

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

8 JULY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Clwyd Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Monday, 8 July 2013

PRESENT: Mr Patricia Jones (Chair)

Councillors: David Cox, Hilary McGuill and Arnold Woolley

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

APOLOGIES: Head of Legal and Democratic Services, and Chris Bretherton-Watt.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Patrick Heesom

IN ATTENDANCE: Democracy and Governance Manager, and Committee Officer

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

11. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 June 2013 were submitted.

Matters arising

Page 3: The Democracy and Governance Manager advised that the Flintshire Local Resolution Procedure had been approved by Council at the meeting held on 25 June 2013.

Page 4: The Democracy and Governance Manager reported that the amended Code of Conduct for Members had also been approved at the above meeting.

In response to a request from members the Democracy and Governance Manager agreed to send a copy of the revised Code of Conduct for Members and the Local Resolution Procedure to the Committee. He also agreed to send a copy of the protocol for member/officer relations to Mrs. P. Earlam.

RESOLVED:

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

12. DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensation.

13. ETHICAL ADVICE ON COLLABORATION

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced a report to approve a Protocol on how ethical advice would be given in respect of collaboration between authorities. He provided background information and commented on the governance arrangements for collaborative working. He emphasised the need for Members to receive clear and consistent advice and referred to the importance of liaison between the Officers advising joint committees and the Monitoring Officers providing advice from the participating Councils.

The Democracy and Governance Manager advised that the process was designed to enable a collective view to be taken of potential interests and depended on advice being sought early to function at its most effective. He explained that unilateral action was still possible where advice had to be given without the opportunity for liaison. Members were asked to consider the draft Protocol which was attached to the report.

During discussion the Democracy and Governance Manager responded to the questions and concerns raised around the consequences if Members did not follow the advice given by the advisors or if the advice provided was not correct. He said that it was for the individual member to decide whether they had an interest and if they did which type it was. Whether the Member had followed the advice given would be an important factor for the Public Services Ombudsman irrespective of whether the advice had been correct.

Councillor H.J. McGuill sought clarification concerning the position of Member representatives who sat on the various committees and forums of outside bodies. The Democracy and Governance Manager advised that Members should obtain advice from the appropriate senior officer for the Body concerned. He said that if an organisation did not have a code of conduct then members should abide by the Flintshire Code of Conduct.

Councillor A. Woolley proposed that the Protocol be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor H.J. McGuill and became the resolution of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Protocol be approved.

14. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced the Forward Work Programme and invited members to put forward items for future consideration. He suggested that if members wished to add further items to the Programme at

any point in the future they could contact himself or the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to put their topics forward.

Councillor H.J. McGuill referred to the training session to be held at the 2 September 2013 meeting and suggested that an item be included to address the matter of where a Member has a dual role as a County Councillor and as a Community Councillor.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be agreed; and
- (b) That an item to address the matter of where a Member has a dual role as a County Councillor and as a Community Councillor be included in the training session to be held at the meeting of the Committee on 2 September 2013.

15. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 6.55 pm)

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Chairman