

Report

Standards Committee

Part 1

Date: 15th November 2022

Item No:

Subject **Standards Committee Annual Report 2021/2022**

Purpose To submit a draft of the Standards Committee Annual Report 2021/22 for comment and approval

Author Head of Law and Standards

Ward General

Summary In accordance with the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Standards Committee are required to make an annual report after the end of each financial year and Council is required to consider that report within 3 months.

The statutory annual report must describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the previous year and, in particular, must include a summary of any reports, actions or recommendations made or referred to the Committee. In addition, the annual report must include an assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their new duties to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within their groups.

A draft of the Annual Report for 21/22 is attached for comment and approval prior to its presentation to the next meeting of full Council on 22nd November 2022.

Proposal To comment and approve the Annual Report for presentation to full Council on 22nd November 2022

Action by Head of Law and Standards

Timetable Immediate

Background

1. Standards Committee have presented an Annual Report to the Council on a voluntary basis over the past 9 years, which provides information about the work carried out by the Committee during the previous 12 months, identifies particular issues that have arisen and sets out the forward work programme for the forthcoming year. The previous annual report was presented to Council on 26th November 2021, and covered the 12 month period from November 2020 to November 2021.
2. As from May 2022, there is now a statutory requirement under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for Standards Committee to make an annual report after the end of each financial year and for full Council to consider that report within 3 months. The statutory report must describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the previous year and, in particular, must include a summary of any reports, actions or recommendations made or referred to the Committee. In addition the Annual Report must include an assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their new duties to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within their groups. Copies of the Standards Committee Annual Report must also be provided to the Ombudsman and all of the local community councils.
3. A draft of the Annual Report for 2021/22 is attached for comment and approval prior to its presentation to the next meeting of full Council on 22nd November 2022.
4. The Report confirms that, once again, no serious complaints of misconduct were referred to the Standards Committee by the Ombudsman during the past 12 months and no complaints were referred for determination by the Committee under Stage 3 of the Local Resolution Protocol.
5. The training requirements for City Councillors, community councils and their clerks will continue to be monitored as part of the Committee's forward work programme. The Committee will also be undertaking a review to ensure that all mandatory training has been completed and that all declarations of acceptance of office and registers of members' interests have been completed properly, following the May elections
6. The Annual Report also contains a draft forward work programme for the forthcoming 12 months.

Financial Summary

7. There are no financial implications.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

8. The Nolan principles, which underpin the ethical standards framework, and principles of good governance, are all enshrined in the Council's corporate and well-being objectives

Proposed action

9. To comment and approve the Annual Report for presentation to full Council on 22nd November 2022

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

10. There are no financial implications.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

11. Included in the Report.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

12. There are no staffing or policy implications.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**
- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

13. The principles of fairness and equality are embodied within the Members Code of Conduct and the Ethical Framework. No FEIA is required, as the Annual Report is for information purposes only.

- There are no negative impacts in terms of equalities or social disadvantage.
- In terms of the sustainable development principle and 5 ways of working

Long-term – The Annual Report will assist Standards Committee and the Council in taking a long-term view about improving ethical standards

Prevention – The Annual Report guide will help to prevent future complaints of misconduct

Integration – The Annual Report has been produced in consultation with key stakeholders

Collaboration – The Annual Report will assist people in interacting with councils and elected members, in a more collaborative way. It will also facilitate collaboration between Standards Committees in discussing matters of common interest.

Involvement – The Annual Report will encourage greater involvement in reporting and resolving complaints

Dated: 3rd November 2022