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Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Patricia Jones (Chair)

CS/NG

Councillors: David Cox, Hilary McGuill and
Arnold Woolley

6 May 2014

Co-opted Members

Robert Dewey, Jonathan Duggan-Keen, Phillipa
Ann Earlam, Edward Michael Hughes and Kenneth
Harry Molyneux

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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **MONDAY, 12TH MAY, 2014** at **6.30 PM** to consider the following items.

Please note that a training session for the Standards Committee members will be held from 6.00pm until 6.30pm.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

A G E N D A

- 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 meeting held on 7 April 2014.

4 **DISPENSATIONS**

5 **REPORT BACK FROM THE NORTH WALES STANDARDS COMMITTEES FORUM**

To receive a verbal update from the Chair and Vice-Chair from the meeting which took place at Flintshire County Council on 29 April 2014.

6 **RECORDING MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE** (Pages 5 - 8)

To consider the practicalities of recording Member attendance at training as part of the Council's website.

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

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

STANDARDS COMMITTEE **7 APRIL 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold, on Monday, 7 April 2014.

PRESENT: Patricia Jones (Chair)

Councillors: David Cox, Hilary McGuill and Arnold Woolley

Co-opted members: Robert Dewey, Jonathan Duggan-Keen, Phillipa Earlam, Edward Hughes, and Kenneth Molyneux

IN ATTENDANCE:

Democracy and Governance Manager, and Committee Officer

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Including Whipping Declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

53. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 March 2014 were submitted.

Accuracy

The Chair pointed out that the meeting had started at 6.30pm not 6.00pm as stated.

RESOLVED:

That with the amended starting time the minutes be received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

54. DISPENSATIONS

The Democracy and Governance Manager explained that Councillor Clive Carver had applied to extend the duration of his dispensation relating to 'Land at Overlea Drive' which had been granted for a year on 10 June 2013, for a further 12 months. He advised that the terms of the original application for dispensation which had been made by Councillor Carver were as detailed in the agenda. The Democracy and Governance Manager outlined the reasons for the request for an extension.

Mr Robert Dewey proposed that a 12 month extension be granted to the dispensation that was due to end on 16 June 2014. This was duly seconded by Councillor David Cox and agreed by the Committee.

The Democracy and Governance Manager reported that following publication of the agenda requests for dispensations had been received from

Councillors Brian Dunn and Glenys Diskin in relation to an item on Post Office Modernisation which was to be considered at a meeting of the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 28 April 2014.

The Democracy and Governance Manager explained that Councillor Brian Dunn was seeking dispensation to remain in the room and speak and vote on the item under paragraphs (d) and (f). Councillor Glenys Diskin was seeking dispensation to speak on the item under paragraphs (e) and (f), however, following advice from the Democracy and Governance Manager she had amended her application to seek dispensation under paragraphs (d) and (f).

The Democracy and Governance Member advised that Councillor Brian Dunn was Chairman of the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He expressed the view that he should not Chair the meeting when the item was being considered due to issues around public perception and suggested that the Committee may wish to consider this.

Councillor Arnold Woolley referred to the role and responsibilities of the Chairman during meetings and spoke in support of the view that it would not be advisable for Councillor Dunn to Chair the meeting when the item on Post Office Modernisation was being discussed.

Councillor Hilary McGuill proposed that Councillor Brian Dunn's request for dispensation to remain in the room and speak and vote on the item be granted, but that he did not Chair the meeting whilst the item was being considered. This was seconded by Councillor Arnold Woolley and agreed by the Committee.

The Democracy and Governance Manager suggested that for consistency the Committee may wish to grant dispensation to Councillor Diskin to vote as well as speak.

Councillor Hilary McGuill proposed that the request from Councillor Glenys Diskin for dispensation be granted to allow her to speak and vote on the item. This was seconded by Councillor David Cox and agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Councillor Clive Carver be granted an extension to his dispensation relating to 'Land at Overlea Drive' which would now end on 16 June 2015;
- (b) That Councillor Brian Dunn be granted dispensation under paragraphs (d) and (f) of the Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to speak at, remain in the room, and to vote on the item on Post Office Modernisation, but that he did not Chair the meeting of the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee whilst the item was considered; and

- (c) That Councillor Glenys Diskin be granted dispensation under paragraphs (d) and (f) of the Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to speak at, remain in the room, and to vote on the item on Post Office Modernisation.
- (d) That the dispensations to Councillors Dunn and Diskin be granted for a period of 12 months.

