

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday, 1 November 2021
Report Subject	Standards Forum Pre-Briefing
Report Author	Gareth Owens Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mid and North Wales Standards Forum (“the Standards Forum”) meets to enable the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Standards Committees to share good practice and learn from each other. It provides a support network to Independent Members who might otherwise be more isolated due to their position as co-opted members on Committees, some of which meet relatively infrequently.

The next meeting is due to take place in November and should be hosted by Gwynedd County Council. The delayed biennial Standards Conference is also due to take place in November and may displace the planned meeting of the Forum. If the meeting does proceed then the Committee will need to suggest items for the agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee suggests items for the agenda of the next meeting of the Standards Forum.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE STANDARDS FORUM
1.01	The Mid and North Wales Standards Forum (“the Standards Forum”) meets to enable the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Standards Committees to share good practice and learn from each other. It provides a support network to Independent Members who might otherwise be more isolated due to their position as co-opted members on Committees, some of which meet relatively infrequently.
1.02	The member Councils take turns to host the Standards Forum. By convention the meeting is attended by the Chair and Vice Chair with only the Monitoring Officer from the host authority being present. Gwynedd County Council have volunteered to host the next meeting. It is due to be held in November though the planned biennial Standards Conference may delay this.
1.03	The purpose of the forum is to support Independent Members who, by reason of being co-opted, may not have an extended network amongst other Councils. As a body set up to support its membership each Standards Committee suggests items for discussion and inclusion on the agenda.
1.04	The Penn Review will be a significant item for discussion even after the Standards Conference as authorities compare notes on their proposed response to its findings. Another possible item for discussion will be training and induction plans following the forthcoming elections. Many Councils also struggle with social media and how to manage disruptive or poor behaviour (within the safeguards for freedom of expression).
1.05	The Committee is asked to consider any areas where it thinks that hearing views/practice from other Councils might benefit its work.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None directly arising from this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	This report is itself consulting the Committee for its views.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The Standards Forum can help to ensure that Independent Members and Standards Committees do not operate in isolation. The Committee is of course free to address any issue that is within its terms of reference in the

	manner that it sees fit and should not feel constrained by whether another Council has not encountered an issue or has tackled it in a different manner.
4.02	The Monitoring Officer will advise if there are any equalities implication arising from topics that are suggested for the agenda of the next Standards Forum meeting.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Gareth Owens, Chief Officer Governance Telephone: 01352 702344 E-mail: Gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	None.