



**Gwasanaeth Democraidd**  
**Democratic Service**  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Cyfarfod / Meeting

**PWYLLGOR SAFONAU**  
**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

**11.00am, DYDD LLUN, 1 GORFFENAF, 2013**

**11.00am, MONDAY, 1 JULY, 2013**

Lleoliad / Location

**Ystafell Gwyrfai,**  
**Swyddfa'r Cyngor / Council Offices,**  
**Stryd y Jêl / Shirehall Street,**  
**Caernarfon**

Pwynt Cyswllt / Contact Point

**Eirian Roberts**

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*Dosbarthwyd/Distributed 21/06/13*

**PWYLLGOR SAFONAU  
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Aelodaeth/Membership**

**Aelodau Etholedig / Elected Members (3)**

Y Cynghorwyr/Councillors  
Charles Wyn Jones  
Eryl Jones-Williams  
Michael Sol Owen

**Aelodau Annibynnol / Independent Members (5)**

Ms Linda Byrne  
Mr Gwilym Ellis Evans  
Miss Margaret E Jones  
Mr Sam W Soysa  
Dr Einir Young

**Aelod Pwyllgor Cymuned / Community Committee Member (1)**

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor David Clay

## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

### **3. URGENT ITEMS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

### **4. MINUTES**

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 28 January, 2013 be signed as a true record (copy herewith – yellow paper).

### **5. APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION BY COUNCILLOR MIKE STEVENS**

To consider the report of the Monitoring Officer (copy herewith – blue paper).

### **6. THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

To consider the report of the Monitoring Officer (copy herewith – lilac paper).

### **7. FEEDBACK FROM THE STANDARDS CONFERENCE**

To consider the report of the Monitoring Officer (copy herewith - salmon paper).

### **8. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Ystyried adroddiad y Swyddog Monitro (copi yma – papur green).

### **9. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS**

To consider the report of the Monitoring Officer (copy herewith - pink paper).

### **10. NORTH WALES STANDARDS COMMITTEES FORUM**

To submit the minutes of the Forum held on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 (copy herewith - grey paper).

**11. THE OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

To consider the report of the Monitoring Officer (copy herewith - cream paper).

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## STANDARDS COMMITTEE, 28.01.13

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**Present:-**

**Elected Members:-** Councillors Charles Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams and Michael Sol Owen.

**Independent Members:-** Mr Gwilym Ellis Evans (Chairman), Ms Linda Byrne, Miss Margaret E.Jones and Dr Einir Young.

**Community Committee Member:-** Mr David Clay.

**Also Present:** Dilys Phillips (Monitoring Officer), Sion Huws (Compliance and Language Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

**Apology:-** Mr Sam Soysa (Independent Member).

### 1. WELCOME

Dr Einir Young was welcomed to the meeting following her appointment as an independent member on the Standards Committee.

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

### 3. URGENT ITEM – APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION BY COUNCILLOR PEREDUR JENKINS

This matter had not been included on the committee's agenda; however, the Chairman agreed to hold a discussion on this matter as an urgent item under Section 100B (4)(b), Local Government Act 1972, as the councillor wished to speak in the local discussions regarding the reorganisation of primary education in the catchment area of Ysgol y Gader, Dolgellau, although he was connected with the matter.

It was agreed to address the application under item 5 on the agenda.

### 4. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of a meeting of this committee held on 27 November 2012 as a true record.

#### Matter arising from the minutes Item 9 – Work Programme

The Monitoring Officer noted that draft dates had been announced for the meetings of the committee for the year to come, namely 1 July and 30 September, 2013 and 27 January and 7 April, 2014. These dates followed the historic pattern of holding the committee on a

Monday morning and she asked the members if they wished to continue with this procedure.

**RESOLVED to continue with the procedure of holding the Standards Committee on a Monday morning.**

## **5. APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

### **(A) An application by Councillor Dyfrig Jones**

Submitted – an application by Councillor Dyfrig Jones for a dispensation in connection with the discussions of Bethesda Community Council about the area's village halls, including funding arrangements.

The Monitoring Officer noted that the Councillor had declared a prejudicial interest as he was a member on the management committee of one of those halls. She added that the Councillor was not representing the community council on the hall committee, and that he was there as an individual. No other similar applications from other members of the community council were received by the date of this meeting. She further explained that paragraph 81(4)(a) of the Act was relevant in this case, namely:-

*“The standards committee of a relevant authority may grant dispensations under Section 81(4) of the act where –*

*(a) no fewer than half of the members of the relevant authority or of a committee of the authority (as the case may be) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business.”*

The Monitoring Officer further noted that the funding to be allocated was likely to be more than £500, but that the Councillor would not have to submit an application for dispensation if it was less than that. She added that more than half the Community Council members were also serving on one of the four hall committees in the area of the Community Council, and if a dispensation was not granted to Councillor Dyfrig Jones, or other members of the Community Council which were also serving on a hall committee, only two members of the Community Council would be able to participate in the discussion.

In considering the application, the following observations were noted:-

- That this was a simple enough case and it would be reasonable to approve it, or otherwise, there would not be a quorum in the Community Council to discuss the matter.
- That the Clerk should be informed that other Community Council members, who serve on hall committees, were also required to submit applications along the same lines.

**RESOLVED to approve the application for dispensation.**

### **(B) An application by Councillor Peredur Jenkins**

Submitted – an application by Councillor Peredur Jenkins for a dispensation in connection with discussions regarding the reorganisation of primary education in the catchment area of Ysgol y Gader, Dolgellau.

The Monitoring Officer noted that the Councillor had originally asked for the right to personally submit his application to the Committee in the meeting, but that he later had to tender an apology because of another commitment.

The Compliance and Language Manager explained that the plans for the catchment area had been divided into three parts, namely (i) schools in the eastern part of the catchment area, (ii) schools in the western part of the catchment area and (iii) schools in the town of Dolgellau. The application involved plans for schools in the eastern part of the catchment area as the daughter of the Councillor was an acting head teacher for two of the schools in that area.

He then referred to the guidelines imposed by this Committee in the past for applications involving the organisation of schools, namely:-

*“That a father/mother, grandfather/grandmother, grandson/granddaughter, husband or wife, children, brother or sister would amount to too close a connection to allow dispensation in terms of a specific school, since it would be difficult for the public to gain confidence in the way a decision would be reached.”*

Nevertheless, members had been permitted to participate in the discussions of the Catchment Area Review Panels and to participate fully in Council discussions and its committees on matters relating to the organisation of the county’s primary schools, unless those discussions had been directly associated with the school in question. It was also noted that the application by the Councillor had been restricted to only the right to speak in the local discussions, and not to participate in any decision.

In considering the application, the following observations were noted:-

- That this application was not that different to other applications that had been approved in the past.
- That excluding the member entirely could make the public think that their local councillor had no interest in the subject.

On a more general point, the principle of allowing a councillor to appear before the Committee to personally submit applications, rather than only submitting an application form alone, was considered. It was suggested that having the opportunity to question candidates would be a way for the Committee to obtain more information regarding an application. To the contrary, it was noted that this was not believed to be the best use of anyone’s time, and that candidates should be requested to submit information in advance.

## **RESOLVED**

- (a) To approve the application for dispensation for the Councillor to speak, but not to vote, in meetings under the sponsorship of the Council which are held in the area, but that he cannot speak, or be present or vote at meetings of the Council, or any of its committees, and that in every meeting he participates in he is required to clearly state that he has received a dispensation, explaining the exact nature of the restraints on him, and that this is noted in the minutes of such meetings.**
- (b) That every councillor who is granted a dispensation in the future should submit a statement explaining the nature of that dispensation in any meetings attended.**
- (c) That the officers should consider whether or not sufficient information was included as part of an application for dispensation before it is placed on the Committee’s agenda.**

## 6. NORTH WALES STANDARDS COMMITTEES FORUM

Submitted – the oral report of the Monitoring Officer together with the minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 7 January, 2013.

**RESOLVED to note the content of the report.**

## 7. STANDARDS CONFERENCE 2013

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer outlining the arrangements of the Standards Conference 2013 and asking the Committee to nominate their representatives together with prioritising a reserve list if more members wished to attend the conference.

**RESOLVED to nominate the Chairman, together with Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams, Ms Linda Byrne and Miss Margaret Jones to attend the Standards Conference 2013, with Dr Einir Young as the first reserve name and Councillor Michael Sol Owen as the second reserve name.**

## 8. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS

Submitted for information – the report of the Monitoring Officer notifying the Committee members of the developments, since her last report, in terms of allegations against members.

The Compliance and Language Manager noted further to preparing the report, that the Ombudsman had decided not to investigate further into the complaint that a county councillor had used his Facebook page to solicit negative comments and that some of those comments had been offensive and unfounded. The complainant had two weeks to ask the Ombudsman to reconsider his decision.

**RESOLVED to note the content of the report.**

## 9. TRAINING

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer asking the Committee to consider different options and to offer guidance on drawing up a training programme on the Code of Conduct.

In considering the matter, the following observations were noted:-

- Concern was expressed that 11 county councillors (including three new members) had not attended the training on the Code of Conduct offered as part of the induction procedure following the May 2012 elections, and that it was necessary to give priority to close this gap.
- In light of closing this gap noted above, an annual refresher session should be offered to all councillors, keeping a record of their attendance.
- That training could be offered to county councillors at meetings of the Area Committees.
- That training needed to be provided to members on declaring an interest in the planning field.
- That the training should be attractively packaged for the members and that there were different ways of providing it, e.g. CD or online test.



- That the culture needed to be changed as people believed that they did not need training.
- That the Clerks were key in getting better arrangements in the community councils, and without their cooperation, it would be more difficult for the parish councillors to obtain the training they required.

