

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD AT
COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
WEDNESDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2019**

PRESENT: Mrs H Rhydderch-Roberts (Chair)

Independent Members: Mrs C Jackson, Mrs J Evans and Mrs C Mulholland

County Councillors: S Lewis, K M Roberts-Jones and K S Silk

In attendance: Ms D Jones (Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Ms C Johnson (Democratic Services Officer).

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies were received from Mr S Hayes.

2.	MINUTES
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October, 2018 as a correct record.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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No declarations were received.

4.	REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL
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The Committee received the report of the Solicitor to the Council (copy filed with signed minutes).

A. General Standards Issues for County Councillors and Co-opted Members

A1. Code of Conduct Training

It was noted that there was nothing to report on this issue.

A2. Mandatory Training

The Committee noted the report.

RESOLVED:	Reason for decision
That the Committee notes that the three Members have completed their Mandatory Treasury management training for 2017-18.	To monitor attendance at Mandatory Development sessions.

B. Referral of Councillors to the Public Services Ombudsman

B1. County Council Referrals

The current position regarding matters with the Ombudsman is as follows:

02/CC/2017 Ombudsman investigating

01/CC/2018 Referred to APW

02/CC/2018 Concluded no breach

05/CC/2018 Concluded no further action

08/CC/2018 Ombudsman deciding whether or not to investigate

09/CC/2018 Ombudsman deciding whether or not to investigate

10/CC/2018 Ombudsman investigating

11/CC/2018 Ombudsman investigating

12/CC/2018 Ombudsman investigating

1/CC/2019 Ombudsman not investigating

C. Dispensations

C1. Applications - County Councillors

No applications for dispensation have been received from County Councillors.

D. Late Payment of Expenses

A claim for payment of expenses was submitted by County Councillor Bryn Davies for mileage expenses (submitted on November, 2018 for September 2017 to November 2018).

The Committee approved this application (which was the first one for mileage made by this Member) and thanked the Member for the explanation he had provided.

RESOLVED THAT	REASON FOR DECISION
the payment of the late claim submitted by County Councillor Bryn Davies for mileage be paid for the period September 2017 – November 2018.	To reimburse expenses incurred by County Councillor Bryn Davies.

E. Ombudsman's Casebook

The Ombudsman had published the July – September 2018 Code of Conduct Casebooks which can be accessed at. (Copy filed with signed minutes).

F. Arrangements to fill one vacancy arising from the completion of a term of office of an Independent [Lay] Member on the Standards Committee.

The Committee noted the appointments process.

RESOLVED THAT	Reason for decision
Depending on their availability	To enable the Appointment

<p>the Appointments Panel would consist of: Independent Members - Claire Jackson and Chris Mullholland [Jacqueline Evans reserve] County Council representative – County Councillor Kathryn Silk or Kath Roberts-Jones.</p>	<p>process to continue.</p>
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G. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

However, with the Chair's agreement the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' [PSOW] Draft Corporate Plan 2019/20 – 2021/22 was considered by the Committee. It was noted that the consultation closed on 5 March, 2019.

The Committee considered the above with the Standards Sub-Committee members. The comments were as follows:

Strategic Aim 1

KPI 3 and KPI 4 – in response to comments that the timescales for completing investigations should be shorter the Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that the timescales were reasonable. However, investigations should be completed and closed as soon as possible, as delays cause unacceptable stress to the parties involved.

To raise awareness of the PSOW service and eliminate any know barriers to access from vulnerable groups [page 08]

The 1st action point needs to be clarified as it is not clear what this means. Is it a programme of activity once a year or an annual programme of activity? The Committee considered that this should be an annual programme of activity.

The 5th action point needs clarifying.

Strategic Aim 3 [page 12]

To adopt international best practice, to serve Wales in the best way we can

It is noted that the PSOW will strengthen its presence in North Wales but the Committee wonder what it intends to do in respect of Mid Wales.

A general comment was made that the Plan needs to be in plain English and Welsh, to ensure it is accessible to the public, as a whole.

H Meeting dates

The Committee noted the meeting dates:

Wednesday 5 June, 2019

Wednesday 2 October, 2019.

As the Chair's term of office was coming to an end in May 2019, this was her last scheduled meeting. She thanked Members and officers for their support. She commented that she had enjoyed the Committees work and had learnt a lot.

The Vice Chair thanked the Chair for her work and presented her with a card and flowers on behalf of the Committees.

Mrs H Rhydderch-Roberts (Chair)