

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 6th October, 2022.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#)

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: R. Hendicott (Chair); L. Tinsley (Vice-Chair); P. Hallett and G. Watkins (Independent Members) and Councillors J.E. Charles and C.P. Franks.

304 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

305 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from R. Alexander (Independent Member) and Councillor R.M. Birch.

306 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June, 2022 and the Special Meeting held on 22nd July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

During consideration of the minutes the Chair queried the current position with regard to the appointment of the Town and Community Council representative (TCC) on the Standards Committee and was advised that two TCC representatives had expressed an interest however, one was unable to apply following discussion with regard to the criteria and an application was awaited from the other enquirer.

307 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor Franks declared an interest in agenda item 4 – Applications for Dispensation having regard to the applications submitted by Councillor K. Hatton and Councillor K. Shaw in that he was also a member of the organisations being applied for and vacated the meeting when the applications were to be considered.

308 APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION (MO/HLDS) –

The Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 permitted Members to apply to the Standards Committee to speak, and if appropriate, to vote on issues which due to prejudicial interests, they might not otherwise be able to speak or vote on or remain in the room.

Following careful consideration of the applications it was

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T dispensations as set out in the schedule below be granted up to the date of the next Local Government Elections:

Member Requesting Dispensation	Paragraph(s) of the Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 Under Which Dispensation is Granted and as applied for	Decision
Councillor J. Aviet	(a), (e) and (f)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote on matters at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings relating to the review of Council employment, employee terms and conditions, in view of a family member being employed by the authority.
Councillor R.M. Birch	(d), (f) and (g)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote on topics connected with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's re-shaping services programme when being discussed at both Vale of Glamorgan and Penarth Town Council meetings as appropriate.
Councillor R.M. Birch	(c), (d), (f) and (g)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote when matters relating to Ysgol y Deri School, Penarth are being discussed at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings.

Community Councillor K. Hatton	(d), (e), (f) and (h)	Dispensation granted to speak only at Dinas Powys Community Council meetings, on issues relating to the management of allotments as a member of the Commons and Open Spaces Sub Committee.
Community Councillor K. Hatton	(d), (e), (f) and (h)	Dispensation granted to speak only at Dinas Powys Community Council meetings, on issues relating to the Dinas Powys Library and Activity Centre.
Community Councillor K. Hatton	(e), (f) and (h)	Dispensation granted to speak only at Dinas Powys Community Council meetings, on issues affecting Seel Park.
Community Councillor K. Hatton	(h)	Dispensation granted to speak only at Dinas Powys Community Council meetings on issues affecting Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern.
Community Councillor P. King	(a)	Dispensation granted to speak only at Llandough Community Council meetings on matters concerning Llandough and Leckwith War Memorial Institute Committee as a principal trustee
Councillor B. Loveluck-Edwards	(d), (f) and (g)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings on general matters relating to the review of Council employment, employee terms and conditions or to respond to allegations relating to child protection or safeguarding matters, in view of being employed as a full time regional caseworker for NASUWT. Where specific cases are referred to to speak only on such matters as outlined above.
Councillor B. Loveluck-Edwards	(c), (d) (f) and (g)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote when matters

		relating to St. Richard Gwyn High School are being discussed at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings.
Community Councillor K. Shaw	(d), (e), (f) and (h)	Dispensation granted to speak only at Dinas Powys Community Council meetings, on issues affecting Seel Park.
Councillor M.R. Wilson	(c), (d), (f) and (g)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote when matters relating to Ysgol y Deri School, Penarth are being discussed at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings.

(2) T H A T the following late applications for dispensation as set out in the schedule below be granted up to the date of the next Local Government Elections:

Member Requesting Dispensation	Paragraph(s) of the Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 Under Which Dispensation is Granted and as applied for	Decision
Councillor J. Aviet	(d), (e), (f) and (i)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote when matters relating to St. Helens R/C Primary and Nursery School are being discussed at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings.
Councillor J. Protheroe	(e)	Dispensation granted to speak and vote when matters relating to Cowbridge Comprehensive School are being discussed at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) To comply with the regulations and obligations for the grant of dispensations to speak and vote.

309 OBSERVATIONS BY INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS (MO/HLDS) –

The purpose of the report was to provide the Committee with an overview of observations, if any, and to note that a list of Town and Community Council meetings had been forwarded to all Independent Members during August 2022 in order that observations of each Town and Community Council could be scheduled to be undertaken.

