

# Standards and Ethics Committee Annual Report 2020/21

Cardiff Council



# The Ten General Principles of Public Life

<p><b>Selflessness</b> – members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.</p>	<p><b>Personal judgement</b> – members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.</p>
<p><b>Honesty and integrity</b> – members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly, and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.</p>	<p><b>Respect for others</b> – members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers and its other employees.</p>
<p><b>Objectivity</b> – members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefit.</p>	<p><b>Duty to uphold the law</b> – members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.</p>
<p><b>Accountability</b> – members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.</p>	<p><b>Stewardship</b> – members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently, and in accordance with the law.</p>
<p><b>Openness</b> – members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.</p>	<p><b>Leadership</b> – members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>“Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life”</i></b></p>	

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# Chair's Foreword

This report covers my last full year of office as Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee. Over the whole of my time in this role, and despite the unprecedented challenges of the last eighteen months, the Committee has continued to work proactively to promote and maintain high standards of conduct, as well as dealing judiciously with the small number of instances of actual or alleged misconduct referred to us. We have maintained awareness of the Committee's role through Member Briefings and by attending meetings of Council and the Community Councils. The feedback on our observations have been consistently well received.

During 2020/21, standards of conduct have generally remained high. Thirteen complaints were recorded, but eight of these related to the same incident, which the Ombudsman decided not to investigate because there was insufficient evidence of any breach of the Code. None of the complaints related to Community Councillors, for which the Community Councils may be commended. We are, however, mindful that the last Members' Survey results indicated that Councillors may sometimes be reluctant to report their concerns; and we wish to urge anyone with concerns about the conduct of an elected Member to raise their concerns with their group leader, Community Council clerk, or the Monitoring Officer, so that their concerns may be properly addressed.

Social media has continued to be a common feature of many complaints, so the Committee was pleased to be asked to develop Social Media Codes, following on from the resolution passed by full Council in March 2021. It is hoped that the Social Media Codes, once adopted by Council, will support Members to use social media constructively, whilst upholding the high standards of conduct expected of them; and clarify the Council's expectations in relation to its partner organisations.

The legislative landscape within which the Committee operates is changing. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 is introducing new duties on political group leaders in relation to standards of conduct and the Committee is tasked with monitoring compliance with these new duties. The Committee's annual report is also to be placed onto a statutory footing from 2022/23. It is encouraging to note that the new legislative requirements largely reflect what is now established practice in Cardiff. The Welsh Government has also reviewed the ethical standards framework more widely and both myself and the Monitoring Officer were pleased to be interviewed as part of that review.

I would like to thank my fellow Committee members, who have all contributed fully and worked diligently to improve the ethical culture of the Council. I have been ably supported in my role by Hollie Edwards-Davies as Vice-Chair, who has been deservedly elected as my successor as Chair, and the Monitoring Officer and her staff who have worked with great professionalism.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the shared responsibility that we all have to promote and maintain high standards of conduct, and ask that Members keep this in mind over the months ahead, and in particular, in the lead up to the local government elections, as political debate and pressure intensifies.

**Prof. James Downe**  
**Chair of Standards and Ethics Committee**

# The Role of the Standards and Ethics Committee

**The Committee operates within a statutory framework and the following terms of reference:**

- (a) To monitor and scrutinise the ethical standards of the Authority, its Members, employees and any associated providers of the Authority's services, and to report to the Council on any matters of concern.
- (b) To advise the Council on the content of its Ethical Code and to update the Code as appropriate.
- (c) To advise the Council on the effective implementation of the Code including such matters as the training of Members and employees on the Code's application.
- (d) To consider and determine the outcome of complaints that Councillors and Co-opted Members have acted in breach of the Code in accordance with procedures agreed by the Standards Committee, including the imposition of any penalties available to the Committee.
- (e) To oversee and monitor the Council's whistleblowing procedures and to consider ethical issues arising from complaints under the procedure and other complaints.
- (f) To grant or refuse requests for dispensations in respect of Members' interests under the Members Code of Conduct in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions.
- (g) To undertake those functions in relation to community councils situated in the area of the Council and members of those community councils which are required by law.
- (h) To recommend to Council and the Cabinet any additional guidance on issues of probity.
- (i) To hear and determine any complaints of misconduct by Members or a report of the Monitoring Officer, whether on reference from the Ombudsman or otherwise.
- (j) To recommend the provision to the Monitoring Officer of such resources as he/she may require for the performance of his/her duties.
- (k) All Members of the Committee will be required to undertake relevant training to enable them to properly discharge their duties.

