

Meeting of:	Standards Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 23 June 2022
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Feedback Report following Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards Framework Training to Vale of Glamorgan Councillors and Lay / Co-opted Members by the Monitoring Officer and Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards Framework Training to Town and Community Councils by the Monitoring Officer and One Voice Wales
Purpose of Report:	To provide the Committee with an update re progress
Report Owner:	Debbie Marles, Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Responsible Officer:	Karen Bowen, Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	This report does not require consultation to be undertaken
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for decision by the Standards Committee
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To provide Committee with a progress update relating to Code of Conduct training undertaken with Elected Members and Co-opted/Lay Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council by the Monitoring Officer, Debbie Marles. - To provide Committee with a progress update relating to Code of Conduct training commissioned by the Monitoring Officer, Debbie Marles and undertaken by Paul Egan of One Voice Wales. 	

Recommendation

1. THAT the progress update in relation to the training that had been undertaken with Elected Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council be noted.
2. THAT the progress update in relation to the training that had been commissioned for Town and Community Councils in the Vale of Glamorgan be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

1-2 Having regard to the contents of the report.

1. Background

1.1 The Roles and Functions of the Standards Committee as contained within the Council's Constitution at Section 8.7 are as follows:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-Opted Members and church and parent governor representatives;
- (b) assisting Councillors, Co-Opted Members and church and parent governor representatives to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (e) advising, training or arranging to train Councillors, Co-Opted Members and church and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (f) granting dispensations to Councillors, Co-Opted Members and church and parent governor representatives from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (g) dealing with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter referred to that officer by the Public Services Ombudsman;
- (h) the exercise of (a) to (g) above in relation to the Community Councils wholly or mainly in its area and the members of those Community Councils;
- (i) overview of complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations;
- (j) make an Annual Report to Full Council describing how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the financial year;

(k) monitor compliance by political leaders of the above duties and provide advice, training or arrange to train leaders of political groups

2. Key Issues for Consideration

Vale of Glamorgan Council Elected Members, Co-Opted and Lay Members Ethics and Standards Training

- 2.1** The Vale of Glamorgan Council approved an Induction Programme for Elected Members, Co-Opted and Lay Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council following the Local Government Elections held on 5th May, 2022.
- 2.2** Code of Conduct training entitled Ethics and Standards was deemed to be mandatory for all Elected Members, Co-Opted and Lay Members of the Council following the elections.
- 2.3** The Monitoring Officer, Debbie Marles, supported by the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer undertook the training on 12th and 13th May, 2022. Prior to the training sessions all Members were forwarded by email a number of pieces of documentation for consideration prior to the training with included the following:
 - A link to the Council's Constitution
 - A copy of Section 19 of the Council's Constitution which included Code of Conduct and Local Dispute Resolution Procedure
 - Disclosure of Members' Interest form
 - An application for Dispensation to the Standards Committee
 - A link to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales current Code of Conduct guidance
 - A link to the Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report 2020-21.
- 2.4** Following the training sessions the video presentation of one of the the training sessions has been made available together with the presentation slides for Members unable to attend on 12th or 13th May, 2022.
- 2.5** The majority of Members attended the training sessions on 12th and 13th May, 2022, however, Members unable to attend were provided with a further mop-up session on 31st May, 2022 and 6th June, 2022.
- 2.6** The Monitoring Officer is pleased to confirm to the Standards Committee that all Elected Members, Co-Opted and Lay Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council (total of 54 Elected Members and 12 Co-Opted and Lay Members) have undertaken the Ethics and Standards Code of Conduct training.

Vale of Glamorgan Town and Community Councils Code of Conduct Training undertaken by One Voice Wales

- 2.7** Having regard to the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee training for Town and Community Councils was commissioned from One Voice Wales by the Monitoring Officer, Debbie Marles. All Members and Clerks of Town and Community Councils were invited to attend the training which took place on a virtual basis on the following dates:
- 20th May, 2022 (evening)
 - 30th May, 2022 (afternoon)
 - 30th May, 2022 (evening)
 - 1st June, 2022 (evening).
- 2.8** Committee is informed 76 Members/Clerks attended the sessions.
- 2.9** Town and Community Councils have been advised to provide training for any Member of their Town/Community Council that were unable to attend the Vale of Glamorgan commissioned training or the Vale of Glamorgan training (being a twin-hatted Member) as soon as possible.
- 2.10** Evaluation forms of the training provided for all of the training will be analysed and reported to Committee in due course.
- 2.11** The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Standards Committee will consider when refresher training will be provided with Town and Community Councils being advised to do the same.
- 2.12** Standards Committee is therefore recommended to note the training that has been provided to date.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor representatives. It was intended that the process adopted within this report will aim to promote that role.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** None as a result of this report.

Employment

- 4.2** None as a result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.3** The Council has a duty to establish and maintain a Standards Committee as defined by legislation as set out in the Standards Committees Rules and Regulations 2001 and the Standards Committee (Wales) Amendment Regulations 2006.
- 4.4** The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor Representatives.
- 4.5** The role of the Standards Committee under its Terms of Reference is to also exercise (a) to (g) as referred to above in paragraph 1.1 in relation to the Community Councils wholly or mainly in its area and the members of those Community Councils.

5. Background Papers

None.