

<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>16 June 2021</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Revised Code of Conduct Guidance for members of (a) county councils and (b) town and community councils published by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:</b>	<b>To provide copies of the revised Guidance</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>Lynn Ball Director of Function (Council Business) / Monitoring Officer <a href="mailto:lbxcs@ynysmon.gov.uk">lbxcs@ynysmon.gov.uk</a> 01248 752586</b>
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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) has published guidance on the Code of Conduct for members of (a) county councils and (b) town and community councils; these are available on the PSOW's website and have been shared with members previously, when originally published.
- 1.2 The Guidance has been prepared by the PSOW to assist individuals to understand their obligations under the Code of Conduct. It provides more detail than the Model Code of Conduct, and provides examples of previous cases. It also includes details about the two-stage test considered by the Ombudsman when deciding whether to investigate or to continue to investigate a breach of the Code.

## **2. CONSULTATION ON AMENDED GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 In early 2021, the PSOW embarked on a consultation exercise in relation to amended Guidance.
- 2.2 When comparing the previous Guidance with the revised Guidance, there are no major differences; it seems the changes relate to updating examples and ensuring clarity.

2.3 The Standards Committee met informally to discuss the amended Guidance on 10 March 2021. Suggestions were made and the Committee's response was formulated, by way of correspondence, in agreement with the Chair and the Vice Chair of this Committee.

2.4 On 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standards Committee attended a meeting of this Council's Group Leaders and presented a copy of the proposed response to the consultation exercise. The Group Leaders unanimously agreed the suggested correspondence.

2.5 The letter was sent to the PSOW office on 19<sup>th</sup> March [prior to the deadline on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021].

2.6 No direct response has been received to that correspondence.

2.7 The Ombudsman has produced a Summary Report of the Consultation on Revised Guidance on the Local Government Member Code of Conduct, dated May 2021, which provides a summary of the responses received and the PSOW's responses to those comments. The Summary Report is available on this [link](#).

### **3. NEW GUIDANCE**

3.1 The revised Guidance has now been published on the PSOW's website.

3.2 Guidance for members of county councils, county borough councils, fire and rescue authorities, national park authorities and police and crime panels can be seen [here](#).

3.3 The Guidance for members of town and community councils can be seen [here](#).

3.4 Most of the content of both Guidance (i.e. the one for County Council members and the one for Town and Community Councillors) is the same. This is reasonable considering that the Code is the same for both groups. However, the biggest difference is the examples included; both guidance include different examples, depending on the intended audience.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

4.1 The Standards Committee is requested to

4.1.1 consider the amended Guidance on the above links;

4.1.2 agree that the relevant Guidance should be brought to the attention of the Members of this Council and the Town and Community Councils by way of the next Newsletter; and

4.1.3 agree that the Briefing Note prepared by the Standards Committee on personal and prejudicial interest is updated so that it refers to the new PSOW Guidance.