

Procedure for Dealing with Complaints against Members of the Senedd

With regard to the current Standards of Conduct Committee Consultation on proposed revisions to the procedure for dealing with complaints against Members of the Senedd, I wish to make the following response.

1 Timescales

I am content for there to be a six month time frame for a complaint unless in exceptional circumstances. This will allow a person reasonable time to make their complaint without the danger of leaving it open ended with the possibility of the procedure being misused.

2 Information

I wholeheartedly support the need for the process to be transparent and open. It is vital that all parties involved should be aware of what is going on as their case progresses.

3 The Complainant

I believe the system in place is adequate and allows updates to be provided.

4 Point 23

I believe Point 23 is very important and the Commissioner should be allowed the discretionary features as described to avoid wasting time on complaints which do not merit investigation.

5 Point 25

I am fully being the point regarding rectification. Both Members and their staff are capable of human error and should be given the chance to resolve any error which has occurred and to apologise for any lapse.

6 Appeals

I do feel that the appeals process is already too long. I believe that any member subject to investigation should be provided one final opportunity to present any additional information or evidence that is relevant to their case.

7 Redactions

I understand and support the need for redactions on the grounds of confidentiality. However, if a Member has been publicly accused and is subsequently vindicated, then their name should be published to avoid their reputation being damaged by the media, in particular social media. The Senedd should support its Members if they are vindicated and exonerated. I am content with the details of the complainant being kept.

Natasha Asghar MS