The Monitoring Officer referred to a letter from Carl Sargeant AM, the Minister for Local Government and Communities, regarding a Local Government Ethical Framework, dated 15 January, 2013, that was distributed to members with the Committee agenda. As well as asking councils to respond to a series of specific questions, the letter invited observations on any other aspects of the Code and she suggested that the Minister could be asked to include a condition in the Code that every councillor had to receive training on the Code of Conduct.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) To give priority to providing training on the Code of Conduct to the 11 county councillors who did not attend the training offered as part of the induction procedure following the May 2012 elections.**
- (b) To offer an annual refresher session to all county councillors, looking at different ways of providing the training, e.g. area committees.**
- (c) To offer specific sessions to Town and Community Council Clerks and monitor how the training with One Voice Wales proceeds.**
- (ch) To offer a tailored session for members of the Standards Committee.**
- (d) That various and more innovative methods of introducing training in general is needed.**
- (dd) To ask the Minister for Local Government and Communities to include a condition in the code stating that every councillor has to receive training on the Code of Conduct.**

#### **10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DEMOCRACY) WALES BILL**

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer asking the Committee whether or not they wished to express an opinion and respond to the consultation on the above Bill that was currently before the Assembly, and specifically the proposal (in Clause 63) that involved establishing joint standard committees.

The Monitoring Officer then referred to a letter from Carl Sargeant AM, the Minister for Local Government and Communities, regarding a Local Government Ethical Framework, and asked the members for their opinion on six specific points in that letter, namely:

- 1) Encouraging councils to establish a procedure in order to resolve complaints locally rather than referring them to the Ombudsman.
- 2) An application for councils to set a cap of £20,000 on the level of indemnity offered to members facing cases of misconduct.
- 3) The intention to remove the condition from the Code of Conduct which stated that members had to report potential breaches of the Code of Conduct to the Ombudsman.
- 4) The intention to remove the clause from the Code of Conduct which stated that a local member had a personal interest if there was conflict between the interests of his / her ward and the interests of the Council as a whole.

- 5) The intention to revise the guidelines in order to be clear that making a political comment did not necessarily mean breaching the code.
- 6) The intention to include a condition in the measure that the online Interest Register for each council throughout the country had to be published.

The Committee was also asked whether or not it wished to submit observations on any other aspects of the Code and it had already been decided (under item 9 above) that the Minister for Local Government and Communities should be asked to include a condition in the code that every councillor had to receive training on the Code of Conduct.

In considering the matter, the following observations were noted:-

- That the idea of establishing joint standards committees should be refused. They would have an effect on the individual standards committees. Although lay members had a keen interest in seeing their local council acting appropriately, there could be no certainty that they would feel just as enthusiastic regarding the action of councils in other areas. Also, the arrangements would certainly be unmanageable and the papers would become too cumbersome.
- That this Council had a local procedure to resolve disputes between members and between a member and an officer, and therefore this Committee was already accomplishing what the Minister requested.
- The general opinion was that a cap of £20,000 on the level of indemnity offered to members facing cases of misconduct was too high. Each case should be discussed individually, but on a practical note this Council would provide an indemnity of less than £20,000.
- Agree with the intention to remove the condition from the Code of Conduct which stated that members had to report possible breaches of the Code of Conduct to the Ombudsman.
- Agree with the intention to remove the clause from the Code of Conduct which stated that a local member had a personal interest if there was conflict between the interests of his / her ward and the interests of the Council as a whole.
- Agree with the intention to revise the guidelines in order to be clear that making a political comment did not necessarily mean breaching the code.
- Disagreed with the intention to include a condition in the measure that the online Interest Register for each council throughout the country had to be published. In terms of parish councillors, this could pave the way for a lot of bickering. In any case, it was already difficult enough to get volunteers on the parish councils and having to make such statements would turn people away. In terms of county and parish councillors, under the Right to Information Act the individual had a right to ask for the information anyway, and the relevant council would have a record of the name of anyone who had submitted an application for information under that act, which would be a different situation if people had come across the information themselves by searching on the internet. It was also noted that the Government's guidelines for Assembly members were not as strict.
- That the Minister should be asked to include a condition in the code that every councillor should receive training on the Code of Conduct, noting that training in Planning and Licensing fields were already compulsory for members of this Council.
- To state dissatisfaction that the Minister's letter had been received in English only.

**RESOLVED to submit the above observations to the attention of the Minister for Local Government and Communities.**

## 11. MEMBERS PROTOCOL ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Submitted – the amended report of the Monitoring Officer on the Members Protocol on Gifts and Hospitality in light of the discussion in the previous meeting of the committee on 27 November, 2012. The opinion of the committee was sought on the amended protocol, the method of bringing the protocol to the attention of the councillors together with the gifts and hospitality registration form.

In considering the matter, the following observations were noted:-

- In response to an observation that it was not always possible to declare a gift within 28 days, e.g. when a bill for work had not been received, the Monitoring Officer noted that there was no requirement in such cases to register within 28 days.
- It was suggested that it was not appropriate to name members of the public on the register.
- That the threshold of £25 should be kept.
- That the officers should make a formal arrangement to share the register every six months with the Chairman, noting in the annual report of the committee that this took place and what were the conclusions.
- That part 5 of the protocol should include the word 'presentations'.
- That a rolling programme should be established to examine the registers of town and community councils on an annual basis.
- That the training offered to clerks of town and community councils should include the requirement to register gifts and hospitality.
- That the gifts and hospitality registration form should be placed on the internet.

**RESOLVED that the Monitoring Officer redrafted the protocol in accordance with the opinion of the committee and submit it to the full Council to be adopted in May.**

The meeting commenced at 10.30am and concluded at 1.05pm.

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>1 July 2013</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Application for dispensation by Councillor Mike Stevens</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>Action:</b>	<b>To decide upon the application</b>

## **Background**

1. Cllr Mike Stevens of Tywyn Town Council has applied for a dispensation to take part in discussions, in the Town Council, relating to the Tywyn Chamber of Tourism and Commerce. The Council provides an annual grant to the Chamber but this year it wishes to discuss the matter further before making a decision because of developments within the Chamber over the last year.

2. The Councillor has declared a prejudicial interest because he is the Chairman of the Chamber. He wishes to attend the meeting in order to provide information and to allow members the opportunity to question him. He has asked for the right to speak and vote. Further background information will be available and will be presented at the Standards Committee meeting.

3. The Standards Committee may grant a dispensation if the situation comes within one (or more) of those listed in the relevant regulations). The Councillor states that he is asking the Committee to grant a dispensation under paragraph (h), which states that a dispensation may be granted where -

*“the business which is to be considered relates to the finances or property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board the member is a member otherwise than as a representative of the relevant authority and the member has no other interest in that business provided that any dispensation shall not extend to participation in any vote with respect to that business;”*

He also refers to paragraph (e) - the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the general public;

4. The Ombudsman’s Guidelines on the code of Conduct notes the following in relation to granting dispensations (p.36):

*“The standards committee will need to balance the public interest in preventing members with prejudicial interests from taking part in decisions, against the public interest in decisions being taken by a reasonably representative group of members of the authority.”*

## **Recommendation**

5. The Committee is requested to consider and decide upon Councillor Mike Stevens’ application for a dispensation, along with any others that are received.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>Date :</b>	<b>1 July 2013</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>The Standards Committee's Annual Report 2012/13</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>Action :</b>	<b>Observations and approval</b>

### **Background**

1. The Standards Committee publishes its annual report as a way of introducing the Committee and its work to members of Gwynedd Council and the town and community councils, and to raise its profile generally.
2. I attach, for the Committee's attention a draft of the Annual Report for the period from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

### **Recommendations**

3. The Committee's observations and approval are invited

**GWYNEDD COUNCIL  
STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013**

Draft

## **FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN**

[to follow]

**Gwilym Ellis Evans**  
**Chairman of Gwynedd Council's Standards Committee**

Draft

## **FOREWORD BY THE MONITORING OFFICER**

**[to follow]**

**Dilys A Phillips  
Monitoring Officer  
Gwynedd Council**

Draft



## **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Although the Standards Committee is one of Gwynedd Council's committees, it contains a majority of members who have no connection with the Council or local government ('Independent Members'). It also includes a member who represents the interests of town/community councils ('the Community Committee Member'), as well as three elected members of Gwynedd Council.

### **Independent Members**

#### **Gwilym Ellis Evans**



Gwilym lives in Dolgellau, where he ran a garage business for almost 40 years. He has served on several tribunals including Industrial and Social Services Appeals Tribunals and is currently a member of North Wales Valuation Appeals Tribunal. He is currently Chair of the Gwynedd & De Ynys Môn Citizens Advice Bureau and serves on the Meirionnydd CAB Consultative Committee. He is also a member of the Gwynedd Economic Partnership Steering Group and a Trustee Board Member of Age Concern Gwynedd & Môn.

#### **Samindre (Sam) W. Soysa**



Sam lives in Harlech and works as a Health & Safety Consultant in North Wales. He has worked in several senior management and business roles over the past 20 years, including 7 years with the Ministry of Energy in New Zealand. He is currently Vice-Chair & Trustee / Director of Gwynedd & De Ynys Môn Citizens Advice Bureau, and serves on the Consultative Committee of the Meirionnydd CAB. He also serves as an Independent Member on the Standards Committees for Snowdonia National Park Authority and the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.

#### **Linda Byrne**

**[details and photograph to follow]**

#### **Margaret E Jones**

**[details and photograph to follow]**

## **Einir Young**

[details and photograph to follow]

## **Community Committee Member**

### **Councillor David Clay**



David has been an elected member of Barmouth Town Council for 25 years and has held the position of Chair on 4 separate occasions. He is currently Chair of the Meirionnydd Area Committee of One Voice Wales. Now retired, he was an hotelier in Barmouth for 30 years and was an active member of Mid Wales Tourism Council and in latter years a Director of Mid Wales Tourism Partnership.

