

Finance Committee

Draft Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill

DB PSOW 15 Vale of Glamorgan Council

**VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON THE DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICES  
OMBUDSMAN (WALES) BILL**

1. The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Standards Committee, on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2015, considered the draft Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill ("the Bill").
  
2. Having considered the contents of the draft Bill, the Committee was agreed that there were issues that should be raised, namely:
  - The impact on resources
  - The provisions of the draft Bill would entail a great deal of co-operation involving the Ombudsman, the Auditor General and the Future Generations Commissioner.

The Committee's main concern centred on the impact on resources.

3. In noting that the provisions of the Bill would widen the powers of the Ombudsman by:
  - Granting powers to commence his / her own investigations without first having received a complaint about an issue
  - Enabling him / her to investigate issues when a patient had received private health care in conjunction with public health care.

The Committee was concerned that should the above extensions to the Ombudsman's powers be granted, and as available resources may decline, there could be pressure on the Ombudsman to:

- Widen the Local Dispute Resolution Process to include Town / Community Councillors. This would result in capacity issues within Principal Councils.
- Reduce the emphasis to investigate complaints concerning Members' Code of Conduct issues with a potential indirect impact on lowering of standards of the conduct of Members.