

Report to: Standards Committee

Date of Meeting: 7th June 2013

Lead Officer: Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer

Report Author: Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer

Title: Standards Conference 2013

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide Members with information and feedback regarding the Standards Conference 2013.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 A national conference was arranged by the six North Wales authorities as well as the Snowdonia National Park and took place at Venue Cymru on 19th April 2013.

2.2 There were over one hundred delegates attending the Conference from authorities from all parts of Wales. Eighty feedback forms were received and the summary of those responses is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

2.3 The Conference was opened by Dilys Phillips, Monitoring Officer of Gwynedd who welcomed delegates to North Wales and set the content of the day's events and the theme of 'Balancing Rights and Responsibilities'.

2.4 The keynote speaker at the Conference was the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, Peter Tyndall, who spoke about the revisions made to his guidance on the Code of Conduct, the importance of local resolution of complaints and the need for an agreed cap on the level of indemnities provided to elected members in respect of legal costs incurred in code of conduct proceedings.

2.5 There were a series of workshops provided to delegates under the following headings:

Promoting Standards Proactively

Conducting Hearings and Sanctions

Register of Interests and Dispensations

Standards issues for Town and Community Councils and single purpose authorities.

2.6 During the afternoon session, delegates heard from a representative of the WLGA, the Monitoring Officer of Rhondda Cynnon Taf and the Deputy Monitoring Officer

of the City and County of Swansea about their experiences in operating local resolution procedures.

- 2.7 The Conference was closed by the chair of the North Wales Standards Committee Forum, Mr Howie Roberts, who thanked all those who had contributed to the arrangements of the Conference and those who had attended, many of whom had travelled long distances. Copies of the presentation made at the Conference are attached as Appendix 2.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the content of this report.
- 3.2 That Members consider what aspects, if any, of the topics covered by the Conference merit further, more detailed consideration by the Committee.