

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

13 July 2022

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – MR CRAIG GRIFFITHS

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All

Town and Community Council Code of Conduct Matters

Purpose of the Report

1. To draw to Members attention the role of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's ("the Council") Standards Committee in respect of Town and Community Councils.

Background

2. Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 introduced a new Ethical Framework for Councils. As part of this framework, the Council has a Standards Committee. This Committee is also responsible for standards functions in relation to the Town and Community Councils (and their Members) in the area of the County Borough Council.
3. Another critical part of the Ethical Framework is the Code of Conduct for Members. One of the functions of the Standards Committee is to assist the Council and the Town and Community Councils in securing compliance with the Code.

4. In the past members have been invited to attend Town/Community Council and a similar invite is extended to all members to attend a Town Council meeting and accordingly arrangements have been put in place with the Clerk of Neath Town Council to facilitate this and in the event members wish to pursue this avenue, the following dates would be available and members should contact the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to facilitate the same. A future report to the Standards Committee will aim to consider any observations from such meetings. Opportunities are also extended to the independent members to observe meetings of Neath Port Talbot Council.
5. Nevertheless to ensure that the Standards Committee can fully discharge its function in respect of Town/Community Councils, the Monitoring Officer is of the view that it would be wise to obtain some conduct related information from each Town/Community Council, which can form the basis of discussion at future Standards Committees and also to allow members of the Standards Committee to determine what specific areas they would like to consider as part of their forward work programme.
6. To that extent a questionnaire has been produced which is annexed to this report at Appendix 1 for members of the Standards Committee to consider and a discussion is invited on whether this covers the issues that members of the Standards Committee wish to consider.

Financial Impact

7. There are no financial impacts associated with this Report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

8. There is no requirement to undertake an integrated impact assessment for this report.

Workforce Impacts

9. There are no workforce impacts associated with this Report

Legal Impacts

10. The Standards Committee is governed by the obligations set out in the Local Government Act 2000 and its composition and running is as set out in the Standards Committee (Wales) Regulations 2001.

Consultation

11. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

12. That Members approve the issue of the Code of Conduct questionnaire annexed at Appendix 1 of this report for issue to Town/Community Clerks and a report be brought back to Members at the next Standards Committee

Reason for Report

13. That Members of the Standards Committee are aware of the remit of the Standards Committee and the legislative background in which the Standards Committee operates

Appendices

14. Appendix 1 – Draft Questionnaire to Town/Community Councils

List of Background Papers

15. The Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

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