

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

24TH JANUARY, 2023

PRESENT: MR R. ALEXANDER (CHAIR)

Mr R. Lynch
Mr S. Williams
Councillor M. Cross
Councillor L. Winnett

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

1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

No requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor S. Thomas (Leader of the Council)
Councillor J. Wilkins (Leader of the Independent Group)
Councillor J. Thomas
Ms S. Rosser

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.

4. STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 18TH OCTOBER, 2022

The decisions of the Standards Committee held on the 18th October, 2022 were submitted.

The Committee AGREED that the decisions be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

5. ACTION SHEET

The Action Sheet arising from the meeting held on 18th October, 2022 was submitted.

The Committee AGREED that Group Leaders only be invited to meetings of the Standards Committee if relevant items on the agenda; and the work of the Democratic Services Team and the Monitoring Officer be noted in the Annual Report.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consideration was given to the draft Terms of Reference.

The Committee AGREED that

- the draft Terms of Reference be amended to include the word 'ethics' to reflect the Nolan Principles, the word standards precluded by the word ethics;
- the Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance to look at the involvement of the Committee in Town/Community Council work;
- the Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance to pursue attendance of the Town Council representative on the Committee.

7. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT DRAFT TEMPLATE

Consideration was given to the Annual Report draft template.

The Committee AGREED that the Annual Report

- should report on items in the public domain;
- should include a Chair's conclusion summing up the work of the Committee for the year and the conclusion to note the work of the Democratic Services Team and the Monitoring Officer;
- a Special Standards Committee be convened on 2nd March, 2023 to approve final version of the Annual Report before being considered at Council on 30th March, 2023;

- the report to cover a calendar year i.e. January 2022 – January 2023.

8. STANDARDS COMMITTEE LAY MEMBER VACANCY APPOINTMENT UPDATE

Consideration was given to the verbal report of the Data Protection & Governance Officer.

The Committee AGREED that the verbal report be noted.

9. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS AMENDMENT TO PROCESS

Consideration was given to the verbal report of the Monitoring Officer.

The Committee AGREED that if the new process was causing issues to advise the Ombudsman going forward.

10. FUTURE TRAINING OF MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Committee AGREED that a virtual half day training session be arranged with an external provider for existing and new Members. Torfaen and Monmouthshire Council's to be invited to attend. An internal discussion on the training session to be held once completed.

11. AOB/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance to look to establish a specific webpage promoting the work of the Standards Committee.

The next meeting to be held on 2nd March, 2023.
