

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

15 November 2017

Present: Mrs J Wainwright (Deputy Chair in the Chair)
Mr A Archer, Councillor P Morgan and Mrs V Tomlinson.

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 10.50am)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Barrett-Evans and Councillor R Owens

2. Disclosures

A disclosure of interest was made by Mr A Archer in relation to items 4 and 5 on the Agenda, the Annual Reports of the Monitoring Officer and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2017 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held 28 June 2017 be confirmed and signed.

4. Personal

The Monitoring Officer advised that the meeting that day would have been the last for the Committee's Chair, Mr R Barrett-Evans as his term of office came to an end on 16 December 2017. Knowing that he would not be present at the meeting, the Monitoring Officer had written to him to thank him for his service and had received a response in which Mr Barrett-Evans had expressed his thanks to both officers and his fellow Members of the Committee for their assistance during his time in office. It was noted that an advertisement had been placed in the press for a new Standards Committee member and Members were asked to draw this to the attention of anyone who might be interested.

5. Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer for 2016/17

The Monitoring Officer's report set out the categories of complaint which fell within his remit. He was pleased to note that he had not had to undertake any reports in respect of these during the previous year. Neither had he had to deal with any referrals from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales regarding Code of Conduct issues in relation to any Members or under the Local Dispute Resolution procedure in respect of complaints made by one Member against another.



However the Monitoring Officer did report that the Standards Committee had granted one Member a dispensation on specific issues in relation to Newport, Pembrokeshire, and Pembrokeshire County Councillors had been granted dispensations in relation to Pembrokeshire County Council matters.

Members stated that they valued the advice provided by the Monitoring Officer and asked if he felt the Authority managed the risk of things going wrong satisfactorily. The Monitoring Officer replied that he was happy with the Authority's audit and scrutiny procedures and that there was nothing that caused him concern.

NOTED.

- 6. Annual Report of the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales 2016/17**
Referring to the report, the Monitoring Officer was pleased to note that of the two cases against the Authority taken to the Ombudsman, one had been classed as premature and the other closed after initial consideration.

One Member was quite impressed with the report, being of the view, that the Ombudsman had a clear set of priorities and was being quite proactive in taking opportunities to achieve these.

NOTED.

- 7. Annual Report of the Adjudication Panel for Wales 2014-2016**
The Monitoring Officer noted that the Panel had transacted very little business in recent years and had therefore produced a report which covered the previous two years. Members were asked to note the report.

One Member noted that a more satisfactory resolution could usually be made when agreement could be reached at an early stage in the proceedings, and the Monitoring Officer agreed that the Ombudsman sought swift resolution wherever possible.

NOTED.

- 8. Thanks**
As this was the last meeting of the Committee attended by the Monitoring Officer, the Chair wished to formally thank him for all his work. She considered that the fact that the Monitoring Officer's report contained little of substance reflected a job well done in advising the Members of the Authority. Thanking her for her comments, the Monitoring Officer felt that this also reflected on the quality of the Members. He hoped that there would be an orderly transition and a report would be considered by the Authority's Personnel Committee on 22 November which set out the



proposed way forward. With regard to future training for Members, which fell within the remit of the Committee, the Monitoring Officer suggested that this should focus on potential conflicts of Members with regard to the Local Development Plan which was currently under review.

