

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

18 JUNE 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of the Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Monday, 18 June 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Kevin Sibbons (Chairman)

Mr. Chris Bretherton-Watt, Mrs. Patricia Jones and Mr. Merfyn Roberts

Councillors: David Cox, Hilary McGuill and Arnold Woolley

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Bernie Attridge, Clive Carver, Richard Lloyd and Aaron Shotton

APOLOGIES: Mr Kenneth Martin.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Monitoring Officer and Committee Officer

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman welcomed and introduced newly elected Members to the Committee.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

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

3. DISPENSATION

The Chairman explained that Councillor C.S. Carver was in attendance at the meeting as he had submitted an application for dispensation in relation to 'land off Overlea Drive, Hawarden' to enable him to correspond and discuss with officers, make representations and speak upon planning applications at Flintshire County Council and Hawarden Community Council.

The Chairman invited Councillor Carver to outline his application in more detail. Councillor Carver provided background information and explained that he had made previous requests for dispensation on the matter. He referred to the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 13 September 2010 and reported that he had received dispensation to speak and vote on the item at Hawarden Community Council and to make written representations on the item including to the Planning Committee. He also submitted a further request for dispensation which was considered at the meeting of the Committee held on 14 November 2011, as he was unclear if his existing dispensation was for single or multiple

use. Following the meeting he had received a letter of dispensation from the Interim Monitoring Officer which he understood confirmed that dispensation had again been granted. However, in March 2012, when Councillor Carver sought further information from the Democracy and Governance Manager, he was advised that the dispensations granted in the minutes of the meetings of the Standards Committee held in September 2010 and November 2011 were not fully appropriate for the purpose intended by Councillor Carver.

The Monitoring Officer gave an overview of the circumstances when a Standards Committee may grant dispensations and advised on the specific grounds which were relevant to Councillor Carver's application. He responded to the queries raised by members and provided further advice to assist the Committee in its decision making process.

Councillor Carver withdrew from the meeting whilst the Committee made their decision.

The Committee considered the application together with the additional oral explanations provided by Councillor Carver at the meeting and it was agreed that Councillor C.S. Carver be granted a dispensation for a period of 12 months ending 17 June 2013.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Councillor C.S. Carver be granted a dispensation for a period of 12 months ending 17 June 2013 enabling him to:
1. make written representations to and to request written information from Flintshire County Council as Local Planning Authority;
 2. speak at and/or remain in the room during the debate:
 - at any council or committee meetings of Flintshire County Council and/or Hawarden Community Council at which the press and/or public are entitled to be present; and
 - which are considering matters pertaining to the planning application (including any subsequent appeal(s)) for land off Overlea Drive, Hawarden (or any application which in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee is substantially the same) as shown on the plan attached to the dispensation.
- (b) That under the terms of the dispensation Councillor C.S. Carver is not permitted to vote on nor exercise any council functions (whether executive or otherwise).

4. ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES

The Monitoring Officer referred to a letter and Notice of Decision from the Adjudication Panel for Wales, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda. He explained the item had been included on the agenda for information to provide the opportunity for the Committee to familiarise itself with decision making and thinking at Adjudication Panel and Ombudsman level. Members were also asked to consider any matters that could be derived from the case tribunal's decision or further action that may be taken.

The Monitoring Officer referred to the case tribunal recommendation that Saltney Town Council should seek advice and further training on the code of conduct from the Authority for all members following the May 2012 elections. He reported that he would be attending a meeting of Saltney Town Council in July to introduce himself as the new Monitoring Officer, and that he would offer training to the Council at that visit. He added that 3 training sessions had already been arranged to which all town and community councillors were invited (taking place on the 20th, 21st and 22nd June). If Saltney Town Council wished to host further training to which councillors on other town and community councils could be invited, then he would be happy to arrange it.

The Chairman commented on the invitation which the Authority extended to Town and Community Council representatives during the year to attend a meeting of the Standards Committee and submit questions for discussion. He suggested that the meeting would also provide an appropriate opportunity for consideration of topics such as training and other areas where representatives deemed advice and support was needed.

RESOLVED:

That the letter and Notice of Decision be noted.

5. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and ended at 6.48 p.m.

6. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were two members of the public and no members of the press in attendance.

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Chairman