## **Gwynedd Council Members**

### **Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams**



Eryl is a semi-retired freelance journalist who has represented Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talybont on Gwynedd Council since 2008. He is also a long-standing town and community councillor and has served as both Mayor and Chairman. He takes an active part in disability rights and is vice-chairman of the Meirionnydd Access Group as well as a member of the South Snowdonia Access Forum and the Betsi Cadwalader University NHS Community Health Council. He is currently chairman of the Gwynedd Central Licensing Committee, where is able to draw on his experience as a former licensee. A former Welsh Football referee his hobbies includes golf at Royal St David's Harlech and Dolgellau.

### **Councillor Charles Wyn Jones**

[details and photograph to follow]

**Councillor Michael Sol Owen**

**[details and photograph to follow]**

Draft

## THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The Committee's main role is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and to assist them to observe the Members' Code of Conduct. It is responsible for doing so for members of Gwynedd Council and the county's town and community councils.

The Committee is responsible for considering and deciding upon complaints, referred to it by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, that members have breached the Code of Conduct.

It also considers applications made by members for dispensations to allow them to take part in discussions even though they have a prejudicial interest under the Code.

Last year, Gwynedd Council's Gifts and Hospitality Protocol for Members was added to the Committee's terms of reference.

### Work Programme

A copy of the work programme is attached as an **Appendix**.

### Dispensations

The Members' Code of Conduct provides that a councillor cannot take part in a discussion if he/she has a 'prejudicial interest' under the Code of Conduct. However, the member does have the right to make an application to the committee for permission to take part in the discussion despite the existence of the interest, i.e. a dispensation.

The committee considered three applications during this period:

<b>Nature of interest</b>	<b>Committee's decision</b>
Member was tenant of applicant for planning permission	Allowed (to speak only – no right to vote in any case)
Member of management committee of village hall – community council to discuss financing the area's village halls.	Allowed
Daughter was temporary head teacher at two primary schools in the Gader eastern catchment area – discussions regarding reorganisation of primary education in that area.	Allow member to take part in local and informal discussions but did not extend to formal meetings within the Council.

## Allegations against members

The Committee was informed of the following decisions by the Ombudsman in relation to allegations that members had breached the Code of Conduct:

Allegation	Decision
Councillor using his position improperly	No investigation
Bringing office of councillor into disrepute	Not to continue with investigation
Failure to declare an interest	Member had breached code by not disclosing interest but no further steps were required in circumstances
Unacceptable behaviour towards fellow-member	No evidence of breach of code
Sending e-mail to newspaper making untrue allegations about a policy	No investigation
Verbal attack on member of public and belittling him in public place	The behaviour could be a breach of the code but was not of the opinion that a standards committee would impose a sanction in the circumstances.
Failure to declare an interest	No investigation
Failure to declare an interest	No investigation

The Ombudsman referred one allegation to the Committee for determination:

Allegation	Decision
Making unfounded allegations against a member of the public in his blog.	Suspend the councillor from being a member of Gwynedd Council for a period of three months.

## The North Wales Standards Committee Forum

North Wales Standards Committees Forum provides an opportunity for representatives of all the standards committees in north Wales to meet. The purpose of the forum is to enable standards committees to discuss and share ideas, good practice and resources, and also present a collective view on the national level. Forum meetings are attended by representatives from the Committee (usually the

Chair and/or Vice-chair) and officers. This year the Forum was been instrumental in the process of arranging the Wales Standards Conference 2013, which was held in Llandudno in April 2013.

## **Gifts and Hospitality Protocol for Members**

As part of the work of promoting high standards of conduct within the Council, the Standards Committee looked at the protocol and proposed some amendments. The amended protocol was accepted and adopted by the Full Council as part of the Council's constitution.

## **Consultations**

In its meeting in January 2013 the Committee responded to the Welsh Government's consultation on Local Government (Democracy) Wales Bill, in respect of those aspects relating to standards committees. It also considered and responded to a letter from Carl Sargeant AM, the Minister for Local Government and Communities, regarding a Local Government Ethical Framework,

## **Code of Conduct Training**

The Committee decided on the following matters:

- To give priority to providing training on the Code of Conduct to the county councillors who did not attend the training offered as part of the induction procedure following the May 2012 elections.
- To offer an annual refresher session to all county councillors, looking at different ways of providing the training
- To offer specific sessions to Town and Community Council Clerks and monitor how the training with One Voice Wales proceeds.
- To offer a tailored session for members of the Standards Committee.
- That various and more innovative methods of introducing training in general is needed.
- To ask the Minister for Local Government and Communities to include a condition in the code stating that every councillor has to receive training on the Code of Conduct.

### **Useful Contacts**

- **Dilys Phillips, Monitoring Officer / Siôn Huws, Propriety Officer**  
Gwynedd Council, Shirehall Street, Caernarfon, LL55 1SH  
E-mail: [SionH@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:SionH@gwynedd.gov.uk) Tel: (01286) 679168 Website: [www.gwynedd.gov.uk](http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk)
- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** - [www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)
- **Panel Dyfarnu Cymru** - [www.adjudicationpanelwales.org.uk](http://www.adjudicationpanelwales.org.uk)

## APPENDIX

# WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### 28 January, 2013

- A report on allegations against members
- Minutes of the Chairman and Vice-chairmen North Wales Forum
- Report on training
- Legislation on Promoting Local Democracy (*subject to the consultation period*)
- Links with community and town councils

### 8 April, 2013

- A report on allegations against members
- Minutes of the Chairman and Vice-chairmen North Wales Forum
- Work programme for the pending year
- Draft annual report of the Standards Committee

### July 2013

- Reports on allegations against members
- Minutes of the Chairman and Vice-chairmen North Wales Forum
- The Ombudsman's Annual Report
- Feedback from the Standards Conference

To include a specific item on the work programme to discuss the entire field of social media and how councillors use them.

That members of this committee are able to attend any meetings of the Council as observers and receive a link for every programme that is published.

To send a list of dates and locations of the Planning Committee to members of this committee so that they can be present when the committee meets in their area

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>1, JULY, 2013</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>FEEDBACK FROM THE STANDARDS CONFERENCE.</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>DILYS PHILLIPS, MONITORING OFFICER.</b>

1. The seventh all Wales Standard Conference was held in Llandudno on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. 5 from the Committee attended namely :  
Councillor Michael Sol Owen  
Einir Young  
Margaret Jones  
Gwilym Evans  
Linda Byrne,  
  
as well as four officers :  
Dilys Phillips,  
Iwan Evans  
Siôn Huws  
Rhun ap Gareth.
2. Just over a 100 attended and 80 feedback forms were received. The analysis of the forms can be seen in Appendix '1'.
3. Four workshops were held during the conference. The feedback from one of them namely "Promoting Standards Proactively" can be seen in Appendix '2'.
4. The Committee is requested to :
  - (a) Note the report.
  - (b) Offer any observations on the timing and arrangements of future conferences.



## **Cynhadledd Safonau 2013 / Standards Conference 2013**

### **Ffurflen adborth / Feedback form**

<b>Os gwelwch yn dda rhowch eich barn am y canlynol: Please give your view on the following:</b>	<b>Ardderchog Excellent</b>	<b>Da Good</b>	<b>Boddhaol Satisfactory</b>	<b>Gwael Poor</b>
<b>Trefniadau cyn y gynhadledd Pre-conference arrangements</b>	50	21	6	2
<b>Pa mor ddefnyddiol oedd y gynhadledd The usefulness of the Conference</b>	49	28	2	0
<b>Y cyfle i rwydweithio Opportunity for networking</b>	42	30	5	1
<b>Lleoliad/Lluniaeth Location/Refreshments</b>	54	18	3	1
<b>Trefniadau'r gynhadledd The Conference arrangements</b>	55	19	0	1
<b>Deunyddiau'r gynhadledd Conference materials</b>	47	23	8	2
<b>Sesiwn lawn 1 – Peter Tyndall Plenary session 1 – Peter Tyndall</b>	38	34	3	0
<b>Sesiwn lawn 2 – trefn datrys leol Plenary session 2 – local resolution procedure</b>	38	30	0	0
<b>Gweithdy 1A/2A: hyrwyddo safonau Workshop 1A/2A: promoting standards</b>	31	17	1	0
<b>Gweithdy 1B/2B: gwrandawiadau a chosbau Workshop 1B/2B: hearings and sanctions</b>	19	18	6	1
<b>Gweithdy 1C: buddiannau a gollyngiadau Workshop 1C: interests and dispensations</b>	12	9	3	0
<b>Gweithdy 2C: cyngorau cymuned ac un bwrrpas Workshop 2C: communities and single purpose</b>	15	8	2	1

### **Sylwadau pellach / Further comments.**

1.	I think we did a good job here in the North. Good balance of presentations and workshops.
2.	Very worthwhile exercise. Informative, lively, information sharing.
3.	Very well organised in all respects.
4.	Very well organised and useful. Well chosen topics. Good venue and good facilities.
5.	Very enjoyable and good Conference.
6.	Should have started at 9 or 9:30. Most stayed overnight or were within 1 hours drive Standards documents too large Perhaps One Voice Wales representative should be invited?
7.	I'd suggest that the Conference should have started earlier in the day. Those that travelled from South Wales probably all stayed the night before. Conference should have finished therefore at 15:30. Conference was excellent.
8.	Diddorol dros ben. Dim digon o drafod/gwaith grŵp yn Gweithdy 1C. Trefniadau da / dwyieithog. <i>Very interesting. Not enough discussion/group work in Workshop 1C. Good organisation/bilingual.</i>
9.	Would have liked longer to discuss Workshop 1A/2A – Promoting Standards.

