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Contact Officer:  
Maureen Potter 01352 702322

To: Edward Michael Hughes (Chairman)

Councillors: David Cox, Hilary McGuill and Arnold Woolley

## **Co-opted Members**

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

1 March 2016

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Standards Committee which will be held at 6.30 pm on Monday, 7th March, 2016 in the Clwyd Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA 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**

## **A G E N D A**

### **1 APOLOGIES**

**Purpose:** To receive any apologies.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

**Purpose:** To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

### **3 MINUTES (Pages 3 - 6)**

**Purpose:** To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2016.

### **4 DISPENSATIONS (Pages 7 - 8)**

**Purpose:** To receive any requests for dispensations.

### **5 STANDARDS FORUM**

To receive a verbal update from the Chief Officer (Governance)

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

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

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Evans', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Evans  
Democracy & Governance Manager

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** **8 FEBRUARY 2016**

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold, on Monday, 8 February 2016.

### **PRESENT: Robert Dewey (Vice Chair in the Chair)**

#### **Councillors:**

David Cox, Hilary McGuill and Arnold Woolley

#### **Co-opted Members:**

Jonathan Duggan-Keen, Phillipa Earlam and Ken Molyneux

### **APOLOGY:**

Edward Hughes

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Monitoring Officer and Team Manager – Committee Services

## **34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (including whipping declarations)**

None were received.

## **35. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2015 were submitted.

The Monitoring Officer explained that the proposed changes to the Local Resolution Procedure had been submitted to Constitution Committee on 27 January 2016 and were scheduled to be submitted to County Council on 1 March 2016.

### **RESOLVED:**

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

## **36. DISPENSATIONS**

None had been received.

## **37. REVIEW OF PROTOCOL ON COUNCILLOR NEWSLETTERS**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which provided background details on the decision of County Council to prohibit the use of Council resources for Councillors to produce newsletters in their ward. Also outlined was Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 which required the Council to make arrangements for every Member to prepare an annual report which it must then publish. Guidance published in May 2013

allowed Councils to set conditions/limits on what it contained within such reports, and also for Councils to decide how the reports would be published.

On 17 July 2013 the Democratic Services Committee resolved the following:

- (a) That the following conditions be imposed as part of the arrangements under Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011:
  - (i) That annual reports by Members must comply with the statutory guidance including the standard template referred to in paragraph 1.6 of that guidance;
  - (ii) That the contents of the annual report are not defamatory in the opinion of the Council's Monitoring Officer
- (b) That there are sufficient arrangements for publishing the annual reports and publicising their availability if they are published on the appropriate part of the Council's website and their availability publicised on it.

The Monitoring Officer said that since July 2013 there had been little take up of the production of annual reports, with three being published on the Council's website for 2014/15. However some Councillors did produce their own newsletters without support or assistance from the Council so there did not appear to be a need to amend the current arrangements. It was suggested that it would be useful to have clear data on the number of Councillors producing their own newsletters and the frequency.

Phillipa Earlam asked what was usually contained in annual reports and newsletters. The Monitoring Officer explained that they generally covered what the Councillor had undertaken on behalf of the electorate in a given time period. In response to a comment by Councillor Woolley the Monitoring Officer explained that details could be reported in a way in which individuals could not be identified.

Councillor Cox commented on a community newsletter that he and Councillor Aldrige produced for the residents of Flint Coleshill which provided information about the community only and did not cover any political issues.

In responding to a question from Councillor McGuill, the Monitoring Officer explained that under the current Council protocol Members should not use their iPad to draft newsletters, despite there being no cost implication. On a question from Councillor McGuill on what iPads could be used for, the Monitoring Officer referred to an adopted protocol for the use of IT which he would provide to Councillor McGuill.

Following a suggestion from Jonathan Duggan-Keen, it was agreed that the second recommendation in the report be amended to read "That all Councillors be asked to confirm whether they produce or contribute to newsletters or any other regular communications".

