



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON MONDAY, 14TH JUNE 2010 AT 11.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

M.G. Warrender - Chairman

Councillors:

J. B. Criddle and L.R. Rees

Messrs L.C. Davies, D.R.G. Parry and Mrs E.J. Rowlands

Together with:

Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer (D. Perkins), Deputy Monitoring Officer (G. Williams), Corporate Support Officer (S. Richards), Scrutiny and Members' Services Manager (J. Jones), Committee Services Officer (R. Thomas)

Also in attendance for agenda item number 4:

Customer Services and Performance Co-ordinator (J. Morgans), Service Manager, Mental Health & Substance Misuse (K. Powell), Interim Assistant Director, Adult Services (D. Street), Social Services Facilities Manager (R. Jones), Finance Services Manager, Social Services (S. Harris), Assistant Director, Social Services (A. Jarrett), Service Manager, Children's Services (J. Moore), Service Manager, Children's Services (A. Sheehan)

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from K.C. Mock

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman informed the committee that his son works for Caerphilly County Borough Council's social services. Following advice from the Monitoring Officer, it was determined that there was no prejudicial interest to be declared.

No further declarations of interest were made at the beginning or during the meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2010 (minute nos. 1-8, on page nos. 1-3), be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. COMPLAINTS TO THE OMBUDSMAN

The report on complaints made to the Ombudsman which had been rejected by him as not accepted for formal investigation (or re-opened) or that he was satisfied with the action taken, those complaints which remained at the enquiry stage or were awaiting determination and those complaints which were not upheld or upheld in part, were noted.

Members were updated on the recent decision by the Ombudsman not to proceed with a complaint that was made against a former councillor. The monitoring officer advised he would fully update the Committee once clarification was received on the level of information that could be disclosed.

4. REPORTS FROM PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES

Consideration was given to the following reports of the Monitoring Officer with that of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales regarding maladministration complaints made against Caerphilly County Borough Council.

4.1 Case of Maladministration - Mrs R and Mrs H

A detailed discussion took place on the report which had been issued under Section 16 and Section 21 of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005. Members noted that the Ombudsman felt that a public report was not required in regard to the complaint made under Section 21 of the Act, as the matter has been satisfactorily resolved.

The Customer Services and Performance Co-ordinator, Service Manager (Mental Health & Substance Misuse) and Interim Assistant Director (Adult Services) were present to answer the questions asked, explain the actions taken and to advise on the action taken to ensure that internal procedures were improved to avoid a recurrence of similar issues in the future.

RESOLVED that the Ombudsman report including his recommendations be accepted.

4.2 Case of Maladministration - Complaint - Mr M

A detailed discussion took place on the report which had been issued under Section 16 and Section 21 of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005. Members noted that the Ombudsman felt that a public report was not required in regard to the complaint made under Section 21 of the Act, as the matter has been satisfactorily resolved.

The Customer Services and Performance Co-ordinator, Social Services Facilities Manager and Social Services Finance Services Manager were present to answer the questions asked, explain the actions taken and to advise on the action taken to ensure that internal procedures were improved to avoid a recurrence of similar issues in the future.

RESOLVED that the Ombudsman report including his recommendations be accepted.

4.3 Case of Maladministration - Complaint - Mrs A

A detailed discussion took place on the report which had been issued under Section 16 and Section 21 of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005. Members noted that the Ombudsman felt that a public report was not required in regard to the complaint made under Section 21 of the Act, as the matter has been satisfactorily resolved.

The Customer Services and Performance Co-ordinator, Assistant Director (Social Services) and two Service Managers (Children's Services) were present to answer the questions asked, explain the actions taken and to advise on the action taken to ensure that internal procedures were improved to avoid a recurrence of similar issues in the future.

RESOLVED that the Ombudsman report including his recommendations be accepted.

5. VERBAL UPDATE ON STANDARDS COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that three appointments on the Committee were due to expire on 11th October 2010 (Chairman Mr M.G. Warrender, Mr K.C. Mock and Mrs E.J. Rowlands). She confirmed the action required, with deadlines, to recruit the necessary replacements.

In addition, Members were made aware that Mr M.G. Warrender would be asked to be the lay member on the Interview Panel.

6. VERBAL UPDATE ON STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Monitoring Officer updated members on the work carried out on the Committee's Annual Report and he confirmed that the Standards Committee Annual Report 2009 had been presented to Council on 27th April 2010. No adverse comments were received.

OTHER BUSINESS

7. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The Chairman requested information pertaining to agenda items for the next meeting of the Committee. The Corporate Support Officer advised she had received one final report from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and a further four were currently in draft form.

The meeting closed at 12.12 p.m.

CHAIRMAN