

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD AT BY TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2021

PRESENT: Mr S Hays (Chair)

Independent Members: Mrs J Evans, Mrs C Moore and Mr N Steward

County Councillors: A Jenner, S McNicholas and K M Roberts-Jones

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs C Mulholland (Independent Member) and County Councillor K S Silk.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED that Independent Member Chris Mulholland be appointed as Vice Chair for her term of office.

3. MINUTES

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021 as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

5. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The Committee received the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (copy filed with signed minutes).

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

A1. Code of Conduct Training

The Committee noted that one Member is still required to complete the Mid-term mandatory Code of Conduct training. The Committee asked that the training be offered to the Member in a variety of ways to facilitate its completion.

It was moved and duly seconded that the Committee write to the Member asking them to complete the training by the end of the month, unless they had difficulties in accessing the training.

RESOLVED	Reason for decision
That a letter be sent to the member asking that the mandatory Code of Conduct training be completed by the end of October 2021, unless they had	To ensure mandatory training is completed.

difficulties in accessing the training.	
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B. Referral of Councillors to the Public Services Ombudsman

B1. County Council Referrals

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that she had liaised with the Ombudsman and the list of referrals had been updated. The current position regarding matters with the Ombudsman is detailed below:

02/CC/2020 Ombudsman investigating

01/CC/2021 Ombudsman deciding whether or not to investigate

02/CC/2021 Ombudsman not investigating

03/CC/2021 Ombudsman deciding whether or not to investigate

04/CC/2021 Ombudsman investigating

C. Dispensations

C1. Applications - County Councillors

Further to the discussions at the last meeting, officers had drafted a dispensation in respect of wool production, in response to the request from County Councillor Vaughan.

The Committee considered the draft. The Committee considered that a farming councillor being able to speak in general terms would be of benefit to all sheep farmers, not just the speaker.

It was moved and duly seconded to approve the dispensation.

RESOLVED	Reason for decision
<p>i) a dispensation be granted to those Members who are sheep farmers, (including close personal associates involved in sheep farming) to speak but not vote on matters relating to Wool Production and having spoken to leave the room.</p> <p>(ii) the dispensation shall continue in force until the first meeting of the Standards Committee after the next ordinary council elections in 2022 unless before those elections the Standards Committee revokes, amends or alters the dispensation.</p>	<p>i) due to the rural nature of the county a significant proportion of the Council was affected and unable to take part in a discussion on this matter, and Council thereby would lose their expertise</p> <p>ii) that no fewer than half of the Members of the Authority or of a committee of the Authority by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business,</p> <p>iii) that the nature of the Member's interest is such that the Member's participation in the business to which the interest relates would not damage public confidence in</p>

	the conduct of the relevant Authority's business.
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D. Late Payment of Expenses

There were no requests for late payments of expenses.

E. Standards Committee – changes to Constitution

The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 requires that Standards Committee presents an annual report to Council. The Committee noted the draft amendments to Section 8: Standards Committee contained in the Constitution which will be considered by Council in due course. Section 4 of the Constitution had already been amended to state that the Council would be required to consider such an annual report.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that the report would be drafted by officers in conjunction with the Chair and for approval by the Committee. It was noted that officers were liaising with Monitoring Officers in Wales on the format and detail of such a report.

F. Ombudsman's Casebook

There are no new Code of Conduct Casebooks.

G. North Wales Standards Forum

It was agreed that the notes of the meeting would be circulated when available.

H. Standards Conference Wales

Details of the Standards Conference would be circulated when available.

J. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

K. Meeting dates

The Committee noted the 2022 meeting dates:

9 February 1400hrs

9 September 0930hrs – induction training [once the community council appointments have been made to the Community sub-committee]

15 September 1400hrs

5 December 1400hrs

Mr S Hays (Chair)