

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 21 MAY 2015 AT 2.00 PM

Present

Independent Members:

Ms M Powell - Chairperson

Mrs B Heller

Mr J Bevan

County Borough Council Members:

Councillor R D Jenkins

Councillor D R W Lewis

Officers:

Andrew Jolley Assistant Chief Executive Legal & Regulatory Services and
Monitoring Officer

Kelly Watson Group Manager Legal & Democratic Services

Andrew Rees Senior Democratic Services Officer – Committees

Sarah Daniel Democratic Services Officer – Committees

82. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following member of the Committee for the reason so stated:

Councillor RJ Hancock – Holiday.

83. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following personal Declarations of Interest were made in respect of agenda item 8 – Shortlisting of Candidates for the Position of Town & Community Councillor and Independent Members on the Standards Committee:

Councillor RD Jenkins – As he knew of one of the candidates applying for the position of Town / Community Councillor on the Standards Committee.

Councillor DRW Lewis - As he knew of the candidates applying for the position of Town / Community Councillor on the Standards Committee.

Mr J Bevan - As he knew of one of the candidates applying for the position of Town / Community Councillor on the Standards Committee.

Mrs B Heller - As she knew of one of the candidates applying for the position of Independent Member on the Standards Committee.

Ms M Powell - As she knew of one of the candidates applying for the position of Independent Member on the Standards Committee.

84. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee of 26 March 2015 be approved as a true and accurate record.

85. THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Committee at its meeting on 16 January 2015 had received a report which informed of proposals made by the Ombudsman to revise the Guidance on the Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members. He stated that the Ombudsman had proposed a further public interest test be considered when deciding whether to investigate a complaint or whether to continue an investigation of a breach of the Code to the stage of referring the matter to the Adjudication Panel for Wales.

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Ombudsman had issued a new test which had changed as a result of complaints received from Monitoring Officers in Wales. He stated that in determining whether to investigate a complaint or whether to continue an investigation of a breach of the Code a two stage test will be applied. At the first stage, the Ombudsman will aim to establish whether there is direct evidence that a breach actually took place and if the evidential test was met, at the second stage, consideration would be given as to whether an investigation or a referral to a Standards Committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales is required in the public interest.

The Monitoring Officer highlighted some of the public interest factors that the Ombudsman will consider which were set out in the new Code of Conduct. He stated that the Ombudsman had determined that if it was felt a case did not warrant a sanction, the case would not be referred to the Monitoring Officer.

The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that he would be reporting the new Code of Conduct to Council.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the new Code of Conduct Guidance.

86. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

87. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: 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 report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A and Paragraph 5 of Schedule 12A of the Act:-

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 items in private with the public being excluded from the meeting as it would involve the disclosure to them of exempt information as stated above.

Minute No.

Summary of Item:

88

Exempt minutes of the Standards Committee of 26 March 2015

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 21 MAY 2015

- 89 Shortlisting of Candidates for the position of Town
and Community Councillor and Independent Member on the
Standards Committee.

88. APPROVAL OF EXEMPT MINUTES

89. SHORTLISTING OF CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION OF TOWN & COMMUNITY
COUNCILLOR AND INDEPENDENT MEMBERS ON THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The meeting closed at 3.50 pm