## **The Committee has identified its major role as being to:**

- Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by County Councillors, Community Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- Provide support, advice and training for County Councillors and Community Councillors on conduct and personal interests.
- Monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct and the governance of the Council.
- Hear and determine any complaints referred by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
- Provide advice and guidance on the whistleblowing procedure, constitutional, protocols and ethical issues.

The Committee operates on the clear understanding that Elected Members that sit on the Committee are independent of political allegiance and that all discussions and decisions are taken with ethical principles at the forefront. The Committee is mindful that not all political groups are represented on the Committee, but welcomes attendance by all Members at its meetings and is happy to receive contributions from those groups not so represented. The Committee wishes to do all it can to support Elected Members in their role.

# The Committee's Work in 2020/21

## **MEMBER PROTOCOL ON SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

The Committee noted that the Members' Safeguarding Protocol (adopted by the Council in January 2016 on the recommendations of the Committee) had been independently reviewed, in light of extensive discussion with Members. The Committee was pleased to note that the independent review had agreed that the Protocol provided Members with helpful guidance on their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults; and were happy to approve the introduction of flowcharts to clarify processes, as well as various updates and drafting improvements.

In order to reinforce the importance and effectiveness of the Protocol, the Committee also agreed to recommend to Council that the revised Protocol should be incorporated within the Constitution and the Cardiff Undertaking.

The revised Protocol was subsequently adopted by full Council in November 2020, incorporated into Part 5 of the Constitution and added to the Cardiff Undertaking (please see below).

## **CARDIFF UNDERTAKING**

The Committee considered and agreed to recommend a number of amendments to the Cardiff Undertaking. The amendments included recommendations made by the Council's Internal Audit team in relation to the statutory principles of stewardship of Council resources and leadership. The Committee also agreed to recommend that the Undertaking should include a commitment to complying with the Members' Safeguarding Protocol (see above), and a number of other minor drafting improvements.

The revised Undertaking was recommended to full Council and approved in November 2020. All elected Members affirmed their commitment to the revised Cardiff Undertaking at the Annual Council meeting in November 2020 (and May 2021).

## **MEMBERS' SURVEY 2019-20**

The Committee considered the results of the Members Survey 2019-20 and proposed actions to be taken in response. It was agreed that the Democratic Services Committee should be asked to consider additional training on issues such as unconscious bias and bullying; and for the next Members' Survey to consider including questions about whether Members felt safe and confident to report unacceptable

behaviours, and questions about Members' general well-being, particularly in light of Covid related pressures. In response to the request for training on unconscious bias, two sessions were provided, with a total of 24 (32%) Members attending the sessions. The feedback from attendees was generally positive. The Committee agreed that regular surveys were helpful to highlight issues of concern and improvements.

## **MEMBERS BRIEFING**

The Committee issued a Member Briefing in May 2021 to all Members and Community Council Clerks, for forwarding to their Community Councillors. The Briefing introduced the three new independent members of the Committee and gave an overview of the Committee's work and the number of Member conduct complaints reported to the Monitoring Officer. Members were encouraged to report any concerns about unacceptable behaviour to the Monitoring Officer or their group leader or whip, so that these could be addressed. In response to a request from a Member, the Briefing included general advice on bias and predetermination and how to avoid creating an appearance of either. Community Councillors were reminded that they were welcome to attend any of the Committee's meetings.

All Members were invited to contact the Chair if they wished to provide any feedback on the Briefing or required any further information about the work of the Committee.

## **HEARING OUTCOME AND AMENDMENTS TO HEARINGS PROCEDURE**

The Committee received a report on the outcome of a complaint which had been heard by the Hearings Panel, following a referral from the Ombudsman, over the course of a five day hearing in January 2020, which attracted considerable publicity. The Panel had found the Member to be in breach of the Members' Code of Conduct and imposed a four month suspension. The Panel's decision was fully upheld on appeal by the Adjudication Panel for Wales in June 2020; and the Ombudsman personally attended the Committee's meeting in September 2020 to commend the Panel for its professionalism throughout the process, in very challenging circumstances, and to thank them for their support in maintaining high standards of conduct.

