



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council

## MINUTES OF MEETING

# STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**FRIDAY, 15TH JULY, 2016**

**PRESENT:** J Morgan (In the Chair)

**Councillors:**

H Barrett, S P Brown and C T Jones

**Independent Members:**

Nathan Fear, David McCarthy, Peter Young

**Community Council:**

Helen Thomas

**Officers:**

Simon Jones (Senior Solicitor)

Karen Vokes (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
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The Chair welcomed M Jehu, A Jones, R Butler and G Stacey of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Standards Committee to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

198	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence received from Ian Cathrew and Carys Kennedy.
199	Declarations of Interest	No declarations of interest were made.
200	Whistleblowing	<p>Simon Jones advised members that the Council is required to have a Whistleblowing Policy and procedure which provides a format where members of staff can report any behaviour or practice which causes them concern and may potentially put the organisation at risk.</p> <p>He referred to the review carried out by the Wales Audit Office which outlined that the Authority's process was on the whole satisfactory but a number of recommendations for</p>

		<p>improvement were put in place. These recommendations were discussed in detail.</p> <p>In relation to recommendation number 4, Simon Jones advised that this needed further updating following a review of the Council structure to be carried out shortly.</p> <p>Detail discussion also ensued in relation to the whistleblowing data outlined in the report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. Simon Jones advised that this data is anonymous as all information relating to whistleblowing must be kept confidential.</p> <p>Discussion ensued in relation to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What assistance could be given to alleviate staff fears in that they receive proper protection when making a whistleblowing disclosure.</li> <li>• An update on the 2 complaints that are still the subject of investigation in the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.</li> <li>• Progress on the Action Plan</li> <li>• What procedures are in place following the conclusion of a complaint.</li> <li>• Clarification on whether the Authority's Grievance Policy was reviewed in line with the Whistleblowing Policy.</li> <li>• Clarification on whether the previous administration of the Standards Committee had a role to play with regard to the Whistleblowing Policy.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED that:</b></p> <p>The contents of this report be noted.</p> <p>A copy of the Whistleblowing Policy be sent to members.</p> <p>An Update on the Action Plan be given at the next Standards Committee.</p>
201	Member Training	<p>The Chair referred to the Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Standards Committee in April which was attended by several members of the Merthyr Standards. He gave a brief overview and expressed the need to progress the requirement of joint training.</p> <p>Following debate it was <b>RESOLVED that:</b></p> <p>A meeting be arranged with the Monitoring Officers at Merthyr Tydfil CBC and Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC together with their Chairs of Standards to discuss how to progress joint training.</p>

202	Member Representation External Bodies at	<p>Simon Jones reminded members of the discussions in the last meeting about the attendance of Councillors who are appointed as Local Authority representatives on various external bodies.</p> <p>Following the last meeting, he advised that the Monitoring Officer together with Democratic Services staff have reviewed the position and ascertained that no agency/body has expressed concern about the elected Councillor serving them. It is therefore the view that the Authority's elected Councillors are meeting the expectations of the bodies that they serve.</p> <p>Following debate on how this needs to be progressed, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration be given to contacting external bodies at the appropriate time with contact details if they wish to raise concerns in relation to the elected Councillor/s serving them.</li> </ul>
203	Any other item deemed urgent by the Chair	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u> - The next meeting to be scheduled for Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 2.00 pm at the Civic Centre.</p> <p>At the invitation of the Chair, Mel Jehu, the Chair of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Standards Committee, thanked everyone for the opportunity for him and his members to observe the proceedings.</p>