10.	Would have preferred all the conference materials to be on the web or e-mail. The contents were very heavy to transport and a waste of paper. Could have condensed the day a little to perhaps start at 10:00 to enable us to get home earlier. Would be easier on a midweek day. Good use of bilingual communications.
11.	Found documentation awkward to negotiate.
12.	Generally good – but not as good over the whole range as the last 2/3 annual events have been. Venue (although at the opposite end of Wales for me) was very good.
13.	Nid oedd y brif neuadd yn lleoliad delfrydol ar gyfer y gweithdai (rhy fawr ac amhersonol!) At y dyfodol, byddai'n ddefnyddiol pe bai'r dogfennau i aelodau'r gynhadledd gynnwys rhestr o'r holl aelodau, gan nodi pa Gyngor oeddent yn ei gynrychioli. <i>The main hall was not ideal for the workshop (to big and impersonal). In the future, it would be useful if the documents contained the names of all the delegates attending, together with the Council they were representing.</i>
14.	Cynhadledd wedi ei threfnu'n dda gyda chynnwys ardderchog. Diolch! <i>The Conference was well organised with excellent content. Thank you!</i>
15.	<i>Workshop 1C</i> – We didn't have the opportunity to work in small groups although tables were arranged to provide just the opportunity. I would have welcomed more workshop sessions, shorter lunch break if necessary. I would have been happy to forego the cost of having conference documents in English and Welsh.
16.	Page numbers needed on brochure. Morning group sessions not enough "Group Work".
17.	Balance of Workshops/Plenary – just right.
18.	Location – excellent – easy to find and very pleasant vicinity, good facilities. Refreshments – very good. Food – poor – satisfactory – very heavily bread orientated, good fruit sticks option.
19.	Members should have been asked prior to arriving if they wanted material in English or Welsh as of this document is waste! 1B – too rushed – needed 2 hour slot. 2C – Single Purpose Authorities was poor - Registration on interest was good.
20.	Venue could have been warmer and it would have been nice to have had some form of soft drink save for water. Otherwise – Excellent!
21.	As a new member of the Standards Committee I have found the conference to be extremely helpful.
22.	Da lawn. <i>Very good.</i>
23.	Excellent conference pack, well organised and relevant. 2C – This took the form of a presentation with questions rather than a workshop.
24.	It is encouraging to see the degree to which all participants engaged with the issues, are willing to share and learn from good practice.
25.	A useful and informative day. Thank you.
26.	The need for mandatory training per town and community councils on the code is foremost. We have to sign to state we have read this when elected but not all understand. Well Done.
27.	Prior commitment prevented attendance to morning session.
28.	Excellent venue and welcome from staff-organisers. I feel that once again Community Councils were disregarded in view of what they do and achieve re training in Standards.
29.	Excellent – particularly hearings and sanctions.
30.	Excellent conference. Acoustic conditions in workshops not good. Microphones needed. Food excellent.
31.	The workshop in interests wasn't really a workshop with participations.
32.	Conference materials overblown. Shiny paper not good. Papers very difficult to find ones way around. Liked idea of allocating people to tables for workshop sessions.
33.	Really good conference, well done to everyone involved in organising the day.
34.	At my first Standards Conference I found it very interesting and enjoyed hearing from others. The setting of the venue was much enjoyed! It was good to be able to chat to those with so much more experience.
35.	Really useful – lots to think about. Look forward to receiving conference notes.

36.	No further comments required. An informative and enjoyable conference.
37.	Wedi mwynhau'r profiad ac wedi dysgu llawer. Cynhadledd wedi ei threfnu yn dda. Diolch am gael bod yna. <i>Enjoyed the experience and have learnt a lot. Conference was well organised. Pleased that I attended.</i>
38.	A very good day.
39.	Very enjoyable and good to meet other members. More time for Workshops would be good.
40.	I spent the first few minutes of each session trying to find the slides in the conference pack. Rather confusing – please could it be improved, at least with page numbering.
41.	Gormod o ddeunydd yn sleidiau Gweithdy B. Fformat Gweithdy A yn llawer gwell a mwy rhyngweithiol. <i>Too much material in the slides for Workshop B. The format of Workshop A was a lot better and more interactive.</i>
42.	Llongyfarchiadau am y trefniadau ac ar lwyddiant yr achlysur. <i>Congratulations on the organisation and the success of the event.</i>
43.	The standard of arrangements was well above expectation!!
44.	Very well organised and relevant conference.
45.	Really useful, especially the opportunity to discuss with members of other Standards Committees. Raised a lot of new and interesting issues concerning the role of Standards Committees.
46.	Facilities – Main conference room was dark, black walls (!). Poor lighting. The room was very cold. Doors were left open and I asked several times if door could be closed. The women present sat in their coats. Thoroughly enjoyed and learned a great deal from Workshop Session 1A. Content was thin and I felt a wasted opportunity. Pack not numbered, difficult to follow. I do not eat dairy products not asked dietary requirements before attending.
47.	Diwrnod buddiol – yn bennaf i glywed beth sydd yn mynd ymlaen mewn Awdurdodau eraill. <i>Profitable day – mainly to hear what is going on within other Authorities.</i>
48.	Buddiol iawn. <i>Very profitable.</i>

**STANDARDS CONFERENCE 2013**  
**VENUE CYMRU, LLANDUDNO**  
**19 APRIL, 2013**

**FEEDBACK FROM THE WORKSHOP SESSIONS ON PROMOTING  
STANDARDS PROACTIVELY**

**INTRODUCTION**

During the Conference, two workshop sessions were held on promoting standards proactively. The facilitators were Dilys Phillips, Monitoring Officer, Gwynedd Council and Stephen Phipps, Head of Ethics and Regulation Team, Department of Local Government, Welsh Government.

It was noted that the statutory duties of Standards Committees were to promote and maintain high standards of conduct; assist elected members with matters relating to the Code of Conduct; monitor the implementation of the Code within the authority and advise and train elected members on matters relating to conduct. Attendees were asked to participate in group work on how the Standards Committees could be proactive in achieving these roles. Here are the ideas submitted:-

**ACTIVITIES TO RAISE PROFILE**

1. Meetings

Hold regular meetings with relevant stakeholders to promote the work of the Standards Committee and/or hold discussions on standards matters.

Stakeholders could include:

- Political Group Leaders within the authority;
- Chief Executive;
- Members of the Corporate Management Team;
- Heads of Department;
- Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council;
- Chair of the Democratic Services Committee;
- Community Council Clerks.

2. Visits

Hold visits with relevant bodies or meetings such as:

- Community Councils;
- Council Committees;
- Full Authority.

Invite the Standards Committee or some of the Standards Committee members to events such as the annual meetings of community councils or induction days for new members.

### 3. Publicity

Hold publicity campaigns regarding the work of the Standards Committee such as:

- The annual report to the Council;
- Releasing press statements from time to time;
- Including an article in the Council's newspapers;
- Producing periodical newsletters;
- Sending an update to each Council member;
- Inviting the press to the Committee meetings.

## ACTIVITIES RELATING TO TRAINING

### 4. Training Content

Draw up member training policies in order to ensure standard content. Such policies could relate to the following:

- Obtaining the Council's approval to make training on the Code of Conduct compulsory;
- Presenting training on subjects of concern within the authority, e.g. the use of social media or conduct at public meetings;
- Joint producing training on a regional basis;
- Using the material of the Welsh Local Government Association or Unllais Cymru as a basis to the training.

### 5. Presenting

Use various methods of presenting training including some of the following:

- Members of the Standards Committee to attend training events to contribute to the presentations;
- Presenting web-based training;
- Members of the Standards Committee to hold visits with community councils;
- Using easy to understand materials such as a concise version of the "quick reference" Code, etc.

### 6. Monitoring

Hold events to monitor the effect of training by:

- Analysing feedback forms;
- Receiving regular reports to the committee on conduct matters.

## ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE GOOD CONDUCT

### 7. Conflict Resolution

Act locally to resolve conflict relating to conduct by:

- Producing a Local Protocol (two models are used in Wales, one including the Standards Committee and the other including political group leaders);
- Acting as an arbitrator between members;
- Standards surgeries.

### 8. Observing

Inviting elected members to observe Standards Committee meetings.

## MONITORING ACTIVITIES

### 9. Complaints

Monitor complaints or allegations against members and produce regular reports to the committee.

### 10. Attendance

Monitor the attendance of members at various meetings and produce regular reports:

- Attendance at training events;
- Attendance at committee meetings;
- Attendance at external body meetings.

### 11. Registers

Monitor the registering that members undertake on the following:

- Gifts and hospitality register;
- Interests register (and decide whether or not they should be published).

## REVIEWING ACTIVITIES

### 12. Procedures of the Standards Committee

Review or draw up various protocols or procedures relating to the way in which the committee itself acts, such as:

- Conflict resolution protocol;
- Procedure for hearings before the committee;
- Requests for dispensations;
- Self-assessment of the committee's work.

### 13. The Authority's Policies

Review the authority's policies relating to the standards field, including the following:

- Gifts and hospitality policy;
- Social websites policy;
- Web-casting policy;
- Video conferencing policy;
- Use of information technology policy;
- Member correspondence policy;
- Whistleblowing policy;
- Press use policy;
- Local commitment to the standard of conduct.

## **COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

### 14. Appraisals

Undertake an appraisal or evaluation of the work and training needs of individual members of the committee.

### 15. Regional Activity

Establish or participate in various events to share good practice, such as:

- Standards Committee Regional Forum;
- Standards Conferences;
- Joint training events with other standards committees.

