

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot & Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

9 September 2024

Chairperson: L.Fleet

Independent Members: A.Davies

NPTCBC Members: Councillor S.Thomas

Community Committee Members: Councillor C.Edwards

Officers In Attendance: C.Griffiths and N.Jones

Apologies: T.Ward and D.Lewis

1. **WELCOME AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

There were apologies from T.Ward and D.Lewis.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 23 April, and 17 June 2024 be agreed as an accurate record.

4. **INTERNAL AUDIT IN RESPECT OF MEMBERS ETHICS**

Officers updated the Committee with a report in relation to Internal Audit in respect of Members Ethics.

It was discussed that there were appropriate internal processes in place to ensure members are acting in an ethical manner.

Officers mentioned that training had been undertaken in relation to declaration of interest, use of social media and is currently in the process of finalising a report to come back to the Committee on Conflict Resolution.

RESOLVED: That the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Internal Audit Report, be noted.

5. **REFERRAL FROM THE OMBUDSMAN**

Officers gave the Committee an update on the circulated report.

RESOLVED: That the Decision Notice in respect of the investigation into the conduct of Councillor Dean Lewis, County Borough Councillor representing the Resolven and Tonna ward of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, be noted.

6. **PLANNING PROTOCOL FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

Members discussed the circulated report and Officers explained the rules and principles on the Planning Protocols. Officers suggested they will undertake a training session for all elected members on the Planning Protocol.

RESOLVED: That the content of the Neath Port Talbot Council Planning Protocol for elected Members, be noted.

7. **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Officers updated the Committee with the circulated report.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Whistleblowing Policy, be noted.

8. **RECENT DECISION OF THE ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES AND PUBLIC SERVICE OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES RELATING TO MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT BREACHES**

Officers updated the Committee with the circulated report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

9. **SOUTH WEST WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE**

Officers gave the Committee an update on the circulated report.

Officers updated the Committee they would bring a report to the meeting in relation to the advisers appointed and an invite will be sent to the Chair of South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee to attend to an upcoming meeting.

RESOLVED: That the delegation of the Standards Committee function of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee to Neath Port Talbot Council Standards Committee, and the work programme to date, be noted.

10. **TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT MATTERS**

Officers gave the Committee an update on the circulated report.

Officers were advised they attend Town and Community Council in the future, dates of this meeting will be brought to the next Standards Committee.

RESOLVED: That the findings from the survey undertaken of Town and Community Councils, be noted.

11. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Members were advised that the Forward Work Programme could be amended or added to any time Members felt necessary.

As discussed, a report will come back to the Committee on Conflict Resolution and the advisers appointed in relation to South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee.

The main focus in the October meeting will be with the group leaders and get the opportunity to hear from them directly.

RESOLVED: That the Standards Committee Forward Work Programme be noted.

12. **URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent items were received.

CHAIRPERSON