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## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Standards Committee held  
at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 16th December, 2024 at 10.00 am**

**PRESENT:** County Councillors: R. Price, A. Blackmore, John, R Williams-Flew,  
P. Easy and Frances Taylor

R. Price, A. Blackmore, M. John, R Williams-Flew, and P. Easy  
(Chair)

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Nicola Perry  
Geraint Edwards

Senior Democracy Officer  
Solicitor

### **APOLOGIES:**

M. Gibson and Fay Bromfield

#### **1. Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting - 16th September 2024**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising:

- 1) There was one action point for the Deputy Monitoring Officer relating to compliance with the PSOW Annual Letter requirement to take a report to the Governance and Audit Committee and to Cabinet to explain the position and this has been copied to the Chair. It was confirmed that all four recommendations have been responded to.
- 2) A replacement for former Councillor Fookes is yet to be determined.

#### **3. Community and Town Councils Training Update**

The report was presented to advise members of the extent and uptake of code of conduct training among members of Community and Town Councils ("the Councils") in the administrative area of Monmouthshire County Council.

It was agreed that a return from just half of the Councils is unsatisfactory for this committee. The Committee has a responsibility to promote and encourage training in the Code of Conduct but there is no statutory or legal requirement for community or town council to undertake it. The Committee is interested in understanding why the training is not completed by some councils.

**The Committee resolved to accept the recommendations to note the information set out in the report relating to the arrangements for code of conduct training for members of the**

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**Councils, and to instruct the Monitoring Officer to liaise with the clerks of the Councils to encourage the uptake of training on the code of conduct.**

**Action: It was requested that clerks to town and community councils are approached to gain a fuller picture of their council's position in relation to training, to promote and encourage take up of training and to capture any late returns.**

#### **4. Outcome of Panel Meeting**

The Committee was updated on the outcome of the Panel hearing held on 28th August 2024.

**In doing so the Committee resolved to accept the recommendation that members note the decision of the Panel attached at Appendix 1.**

**The Deputy Monitoring Officer will liaise with the Monitoring Officer regarding how the Committee will know if the required training has been completed.**

#### **5. PSOW External Review**

The Committee considered the Report of the Independent Review of Investigations by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales into Code of Conduct Complaints published on 27 September 2024.

**The committee resolved to:**

- a) **Note the report of the independent review of investigations by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales into Code of Conduct Complaints; and**
- b) **Instruct the monitoring officer to prepare and submit a response to the PSOW consultation on behalf of the committee to cover the following points:**
  - To inform the subject of a complaint as the complaint is made Rather than wait for the assessment stage;
  - That the Committee supports the reversal to the original process; and
  - That there should be no representations following knowledge of a complaint (at that early stage).

#### **6. Annual Report of the Adjudication Panel for Wales**

The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Adjudication Panel for Wales 2023/24.

**The Committee resolved to note the Annual Report of the Adjudication Panel for Wales 2023/24.**

#### **7. Notes from the National Forum of the Chairs of Standards Committees**

The Committee was provided with the opportunity to review the notes from the Chair following his attendance at the National Forum for Chairs of Standards Committees on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

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**The Committee resolved to note the contents of the report.**

## **8. Dates and Times of Future meetings**

The Committee accepted a request from County Councillor Bromfield to hold the December meeting in the first rather than the third week of the month.

The next meeting will be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 10.00am.

**The meeting ended at 10.54 am**

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