### 16. Reports

Consider and learn from published reports, such as:

- The Ombudsman's annual reports;
- The Ombudsman's casebook;
- Reports or decisions by other Standards Committees.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE.</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>1, JULY, 2013.</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME.</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>DILYS PHILLIPS, MONITORING OFFICER.</b>

1. The Committee decided on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2012 that it would produce an annual forward work programme. The first programme for 2012/13 was approved in the subsequent meeting.
2. The draft work programme for 2013/14 is presented and the committee's approval is requested. Once approved, it will then be published on the Council's website.



**STANDARDS COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14.**

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>	<b><u>PURPOSE</u></b>
1, July, 2013	Annual Report to the Standards Committee	Approve the annual report on the committee's work for the past year.
	Feedback from the Standards Conference.	Receive the feedback report and submit any observations.
	Committee Forward Work Programme.	Approve the forward work programme for 2013/14.
	Allegations against members.	Receive the report on allegations made since the last meeting.
	North Wales Standards Committee Forum.	Receive for information, minutes of the last Forum meeting.
30, September, 2013	The Ombudsman's Annual Report.	Receive the report for information.
	Wales Adjudication Panel's Annual Report.	Receive the report for information.
	Allegations against members.	Receive the feedback report and submit any observations.
	Meet the Political Group Leaders.	Hold discussions with the leaders or their representatives on the committee's work and standards matters.
	Social Media Protocol	Consider the draft protocol on social media use for elected members in order to recommend adoption by the Council.
	Training.	Receive a report on training which was presented on the Code of Conduct and on the training arrangements for the coming year. Consider training for committee members.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>
27, January, 2014.	Gifts and Hospitality Register.	Receive the annual report on the Gifts and Hospitality register.
	Elected members register of interests.	Accept the annual report on the register of interests and the declarations made during the year.
	Procedure to resolve disagreements and Gwynedd Standard.	Review the procedure and receive a report on its implementation throughout the year.
	Allegations against members.	Receive the feedback report and present any observations.
	North Wales Standards Committee Forum.	Receive for information the minutes of the last Forum meeting.
7, April, 2014	Meet with the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Democratic Services Committee.	Discuss matters of general interests to both committees.
	Procedure for dispensation applications.	Review the process of dealing with dispensation applications, receive a the feedback report of the applications made up to now.
	Self assessment of the committee's work.	Hold a self assessment of the committee's work up to now and offer any changes.
	Allegations against members.	Receive the feedback report and present any observations.
	Committee's Work Programme.	Approve the work programme for 2014/15.

<b>Committee :</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>1, July, 2013.</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Allegations against members.</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer.</b>
<b>Action:</b>	<b>For Information.</b>

## **1. Background.**

This report is to inform the Committee of developments, since my last report, with regards to complaints against members. The report is based on information received from the Ombudsman.

## **2. Complaints.**

### **2.1 Ombudsman's Reference 201203449 & 201203493**

<b>Complaint.</b>
That a county councillor had used his Facebook page to solicit negative comments about a school and that some of these comments were offensive and unfounded.
<b>Decision.</b>
Not to continue with the investigation.
<b>Reasons.</b>
The Monitoring Officer intervened in the matter promptly and the councillor followed her advice. He removed the more offensive posts and warned other contributors not to name names or use bad language. The councillor himself did not put on offensive material nor did he name the school or the person. However, the Ombudsman accepted that it was the responsibility for the contents of the page was his. The member had not breached the codes simply by mentioning in public the fact that there was a complaint against him. There was no need to consider the matter further. The Monitoring Officer had dealt with the matter sufficiently. However he drew the councillor's attention to his concern at his manner of addressing the matter – for which more appropriate channels existed.

## 2.2 Ombudsman's Reference 2665/201204709

<b>Complaint.</b>
That a town councillor had not declared an interest in a letter which was on the agenda for a meeting of the town council and where the content may have related to his position on a local tourism and commerce body.
<b>Decision.</b>
No investigation.
<b>Reasons.</b>
The issue being discussed was not the contents of the letter but whether the contents of the letter should be read in public. The councillor therefore did not have an interest in this topic over an above other councillors.

## 2.3 Ombudsman's Reference. 201204544

<b>Complaint.</b>
That a county councillor had posted, on his Facebook page, that a local business had received a zero score under the food hygiene scheme. By that time the problems had been rectified, but this had damaged the complainant's business.
<b>Decision.</b>
No investigation.
<b>Reasons.</b>
The score was already public knowledge. The information was put on his page because the councillor was concerned that the business catered for children. The councillor had not fabricated any information and he offered his assistance in helping the complainant to put things right. When the information was posted on the page the original score still stood although steps had been taken to rectify the situation. The complainant had a right to reply through Facebook and it was a matter for the members of the public to take all the information available to them into account so that they could make a decision about whether to attend the venue.

#### **2.4 Ombudsman's Reference 201300346**

<b>Complaint.</b>
That a county councillor had secretly filmed and recorded a conversation and then put it on his Facebook page.
<b>Decision.</b>
The investigation continued.

#### **2.5 Ombudsman's Reference 3982/201301430**

<b>Complaint.</b>
That a county councillor had allowed offensive and libellous comments posted on his Facebook page.
<b>Decision.</b>
Considering whether or not to investigate.

#### **2.6 Ombudsman's Reference 201301307**

<b>Complaint.</b>
That a county councillor had behaved in a threatening manner towards the complainant.
<b>Decision.</b>
Considering whether or not to investigate.

### **3. A case that has been before the Standards Committee.**

The Committee held a hearing in respect of the complaint against Councillor A. M. Jones, Gwynedd Council on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2012. The Councillor has lodged an appeal with the Adjudication Panel for Wales and a date is awaited for the hearing.

### **4. Recommendation.**

The Committee is asked to note the information.

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## NORTH WALES STANDARDS COMMITTEES FORUM

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Monday, 20 May 2013 at 2.00 pm  
Bodlondeb, Conwy

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<b>PRESENT:</b>	Gwilym Ellis Evans	Vice-Chair, in the Chair (Chair - Gwynedd Standards Committee)
	Trevor Coxon	Monitoring Officer - Wrexham
	Sion Huws	Propriety Officer - Gwynedd
	Delyth E. Jones	Monitoring Officer - Conwy
	Islwyn Jones	Vice-Chair - Isle of Anglesey Standards Committee
	Patricia Jones	Vice-Chair - Flintshire Standards Committee
	Peter Rowland	Chair - Snowdonia National Park Standards Committee
	Michael B. Wilson	Chair - Isle of Anglesey Standards Committee
<b>In attendance:</b>	Caren Lewis	Isle of Anglesey
<b>Officers:</b>	Sian Harland	Committee Services Officer
	Ifan Prys	Translator

### 1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Gwilym Ellis Evans (Gwynedd) be nominated as Vice-Chair of the North Wales Standards Committees Forum.

#### **RESOLVED-**

**That Councillor Gwilym Ellis Evans (Gwynedd) be appointed as Vice-Chair of the North Wales Standards Committees Forum.**

*(The appointment of a Vice-Chair was required as the previous Vice-Chair was no longer a Member of the North Wales Standards Committees)*

### 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Lynn Ball (Anglesey), Sioned Wyn Davies (Wrexham), Rob Dawson (Wrexham), Jane Eyton-Jones (North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority), Lisa Jones (Denbighshire), Robyn Jones (Anglesey), Ceri Nash (Wrexham), Gareth Owens (Flintshire), Dilys Ann Phillips (Gwynedd), Howie Roberts (Conwy), Rev. Wayne Roberts (Denbighshire), Ceri Williams (Conwy) and Gary Williams (Denbighshire).

### 3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the North Wales Standards Committees Forum held on 7 January 2013 were submitted for approval.

**RESOLVED-**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the North Wales Standards Committees Forum held on 7 January 2013 be approved as a correct record.**

**4. STANDARDS CONFERENCE 2013 - FEEDBACK**

Members considered the feedback collated from the Standards Conference 2013 and made the following comments:-

- The event was well organised and the food was good
- There was something for everybody during the day
- It was noted that the main hall was not an ideal location, but the smaller room was not available on that day
- Although the literature was excellent, for ease of use, the documents would have benefited from being page numbered with an index
- It was suggested that the documents could be posted on the website with the link to the site e-mailed to the attendees
- More time could have been given to the interactive workshops
- The next Standards Conference would be organised by another Local Authority
- The frequency of the Standards Conference would be discussed at the next meeting of the Local Government Lawyers

Members agreed that the co-ordinators of the Standards Conference 2013 should be congratulated on organising such a successful event.

**RESOLVED-**

**That the co-ordinators of the Standards Conference 2013 should be congratulated on organising such a successful event.**

**5. ANY OTHER ITEMS**

Future of the Forum

The Monitoring Officer (Conwy) advised that there had been discussions between the Monitoring Officers in North Wales on the future of the Forum.

Comments were made as follows:-

- Each meeting could have a small agenda followed by a Training Session
- Speakers from the Ombudsman's Office, Adjudication Panel for Wales and Welsh Government could address the Forum on their work
- The frequency of meetings would be discussed at the next meeting of the Forum
- Meetings could rotate between Local Authorities
- Only the Monitoring Officer of the host Local Authority would be in attendance to offer advice and facilitate the Training Session
- Monitoring Officers would decide on a Forward Work Programme for the Forum

- Conwy would still take ownership of the organisation of the Forum and production of agendas, with the host Local Authority providing an Officer to take the minutes
- The next meeting would be held in the autumn of 2013

### Indemnities for Members and Local Resolution

The Monitoring Officer (Conwy) advised that the Local Resolution for Member on Member Protocol would be presented to a meeting of Conwy's Council on 4 July 2013. However, at the last Council meeting on 16 May 2013, it was agreed to set the indemnity for Councillors at £20,000.

