

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL LETTER 2024-25</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Governance &amp; Audit Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>27 November 2025</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

**1. PURPOSE:**

The purpose is to fulfil the expectation of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales that their report is brought to the attention of Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To note the content of the Public Sector Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) annual letter (Appendix 1) and inform the PSOW of their considerations and any proposed actions. The PSOW is aware that due to the scheduling of meetings there would be a delay in responding to them.
- 2.2 That the authority continues to engage with the PSOW complaints standards work, access training for staff and provide the PSOW with complaints data. We have also fully implemented the PSOW's model complaints policy.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales sends every Council an annual letter which provides a summary of the complaints received and investigated. This compares the number of complaints against the local authority which were received and investigated by the PSOW during 2024/25, with the local authority average during the same period.
- 3.2 The PSOW annual letter provides:
  - a breakdown of the number of complaints about the local authority broken down into subject categories.
  - shows the complaint outcomes for the local authority and the volume and proportion that each outcome represents for the local authority.
  - the numbers and percentages of cases received in which an intervention has occurred.
  - a breakdown of all Code of Conduct complaint outcomes against councillors.
  - a breakdown of all Code of Conduct complaint outcomes against town or community councils.

- 3.3 The PSOW received 19 complaints about Monmouthshire County Council. This is 10 less than they received in the previous year, and they closed 16, some complaints were carried over from the previous year. They did not investigate any complaints although they intervened in one case and requested an early resolution which was agreed.

<b>Complaints received by subject: (PSOW definition)</b>	<b>Complaints Received</b>	
	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>
Adult Social Services	0	6
Children Social Services	7	2
Complaints handling	5	0
Environment and Environmental health	0	0
Licensing	0	0
Finance and Taxation	1	0
Housing	3	2
Planning and Building Control	4	6
Roads and transport	4	2
Community Facilities, Recreation & Leisure	0	0
Covid 19	0	0
Benefits Administration	0	0
Education	0	1
Various Other	4	0

**PSOW Comparison of complaint outcomes (\* denotes intervention)**

<b>Monmouthshire County Council</b>	<b>Complaint Outcomes</b>
Complaint investigation discontinued (with early resolution at assessment stages)*	0
Complaint investigation discontinued (without settlement)	0
Decision not to investigate complaint	6
Early resolution*	1
Matter out of jurisdiction	2
Non-public interest report issued: complaint not upheld	0
Non-public interest report issued: complaint upheld*	0
Non-public interest report issued: complaint upheld with early resolution at assessment stage*	0
Premature	7
Public interest report issued: complaint upheld*	0
Public Interest report issued: complaint upheld with early resolution at assessment stage*	0
Special Interest Report*	0
Voluntary settlement*	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

## **Compliance performance comparison**

The PSOW's annual letter includes the number of recommendations made to individual local authorities and the timeliness of our response. The PSOW made two recommendations and unfortunately we were slightly late in complying with them. This was due to an agreed settlement of one complaint that 1) it would be investigated and 2) responded to within 4 weeks. The complainant was not available to discuss the complaint within this timescale, therefore the investigation and response was delayed with a new date agreed with the complainants. However, the Ombudsman deemed that the agreed compliance was not met.

## **Code of Conduct complaints**

There were 7 complaints that the PSOW decided not to investigate. They concluded that there was no action necessary on 2 complaints; no prima facie evidence of breach on 4 complaints; and it was not in the public interest to investigate on 1 complaint.

## **Town/Community Council Code of Conduct complaints**

There were 2 complaints concerning Llantilio Pertholey Community Council, they concluded that there was no evidence of breach. There were 14 complaints about Magor with Undy Community Council, they concluded that there was no prima facie evidence of breach. There were 2 complaints about Usk Town Council and it was concluded that there was no prima facie evidence of breach.

3.4 This report and the PSOW Annual letter 2024/25 will also be presented to the Cabinet.

## **4 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

This report provides feedback information from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The report does not seek to divert from the Council's corporate priorities and the continued delivery of the wide range of services provided through the Council to the public. As the report deals solely with feedback information, a Future Generations and Equality Impact Assessment is not considered appropriate in this instance.

## **5 OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

This section is not relevant as the work of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is outside of our control.

## **6 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

We will continue to work with the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales office to resolve as many issues as possible at an early stage and monitor the number of complaints the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales receives and deals with.

## **7 REASONS:**

- 7.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) role is to consider complaints about public services providers in Wales and to consider complaints that members of local authorities have broken the Code of Conduct. The PSOW has requested that the Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet considers the complaints that the PSOW has received.

## **8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are currently no extra resource costs identified.

## **9 CONSULTEES:**

Strategic Leadership Team

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

**Appendix 1:** The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual letter 2024/25

## **11 AUTHOR:**

Annette Evans, Customer Relations Manager

## **12 CONTACT DETAILS:**

Tel: 01633 644647

E-mail: [annetteevans@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:annetteevans@monmouthshire.gov.uk)