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Standards Committee
5th October 2016

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2016

PRESENT

Independent Member Mrs H Rhydderch-Roberts (Chair)

Independent Members: Mrs C Jackson, Mrs J Evans, Mr S Hays, Mrs S Jarman
County Councillors: P J Medlicott, K M Roberts-Jones, K S Silk and G I S Williams

1.	MINUTES	S29-2016
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 29th June 2016 as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

PRESENT

Independent Member Mrs H Rhydderch-Roberts (Chair)

*Independent Members: Mrs C Jackson, Mrs J Evans, Mrs S Hays, Mrs S Jarman
County Councillors: P J Medlicott, K Silk and G I S Williams*

2.	APOLOGIES	S30-2016
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No apologies for absence were received.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	S31-2016
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No declarations of interest were received.

4.	REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL	S32-2016
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The Committee received the report of the Solicitor to the Council (copy filed with signed minutes).

A. General Standards Issues for County Councillors and Co-opted Members

A1 Code of Conduct Training

It was reported to the last meeting that arrangements were made for the remaining four Members to receive this refresher training by means of the Members providing written responses to 3 or 4 questions considered at the refresher training sessions. The scenarios were sent to the four Members. Only one Member had attempted the scenarios but seems unclear as to what response is required. The other 3 Members have not responded.

At the last meeting the Committee agreed that the Chair write to those four members (County Councillors G.M. Jones, G.D. Price, W.D. Powell

and M.J. Dorrance) seeking a response as to why they had not completed this training.

County Councillor M Dorrance replied indicating that he had submitted the response. There was no record of receipt of this and the Head of Democratic Services was asked to follow this up.

County Councillor G Jones replied indicating he had been ill around the time of one of the training sessions and had not picked up on the dates of the other sessions offered. He had responded to the written questions and the Head of Democratic Services was asked to contact Cllr Jones to discuss his responses.

Neither Cllr Price nor Cllr Powell had replied to the Chair on this matter. However, the Head of Democratic Services reported that Cllr Powell had been attempting to secure training elsewhere. The Committee asked that he be contacted to find out if he had been able to undertake this training elsewhere. If not he would be invited to the next meeting.

Resolved to write to Cllr G Price and Cllr W Powell (if applicable) inviting them to the next meeting of the Standards Committee to explain their non attendance at refresher Code of Conduct training.

B. Referral of Councillors to Public Services Ombudsman

B1. County Councillor Referrals

B1.1 The current position regarding existing matters with the Ombudsman is as follows:

6/15/CC	Referred to the Standards Committee
8/15/CC	Ombudsman investigating
9/15//CC	Ombudsman investigating
04/16/CC	Ombudsman investigating
07/16/CC	Ombudsman investigating

Since the last meeting the following referrals have been received and the current position is shown:

09/CC/2016	Ombudsman investigating
10/CC/2016	Ombudsman investigating
11/CC/2016	Not investigating
12/CC/2016	Not investigating
13/CC/2016	Not investigating
14/CC/2016	Not investigating
15/CC/2016	Ombudsman investigating
16/CC/2016	Ombudsman investigating
17/CC/2106	Ombudsman investigating
18/CC/2016	Not investigating

C. Other Standards Issues

None.

D Dispensations

D1. Applications - County Councillors

No applications for dispensation have been received from County Councillors.

E. Attendance

E.1 Member attendance

At the last meeting of Standards Committee the following resolution was made:

Resolved to invite Cllr Harris to provide in writing a full explanation for each absence for the period 1st December 2015 to 10th June 2016.

The letter from Cllr Harris was circulated at the meeting. It was agreed to acknowledge the letter, note that Cllr Harris no longer sits on the Planning Committee and advise that Standards Committee will continue to monitor attendance.

F Late payment of expenses

A claims for payment of expenses was submitted by Councillor Dai Jones for mileage expenses (submitted on 11th August 2016 for April and May 2016).

The Committee decided to approve this application (which was the first one for mileage made by this Member) but indicated that it would be unlikely to look favourably on further applications unless there were exceptional circumstances and requested that the Member put in place appropriate systems to ensure claims were submitted within time.

RESOLVED THAT:	REASON FOR DECISION
i) the payment of the late claim submitted by Cllr Dai Jones for mileage be paid for the period April and May 2016	To reimburse expenses incurred by Cllr D Jones.

G Ombudsman's Casebook

The Ombudsman has published Code of Conduct Casebooks for the following periods:

- July 2015 – September 2015
- September 2015 – December 2015
- January 2016 – March 2016
- April 2016 – June 2016

Copies of the Casebooks can be accessed from the website of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales at:

<http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/en/publications/The-Code-of-Conduct-Casebook.aspx>

H. Meeting Dates

To note dates of future meetings as follows:

Wednesday 15th February 2017

Wednesday 28th June 2017

Wednesday 4th October 2017

All meetings to commence at 10.00am with the option of training available afterwards.

Mrs H Rhydderch-Roberts (Chair)