

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE ETHICS & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: ETHICS & STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2023

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: MR R. ALEXANDER (CHAIR)

Mr S. Williams
Mr R. Lynch
Jenny White
Councillor M. Cross
Councillor L. Winnett
Councillor J. Thomas

WITH: Head of Legal Compliance (Monitoring Officer)
Data Protection & Governance Officer

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> No requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> No apologies for absence were received.	
No. 3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u> There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.	

No. 4	<p><u>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The decisions of the Standards Committee held on the 2nd March, 2023 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET</u></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting held on 2nd March, 2023 was submitted.</p> <p>The following update was reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town/Community Council Representation at Meetings – The Data Protection & Governance Officer said he was expecting an update the following week. <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Conduct Element of the Ombudsman Annual Report, when the following point was raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Member suggested that meeting participants should use earphones when discussing exempt information at virtual meetings – The Monitoring Officer undertook to refer this matter to the Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships for further discussion. <p>The Committee AGREED that the Ombudsman Annual Report be noted.</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>OMBUDSMAN REFERRALS</u></p>	

Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.

RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).

Consideration was given to report of the Head of Legal Compliance.

Upon a vote being taken,

The Committee AGREED to proceed to formal hearing.