Wrexham had not yet formulated a Local Resolution Protocol, as the Monitoring Officer wanted to ensure that the protocol would be robust. The Protocol would be presented to Wrexham's Council in September 2013. Indemnities for Councillors would be presented to Council meeting in the near future.

The Isle of Anglesey had adopted a Local Resolution protocol 3 years previously, which had only been used once in those 3 years. Upon reviewing the protocol, it was found to be cumbersome and it was therefore proposed to simplify the process as follows:-

- Complainant had 7 days to report a complaint to the Monitoring Officer
- The Monitoring Officer then sends the complaint to the Councillor, who had been complained about
- Councillor then has 7 days to respond to the complaint
- Councillor is then invited to present their case to two Independent Members of the Standards Committee
- Councillor is able to bring witnesses and a representative

The following responses were made to queries regarding the protocol:-

- The two Independent Members would be used on a rotational basis
- The two Independent Members involved in the original Local Resolution Process would not participate in any subsequent Standards Hearing
- The objective of a Local Resolution Protocol would be to promote mediation and resolution, in order to build an environment where Councillors were more likely to work together
- Officers could also use the Local Resolution Protocol, but this would not undermine their ability to make a complaint to the Ombudsman
- If the Independent Members considered that a breach of the Code of Conduct had been made, they could recommend to the Group Leaders that the complained of Councillor apologise to the complainant or that they be removed from a Committee



Discussion ensued on whether the Local Resolution Protocol could be used to deal with complaints relating to Town and Community Councils. Members were advised that it was not the role of Monitoring Officers to become embroiled in complaints between Town and Community Councillors; this was the role of the Town and Community Clerks. However, the Chair of Isle of Anglesey Standards Committee advised that he had attended certain Town and Community Council meetings in his capacity as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee, to try and stop problems from escalating.

#### Monitoring Officer Feedback

It was suggested that the Monitoring Officer of the host Local Authority would give a verbal feedback at each meeting on any standards or ethical issues that had arisen since the last meeting of the Forum.

(The meeting ended at 3.00 pm)

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>Date :</b>	<b>1 July 2013</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>The Ombudsman's Annual Report 2012/13</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>Action :</b>	<b>Note for Information</b>

### **Background**

1. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales has published his annual report for the year 2012-2013.
2. A copy of those parts of the report relevant to code of conduct complaints is attached to this report as an **Appendix**. The report can be found on the Ombudsman's website ([www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk))

### **Recommendation**

3. The Committee is asked to note the report.

# The Annual Report 2012/13

of

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Laid before the National Assembly for Wales  
under paragraph 14 of Schedule 1  
of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005

# 1. Introduction

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I am pleased to introduce this, my fifth, annual report since taking up my post as Ombudsman. Its key theme is 'Putting Things Right, Driving Improvement', which mirrors the theme of my new three year strategic plan, which we began implementing at the start of 2012/13. As Ombudsman, I see two principal 'reasons for being': that is to put things right for users of public services when I find things have gone wrong, and then to drive improvement in the delivery of those public services using the learning from the complaints I consider. I also take the opportunity to discuss below some wider issues which have emerged in relation to the role of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) which we will wish to pursue in the forthcoming year.

## **Public service delivery by private sector organisations**

In a public service landscape where the distinction in delivery between public and private sectors becomes increasingly blurred, it is important that people's access to redress is not inadvertently denied to them. I have therefore welcomed the Welsh Government's recognition of this in its provisions in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill and the proposals to extend the PSOW's jurisdiction so that I may consider complaints from those people who, for example, pay for their own social care in private care homes as well as those people who have their care paid for by the State.

I have over the past couple of years spoken widely, including internationally, on the issue of ensuring that people have access to redress in respect of public services delivered by private sector organisations. I have also written a number of articles on the subject. This is a matter which requires further attention in respect of the position in Wales. In England, for example, consideration is being given to bringing private healthcare into the Health Service Ombudsman's jurisdiction. I do not believe however that the taxpayer should bear the cost of redress arrangements for private sector complaints. One possibility would be to address this by a levy as operated by some private sector ombudsmen schemes, where all bodies in jurisdiction pay towards their running costs, often based on the size of the body concerned. The second option would be based on the number of complaints. This incorporates an element of the "polluter pays" principle, and is said to encourage bodies in jurisdiction to better address complaints internally to avoid the costs associated with complaints going to the Ombudsman. Some ombudsmen schemes incorporate an element of both funding arrangements. Schemes which rely heavily on a pay per complaint model can have great difficulties in workforce planning as income streams are not predictable, so I would be cautious in advocating this approach. I will in due course wish to pursue discussions with the National Assembly on these issues.

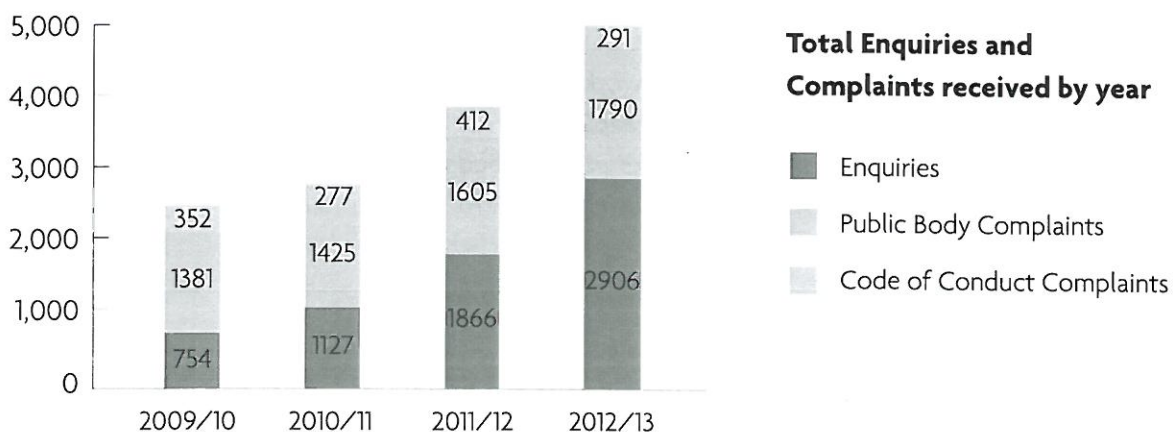
## The Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) 2005 Act

At the time of its introduction the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005 (PSOW Act) was considered to be at the cutting edge of ombudsman legislation and is still one of the most highly regarded in the UK and internationally. However, experience over the seven years of the office’s operation and changes in the external environment during that time has revealed areas of the legislation which could be strengthened, changed and developed. This includes the issue of private sector delivery referred to above, but also matters such as ‘own initiative powers’. Virtually without exception, public services ombudsmen throughout Europe, and indeed, internationally, have the power to undertake investigations on their own initiative. The Ombudsman in the Republic of Ireland already has such a power and it is proposed that it should be introduced in Northern Ireland also. I have, therefore, begun discussions with the National Assembly for Wales concerning a review of the legislation with a view to its amendment or replacement. I have received a positive initial response to my proposals and I look forward to future discussions on this matter.

## Three Year Strategic Plan

The past year saw the start of the implementation of the new three year Strategic Plan. Our revised vision, values, purposes and aims can be found at the end of this report. The plan builds on the previous three years, which had seen significant changes in the way we operate and innovations introduced. This included the introduction of the Complaints Advice Team, the frontline service of the office, which subsequently also became responsible for providing the Complaints Wales signposting service, and our new, innovative websites which supported these services. We also streamlined our investigation processes. This was particularly necessary in the climate of the financial constraints faced by the office, in line with all of the public sector, during this period whilst having to deal with an ever increasing caseload.

In taking stock of the past year against the three years of the previous Strategic Plan, it is worth commenting on that increase. Over this period, there has been a 100% increase in all contacts with the office from 2,487 in 2009/10 to 4,987 this past year. This is illustrated below. I will discuss the increase in the volume of work, and its impact, in more detail in following sections of this report.



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The continuing rise in health complaints has to be an area of considerable concern. Since the office came into existence in 2006/07, complaints about health bodies have increased by 257%. I have attributed past rises to a number of factors, such as an increase in the awareness of my office, the likelihood that members of the public are more prepared to complain in general and changes within the NHS's own complaints process over the past couple of years. But this continued significant increase has to lead to the conclusion that there is greater dissatisfaction with health service delivery. It is also noticeable that all of the public interest reports that I have issued during 2012/13 relate to health matters (see Annex A). There has been much media attention on this area of the public service with more and more health professionals speaking out about their own concerns and frustrations from within the service. No-one underestimates the difficulties in providing a service in a climate of limited resources with greater calls on those resources. It is clear that people's expectations are raised with continual news of new breakthroughs in medical science, with what was previously untreatable becoming treatable – at a cost. However, from the complaints I see, there is a suggestion that the NHS in Wales needs also to go back to basics when the fundamental aspects of care such as providing proper nutrition, proper consent for surgical procedures and end of life care pathways are not in place.

## **Governance**

During the course of the year I introduced a new Advisory Panel to strengthen governance and to be better able to demonstrate greater openness and transparency in the work of my office. I was fortunate in being able to form a diverse Panel of members bringing expertise and experience from a variety of relevant backgrounds. I discuss this further at Section 6 of this report. Although the Panel is still in its infancy, the wider perspective and experience that they bring to the work of my office is proving to be very helpful.

Last year I thanked Mr Laurie Pavelin for his excellent support as Chair of the Audit Committee over a period of six years. I take the opportunity in this report to record that I was delighted to be able to appoint Mr Ceri Stradling as his successor, and that he has already made an active and significant contribution.