The Committee reviewed its Hearings Procedure in respect of complaints referred to the Committee by the Ombudsman, in light of experience gained from this hearing and agreed to make a number of minor changes. Changes agreed included making provision for audio recording of the hearing by the Council and clarifying timescales for late evidence to be submitted and the Panel's written decision to be issued. The Committee also noted that a checklist had been prepared to facilitate the administrative arrangements for hearings.



## **MEMBERS' GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY REGISTER**

The Committee has carried out its annual review of the Members' Hospitality Registers covering the period from 1st November 2019 to 31st October 2020. The Committee was content that there were no concerns regarding register entries. The £25 registration threshold was discussed and it was agreed that although the threshold had not changed in recent years, the level was considered to be fair, so no changes would be made.

## **OFFICERS' GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY GUIDANCE**

The Committee reviewed the guidance issued for officers on gifts and hospitality and the recommendations made by Internal Audit to consider extending the requirements to cover (i) any hospitality offered by Council officers to third parties outside the Council; and (ii) registration of any refused offers of gifts or hospitality over the threshold value of £25. After careful consideration and debate, the Committee agreed to accept these recommended changes in the interests of promoting transparency and public confidence. A number of other amendments were also agreed, including clarifying the requirement for registration to be completed within 28 days, reference to the Council's anti-bribery and corruption framework and other minor updates and drafting improvements.

The Committee approved the revised guidance and authorised the Monitoring Officer to issue it and bring it to the attention of all staff.

## **COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

The Committee has continued to engage with Community Councils to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within those Councils and build good working relationships with them. Members of the Committee have attended a number of Community Council meetings to familiarise themselves with the work of Community Councils and raise the profile of the Standards and Ethics Committee.

The Monitoring Officer has continued to hold quarterly meetings with the Community Council Clerks to discuss and provide support and advice to Clerks in relation to Member conduct issues and good governance.

## **SENIOR OFFICERS' PERSONAL INTERESTS**

The Committee completed its review of the Council's rules on Senior Officers' personal interests disclosures, and agreed to make no changes to the current rules. The Committee agreed to receive an annual report on Senior Officers' Declarations of Interests, excluding trade union membership and home addresses, for review on a confidential basis.

## **WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS**

The Committee received a report setting out the number of whistleblowing reports made during 2018-19, the nature of the concerns raised and outcomes in relation to each case. The Committee was content that the Council's whistleblowing arrangements were operating satisfactorily and that there were no ethical concerns arising.

## **NEW LEGISLATION ON THE STATUTORY ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**

The Committee received a report outlining changes to the statutory ethical framework being introduced by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This introduces new duties on political group leaders from May 2022, in relation to standards of conduct, and the Committee's responsibility to monitor compliance and arrange any necessary training in this regard. The Committee agreed that the new duties should be discussed at the annual meeting with group leaders and whips, to seek views and discuss training requirements.

The Committee also noted the new statutory requirements being introduced after 2022/23 in relation to the Committee's annual report, and was pleased to note that this essentially placed the Committee's current annual report onto a statutory footing.

## **OMBUDSMAN'S GUIDANCE ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT (REVISED DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION)**

The Committee received a report on new draft guidance issued by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for consultation purposes. It was noted that there was two sets of guidance, one for County Councillors and the other specifically for Community Councillors. The Committee noted that the revised draft guidance included up to date examples drawn from cases considered by the Ombudsman, local standards committees and the Adjudication Panel for Wales, and reflected on issues of concern and recent trends. One member commented on the reference in the guidance to hearings being held in public unless there are valid reasons for not doing so, and suggested that it would be helpful for the Ombudsman to provide some examples of what may be regarded as 'valid reasons'. The Monitoring Officer explained that the statutory rules on public access to Council meetings would apply, with exemptions available, for example, if personal information may be discussed about vulnerable children or adults.

