

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 2.00 PM**

Present

Mr P Clarke  
Mr J Baker

Mrs J Kiely

RD Jenkins

DRW Lewis

Apologies for Absence

Town Councillor A Davies, Mr C Jones OBE and Town Councillor RJ Hancock OBE

Officers:

Andrew Jolley  
Laura Griffiths  
Andrew Rees

Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services  
Senior Lawyer  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

154. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED: That in view of the apology received from the Chairperson, Mr Jeff Baker be elected Chairperson for the meeting.

(Mr J Baker in the Chair)

155. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor RD Jenkins declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 3 – Request for Dispensations as he is a member of the Labour Party and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor DRW Lewis declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 3 – Request for Dispensations as he is a member of the Labour Party and as a member of the Development Control Committee has applied for a dispensation and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

156. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported on applications received from Members of the Development Control Committee for dispensation to speak and vote in connection with a planning application for the site and premises formerly known as the Ogmor Constituency Labour Party Social Club. The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that one of the applicants, Councillor GW Davies had since resigned from the Labour Party and the Committee need no longer consider this application. Accordingly dispensations were being sought from 12 Members of the Development Control Committee.

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Council held a freehold interest in the land and premises which were the subject of a 99 year lease to the Trustees of the Ogmor Constituency Labour Party Social Club (OCLP) and which was assigned by licence to Labour Party Nominees Limited. He stated that the Council had explored the possibility of joining with the leaseholder in the marketing and sale of both freehold and leasehold interest in the site, but this was not progressed. He informed the Committee that in order to maximise consideration for the Council's freehold interest in the site, Cabinet approved the sale of the site subject to the OCLP leasehold interest on 27 May 2014.

The Chairperson directed the Committee's attention to the grounds upon which it could grant dispensations in accordance with the 2001 Regulations and Local Government Act 2000.

He reported that the Development Control Committee would be considering a planning application for the OCLP site and the applicants seeking the dispensation were all Members of the Labour Party. He stated that the Development Control Committee would be making a decision solely on planning grounds and not on financial grounds. The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee of the circumstances where the Standards Committee can grant applications for dispensation in that: in the case of a county or county borough council, the inability of the member to participate would upset the political balance of the relevant authority or of the committee of the authority by which the business is to be considered to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected; and 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 relevant authority's business.

The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that Councillor G Thomas, the Vice-Chairperson of the Development Control Committee would be attending the meeting to make the application for dispensation on behalf of the Members of the Development Control Committee.

The Vice-Chairperson of the Development Control Committee was invited into the Committee to make the application for the grant of a dispensation on behalf of all of the members seeking dispensation. He stated that all the members making the application are Members of the National Labour Party and dispensation was sought otherwise there would be an inability to make a decision at the meeting. He stated that the Members have a prejudicial interest due to their membership of the National Labour Party and no personal benefit would accrue from the decision. He stated that the funds from the sale of the OCLP site would go directly to the National Labour Party and there would be no benefit to the Labour Party locally.

The Chairperson thanked the Vice-Chairperson of the Development Control Committee for making the application for dispensation on behalf of the Members of the Development Control Committee.

The Committee considered the application from Members of the Development Control Committee for dispensation to speak and vote in connection with a planning application for the site and premises formerly known as the Ogmores Constituency Labour Party Social Club. The Committee in dealing with the application had to consider whether the Members making the application would benefit from the sale of the site and considered that they would have no personal or local gain or advantage. The Committee considered that the Council has a very large majority group and if the applications for dispensation were not granted, it could obstruct democracy. The Committee also considered that the funds from the sale of the site would go directly to the National Labour Party and that the residents of Bridgend would benefit from the sale of the site as the proceeds would be shared with the Council. The Committee in reaching its decision highlighted the importance of the Model Code of Conduct for Members but recognised that legislation exists for situations like this

**RESOLVED:** That the Standards Committee considered the applications from Members of the Development Control Committee for dispensation to speak and vote in connection with a planning application for the site and premises formerly known as the Ogmores Constituency Labour Party Social Club and agreed in accordance with the Standards

Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Local Government Wales Act 2000 to grant such dispensations on the following grounds:-

- (a) in the case of a county or county borough council, the inability of the member to participate would upset the political balance of the relevant authority or of the committee of the authority by which the business is to be considered to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;
- (b) 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 relevant authority's business

157. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

The meeting closed at 2.23 pm