In expressing thanks, I must of course recognise the work of my staff over the past year. With the growth in caseload and increase in other activities of the office I am grateful to them for their continued dedication and professionalism in the work delivered. In addition, it would be remiss of me if I did not give particular thanks to Mr Malcolm MacDonald, my Financial Adviser, as he retires. Mr MacDonald has been at the office of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales since its inception. He has truly been a valuable member of staff and I wish him well for the future.

Finally, my Annual Report for 2011/12 was considered by a Committee of the National Assembly rather than during a Plenary Session. This was the first time for such an arrangement. I very much welcomed this development, and am grateful to the Presiding Officer, Rosemary Butler, for facilitating it. I was pleased to have the opportunity to be present to discuss the work of my office in person as opposed to having to watch the debate on my report from the sidelines. I understand that the members of the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee also found it a positive development. I look forward to having a similar opportunity to discuss this report with the Committee during 2013.



Peter Tyndall  
Ombudsman

## 4. Code of Conduct Complaints

### Headline figures

- We received 291 new complaints, **down 29%** on 2011/12.
- We referred 20 investigation reports to either a standards committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales, **up 5%** on 2011/12.
- We closed 371 cases, **up 8%** on 2011/12.
- We had no investigations older than 9 months old open at 31 March 2013.

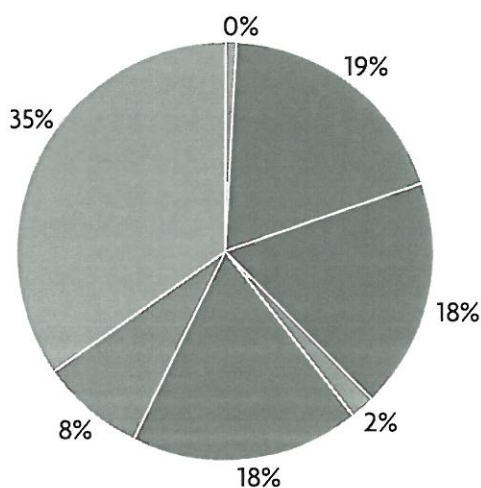
### Complaints received

The table below gives a breakdown of the code of conduct complaints received by type of authority. I am pleased that the number of code of conduct complaints received by my office decreased by 29% over the past year. This is largely due to the fact that 2011/12 was an election year and that the Code of Conduct complaints system was inappropriately used as a tool for political mischief making. However, I believe that the reduction can also to a degree be attributed to the success of new local resolution arrangements recently introduced, which I address later in this section.

	2012/13	2011/12
Community Council	140	205
County/County Borough Council	150	178
National Park	0	28
Police Authority	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>412</b>

### Nature of Code of Conduct complaints

As the chart below shows, the majority of complaints received during 2012/13 related to matters of 'equality and respect' (35% compared to 39% in 2011/12). The increase in the number of complaints relating to 'objectivity and propriety' seen during 2011/12 to 25% (from 10% in 2010/11) has during the past year returned to a lower level, comprising 8% of the Code of Conduct caseload.



- Accountability and openness
- Disclosure and registration of interests
- Duty to uphold the law
- Integrity
- Objectivity and propriety
- Promotion of equality and respect
- Selflessness and stewardship [Note: There was one complaint made in respect of selflessness and stewardship – the 0% shown is a 'rounding' issue.]



## Summary of Code of Conduct complaint outcomes

Of the Code of Conduct cases considered in 2012/13, the majority were closed under the category shown below as 'Closed after initial consideration'. This includes decisions such as:

- there was no 'prima facie' evidence of a breach of the Code
- the alleged breach was insufficiently serious to warrant an investigation (and unlikely to attract a sanction)
- the incident complained about happened before the member was elected (before they were bound by the Code)

The number of cases which I concluded should be referred to either an authority's standards committee or to the Adjudication Panel for Wales was 20 compared to 19 in 2011/12.

Complaint about a public body	2012/13	2011/12
Closed after initial consideration	283	280
Complaint withdrawn	12	0
Investigation discontinued	18	9
Investigation completed: No evidence of breach	23	7
Investigation completed: No action necessary	15	29
Investigation completed: Refer to Standards Committee	15	15
Investigation completed: Refer to Adjudication Panel	5	4
<b>Total Outcomes – Code of Conduct complaints</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>344</b>

(A detailed breakdown of the outcome of Code of Conduct complaints investigated, by local authority, during 2011/12 is set out at Annex C.).

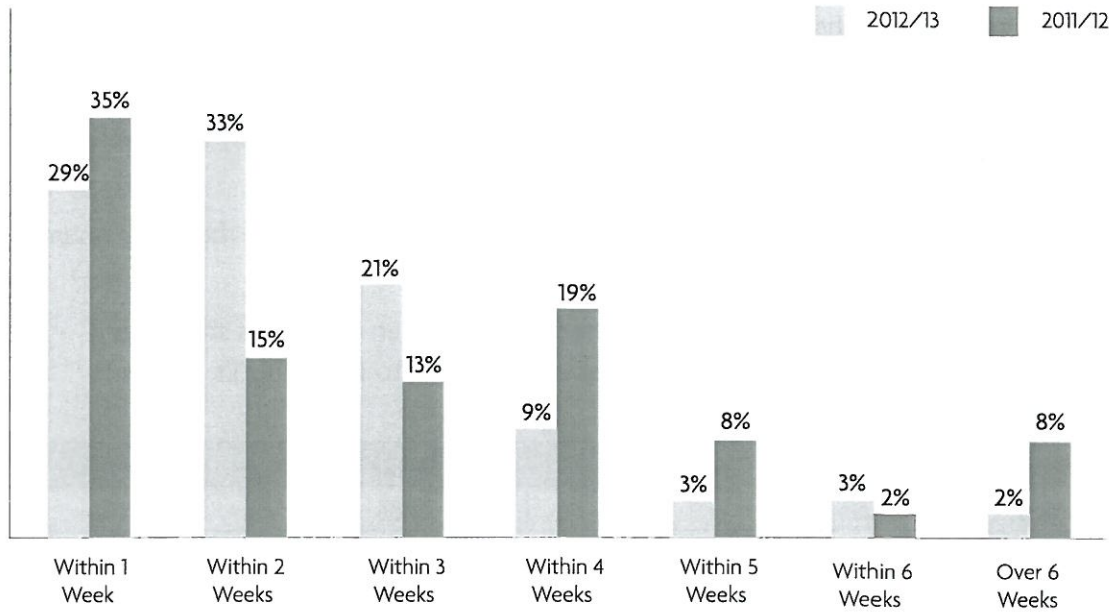
## Decision times

Below are the decision times for Code of Conduct complaints. The time targets set for code of conduct complaints are similar to those for complaints about public bodies, i.e.

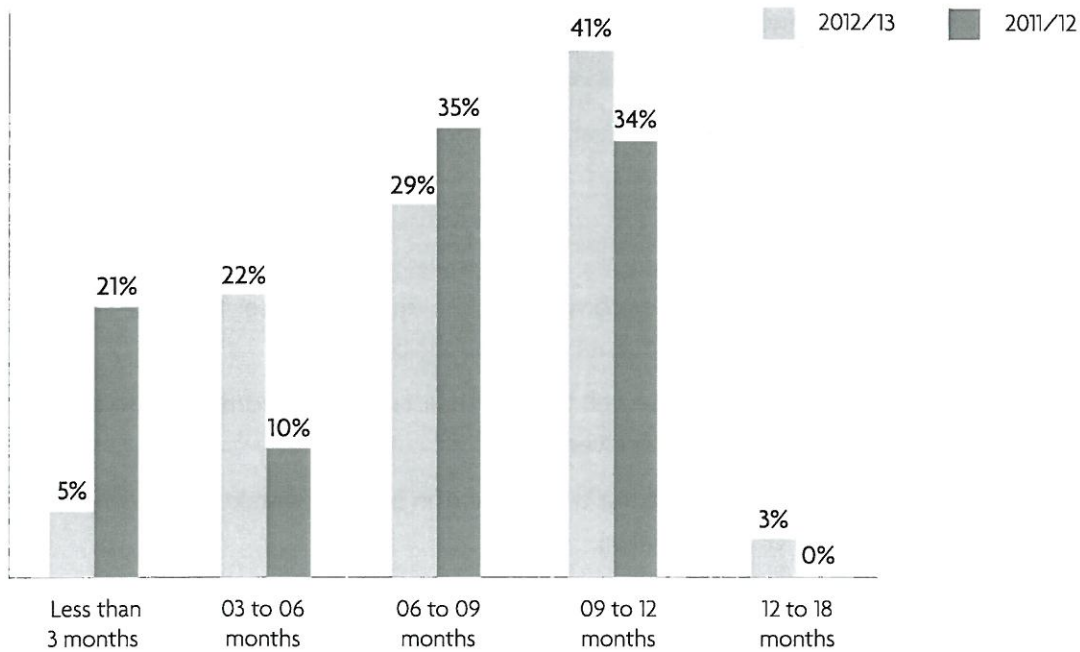
- to tell complainants within 4 weeks whether we will take up their complaint from the date that sufficient information about the complaint is received
- to conclude cases within 12 months from the point that a decision is made to take up a complaint (that is, to commence investigation of a complaint).

In respect of the first target, and similar to that for public body complaints, we set a more testing challenge for 2012/13, aiming to achieve this 90% of the time. We actually did so 92% of the time. This is particularly pleasing in view of the fact that we have to deal with Code of Conduct complaints in their initial stages in a different way from those in respect of public bodies and that the rate achieved in 2011/12 was 82%.