The Monitoring Officer duly submitted a consultation response on behalf of the Committee. The Ombudsman's revised Guidance was finalised and issued in May 2021 and is available here - <https://www.ombudsman.wales/guidance-policies/>

## **ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES (APW) – UPDATED GUIDANCE**

The Committee considered the updated guidance issued by the Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) in relation to (i) the disclosure of evidence; (ii) anonymity; and (iii) the role of the Monitoring Officer, within APW proceedings. It was noted that the Guidance is not legally binding, but aims to assist all parties to understand their role within any proceedings which may be referred to the APW. The Committee also noted that although the APW Guidance does not apply to proceedings before the Committee's Hearings Panel, it was helpful for the Committee to consider the general principles it sets out.

## **OBSERVATION OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Independent members of the Committee and the Community Council representative have continued to observe meetings of Full Council and its Committees, as well as Community Council meetings and record their observations using the Committee's standard template form. Observations have been discussed at Standards and Ethics Committee meetings to inform the Committee's work and understand the work of the Council and Community Councils.

The Committee has been pleased to observe that standards of Member conduct during Council and Community Council meetings are generally good. Observations have highlighted areas for potential improvements to assist public understanding of the business being conducted and these have been shared with the Head of Democratic Services and the Lord Mayor in relation to full Council meetings; and with Community Council Clerks. The Committee has recommended that Community Councils should, as a matter of best practice, consider publishing draft minutes and reports relating to business items on their website. The Committee's observations and recommendations have been well received and responded to positively.

Committee members are encouraged to continue attending different Council and Committee meetings for observation and feedback to the Committee.

## **TRAINING**

The Committee was pleased to note that refresher training on the Members' Code of Conduct was delivered by the Monitoring Officer in a number of sessions between June and September 2021. With the agreement of the Democratic Services Committee, this training was made compulsory for all Members. One of the issues discussed during these sessions was Members' use of social media and the principles for inclusion in the draft social media codes which are to be adopted in line with a Council resolution passed in March 2021. Feedback from Members indicated that they found these sessions helpful. Eleven Members are yet to attend this training and the Committee urges those Members to contact the Head of Democratic Services, who will be happy to make arrangements for further group or individual sessions.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

As two of the Independent Members on the Committee, the Chair and Vice-Chair, are approaching the end of their second term of office (in November 2021 and June 2022 respectively), the Committee has approved a public appointments process and set up an Appointments Panel, to recruit and select two new Independent Members to fill the forthcoming vacancies.

The Committee is required to elect its Chair and Vice-Chair from amongst the independent members of the Committee. The current Vice-Chair, Hollie Edwards-Davies, has been elected as Chair with effect from 1st November 2021, when the current Chair's term of office comes to an end; and Chrissie Nicholls has been elected as Vice-Chair with effect from the same date.

The public appointments process for the two independent member positions is being carried out in line with the statutory rules governing the process. It is anticipated that the Appointments Panel's recommendations on appointment will be reported to Council for approval in November 2021.

Community Councillor Stuart Thomas, Chair of Pentyrch Community Council has continued as the Community Council representative on the Committee. Councillor Stephen Cunnah, Councillor Joel Williams and Councillor Emma Sandrey have continued to hold the elected Member positions on the Committee.

## **ANNUAL MEETING WITH POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS AND WHIPS**

The Committee meets informally with Group Leaders and Whips each year to discuss issues relating to Members' conduct and ethics. The 2020 annual meeting was held in September 2020 and discussed the results of the Members Survey 2019-20 in relation to conduct and behaviour issues. Key points from this discussion were reported in the Committee's last annual report (2019/20).

The Committee met again with Group Leaders and Whips on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and discussed the new draft Social Media Codes which had been developed in response to the Council's resolution in March 2021. It was suggested and agreed that candidates in the forthcoming local government elections should also be made aware of these codes, once approved and adopted by Council.

The new duties being introduced for group leaders in relation to Members' conduct were also discussed and it was noted that this formalised the role which many group leaders were already carrying out. It was agreed that training in mediation skills and conflict resolution would be helpful and that this training should be extended to deputy leaders and group whips.

# Taking Action on Complaints

The Standards and Ethics Committee receives quarterly reports from the Monitoring Officer in respect of complaints made about Members' conduct. The Committee monitors the number of complaints and any themes or patterns emerging (but only considers specific details of individual cases if a complaint is formally referred to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer or the Ombudsman.)

During the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, the Monitoring Officer was notified of a total of thirteen complaints made against Members alleging breach of the Code of Conduct. The table below shows an analysis of the complaints on a quarterly basis.