55. REVIEW OF PLANNING CODE OF PRACTICE – UPDATE

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced a report to update the Committee on the timescale for reviewing Flintshire's Planning Code of Practice. He provided background information and advised that the Welsh Government had recently published its draft Planning Bill. Consultation on the Planning Bill had ended on 26 February 2014 and it was considered it was unlikely to become law until some time in 2015. It had therefore been agreed to proceed with a review of Flintshire's Planning Code in advance of any such legislation.

The Democracy and Governance Manager explained that he had compared Flintshire's Planning Code with those for neighbouring authorities and had submitted suggested changes to the existing Flintshire Code to the Planning Department. Following the Planning Department's consideration of the changes to the Code a report would be submitted to the Planning Strategy Group and to a meeting of the Standards Committee scheduled to be held in July 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed timescale for reviewing the Flintshire Planning Code be noted.

56. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced the Forward Work Programme and invited members to put forward items for future consideration. He referred to the subject of Local Resolution Procedures and suggested that feedback on how the Local Resolution Procedure was working be provided to the meeting of the Committee scheduled for July 2014.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That feedback on the operation of Local Resolution Procedures be provided to the meeting of the Committee scheduled for July 2014; and
- (b) That subject to (a) the Forward Work Programme be agreed.

57. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and ended at 6.58 p.m.

58. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

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Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 12 MAY 2014**

REPORT BY: **MONITORING OFFICER**

SUBJECT: **RECORDING MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING
ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the practicalities of recording Member attendance at training as part of the Council's website.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At the committee's meeting on the 10 March during consideration of the annual report of the Adjudication Panel for Wales there was discussion on member training and the Chair raised the issue of training records being displayed on the Council's website. It was explained that this was not currently done but that the practicalities of doing so would be investigated.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Training is important to enable members to be effective. We offer member development interviews and survey councillors to see what their needs are. We then provide and procure a range of courses as set out below. New members receive a programme of induction training. Those members on particular committees or panels receive training specific to those fora, such as Planning Committee, Licensing Committee, Audit Committee and Pensions Panel. There is also an annual member development programme on skills and topics agreed each year by Democratic Services Committee. In addition there are ad-hoc briefings or training sessions held as and when needed. A current example of this is providing training individually to members as they are issued with iPads which are the subject of a phased roll-out to members. In addition members may be authorised to attend external training courses that they believe would be of benefit to them.

3.02 Besides the member training the Council organises the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) also arranges member development events. These are usually held on a regional basis on topics of interest to all Councils such as Overview & Scrutiny. The WLGA also has member induction courses following County Council elections and holds an annual conference with workshops on topics of current interest.

- 3.02 Where training is offered corporately to all members then Member Services maintain a record of attendance at such events. The accuracy of such records is dependent upon members recording their attendance on the attendance sheet and this being provided to Member Services.
- 3.03 As not all the training events offered are mandatory it is not possible to establish a percentage attendance rate. All that could realistically be recorded would be the number and names of events attended within a given period. The topics or skills covered in the annual member development programme tend to be repeated every few years. Experienced members who have previously attended such training are less likely to attend when training they have previously attended is repeated. Equally councillors bring skills from their private/professional lives that might make it unnecessary to attend some training events. A statistical record of attendance over recent years can therefore be misleading.
- 3.05 Attendance at member training events is monitored by the Democratic Services Committee. At its last meeting it wished to explore ways in which member attendance at training events could be increased. It decided that a questionnaire should be sent to all members to explore ways of increased attendance and for the results to be reported to its next meeting in July. These results can also be reported to the committee.
- 3.06 In view of the considerations referred to in paragraphs 3.01 to 3.03 above it is considered that publishing attendance at member training events on the Council's website is not practical and will give a misleading impression to the public.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That member attendance at training events continue to be recorded by Member Services but statistics not be published on the Council's website.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Any change to the existing arrangements could have personnel implications.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None as a result of this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None as a result of this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.00 None

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

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – STANDARDS COMMITTEE – FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Date of Meeting	Topic	Notes/Decision/Action
July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training• Retirement from Committee• Planning Code of Practice• Local Resolution Procedure	Independent Member – Mrs P Jones (July) April meeting - feedback on how the Local Resolution Procedure was working be provided to the Committee in July
June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training• Review of effectiveness and operation of Local Resolution Procedure• Review of Members and Officers Codes of Conduct	
May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training• Review of Members and Officers Codes of Conduct	Case Hearing in front of the Standards Committee.

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