

Meeting of:	Standards Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 20 November 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Adjudication Panel for Wales – Annual Report 2024/25
Purpose of Report:	To provide Standards Committee with an update in respect of the work of the Adjudication Panel for Wales.
Report Owner:	Victoria Davidson, Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
Responsible Officer:	Amy Rudman, Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer.
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	This report does not require consultation to be undertaken.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for decision by the Standards Committee.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide Standards Committee with an update in respect of the work of the Adjudication Panel for Wales. • The report covers the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025. • Members’ attention is drawn to Case Summaries at Section 3 of the document. 	

Recommendation

1. Committee is asked to note the contents of the Annual Report April 2024 to March 2025 of the Adjudication Panel for Wales.

Reason for Recommendation

1. For Committee information and consideration.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) is an independent tribunal that has been set up to determine alleged breaches against an authority's statutory Code of Conduct by elected and co-opted members of Welsh county, county borough and community councils, fire and national park authorities. The APW was established under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 1.2 The APW's Function The Code of Conduct for an authority provides its members with a set of standards expected of them in public life. The Code of Conduct covers various requirements as to how members should conduct themselves and includes requirements in relation to equality, personal and prejudicial interests, confidential information, their authority's resources and the need to avoid bringing their office or authority into disrepute.
- 1.3 The APW has two statutory functions in relation to breaches of the Code of Conduct:
 - to form case or interim case tribunals ("Case Tribunals") to consider references from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW), following the investigation of allegations that a member has failed to comply with their authority's Code of Conduct; and
 - to consider appeals from members against the decisions of local authority standards committees that they have breached the Code of Conduct ("Appeal Tribunals").

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The link to the Adjudication Panel for Wales(APW) Annual Report for 24/25 can be found here:
[Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report 2024-2025](#)
- 2.2 **Section 1** of the report provides information in respect of the role of the APW, the regulations it operates within, its process, membership and how they can be contacted.

- 2.3 Section 2** refers to its performance and progress.
- 2.4 Section 4** refers to its Business Priorities:
- Implement Welsh Language Standards following legislative change.
 - Strengthen tribunal resilience by appointing additional legal members.
 - Maintain high standards of service delivery and judicial training.
- 2.5 Section 5** refers to its Expenditure.
- 2.6** Members’ attention is particularly drawn to **Section 3** of the report titled Case Summaries which provides details and outcomes of case referrals made to the APW. A summary of which is set out below:

Performance and Case Activity (2024–25)

Hearings held:

- o 4 case tribunal hearings
- o 1 appeal hearing.

No onward appeals to the High Court were made.

All performance targets met, including:

- o Timely notice of hearings
- o Decision reports issued within 30 working days
- o Applications discharged within 12 months.

Case Summaries

- Flintshire & Connah’s Quay: Disqualification (4 months) for bullying, harassment, and misuse of position.
- Ceredigion & Aberystwyth: Disqualification (3 years) for predatory behaviour and sustained misconduct.
- New Quay: Disqualification (12 months) for sexually explicit messages and harassment.
- Bridgend: Disqualification (21 months) for disrespect and pattern of poor behaviour toward the clerk.
- Appeal (Bridgend): Suspension reduced from 6 months to 10 weeks due to lack of repeated breaches.

Key Observations

- Social media misuse by councillors is a recurring theme in cases.
 - Public misunderstanding of tribunal processes noted; steps planned to improve clarity.
- No formal complaints received about APW operations during the year.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** This report relates to the role of the Standards Committee to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of Members as detailed in the Council's Constitution.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** None as a direct result of this report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** None as a direct result of this report.

Employment

- 5.2** None as a direct result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** None as a direct result of this report.

6. Background Papers

None.