

STANDARDS COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)

(Civic Centre, Neath)

Members Present:

15th November, 2013

Chairman: Mr. G.T.Pullen

Vice Chairman: Mrs.J.E.Howells

Independent Members: C.L.Jones and Mrs.B.Richards

Community

Committee Member: Councillor Mrs.S.Davies

Officers in Attendance: D.Michael and A.Borthwick

Apologies: Councillors S.Jones and A.L.Thomas

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 2nd August 2013, be confirmed as a correct record.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

Agreed that dates of future meetings of the Committee be circulated to Members for their information.

Report of the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

3. **PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL LETTER AND REPORT 2012/13**

The circulated report contained details of the receipt by the Local Authority of the Ombudsman's Annual Letter and also the publication of the Annual Report for 2012/13.

Annex 1 of the circulated report contained details of the comparative data for complaints received by the Ombudsman's office, compared to the average, adjusted for population distribution.

Annex 2 of the circulated report, contained two pages that had been reproduced from the Ombudsman's Annual Report 2012/13 showing comparative statistics for the 22 Local Authorities in Wales.

- RESOLVED:**
- (a) that the Ombudsman's Annual Letter and Report 2012/13, as detailed in the circulated report, be noted;
 - (b) that it be noted that the issue of publicity for the Council's internal complaints procedure would be referred to the Officers' Complaints Group via the appropriate Cabinet Board.

4. **STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The circulated report contained details of developments in relation to the Declarations of Interest by Members.

Appended to the circulated report was a copy of the Audit Report from the Internal Audit Section regarding Members' interests. This noted that the information was already available on request, however, under Section 58 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, this information had now to be made available electronically. Accordingly, the Council had now made the appropriate arrangements to facilitate this.

Additionally, a copy of a draft letter to be distributed to County Borough Council Members, was tabled, to inform Members that all Declarations of Interest would now be available electronically on the Internet and it was their responsibility to ensure that the information supplied was kept up to date. It was noted that this would also apply to the Co-opted Members of the appropriate Committees.

- RESOLVED:** the information outlined in the report and draft letter, be noted.

CHAIRMAN