### Decision times for informing complainants we will take up their complaint



### Decision times for concluding Code of Conduct investigations



I have commented in previous Annual Reports about the steps we have taken to improve on the time that it takes us to complete Code of Conduct investigations and the fact that these are often affected by the consequences of members increasingly engaging legal representation. Whilst it is a little disappointing that we have not been able to sustain the investigation times achieved during 2011/12, we are nevertheless completing investigations in a far more timely manner than in the years previous to this (for example, in 2010/11 37% of code of conduct cases took over 12 months to complete). The 3% shown as taking over 12 months in 2011/12 actually equates to two cases. In the first case, a late request was made by the accused member for certain arrangements to be put in place in respect of his interview. This led to the target being missed by 12 days. In relation to the second, an internal review of a draft investigation report led to the provisional conclusion at draft report stage that the case should be referred to the Adjudication Panel for Wales rather than a Standards Committee. This necessitated some additional work, including conducting some further interviews (which then had to be postponed and rearranged because of adverse weather).

### **Code of Conduct for local authority members - changes to practice**

As I reported last year, because of concerns about certain aspects of the Code and the use of complaints for political purposes, I entered discussions with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGGA), the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS) and the Welsh Government on a range of measures designed to reform the current Code of Conduct system, which could be achieved without the need for legislation. The aim was that these measures would enable a local resolution process to be introduced across Wales which should greatly reduce the number of complaints brought by councillors against other councillors which need to be considered by my office.

Whilst an 'all-Wales' approach has yet to be adopted, some county councils have introduced such arrangements. Typically these complaints involve paragraph 4(b) of the Code concerning the requirement to show respect and consideration and 6(1)d which sets out the expectation that members will not make frivolous or malicious complaints. Where these arrangements are in place, I will refer appropriate complaints back for local resolution. Many of the issues giving rise to these complaints can best be dealt with locally, and this can help to stop matters from escalating and damaging working relationships. Anecdotal feedback from the councils who have introduced such arrangements are that they are a success and are having the intended effect. This seems to be borne out by the reduction in the number of complaints to my office (as illustrated at page 16), although I recognise that 2011/12 was an election year which would have had a bearing on the level of complaints received.

The other element of the new approach applies to members of county/county borough councils and community/town councils. When I am minded not to investigate a complaint or having commenced an investigation I am minded to close my investigation, I will write to the local Monitoring Officer. This will arise when I judge that even if the Standards Committee did find that there had been a breach of the Code, it would be unlikely to apply a sanction. It will then be for

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the Monitoring Officer to consider the matter. If they take a different view on the likelihood of the Standards Committee applying a sanction if they decide that there has been a breach of the Code then I will transfer the investigation to them for local consideration. The year 2012/13 was the first full year of operating this new approach. During the year I referred 37 such complaints to Monitoring Officers, 2 of which were called in for local investigation.

### **Guidance on the Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members**

I originally issued Guidance on the Code of Conduct in April 2010. It was always intended that the Guidance would be a living document, updated to reflect the impact of decisions made by standards committees and tribunals of the Adjudication for Panel for Wales. A significant revision was undertaken and published in September 2012, when I took the opportunity to produce separate versions to reflect the differing circumstances of members of principal councils and members of community councils. I have had very positive feedback on this development, and community councils in particular have appreciated a Guidance document tailored for their own circumstances.

One case during the year which in particular led me to amend the guidance was the Calver case. A High Court judgement on this case had impact on the application of paragraph 4(b) of the Code relating to treating others with respect and consideration. I had always taken the view that robust political debate is an essential part of the democratic process and the judgement helps to more clearly set out where the boundaries lie. Councillor Calver was accused of failing to show respect and consideration for others by posting comments online about other councillors and the way in which the Council was run. My investigation concluded that his conduct was likely to represent a breach of the Code. The Standards Committee agreed, and imposed a censure. Councillor Calver appealed this decision to a tribunal of the Adjudication Panel. This upheld the finding of the Standards Committee and Councillor Calver went on to seek a judicial review of this decision. The Court found that whilst the comments which were posted were sarcastic and mocking and the tone ridiculed his fellow members, because the majority of the comments related to the way in which the Council was run, how its decisions were recorded and the competence of the councillors, the comments were political expression. The ruling said no account had been taken of the need for politicians to have “thicker skins”. In view of the Member’s freedom of expression and the fact that the majority of comments were directed at fellow councillors, the finding of a breach in this case was a disproportionate interference with the Member’s rights under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Standards Committee’s decision to censure the Member was therefore set aside.

Mr Justice Beatson was very clear in stating that a member’s freedom of expression attracts enhanced protection under the Human Rights legislation when his or her comments are political in nature. ‘Political’ comments are not confined to those made within the Council chamber and, include, for instance, comments members might make about their authority’s policies or about their political opponents.

As a consequence of the judgement I have made clear that it is highly unlikely that I will investigate complaints made about members criticising the policies or performance of their council or indeed, their political opponents. Mr Justice Beatson made clear that councillors need a “thicker skin” in dealing with, and responding to, politically motivated comments.

I have also had to think carefully about what the implications are for comments about officers. When members raise issues which could be considered political with officers, particularly those holding senior positions, such as chief executives or strategic directors, then it is clear that some degree of protection is afforded to members. It is clearly the case that when responding to such issues senior officers will also need a “thicker skin” and should expect to engage in robust discussions with members. However, it is evidently the case that more junior officers will continue to need the protection of the Code and that even with senior officers, there must be a limit on the extent of the legal protection members enjoy. Accordingly, I will continue to consider each case on its merits. I should also say that what is legally permissible, and what is desirable, are not necessarily the same and would urge all members to conduct themselves in a way that continues to promote standards of behaviour, characterised by respect, and which reflect positively on local government.

### **Standards Committee and Adjudication Panel for Wales’s Hearings – Indemnity Cap**

I have previously made clear that I believed the situation in relation to the levels of indemnity enjoyed by members who are accused of a breach needed to be addressed. This is particularly current in the context of the very difficult financial climate in which we are all working. By having unlimited indemnity, it is possible for cases before tribunals to last for months or even longer, with counsel being engaged at very considerable cost. I strongly believe that members should be able to defend themselves, but that public expenditure on this must be proportionate. I proposed a maximum ceiling of £10,000, to reflect the costs ceiling in employment tribunals. In discussions with monitoring officers and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), this ceiling was raised to £20,000, which I was prepared to support. However, while some councils already have such a ceiling in place, and some councils were prepared to introduce one, others have said that they do not intend to do so. In some instances, this is because the indemnity is backed by insurance. The former local government minister indicated that he would address the matter through legislation if voluntary agreement could not be secured. I note that the WLGA have reported that Council Leaders support the introduction of an indemnity cap and I hope that voluntary agreement will be forthcoming. However, I would support the use of legislation if it is not.

**Annex C**  
**Code of Conduct Complaints:**  
**Statistical Breakdown of Outcomes by Local Authority**

## COUNTY/COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCILS

County/County Borough Councils	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases Closed
Blaenau Gwent	4		1	1				6
Bridgend	2		1					3
Caerphilly	4		1				1	6
Cardiff	2		1					3
Cardiganshire	6	1	2					10
Ceredigion	1			2		1		4
Conwy	2							2
Denbighshire	4							4
Flintshire	4							4
Gwynedd	4	2			1			7
Isle of Anglesey	5						1	6
Merthyr Tydfil	7		2			1		10
Monmouthshire	2	1	1					5
Neath Port Talbot	2				1			3
Newport	1						1	2
Pembrokeshire	3				1			4
Powys	4				1			5
Rhondda Cynon Taf	11		1				2	14
The City and County of Swansea	34	1	6				2	43
The Vale of Glamorgan	1							1
Torfaen	4			3	1			8
Wrexham	11	1						12
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>162</b>

## COMMUNITY/ TOWN COUNCILS

Community/ Town Councils	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases Closed
Bangor City	1							1
Beguildy Community	18							18
Bodelwyddan Community	2							2
Brecon Town	1							1
Buckley Town	1							1
Caldicot Town	1	1						2
Carmarthen Town	2							2
Clydach Community	1	1						2
Coedpoeth Community						2		2
Crickhowell Town	2							2
Cwmbran Community							1	1
Disserth and Trecoed Community	2							2
Dyffryn Ardudwy a Thalybont Community	2			1				3
Gorseinon Town	2				1			3
Herbrandston Community	2							2
Johnston Community	1							1



## COMMUNITY/ TOWN COUNCILS

Community/ Town Councils	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases Closed
Kerry Community	4							4
Knighton Town	1							1
Llandegla Community		4						4
Llandoverly Town	2							2
Llandrindod Wells Town	2							2
Llandudho Town					1			1
Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf Community	1							1
Llangan Community	2							2
Llangernyw Community	1							1
Llangoed a Penmon Community	1		1					2
Llangynwyd Lower Community	8	2						10
Llangynwyd Middle Community	1							1
Llantrisant Community						1		1
Llantwit Major Town	6							6
Maesteg Town	1				1			2
Monmouth Town	1							1
Mumbles Community	2						1	3

## COMMUNITY/ TOWN COUNCILS (CONTINUED)

Community/ Town Councils	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases Closed
Nantyglo & Blaina Town	1							1
Old St. Mellons Community	1							1
Penmaenmawr Town				1			2	3
Penmynydd and Star Community					6			6
Pennard Community	6							6
Porthcawl Town	1		1					2
Prestatyn Town	68	2						70
Pyle Community	3						1	4
Resolven Community		1						1
Rogiet Community	5							5
Seven Sisters Community	1							1
St Donats Community	1							1
St Harmon Community	2			1				3
Trellech United Community	1	1						2
Tywyn Town	1		1					2
Van Community	1							1
Wick Community				1				1
Ystalyfera Community	1							1
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>200</b>

### NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITIES

National Park Authority	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases Closed
Brecon Beacons			3	4				7
<b>Total</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>				<b>7</b>

### POLICE AUTHORITIES

Police Authority	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases Closed
Gwent			1					1
North Wales	1							1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>					<b>2</b>