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Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To:

Councillors: David Cox, Hilary McGuill and
Arnold Woolley

CS/NG

12 February 2013

Co-opted Members

Chris Bretherton-Watt, Jonathan Duggan-Keen,
Patricia Jones, Kenneth Martin and Merfyn Roberts

01352 702350

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **MONDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 2013** at **6.00 PM** to consider the following items.

Please note that a training session for Standards Committee Members will be held from 6.00pm – 6.30pm.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting.

4 **APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

To receive a verbal update from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

5 **ANNUAL ALL WALES STANDARDS CONFERENCE** (Pages 5 - 8)

To inform members of the proposed content for the All Wales Annual Standards Conference to be held on the 19 April 2013 and to request nominations to fill the places allocated to Flintshire County Council.

6 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 9 - 10)

For the Committee to consider topics to be included on the attached Forward Work Programme.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

7 **RESIGNATION** (Pages 11 - 12)

To note the attached letter of resignation.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE **3 DECEMBER 2012**

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at Flintshire County Council on Monday 3 December 2012

PRESENT: Mr. K.P. Sibbons (Chairman)

Mr C. Bretherton Watt, Mr J. Duggan-Keen, Mrs P.S. Jones
Councillors: H.J. McGuill and A. Woolley

ALSO PRESENT:

As an observer: Councillor P. Heesom

APOLOGIES:

Councillor D.L. Cox, Mr M. Roberts, Mr K.A. Martin

IN ATTENDANCE:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Democracy and Governance
Manager, Committee Officer.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

32. MINUTES

Accuracy

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services pointed out that some of the statistical information on page 3, paragraph 26, which, although had been accurately recorded in the minutes as the words of the speaker, was mathematically incorrect. The paragraph quoted that 37 Councillors from a possible 441 seats equated to 16 % attendance. The sentence should be changed to "In total 37 Councillors, from a possible 441 seats attended which equated to an 8% attendance."

Also, in paragraph 26, "Three training sessions were held in May for County Councillors and 6 attended. This represented 4% of the total number of Councillors and 60% of those Councillors elected in May 2012 who had not previously been a County Councillor". The sentence should be replaced with the following: "Three training sessions were held in May for County Councillors and 6 attended. This represented 8.6% of the total number of Councillors and 60% of those Councillors elected in May 2012 who had not previously been a County Councillor".

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2012 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the matters of accuracy quoted above.

33. DISPENSATIONS

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced Item 4 on the agenda which related to an application for dispensation by Councillor Glyn Banks. He explained that Councillor Banks was one of the members of the committee formed to organise the erection of a monument comprising the former point of Ayr pit head in Ffynnongroew.

A planning application for the monument had been submitted and whilst Councillor Banks did not wish to speak or vote at Planning Committee, he had submitted an application for Dispensation to be able to communicate with officers verbally and in writing about the application.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised the committee that this request could be granted under paragraphs D and H of Section 81(4) of the Local Government Act 2000 as the request was unlikely to damage public confidence and related to committee membership of a voluntary organisation in which Councillor Glyn Banks had no other interest. He reminded the committee that as in previous discussions about dispensations, in the interests of transparency and openness, that permission should only be allowed for written communications and not verbal communication. This would also serve as a permanent record of any communications between the councillor and officers.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed the committee that the Democracy and Governance Manager had already advised Councillor Glyn Banks, that similar requests had been granted for written communications only, for the reasons cited above.

There were no questions and it was agreed that Councillor Glyn Banks be permitted to communicate in writing only with officers concerning the proposed monument at Ffynnongroew.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Glyn Banks be granted dispensation by the Standards Committee to write to Council officers about the planning application for the erection of a monument at the former Point of Ayr Pit Head, Ffynnongroew.

34. TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

The Chair moved this item to item 6 on the agenda as this related to training which would be undertaken at the end of the meeting.

35. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised the committee that the January 2013 meeting would include feedback from the North Wales Standards Committee Forum meeting, to be held the same day.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that the protocol for the use of resources was to be referred back to the Group Leaders.

The Democracy and Governance Manager advised the Committee that progress had been made with the proposed database of previous dispensations, but nothing as yet confirmed as to when it would be operational.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that the recruitment of a new Chair Person and a new Independent Member would also be discussed at the January 2013 meeting. Councillor H.J. McGuill asked if notices had been circulated to the press about the recruitment of an independent member. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that this would be circulated in the imminent future. Councillor McGuill said that she was unable to attend the January 2013 committee meeting and asked if copies of all related paper work could be forwarded to her. The Chair proposed that the agenda item about the Recruitment of an Independent Member be deferred to the February 2013 meeting and this was agreed by the committee.

