

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 2024 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor S Cullen – Chairperson

Present Virtually

MJ Williams
R Lynch

G Thomas
S Maughan

G Walter

P Baker

Officers:

Oscar Roberts
Laura Griffiths
Kelly Watson
Michael Pitman

Business Administrative Apprentice - Democratic Services
Principal Solicitor
Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services
Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services

Declarations of Interest

Cllr G Walter declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 – Approval of Exempt minutes, as he had previously declared a prejudicial interest at that particular meeting.

134. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of the 22/06/2023 and the 16/11/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.
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Date Decision Made	07 th March 2024
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135. Update from Observations of Town and Community Council Meetings and Council Meetings

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which updated the Committee on the observations undertaken by Members of this Committee observing meetings of Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Town and Community Councils (TCC).</p> <p>She explained that since the November meeting there have been 3 observations as listed in section 3 of the report. No specific feedback or concerns were given in relation to conduct. The observation sheet attached at Appendix 1 to the report had been provided to assist members with their observations.</p> <p>A Member queried the point made regarding Pencoed Town Council clerk/Members having asked whether they should have been consulted on. This was in relation to the decision made in the Standards Committee's November meeting to observe meetings. The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy stated that she did not believe Standards Committee Members needed to consult with them, as the remit of this committee covered Town & Community Councils also. The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy agreed to forward the correspondence she had with the clerk of the Town Council.</p> <p>A Member asked if there was a way to ensure that Members of the Committee were not double booking at a T&C Council meeting. The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy explained that a spreadsheet had previously been circulated which gave Members the chance to put their name down for a specific meeting and T&C Council of their choice. This would then be coordinated to ensure that Members were not all attending the same meetings.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noted the report and feedback from observations;• Confirmed the use of the observation sheet at Appendix 1.
Date Decision Made	07 th March 2024

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136. Standards Committee - Hearings Process

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which asked the Committee to note the adopted procedure to determine Code of Conduct complaints which are referred to the Standards Committee to ensure that matters are dealt with fairly and efficiently.</p> <p>She explained that the procedure was attached at Appendix 1. If there were to be any conflict between this document and any statutory requirements then those statutory requirements will prevail. The Monitoring Officer will advise the Committee as to process.</p> <p>A Member asked if it were possible to receive some guidance on the elected Members who sit on the Committee and their duty to declare an interest. He elaborated by giving an example that many hearings will often involve another elected Member whereby it makes it difficult for Committee Members to know what is a personal and what is a prejudicial interest, given that they work alongside them.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy explained that as with any interest, it is always on a case-by-case basis. There may be a situation whereby you work in the same ward with them, are in the same political group, or are friends with a witness in the case. She stated that she was always happy to have a detailed conversation if needed about what relationship you have with that person and whether that constitutes a prejudicial interest.</p>
Date Decision Made	07 th March 2024

137. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	07 th March 2024

138. Exclusion of the Public

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Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, as the minutes contained exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A and Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Act.</p> <p>Following the application of the public interest test it was resolved that pursuant to the provisions of the Act referred to above, to consider the under mentioned item in private with the public being excluded from the meeting, as it would involve the disclosure to them of exempt information as stated above.</p>
Date Decision Made	07 th March 2024

139. Approval of Exempt Minutes

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That the exempt minutes of the 22/06/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
Date Decision Made	07 th March 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 10:35