

**CYNGOR SIR YNYS MON / ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL**

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>13 December 2023</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Annual Report for the Standards Committee</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:</b>	<b>For the Standards Committee to note the contents</b>
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## **1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 There is a statutory requirement for the Standards Committee to present an annual report, which meets the statutory requirements, as included in the Statutory Guidance published by Welsh Government, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year.

## **2. ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-2023**

2.1 The Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2022/2023, for the period running from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, was presented, in draft, at the [Standards Committee's June 2023 meeting \(item 11\)](#).

2.2 The Standards Committee members met informally in July 2023 to discuss the process for Group Leaders to provide information in relation to their new duties. The draft Annual Report was amended to include the information ascertained during this process.

2.3 The Committee's final report was presented to a [meeting of full Council on 12 September 2023](#) (item 12).

## **3. ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023-2024**

3.1 One element of the Annual Report, that was done for the first time in the 2022/2023, is that it must include the Committee's assessment of Group Leaders' compliance with their new duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Standards Committee met in November 2023 in order to discuss the process followed for the 2022/2023 reporting period and to consider the process for the current reporting period.

3.2 It was decided at the November meeting that changes would be proposed to the Group Leaders' Form for reporting to the Standards Committee. Arrangements are being made

for the Chair and Vice Chair to attend at a Group Leaders' meeting to present the amended draft template report, included as **Enclosure 1** to this report, and to obtain the Group Leaders' views. The Standards Committee members will be advised as to the result of those discussions.

3.3 As part of the Standards Committee's work with the Group Leaders in relation to their new duty, the Chair and Vice Chair will also discuss with the Group Leaders possible training opportunities. Welsh Government's statutory guidance details that Standards Committees must provide or arrange training to Group Leaders on their new duty.

3.4 A draft annual report for 2023-2024, which incorporates the findings from the above process, will be presented at the Standards Committee meeting in June 2024.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

4.1 For the Standards Committee to note the contents of this report.

## The Standards Committee's Annual Report and the new Group Leaders' duty



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1. Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, political Group Leaders now have duties in relation to standards of conduct. A leader of a political group must (a) take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of the group and (b) cooperate with the Council's Standards Committee in the exercise of its functions.
2. Group Leaders who fail to comply with the duty maybe regarded as bringing their office into disrepute, in breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.
3. In addition, the 2021 Act places a duty on Standards Committees to make an annual report to their council as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year (1 April-31 March). The report must be considered by the relevant council before the end of 3 months beginning with the day on which the council receives it.
4. The Standards Committee's annual report must include an assessment of the extent to which Group Leaders have complied with their duties (paragraph 1 above). The Standards Committee requires information from the Group Leaders in order to do this.
5. Having regard to the requirements in the 2021 Act, a template report has been drafted to assist Group Leaders and remind them of the matters to be covered in their reports to the Standards Committee. This template is included in **Appendix 1**.
6. The template does not ask, and should not include, details of individual cases. The report focuses on the type of action which has been taken in relation to each matter.
7. Group Leaders are asked to produce these reports once a year; however, if issues of importance arise during the year, Group Leaders should consult with the Monitoring Officer, who will inform the Chair of the Standards Committee.
8. Completed forms are to be forwarded by Group Leaders to the Monitoring Officer **by 30 April** in each year. The Monitoring Officer will report to the Standards Committee.
9. The independent members of the Standards Committee will arrange to meet with each Group Leader in private to discuss their reports **during May**.
10. The Standards Committee will use appropriate information from the Group Leaders' reports to inform its annual report to Council. The Committee's annual report will contain a short summary of the steps taken to fulfil the duty, its opinion on whether what has been done is sufficient and any future pieces of work that might be undertaken etc.
11. The Standards Committee will discuss its draft annual report to Council at its formal committee meeting in June. During this meeting the Standards Committee will agree on its findings arising from the Group Leaders' reports and will also confirm in that public forum the identity of any Group Leader who has failed to submit a completed report.
12. The Committee's annual report will be presented to full Council at the next available full Council meeting after the Standards Committee's June meeting.
13. If relevant, unaffiliated members (sitting outside a group) will also need to be briefed in the same way as Group Leaders so as to ensure high standard of conduct are maintained by all members, though they would not be expected to produce a report in this way.

**Report by Group Leaders (GL) to the Standards Committee in relation to their GL duty:**

<b>Report by:</b>	(name of GL)	<b>Political Group:</b>	(name of Group)
<b>Period for which report applies ('the Period'):</b>	1 April 20__ to 30 March 20__	<b>Number of members in Group:</b>	

**Steps taken by the GL to promote compliance with the Code of Conduct:**

*Appendix 2 includes the type of matters the Standards Committee expects the Group Leaders to pay attention to and the threshold that is used by the Committee to consider if you have taken steps in relation to your duty as Group Leader. Please consider these matters and the 10 behavioural principals in public life that are in Appendix 3 when preparing your response.*

**→ Personal commitment**

Use your own words to complete this section. See Appendix 2 for more information.

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**→ Encouraging Members**

Use your own words to complete this section. See Appendix 2 for more information.

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**→ Working with the Standards Committee and other Group Leaders**

Use your own words to complete this section. See Appendix 2 for more information.

