

### **Consultation Questions and Proposed Responses**

1. Do you consider that the PSOW should continue its current practice of notifying the Accused Member of a complaint once it has been closed at the assessment stage of its process or when notifying an Accused Member of a decision to start an investigation? If so, please outline your reasons for holding this view.

What effects do you think there would be of continuing this practice?

**Proposed response:** *The current practice does spare councillors the worry of knowing about a complaint which is statistically unlikely to proceed to investigation. Equally, it removes the opportunity for councillors to make representations on a decision that could potentially affect them.*

*Clearly, councillors have the opportunity to explain their actions during any subsequent investigation, but the timescale for an investigation are much longer. They may therefore need to put up with a longer period of uncertainty and anxiety under the current practice.*

*Conversely, I appreciate that an accused councillor, on being notified of a complaint, may seek to engage in dialogue and correspondence with PSOW employees. This will, no doubt, be a draw on capacity and elongate the assessment stage to the distress of the complainant.*

*The arguments seem to be very finely balanced. Given that the process needs to be managed within limited resources as quickly as possible then whichever option delivers those outcomes should be favoured.*

2. Do you consider that the PSOW should revert back to its previous practice of notifying the Accused Member of a complaint once it has been received?

If so, please outline your reasons for holding this view.

What effects do you think there would be of adopting this practice?

**Proposed response:** *No, see response above.*

3. We have asked these specific questions to help us respond to Recommendation 2 of the Independent Review. If you have other comments to make about this specific Recommendation, please outline them for us.

**Proposed response:** *no additional comments.*