

STANDARDS COMMITTEE
6 JANUARY 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Monday, 6 January 2020

PRESENT: Robert Dewey (Chair)

Councillors:

Patrick Heesom and Arnold Woolley

Co-opted member:

Julia Hughes

APOLOGIES: Ken Molyneux

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Morgan (as observer)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Officer

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

52. DISPENSATIONS

The Monitoring Officer presented the following dispensation request for consideration.

Councillor Clive Carver

As Councillor Carver was not in attendance the Monitoring Officer introduced the dispensation request. He advised that Councillor Carver sought dispensation to write to or speak with officers and to write to, speak and/or answer questions at Council/Committee meetings on matters relating to the Old Brewery, Ryeland Street, Shotton. Councillor Carver, as the Local Member for Hawarden, wished to represent two residents living within his Ward who were also family members and owners of the Old Brewery which had been leased by Flintshire County Council for the past 10 years. The Monitoring Officer referred to the prejudicial interest, as detailed on the application, and explained that as a County Councillor, Councillor Clive Carver was unable to provide assistance on this matter without a Dispensation and felt that his relatives were disenfranchised from representation by their Local Member; a task he could undertake for any of his constituents. The Monitoring Officer drew attention to details of the same request which had been previously considered by the Committee on 13 September 2010, and advised that a dispensation had been granted but had now lapsed.

The Monitoring Officer advised that Councillor Carver was applying for dispensation to make representations on behalf of his constituents, and cited the relevant criteria of (d) (f) and (j) under the Code of Conduct.

During discussion the Monitoring Officer responded to the comments raised by members around the need to maintain public confidence in the ethical procedures of the Council. Julia Hughes suggested that another County Councillor could be asked to represent the residents in this matter in place of Councillor Carver.

Councillor Arnold Woolley proposed that the dispensation be granted so that Councillor Clive Carver could write to or speak with officers to make representation on behalf of his family members. The dispensation to be granted for 12 months, ceasing on 5 January 2021. The proposal was seconded by Julia Hughes.

RESOLVED:

That Flintshire County Councillor Clive Carver be granted dispensation under paragraphs (d) (f) and (j) of the Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to write or to speak with officers to represent his family members who live in Hawarden in matters relating to the Old Brewery, Ryeland Street, Shotton. This allows for making verbal and written communications on the matter to officers of Flintshire County Council provided there is at least one witness when speaking to officers, thereby ensuring that there are at least three people involved in the conversation which is formally minuted. The dispensation to be granted for 12 months, ceasing on 5 January 2021.

53. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The current Forward Work Programme was considered. It was agreed that an item on Code of Conduct issues (which may have arisen from the Election period) and an item on Liaison with the Council on Ethical issues (feedback from the forthcoming meeting with the Leader and Chair of the Council) would be included on the Programme for consideration at the next meeting on 3 February 2020. It was also agreed that the item on Confidential Reporting Procedure which was scheduled for the next meeting would be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

It was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would put forward an item to the next meeting of the Committee looking at creating a sub-committee to enable the Standards Committee to consider urgent requests for dispensations that arise between the scheduled meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be noted.

54. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.38 pm)

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Chair