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the current arrangements for Councillor newsletters and annual reports be confirmed as sufficient and do not require amendment; and
- (b) That all Councillors be asked to confirm whether they produce or contribute to newsletters or any other regular communications.

**38. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Monitoring Officer updated the Committee on the training event with Town and Community Councils on the Code of Conduct which was attended by approximately 20 people. The slides from the event were available on the Council's website via the County Forum link.

A future item for the Forward Work Programme would be a report back on the data received by Members on newsletters or other regular communications produced. No other items were suggested by the Committee for inclusion in the programme.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted; and
- (b) That a future item be submitted on the data received by Members on newsletters or other regular communications produced.

**39. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

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

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and ended at 7.05pm.

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**Chairman**

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# Agenda Item 4

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE BY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL

<b>Name of Councillor</b>	Tim Newhouse
<b>Address</b>	6 The Courtyard Hawarden CH5 3DS
<b>Electoral Division</b>	Hope
<b>Nature of Dispensation sought</b>	To be allowed to speak at Audit Committee meetings in respect of reports relating to E Teach, but not to vote on them.
<b>Level of Dispensation sought (i.e. to speak only or to speak and vote)</b>	To speak only
<b>Relevant Paragraph under which Dispensation is requested (see over)</b>	(d), (e) and (f)
<b>Details of the Prejudicial Interest</b>	<p>My wife Angela Newhouse is a supply teacher, registered with E Teach, Capita, New Directions, Randstad and direct with schools.</p> <p>Pages 308 to 314 of January's Audit Committee meeting related to E Teach.</p> <p>E Teach costs the Council £44k per annum.</p> <p>Internal Audit is investigating if there are cheaper and better value-for-money alternatives to E Teach.</p> <p>Audit Committee postponed hearing the January report until March.</p> <p>I am keen to see a reduction in the £44k annual spend and would like to be able to speak at March's Audit Committee meeting on the pros and cons of E Teach, agencies and direct employment.</p> <p>I do not wish to vote.</p>
<b>Details of any Position of responsibility/control held on Council (eg Chairman/Vice-Chair)</b>	Audit Committee Chairman

<b>Signed:</b> <i>T Newhouse</i>	<b>Date:</b> 12/2/16
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## **Circumstances When A Standards Committee May Grant Dispensation**

The Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 specifies that the Council's Standards Committee may grant dispensations under Section 81(4) of the Local Government Act 2000 where:

- (a) no fewer than half of the Members of the Council or of a Committee of the Council (as the case may be) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which related to that business;
- (b) no fewer than half of the Members of the Executive of the Council (i.e. Leader and Cabinet) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business and either paragraph (d) or (e) also applies;
- (c) Members' inability to participate would upset the political balance of the Council, or any of its committees by which the business is to be considered, to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;
- (d) 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 the conduct of the Council's business;
- (e) the interest is common to the Member and a significant proportion of the general public;
- (f) the participation of the Member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the Member's particular role or expertise;
- (g) the registerable interest relates to business, which is to be considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Council, and the Member's interest is not a pecuniary/financial interest;
- (h) the business relates to the finances of property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board the Member is a member otherwise than as a representative of the Council and the Member has no other interest in that business, provided that any dispensation shall not extend to participation in any vote with respect to that business; or
- (i) it appears to the Standard Committee to be in the interest of the inhabitants of the area of the Council that the disability should be removed, provided that written notification of the grant of the dispensation is given to the National Assembly for Wales within 7 days. Such a notification should specify the Member to whom the dispensation would apply and the Standards Committee's reasons why the disability should be removed.



**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – STANDARDS COMMITTEE – FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Notes/Decision/Action</b>
	Data received by Members on newsletters or other regular communications produced	
<b>October 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training on Code of Conduct</li></ul>	Joint meeting with Town and Community Councils including a training session on the Code of Conduct
<b>March 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training</li><li>• Dispensation</li></ul>	

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