



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON 14TH MARCH 2013 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Mr. L.C. Davies - Chairman
Professor S. M. Griffiths - Vice Chairman

Councillor Mrs. A. Collins, Mrs. M. Evans, Mrs. D. Holdroyd, Community Councillor
Mrs. G. Davies

Together with:

G. Williams (Deputy Monitoring Officer), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Also in attendance for agenda item number 4:

D. Street (Acting Director of Social Services), J. Morgans (Customer Services and
Performance Manager), M. Day (Team Manager - Performance Management), D. Paton
(Service Manager - Children's Service North)

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor H. David and Mr. P. Morgan.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of
the meeting.

2. MINUTES - 12TH OCTOBER 2012

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2012 (minute nos. 1
- 5, on page nos. 1 - 3), be approved as a correct record.

MATTER ARISING

3. CODE OF CONDUCT (MINUTE NO. 6)

It was noted that the Deputy Monitoring Officer would be providing training for the newly appointed community councillors of Risca East and Risca West Community Councils on 28th March 2013 and would invite those members who have still not received training to attend on that date.

4. REPORT FROM PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES

Consideration was given to the report from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales on a maladministration complaint made against Caerphilly County Borough Council. It was noted that there are two forms of report - Under Section 16 which is the form of report which needs to be formally considered by the Authority and Section 21 where the Ombudsman feels that a public report is not required and the matter has been satisfactorily resolved.

A detailed discussion took place on the report which had been issued under Section 21 of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005 and Members noted that the Ombudsman has partially upheld the complaint.

The Acting Director Social Services, Customer Services and Performance Manager, Team Manager - Performance Management and Service Manager - Children's Service North were present to respond to the questions asked and to advise on the action taken to ensure that internal procedures were improved to avoid a recurrence of similar issues in the future.

Members noted the findings of the Ombudsman and his recommendation as set out in the report and that the complaint was partially upheld.

RESOLVED that the Ombudsman report including his recommendations be accepted.

5. UPDATE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER AGAINST MEMBER COMPLAINT

It was reported that the Welsh Local Government Association has supported proposals to introduce a generic protocol for dealing with Member against Member complaints. The proposed protocol will be presented to the Standards Committee for consideration once it becomes available.

6. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman advised that the report has almost been finalised. The statistical information has been collected and is in the process of being collated in order that it can be incorporated within its content and presented to Council. The report will be sent circulated to the Committee prior to its presentation to Council.

7. MEETING WITH INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Members were advised of the role of the Independent Remuneration Panel in determining the scope and maximum level of allowances payable to Councillors in Wales. The Chairman advised that he would be meeting with the Independent Remuneration Panel on 25th March 2013. The report of the Panel would be presented in due course.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. APPOINTMENT OF ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Mrs. Williams advised that following the suspension of the Chief Executive, Nigel Barnett had been appointed as Acting Chief Executive. A report would be presented to a Special meeting of Council on 21st March 2013 detailing revised governance arrangements. It was not possible to comment further at this stage on the report of the Wales Audit Office Public Interest Report as further investigations are to be undertaken.

9. CHAIRMAN – MR. LEN DAVIES

Mr. Davies advised that his term of Office was due to expire in May and, as such, this may be the last meeting that he would be attending. He wished to place on record his appreciation to the Committee for the support they had given him during his eight years in office. The committee paid tribute to the way in which he had carried out his role and commented on his leadership and guidance during that period and for dealing with matters in a helpful and professional manner. He was wished him every success and happiness for the future.

It was noted that arrangements are in hand to advertise the vacancy.

10. STANDARDS CONFERENCE WALES 2013

It was noted that unfortunately on this occasion there were no Members who were able to attend the Standing Conference to be held in Llandudno, North Wales on 19th April 2013.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN