

Standards Committee
09/09/2024

Subject

MEETING WITH POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS

Purpose:

To discuss with political Group Leaders the matters outlined in statutory guidance on the Local Government and Elections Act 2021

Recommendations / key decisions required:

The committee should discuss with Group Leaders (1) the frequency of meetings between the committee and Group Leaders during the year, (2) the compliance by the Group Leaders with their duties under the 2021 Act, (3) the annual reporting process and (4) any issues arising from the analysis of complaints in respect of standards of behaviour

Reasons:

In accordance with statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Not applicable

Directorate: Chief Executives

Designations:

Tel: 01267 224018

Name of Head of Service:

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Report Author:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING WITH POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a statutory duty upon the leaders of political groups in County and County Borough Councils to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members of their political group, and to co-operate with the council's standards committee in the exercise of the standards committee's functions. Carmarthenshire County Council has three political group leaders, namely.

Councillor Darren Price (Plaid Cymru)
Councillor Deryk Cundy (Labour)
Councillor Jane Tremlett (Independent Group)

The Act also places a duty on the Standards Committee to monitor compliance by leaders of political groups on the council with their duties under the Act, and to publish an annual report which must include the committee's assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the council have complied with their duties under the 2021 Act. Statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government expands upon these duties and provides that Group Leaders should meet with the whole Standards Committee at the start of each year to discuss.

- (1) the frequency of meetings between the Committee and Group Leaders during the year,
- (2) the compliance by the Group Leaders with their duties under the 2021 Act,
- (3) the annual reporting process and
- (4) any issues arising from the analysis of complaints in respect of standards of behaviour

As part of this process each Group Leader was asked to provide an annual report to the committee which then forms a basis for these discussions. The leaders of 2 of the Council's political groups, namely Cllr. Darren Price (Plaid Cymru) and Cllr. Derek Cundy (Labour), met with the committee on the 22nd April. However, the leader of the Independent Group, Cllr. Jane Tremlett, was unable to attend on that occasion and therefore her attendance was deferred to the 9th September. A Copy of Cllr Tremlett's the annual report is attached for ease of reference.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Stephen P Murphy

Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets	Bio-diversity & Climate Change
NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

2. Legal

It is a requirement of the 2021 Act and the associated statutory guidance that the Standards Committee meet with leaders of political groups to discuss these issues.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Stephen P Murphy

Head of Law Governance and Civil Services

Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination	NA
Scrutiny Committee	
Date the report was considered:-	
Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-	

2. Local Member(s)

Not applicable

3. Community / Town Council

Not applicable

4. Relevant Partners

Not applicable

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Not applicable

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED	Include any observations here
No	Not applicable

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE