

Presentation Notes – National Standards Forum

Introduction

- Introduce Ombudsman
- Powers of PSOW set out in Local Government Act 2000 - Ethical Standards in Public Life (c.750 bodies in jurisdiction);
- Welcome est. of National Standards Forum – important forum to promoting the highest standards of conduct;

Overview of PSOWs Current Work

- Figures for 2021/22
 - **294 Complaints (Split PC123/TCC 171)** (at this point last year it was 219 PC 85/TCC 129)
 - **No. closed at Assessment 241** (av 20.1pm)
 - **No. Investigations closed last year was 39** (23 at this point in the year)
 - **Referrals to SC/APW last year – 20 Referrals**
- Figures for current year 2022/23
 - **No. Complaints to date 219** (Split PC - 91/TCC - 126)
 - **No. closed at Assessment – 197** (av 22 pm + 6%)
 - **No. Investigations open is 62** (closed 22 compared with 23 at this point last year)
 - **No. Referrals to SC/APW – 5 to date (Likely to be 9 at end of year)**

Our Performance – good early in process but only 7/10 investigations concluded within 12 months.

Key themes

- Breaches due to lack of equality and respect – behaviours towards others (>50%)
- Lack of understanding between public and private role
- Inappropriate use of email and social media
- Lack of CoC training and strong correlation with Breaches
- PSOW work alongside Audit Wales – link between multiple complaints and governance issues = dysfunctional councils

PSOW has a role to be proactive in promoting highest standards of conduct.

Working with NSCF

- **Sounding Board**
- **Sharing data and intelligence** e.g. Annual Letters, SC Annual Reports;
- **Sharing and Promoting Good Practice** e.g. model procedure for agreeing arrangements with the parties (PSOW & the Cllr/their representative);
- **[Joint] Early Intervention** – to prevent escalation e.g. training (low level issues)
- **Promotion of Code of Conduct training** for all Members and reporting on compliance