

REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER

SUBJECT: STANDARD CONFERENCE FOR WALES

Mr John Daniels and I attended the conference held in Aberystwyth on the 14th of September. Claire Sharp the President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales and Mr Nick Bennett, the PSOW, amongst others gave a talk. Claire noted that bullying and harassment (Part 2 point 4 (c) of the Code of Conduct) and equality issues (4A) are increasing areas of referral.

There is a new guidance booklet on sanctions and the approach taken by the Panel in a Tribunal – see website of the APW <http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/apw/apw04-en.pdf> or hard copy at the meeting. This is designed to be a “living document” and will change if necessary to reflect any practice issues as they arise.

The guidance has been written in consultation with the PSOW, monitoring officers and others:

- It is written to be relevant to all those who deal with the Code of Conduct not just the APW in its tribunals.
- It sets out the ten principles to be followed for public life (p3) and the powers available to it as sanctions (p6).
- It identifies 6 underlying principles to be followed when it (or others) consider a case.
- It sets out a five stage process for determining what sanctions to apply (p9).
- It is not prescriptive, and does not offer a fixed "tariff" for sanctions in order to retain the flexibility necessary to deal with the facts of each case.
- It offers good guidance and an effective template for dealing with cases that come before the APW and, I would suggest, any Standards Committee.

There were various workshop sessions. I attended one on “Standards Hearings - Practical issues” and a copy of the notes for this is will be available.

Feed- back on the day was given at the Monitoring Officers bi monthly meeting held in October, and this was all positive.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members note this report