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**Please attach any relevant information you have of the steps that you have taken regarding the above matters.**

**Training on the Code of Conduct during the Period:**

**Number of members that have received training on the Code of Conduct:**

**Mandatory Training Modules (excluding the Code of Conduct) during the Period:**

See list of Mandatory Training in **Appendix 4 2**

<b>Number of mandatory training modules to be completed by all Group members:</b>		<b>Number of completed modules:</b>	
<b>Number of members in the Group that have completed all required mandatory training modules:</b>			

**Number of members that have received specific training on the Code of Conduct specifically:**

**Regular Group Meetings during the Period:**

**Number of Group meetings held for all Group members:**

**Annual Discussion between members and their Group Leader during the Period:**

**Number of members who have been offered an annual discussion with the GL:**

**Number of members who accept the above offer with the GL:**

**Number of members who have attended an annual discussion meeting with the GL:**

**Annual Reports, ~~for the Period~~ that are considered as good practice by the Committee, for the Period:**

**Number of members who have submitted a completed annual report:**

**Standing Register of Personal Interests:**

**Number of members who have reviewed their Standing Register of Interests:**

**Complaints:**

<b>Complaint received from:</b> (insert numbers)	<b>Stage which the complaint reached:</b>		
	<b>Informal</b>	<b><u>Local Resolution Protocol</u></b>	<b>PSOW</b>
member of the public			
officer			
member of the same political group			
member of a different political group / not in a political group			

**Support meetings:**

**Number of members who have been offered support meetings by the GL:**

**Number of members who have accepted the offer of a support meeting by the GL:**

**Steps taken by GL to promote compliance with the Code of Conduct:**

**This section is to be completed in your own words. Please see **Appendix 3** for more information.**

**Consideration for this year compared to last year:**

**A copy of the form that was received by you last year has been attached.**

**Below, please explain what matters have **improved** this year?**

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**A copy of the form that was received by you last year has been attached.**

**Below, please explain what matters you think **need further attention** during the next year?**

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***Please send your report to the Monitoring Officer by emailing [LynnBall@ynysmon.llyw.cymru](mailto:LynnBall@ynysmon.llyw.cymru)***

**Signed by GL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

This section of the report is to be completed in your own words.

There is ***no need to include all the information listed below***. The matters which follow are included as examples of the type of information that you may wish to consider including as part of your response and based on the [Statutory Guidance published by Welsh Government on the Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#).

Personal commitment:

- demonstrated personal commitment by attending relevant development or training around equalities and standards, including the Code of Conduct;
- setting an example by demonstrating the principles of conduct in public life ~~(see Appendix 4)~~; including specifically politeness and respect;
- used your influence to promote a positive culture;
- promoted a culture within the group which supports high standards of conduct and integrity;
- addressed issues as soon as they arose;
- promoted civility and respect within group communications and meetings and in formal meetings of the Council;
- worked to implement any recommendations from the Standards Committee about improving standards;

Encouraging group members:

- encouraged group members to attend relevant development or training, particularly around equalities and standards; including the Code of Conduct;
- ensured nominees to a committee had received the recommended training for that committee;

Co-operation with others:

- promoted informal resolution procedures, and worked with the Standards Committee and Monitoring Officer to achieve local resolution;
- worked with the standards committee to recognise inappropriate behavioural patterns, give them consideration, and deal with these matters e.g. asking for, or suggesting appropriate training, asking to delete inappropriate message from social media pages or asking ~~them~~ to consider apologising.
- attended a meeting of the Council's Standards Committee if requested to discuss Code of Conduct issues;
- attended meetings with the Monitoring Officer and/or other Group Leaders as necessary to discuss matters of conduct;
- worked together with other Group Leaders to collectively support high standards of conduct within the Council;

Other matters that could be relevant:

- You've revised the Ombudsman's Guidance on the Code of Conduct during the year. You've encouraged members of your Group to do the same.
- You've considered the Standards Committee's Newsletters during the year. You've encouraged members of your Group to do the same.

You're asked to attach relevant evidence. In compliance with the [Statutory Guidance by Welsh Government](#), evidence can include minutes from meetings, copies of correspondence, a review on members training on matters regarding equality and the Code of Conduct, and steps taken to deal with any gap-s in that training.

- Selflessness
- Honesty
- Integrity and Propriety
- Duty to uphold the law
- Stewardship
- Objectivity in Decision making
- Equality and respect
- Openness
- Accountability
- Leadership

## Mandatory Training Modules

Generally (excluding Code of Conduct – dealt with under separate heading):-

- Code of Conduct \*
- Cyber Security \*
- Safeguarding #
- Data processing (GDPR) #
- Equalities #
- Information Technology \*

\* = required within 6 months of a member being elected

# = required within 12 months of a member being elected

In addition to:

- For all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Council and its Committees:
  - Chairing Meetings for Chairs and Vice-chairs  
Required on being elected as Chair / Vice-Chair and every two years if re-elected.
- The relevant training required for a member of a particular Committee including:
  - Planning Committee
  - Licensing Committee
  - Governance and Audit Committee
  - Appointments Committee

Members must complete and repeat the required mandatory training in accordance with details published by the Council.