	<b>Q1 Apr, May, Jun 2020</b>	<b>Q2 Jul, Aug, Sept 2020</b>	<b>Q3 Oct, Nov, Dec 2020</b>	<b>Q4 Jan, Feb, Mar 2021</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Total	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>
Member on Member	1	0	0	1	<b>2</b>
Public on Member	1	0	9	1	<b>11</b>
Officer on Member	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Community Councillors	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

The number of complaints received during 2020/21 (thirteen in total) remained similar to the two previous years (nine complaints in 2019/20; and twelve complaints in 2018/19).

An outline of the complaints submitted during each quarter of the year 2020/21 is set out below.

## Quarter 1

During Quarter 1 of 2020/21, two complaints were made. One complaint was made by a Member about material posted on Facebook by another Member, which was alleged to be offensive. This complaint was resolved informally by the Monitoring Officer, who spoke with the Member concerned who agreed to remove the offending material.

The second complaint was made by a member of the public and alleged that comments made by a Member on Twitter were offensive towards Welsh language speakers and breached statutory duties under the Welsh Language Act. The Ombudsman decided that it would not be in the public interest to investigate this complaint, because *'it is not the purpose of the Code to inhibit freedom of speech or*

*the robust expression of different opinions even where the substance of those comments may be controversial. It is my view that Councillor X's comments fall within this category and for that reason, it would not be proportionate for the Ombudsman to investigate.'*

## Quarter 2

The Committee noted that no complaints were reported to the Monitoring Officer during Quarter 2 and was mindful of the national lockdown which was in effect for most of the reporting period and the impact this may have had.

## Quarter 3

During Quarter 3 of 2020/21, a total of nine complaints alleging a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct were reported to the Monitoring Officer. However, eight out of the nine complaints all concerned one Member's activities in relation to one incident.

The eight complaints made about one individual Member were made by members of the public alleging the Member had wrongly participated in a planning committee decision whilst having a personal prejudicial interest in the matter arising from involvement with a campaign group. The Ombudsman considered all eight complaints and found there was insufficient evidence that the Member had a prejudicial personal interest; that the alleged involvement with the campaign group may suggest a predisposition (which was permissible by law), but did not indicate a predetermination (closed mind) on the decision. The Ombudsman decided not to investigate any of these complaints, because there was insufficient evidence of a breach of the Code and the public interest test was not met.

The other complaint made during Quarter 3 was submitted by a member of the public, who alleged that a Member had improperly used their position as Councillor to bully and harass him. The Ombudsman found there was insufficient evidence of a breach of the Code and decided not to investigate the complaint.

## Quarter 4

One of the two complaints made during Quarter 4 of 2020/21 was submitted by a member of the public, alleging that a Member had wrongly participated in a planning committee decision whilst having a personal prejudicial interest in the matter arising from involvement with a campaign group. This complaint related to the same Member and the same incident about which eight earlier complaints had been made during Quarter 3 of 2020/21 (referred to above). In line with the Ombudsman's decisions on the eight earlier complaints, the Ombudsman found there was insufficient evidence that the Member had a prejudicial personal interest in the matter or had predetermined

the decision. The Ombudsman decided not to investigate, because there was insufficient evidence of a breach of the Code and the public interest test was not met.

The other complaint made during Quarter 4 of 2020/21 was submitted by a Member on behalf of all members of their political group, alleging that another Member had delivered election leaflets in breach of Covid restrictions in effect at that time. The complainants were referred to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's decision is awaited. The Committee noted that legal proceedings had also been instigated against the Member in relation to this matter, which was listed for a hearing in the Magistrates Court. The outcome of the legal proceedings is awaited.

## **OUTCOMES**

Of the thirteen complaints received during 2020/21, one was resolved informally by the Monitoring Officer, in accordance with the Local Resolution Protocol; by the Member removing the offending material which had been published on social media.

The remaining twelve complaints were considered by the Ombudsman, who found no evidence of a breach of the Code in eleven of those cases. The Ombudsman's decision is still awaited in relation to the other complaint.

## **LOCAL RESOLUTION**

The Committee notes that the Local Resolution Protocol adopted by Cardiff Council (and updated in November 2017) continues to provide a helpful process for resolving relatively 'low-level' behavioural complaints made by Members about other Members, in a timely and proportionate way.

