STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(Microsoft Teams Meeting / Hybrid Conference Room 2, Ground Floor, Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present: **23 April 2024**

Chairperson:	L.Fleet
Independent Members:	A.Davies and D.Lewis
NPTCBC Members:	**Councillors** W.Carpenter and S.Thomas
Community Committee Members:	**Councillors** C.Edwards
Officers In Attendance:	T.Davies and C.Griffiths
Invitees:	**Councillors** A.Aubrey, N.Goldup-John, C.Galsworthy and S.Reynolds
Apologies:	**Councillors** T.Ward

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

   The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and noted apologies from invitees Councillor D.Keogh and Councillor A.J.Richards.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

   No declarations of interest were received.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

   The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 11 March 2024, were agreed as an accurate record.

4. **ATTENDANCE OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL AT THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

As part of its 2022/2023 Annual Reports, Members of the Standards Committee requested further engagement with Elected Members, to meet for an informal discussion, in order to dispel the myths of the Standards Committee, and to discuss the forward work programme of the Standards Committee.

The following Members attended the meeting:

- Cllr Angharad Aubrey
- Cllr Nathan Goldup-John
- Cllr Sonia Reynolds
- Cllr Charlotte Galsworthy

Councillors Anthony Richards and Dennis Keogh were also invited but gave their apologies.

Various topics were discussed, including:

- Holding to account Elected Members who rarely attend meetings, or don't engage with their constituents.
- Training on the Code of Conduct and the Nolan principles.
- Social media.
- The referral process to the Ombudsman, and the Local Resolution Process.

RESOLVED: That the report, and the discussion with the invited elected Members, be noted.

5. **GROUP LEADER ANNUAL REPORTS**

Members noted that during the 2024-25 cycle of meetings, the 4 group leaders would be invited all together, to a meeting of the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED: That Members note the reports of the Group Leaders, contained at Appendix 1 of the circulated report.

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6. **TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE**

Members discussed the findings from their recent observations of the Town/Community Councils meetings and felt the attached questionnaire would benefit from including additional questions based on the discussion held during Minute No 4.

RESOLVED: 1.   That the Code of Conduct questionnaire (as detailed at Appendix 1 of the circulated report) be approved for issue to Town/Community Clerks, incorporating points from today's discussion.

2.   A report be brought back to Members at a future meeting of the Standards Committee, detailing the results.

7. **CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING**

Members felt the slides which accompanied the Members code of Conduct training were very clear and comprehensive.

RESOLVED: That the training provided to all 60 Elected Members of Neath Port Talbot Council, be noted.

8. **GRANT OF DISPENSATIONS AND RENEWAL OF GRANTS UNDER SECTION 81(4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000**

RESOLVED: That the application for dispensations set out in paragraph 14 of the circulated report, be approved to the Member listed, to speak but not vote, and that the dispensations run to the Standards Committee which follows the Annual meeting of Council 2027.

9. **STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

RESOLVED: That the draft Annual Report of the Standards Committee be approved, and delegated authority be given to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (in consultation with the

Chair of the Standards Committee) to amend the report as may be necessary, to reflect any updated complaint figures received.

10. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

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

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

11. **URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent items were received.

CHAIRPERSON