

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD IN
THE GUILDHALL, WREXHAM ON THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2016**

MEMBERS

Mrs Ceri Nash, Chair
*Mr M W Pugh, Vice-Chair

*Ms J E Adams
*Ms J M Cotter
Mr Neil Benson

Councillor Anne Evans
Councillor P Jeffares
Councillor Paul H Pemberton
Mr Geoff Edwards - Community Councillor

*Absent

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mrs J E Adams and Mr M W Pugh.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that given there were three independent Members absent today the meeting would not be quorate. The meeting could proceed as there was only one substantive item of business on the Agenda, approval of Minutes from the previous meeting and these would now have to be deferred to the March Committee for approval.

12 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

In the absence of a quorum, confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2016 was deferred to the Committee's next meeting in March.

13 PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES - THE CODE OF CONDUCT CASEBOOK

The Deputy Monitoring Officer submitted a report (HCCS/101/16) to enable the Committee to consider recent decisions of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) published in the Code of Conduct Casebook. A copy of the refresher training presentation, which provided details of some of the cases referred to in the current PSOW guidance, was also provided for information.

The Committee noted that the majority of the cases related to Community Councils and commented on the level/nature of the complaints made. The Chair reported that at a recent North Wales Standards Committee Forum, held in October, the Ombudsman had said there had been a reduction in the number of complaints received from County Council's which he attributed to the adoption of Local Resolution procedures.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer ran through the training material and it was agreed that the Committee at its next meeting consider the formal induction training that would be delivered to all County Borough Council Members following the local elections in May 2017 and also offered to Community Councils.

Members were informed there would be a training session held for this Committee immediately prior to the next meeting relating to the Role of the Committee.

AGREED – That the decisions reported in the Code of Conduct Casebook be noted.

14 REVIEW OF LOCAL RESOLUTION PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURE

The Deputy Monitoring Officer submitted a report (HCCS/100/16) to enable the Committee to review the operation of the Local Resolution Protocol and procedure adopted by the Council in September 2013.

Members were informed that there had been no instances recorded by the Monitoring Officer of any referral under the Members' Self-Regulatory Protocol. In the absence of any instances of referral to the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee it was felt that a fundamental review was not merited at this time. A further monitoring report would be submitted to the Standards Committee in 12 months.

A suggestion was made that Community Councils may wish to consider introducing/establishing a similar protocol and that this was something which could be explored further with the Clerks following the Local Elections in May 2017

AGREED – That the contents of report HCCS/100/16 be noted.

15 END OF TERM OF OFFICE

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that this would be the last meeting for Mrs Ceri Nash, Chair, as her term of office as an independent member of the Committee ended later in the month. On behalf of the Authority the Monitoring Officer thanked Mrs Nash for her valued contribution to the work of the Standards Committee over the 9 years she had been an independent member and wished her all the very best for the future.

The Monitoring Officer also thanked Councillor Jeffares for his valued contribution to the work of the Standards Committee as this would also be his last meeting.

Mrs Ceri Nash
Chair