Councillor H.J. McGuill proposed a vote of thanks to Mr K.P. Sibbons and praised him for his work as chair of the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the agenda item concerning Recruitment of a new Independent Member be put back to February 2013.

36. TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services led a briefing on sanctions imposed by the Standards Committee and Adjudication Panel.

37. CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

A vote of thanks was recorded for Mr K.P. Sibbons for his work as chair of the committee.

38. DURATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.10 pm.

39. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

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Chairman

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2013**

REPORT BY: **MONITORING OFFICER**

SUBJECT: **ANNUAL ALL WALES STANDARDS CONFERENCE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.00 To inform members of the proposed content for the All Wales Standards Conference to be held on the 19 April 2013 and to request nominations to fill the places allocated to Flintshire County Council.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The All Wales Standards Conference is an annual event and each year it is held in a different location and covers items of topical interest on ethical and standards issues.

2.02 In previous years the Council has been allocated up to 8 places. Generally these places have been filled by Committee members and surplus places have been offered to Town and Community Councils to send representatives.

2.03 This year the event will take place on 19 April at Venue Cymru in Llandudno. The number of places available to the Council has however been reduced to four due to the size of the premises. In previous years one of those places would have been taken by the Monitoring Officer but this year as I am doing one of the presentations I have been given a free place.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Council has five places available to it. It is for the Committee to choose who will fill those places. I would suggest that the Chair should attend if available but otherwise there are no limitations on how those places are used.

3.02 As with previous years, should there be any spare places then I would propose that we offer them to Town and Community Councils. If there are more volunteers than places then I would suggest that we draw lots to see who is allocated the place.

3.03 The attached programme for the event has been agreed (Appendix 1).

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That the Committee decide who should attend the annual conference.
- 4.02 That any surplus places are offered to Town and Community Councils within Flintshire and that in the event of there being more volunteers than places, that lots are drawn to decide who will attend.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The cost of the conference is estimated at £70 per delegate. Town and Community Councils will fund their own member attendance.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 None

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 None

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 None

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 None

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Appendix 1 – Conference Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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ALL WALES STANDARDS CONFERENCE 2013

Date: Friday, 19 April 2013

Venue : Venue Cymru, Llandudno

Balancing Rights and Responsibilities

10.00 – 10.30	Registration & Tea/Coffee
10.30 – 10.45	Welcome and introduction – Dilys Phillips, Chair of ACSeS
10.45 – 11.30	Plenary session 1 – Peter Tyndall, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
11.30 – 11.45	Tea/Coffee
11.45 – 12.45	Workshop session 1: 1A. Promoting standards proactively - Gwynedd 1B. Conducting hearings and sanctions – Denbighshire and Conwy 1C. Register of Interests and Dispensations – Isle of Anglesey and Flintshire
12.45 – 13.45	Lunch
13.45 – 14.30	Plenary session 2 – Local Resolution Procedures Introduction by WLGA and experiences from some authorities
14.30 – 14.45	Tea/Coffee
14.45 – 15.45	Workshop session 2: 2A. Promoting standards proactively - Gwynedd 2B. Conducting hearings and sanctions – Denbighshire and Conwy 2C. Standards issues for town and community councils and single purpose authorities – Wrexham and Snowdonia National Park
15.45 – 16.00	Closing remarks – Howie Roberts Chair of the North Wales Forum of Chairs and Vice-chairs of Standards Committees

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – STANDARDS COMMITTEE – FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Date of Meeting	Topic	Notes/Decision/Action
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirements from Committee 	Independent Member – M Roberts (Jan), Mrs P Jones (July)
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirements from Committee • 19 April – All Wales Standards Conference 	C Bretherton-Watt (Nov) Venue Cymru, Llandudno
18 February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any requests for dispensation • Recruitment of Independent Member • Election of new Chair person • Training Session • Protocol for use of resources • All Wales Standards Conference 	Independent Member – K Sibbons (Dec) Independent Member - K Martin (Feb), Ascertain how many members of the Standards Committee are interested in attending in April so that the remaining places can be offered to Town & Community Councils

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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