



STANDARDS

2.00 pm FRIDAY, 5TH APRIL, 2019

CONFERENCE ROOM 2

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Any reference documents referred to but not published as part of this agenda can be found on the Council's website or intranet under Background Papers.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 relating to Council Tax, the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct

Note:

- (a) Members are reminded that they must identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest and
- (b) Where Members withdraw from a Meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chair when they leave

3. Ombudsman's Annual Letter
To consider report of the Monitoring Officer **3 - 6**
4. Update on matters reported to the Ombudsman
5. Independent Members - Term of Office
6. Update on the Whistleblowing Policy
7. Date of next meeting
8. Any other item deemed urgent by the Chair

COMPOSITION:

J Morgan (Chair)
I Cathrew (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: J Amos, G Richards and C Tovey

Independent Members: D McCarthy, A L Morgan and
M Veale

Community Council Representative: H Thomas

together with appropriate officers

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STANDARDS REPORT

Date Written	18 th March 2019
Report Author	Carys Kennedy
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	5 th April 2019

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL LETTER 2017/18

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee agreed at its meeting on 27th November 2015 that part of its regular work programme would include a consideration of the Annual Report/Annual Letter of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
- 1.2 Members have had sight of the Ombudsman's Annual Letter and will be aware that it provides a summary of the work of the Ombudsman and details of the data in respect of referrals made to that service. The Annual Letter sets out the number of matters that were resolved in that year and members can compare the levels with those in neighbouring authorities.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- 2.1 The Committee notes and debates the information contained within the Ombudsman's Annual letter.
- 2.2 A report be scheduled to the next Cabinet/Council meeting to report on the outcomes in the Ombudsman's Annual Letter.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Standards Committee on the 27th November 2015 it was recognised that provision needs to be made for there to be consideration of data in respect of referrals made to the Ombudsman annually in respect of this Council with a view to identifying any trends or issues that need to be addressed. Furthermore it is helpful to gain a perspective on the relative level of referral in comparison with neighbouring authorities.

- 3.2 Following publication of the Ombudsman's Annual Report, we have been provided with the Ombudsman's Annual Letter for 2017/18 for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.
- 3.3 The Ombudsman has confirmed that the number of complaints received concerning Merthyr Tydfil have increased in the past year from 10 to 13. Attached, as Appendix 1, is a copy of the Ombudsman Annual Letter giving a breakdown of complaints data which outlines the number of complaints including a new set of statistics regarding Ombudsman's interventions, all cases upheld by his office as well as early resolutions and voluntary settlements.
- 3.4 Overview of Complaints at Merthyr Tydfil

Complaints received and investigated:

Complaints received	Average	Complaints investigated
13	15	2

Complaints received by subject:

Adult Social Services	5
Children's Social Services	1
Complaints Handling	2
Environment and Environmental Health	1
Housing	1
Roads and Transport	2
Various Other	1

Comparison of complaint outcomes with average outcomes for Local Authorities, adjusted for population distribution

	Out of Jurisdiction	Premature	Other cases closed after initial consideration	Early Resolution/Voluntary Settlement	Discontinued	Other Report – Not Upheld	Other Report Upheld – in whole or in part	Public Interest Report	Total Cases closed
Merthyr Tydfil	0	5	5	1	0	0	2	0	13
Merthyr Tydfil (adjusted)	3	4	5	2	0	0	0	0	14

Number of cases with PSOW Intervention:

No. of complaints with PSOW intervention	Total number of closed complaints	% of complaints with PSOW interventions
3	13	23

Code of Conduct Complaints

	Closed after initial consideration	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Standards Committee	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Withdrawn	Total Cases closed
Merthyr Tydfil Council	6		1					7
Bedlinog Community Council	2							2

4.0 DECISION REQUIRED

- 4.1. Committee is asked to consider the information provided and identify whether there are any issues of concern that need to be highlighted for further action and to consider whether a report should be provided to Cabinet/Council on these outcomes.

CARYS KENNEDY
MONITORING OFFICER

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Ombudsman Annual Letter 2017/18		Legal Department
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

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