Some observation visits had been agreed for the month of September but as these had been scheduled to be undertaken during the mourning period of the passing of the late Queen Elizabeth II they had been postponed.

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T it be noted that no observations visits had taken place since the last meeting however Independent Members were due to commence observation visits of Town and Community Council's shortly.
- (2) T H A T the list of Town and Community Council meetings attached at Appendix 1 to the report be noted.
- (3) T H A T it be accepted that the Monitoring Officer may advise during the year that additional, specific Town and Community Council meetings be observed.

Reason for decisions

(1-3) Having regard to the contents of the reports and discussions at the meeting.

310 PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2021/22 (MO/HLDS) –

The purpose of the report was to present to Members extracts from the Annual Report and Accounts for the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales for the year ending 31st March, 2022 in respect of Members' Code of Conduct matters.

Standards Committee Members were requested to consider the references detailed in the Ombudsman's report in respect of complaints of Members of Local Authorities who had breached their Authority's Members' Code of Conduct, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 to the report referred to key performance indicators, Appendix 3 provided details relating to the PSOW's Strategic aim of delivering justice and included an overview of new and closed cases and Appendix 4 to the report, provided further detail relating to the cases.

Having considered the report it was,

RESOLVED – T H A T the report be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the reports and discussion at the meeting.

311 POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS DUTY UNDER SECTION 62 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021 IN RELATION TO STANDARDS OF CONDUCT (MO/HLDS) –

The report provided the Committee with an update on the progress to date regarding the duty of Political Group Leaders in relation to standards of conduct under section 62 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the meeting that had been held between the Monitoring Officer and Group Leaders of the Council on 27th July, 2022. Paragraph 2.1 of the report provided an overview of the discussion that had been held with it being noted at paragraph 2.2 that further progress updates would be presented to the Committee as appropriate.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that further discussions in respect of the proforma and the duty were likely to be considered at the all-Wales Monitoring Officers Group meeting being held on 7th October, 2022 with it subsequently being

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the reporting arrangements by Political Group Leaders, as outlined in the report, be approved and that delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee to finalise / amend as appropriate the proforma attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Reason for decisions

(1&2) Having regard to the content of the report and discussions at the meeting.

312 UPDATE ON NATIONAL FORUM (MO/HLDS) –

In referring to the report the Deputy Monitoring Officer commenced by advising that the establishment of a National Forum had previously been discussed by the Committee in September 2019 which had expressed the view at that time that they wished to be part of an All Wales Standards Forum. It was further noted at paragraph 2.3 of the report that a further report on the role, purpose etc. of the Forum was also to be presented to the next meeting of the Monitoring Officers Group on 7th October with areas for discussion to include those referred to at paragraphs 2.4 – 2.9 of the report.

Having regard to the report it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the report be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the content of the report and discussions at the meeting.

313 CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES (MO/HLDS) –

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that she would provide an overview to Members of the Committee under Part II of the agenda in relation to recent correspondence and matters arising in line with the procedures of the Ombudsman which were confidential in nature. It being noted that correspondence had been received relating to two Vale of Glamorgan Councillors and one Community Councillor for the Vale of Glamorgan.

The item was a standing item on the agenda in order that the Monitoring Officer could apprise Members as appropriate.

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted having regard to the fact that an update on the correspondence received from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and any matters arising under Part II of the report would be considered under Part II of the agenda.

Reason for decision

To apprise Members of the Committee.

314 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

315 CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES (MO/HLDS) (EXEMPT INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12, 13 AND 14) -

As outlined at Part I of the agenda, it had been agreed by the Standards Committee that a standing item appear on the Committee's agenda in order that the Monitoring / Deputy Monitoring Officer was able to apprise Standards Committee Members of correspondence received from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (the Ombudsman) on any matters arising, the items being confidential in nature in line with the Ombudsman's procedure.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer therefore provided the Committee with a verbal update in respect of recent confidential correspondence with the Ombudsman.

There being no questions in relation to the information provided at the meeting, it was

RESOLVED – T H A T the confidential information provided by the Deputy Monitoring Officer at the meeting be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to correspondence received from the Ombudsman, noting that it was confidential at this stage.