The Committee encourages Community Councils to adopt their own local resolution protocols, using the model developed by One Voice Wales in consultation with the Ombudsman.

One complaint was referred to the Hearings Panel in 2020/21 (relating to incidents reported during 2019/20). A hearing was held to determine the complaint and the Panel upheld one part of the complaint, finding the Councillor in breach of the duty to not bring the Council or the office of Councillor into disrepute, but finding no breach in respect of three other parts of the complaint. The Panel issued a private warning to the Councillor in respect of its finding of a breach of the Code.

# Future Priorities

The Committee regularly reviews its work programme and has identified the following priority areas for consideration in 2021/22:

- **Observation of Council and Committee Meetings** – the Committee will continue to observe proceedings at Council and Committee meetings to give feedback on observations and inform its work priorities.
- **Member Briefings** To continue to publish Member Briefings on the work of the Committee, underlining the importance of the Cardiff Undertaking and Member conduct and behaviour.
- **Code of Conduct Complaints** - To receive quarterly reports on complaints made against Members of the Council alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- **Gifts and Hospitality** - To continue to monitor the registers of gifts and hospitality received by Members.
- **Senior Officers' Personal Interests** – to continue to monitor senior officers' personal interests declarations.
- **Whistleblowing Policy** - To review the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and its implementation; and to receive information on reports made under the Policy and consider any ethical issues arising.
- **Training** - to ensure the delivery of training on the Members' Code of Conduct following the local government elections in May 2022; and any training requirements of group leaders in connection with their new statutory duties in relation to Member conduct.
- **Annual Meeting with Group Leaders and Whips** - To facilitate ongoing engagement with representatives from all political groups.



# Committee Membership 2020/21

## INDEPENDENT MEMBERS



**Prof. James Downe  
(Chair)**

James is a Professor in Public Management and Director of Research at the Wales Centre for Public Policy at Cardiff University. He has more than fifteen years' experience of managing large-scale evaluations of public policy. His current research interests are in evidence-informed policy-making, local government performance regimes, political accountability, and the ethical behaviour of local politicians. He was a member of the UK Government's Expert Panel on local governance and sat on the Welsh Government's Public Service Scrutiny Reference Group. He became an Independent Member of the Standards and Ethics Committee in November 2013 and was appointed Vice-Chair on 21 October 2014; and Chair from September 2019.



**Hollie Edwards-Davies  
(Vice-Chair)**

Hollie Edwards-Davies was brought up in Rhyl, North Wales and has lived in Riverside, Cardiff for 12 years. She studied for a LLB honours degree in Law with Legal Studies in Europe at the University of Reading, including a year in Germany at *Universität Trier*. She subsequently completed a degree in Applied Accounting by distance learning with Oxford Brookes University and continued her studies to become a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) in 2010. Hollie served as Chair of the ACCA South Wales Members Network Panel between 2013 and 2015, and is still an active member of the network. Following a variety of roles in the private sector and some voluntary work, Hollie worked at the Welsh Government for ten years and departed in 2015 to pursue a career change. She joined the Standards and Ethics Committee in July 2014; stepped down in November 2017 and resumed her position in June 2018 following maternity absence. Hollie was elected as Vice-Chair in September 2019 and will become Chair from 1st November 2021.



**Jason Bartlett**

Jason Bartlett worked within the private sector running a number of businesses over a twenty five year period. He studied at the University of Glamorgan completing a post graduate course in Leadership and Management from the ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management). He has been a Magistrate in Cardiff since 2003, serves as a Chair for Social Care Wales on Fitness to Practice and was also appointed as an independent person to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority. He also served on the CHC (Community Health Council ) for Cardiff and Vale. Other voluntary work included many years as a lay member for the Royal College of Anaesthetists as well as Chair for his local PACT meetings. Jason was appointed as an Independent Member of the Standards and Ethics Committee in November 2019.



**Arthur Hallett**

Arthur Hallett was born and brought up in Essex and came to South Wales in 1983. Arthur is a retired NHS Senior Manager having spent virtually all his working life in the public sector including over 30 years in the NHS specialising in Payroll, Pensions and Human Resources Management. He has a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Cardiff Business School. Previously he was a magistrate on the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Bench as Chair in Adult, Youth and Family Courts; a member of the Independent Social Services Appeals Panels under the aegis of the Welsh Government; a member (including six years as Chair) of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Standards Committee; and a member of the Institute of Personnel and Development and the Institute of Health Services Management. He is currently a member of the Wales Government sub-committee for NHS Consultants Clinical Excellence Awards; and sits as a Chair for the Valuation Tribunal for Wales. Arthur became an Independent Member of the Standards and Ethics Committee in November 2019.



**Chrissie Nicholls**

Chrissie Nicholls has worked in the public and third sector for almost 20 years as an experienced senior and project manager for Local Government and a number of National and International charities. Since 2016 she has been working as an independent consultant, providing business development, governance and capacity building support to the third sector, and research and evaluation programmes for local authorities across Wales. She particularly specialises in violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. Originally born in Cardiff, Chrissie studied in Nottingham before moving to London. She returned to Cardiff in 2012 and now lives in the Vale of Glamorgan. In addition to her work, Chrissie is a Trustee for Cancer Research Wales, and chair of the Income Generation, Marketing and Communications Committee. Chrissie will become vice-chair of the Committee from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021.

## **COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR MEMBER**






**Community  
Councillor Stuart  
Thomas**

Community Councillor Stuart Thomas was appointed to the Standards & Ethics Committee at Full Council on 26 October 2018. Stuart has been a Member of the Pentyrch Community Council since May 1991 and has been Chair of the Community Council on numerous occasions. Stuart has a background in financial management and Banking

For a time, he served as County Secretary for the Cardiff and the Vale Association of Local Councils, the local Association of NALC which has now been superseded as One Voice Wales the umbrella organisation that supports Community Council in Wales. He continues to represent his community Council on the One Voice Wales Cardiff and the Vale area meetings. He has provided particular support in the Induction and ongoing training of Community Councillors on Pentyrch Community Council.

## COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES

 <p><b>Councillor Stephen Cunnah</b></p>	<p>Serving the <b>Canton</b> Ward</p> <p><b>Term of Office:</b> 04/05/2017 –</p> <p><b>Serving on the following committees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Council</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Governance &amp; Audit Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Standards &amp; Ethics Committee</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Outside Bodies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Chapter (Cardiff) Limited</a></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Councillor Joel Williams</b></p>	<p>Serving the <b>Pontprenau and Old St Mellons</b> Ward</p> <p><b>Term of Office:</b> 04/05/2017 –</p> <p><b>Serving on the following committees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Appointments Committee - Chief Human Resources Officer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Appointments Committee - Director Education &amp; Lifelong Learning</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Council</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Council Appeals Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Governance and Audit Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Standards &amp; Ethics Committee</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Outside Bodies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cardiff University Court</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">South Wales Fire &amp; Rescue Authority</a></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Councillor Emma Sandrey</b></p>	<p>Serving the <b>Pentwyn and Llanedeyrn</b> Ward</p> <p><b>Term of Office:</b> 04/05/2017 –</p> <p><b>Serving on the following committees:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Council</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Democratic Services Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Environmental Scrutiny Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Standards &amp; Ethics Committee</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Outside Bodies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cardiff Bus</a></li> </ul>

# Attendance Record

The Committee meets quarterly, with additional ad hoc meetings held as required. During 2020/21, the Standards and Ethics Committee met on the following dates:

- 30 September 2020
- 9 December 2020
- 3 March 2021

COMMITTEE MEMBER	ATTENDANCE MAIN COMMITTEE	
	Possible	Actual
Prof. James Downe (Chair)	3	3
Hollie Edwards-Davies (Vice-Chair)	3	1
Jason Bartlett	3	3
Chrissie Nicholls	3	3
Arthur Hallett	3	3
Community Councillor Stuart Thomas	3	3
Councillor Stephen Cunnah	3	3
Councillor Emma Sandrey	3	3
Councillor Joel Williams	3	3

## Helpful Contacts

**Chair of Standards & Ethics Committee – Prof. James Downe**

Email: [democraticservices@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Director of Governance & Legal Services and Monitoring Officer – Davina Fiore**

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**Contact: Committee & Members Services**

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**Public Services Ombudsman for Wales – Mr Nick Bennett**

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