

No.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 15th May, 2025.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: Councillors R.M. Birch, J.E. Charles, and C.P. Franks; R. Alexander, R. Hendicott and G. Watkins (Independent Members); and Councillor P. Summers (Town and Community Council Representative).

20. 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.”

21. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR –

RESOLVED – T H A T R. Hendicott be appointed Chair for the 2025/26 Municipal year.

22. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR –

RESOLVED – T H A T G. Watkins be appointed Vice-Chair for the 2025/26 Municipal year.

23. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from G. Olphert (Independent Member).

The Monitoring Officer also advised that notice of resignation had been received from Mrs. L. Tinsley for the Committee and therefore a recruitment process would commence in due course.

24. MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 27th March, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

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25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

26. APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION (MO/HLDS) –

The purpose of the report was to consider applications for dispensation received from Councillors B. Loveluck-Edwards (x 2) and W.A. Hennessy (x 1) of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Having regard to Councillor Loveluck-Edwards' second application regarding the Vale of Glamorgan Coastlands Food Bank, and in response to a query raised by Committee Members, the Monitoring Officer stated that their advice would be to grant the application to speak, vote and remain in meetings where general matters were considered but to speak only when matters regarding financial remuneration were to be discussed.

Following careful consideration of the applications and having regard to the Monitoring Officer 's advice above it was

RESOLVED – T H A T the 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 B. Loveluck-Edwards | (d) | Dispensation to speak only, in meetings where issues are raised at meetings of the Council in respect of the Vale of Glamorgan Council 'Visit The Vale' Service. |
| Councillor B. Loveluck-Edwards | (d), (f) and (g) | To speak, vote and remain in Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings when general matters relating to the Vale of Glamorgan Coastlands Foodbank are raised, and to speak only when matters regarding financial remuneration for Mr Loveluck- |

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|--------------------------|------------------|---|
| | | Edwards are to be considered at Vale of Glamorgan Council meetings in respect of the Vale of Glamorgan Coastlands Foodbank.. |
| Councillor W.A. Hennessy | (d), (f) and (g) | Dispensation to speak, vote and remain in meetings of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Barry Town Council meetings when matters relating to the organisation SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) are to be discussed. |

Reason for decision

Having regard to the applications submitted and discussions held at the meeting.

27. STANDARDS COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (MO/HLDS) –

The Standards Committee agreed to establish a Forward Work Programme for the Committee in March 2018. The Monitoring Officer advised that a revised version of the Committee's Forward Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2025/26 was attached to the report at Appendix 1 for Committee's consideration and agreement.

Following a query raised by the Chair, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that arrangements had begun to invite Vale of Glamorgan Group Leaders to the next meeting of the Standards Committee, to provide feedback on compliance with their duties, as set out in section 62 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This matter would be dealt with as part of the Draft Standards Committee Annual Report.

On the matter of producing a schedule for arranging observations of Town and Community Councils by Independent Members of the Standards Committee, the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer advised that all Independent Members had previously been sighted on a draft proposal of the schedule for comment however, the schedule was still subject to confirmation of future Town and Community Council meetings dates following relevant Annual Meetings taking place. Therefore, a timely and final draft would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in July for consideration and approval.

With no further comments or questions raised, the Committee subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the Forward Work Programme attached at Appendix 1 to the report be agreed.

Reason for decision

To agree a Forward Work Programme.

28. STANDARDS COMMITTEE: PROCEDURES WORKING GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE (MO/HLDS) –

The Standards Committee met on 27th March, 2025 and agreed that a small working group be established to review Standards Procedures as follows:

- Following the Motion approved by Full Council on 2nd December, 2025, a review of the Protocol of the Standards of Conduct expected by Members under Section 19 of the Council's Constitution; the Local Dispute Resolution Procedure (LDRP) for handling low-level allegations of breaches of the Members Code of Conduct.
- Following a review by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW), the Monitoring Officers Group (MOG) prepared a model protocol to address identified issues, with advice from the PSOW and a checklist provided as considered by the Committee under Part II of the agenda.
- A review of the Procedure for Dealing with Allegations made against Councillors, as agreed by the Standards Committee in January 2016, was also deemed timely.

As such, the Monitoring Officer advised that a draft Terms of Reference ("ToR") was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and Committee was requested to consider and approve the same, subject to any agreed amendments and a timescale for reporting back to the Standards Committee for Members' consideration.

Following the Monitoring Officer's presentation of the report, Independent Members of the Committee sought clarification on the appropriate order for consideration of the relevant procedures, as referred to in the Motion raised by Full Council, between themselves and appropriate Elected Members of the Council. Independent Members were of the view that Elected Members should conduct the review in the first instance as well as agree the Standards Committee Procedures Working Group Terms of Reference, with the Standards Committee then requested to consult on any subsequent proposals. This would be aligned with the ethos of the Committee's terms of reference to enforce standards rather than set them, and to pass comment on the review undertaken by Elected Members of the Council rather than lead upon it.

Therefore, Members of the Committee were uncomfortable with the Motion from Full Council being included in such detail within the Standards Committee Procedures Working Group ToR document, term of reference point (a). However, were content with ToR points (b) and (c) being included, as well as all other content without comment.

In light of the Committee's comments, the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer proposed that the item be deferred to the next meeting of the

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Committee in order that officers present may hold discussions with Elected Members of the Council who were not currently present, to which, the Committee agreed.

RESOLVED – T H A T the report be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

Reason for decision

To seek further clarification on the order of consultation for conducting the review.

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

In line with the Committee's Forward Work Programme, it had previously been agreed that a standing item would appear on the Committee's agenda so that Committee could be apprised of correspondence with the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and any matters arising.

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted, having regard to the fact that any update on 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.

30. 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.

31. 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 Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services would be 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.

RESOLVED – T H A T the confidential information provided by the Monitoring Officer / Head of Democratic and Legal Services at the meeting be noted.

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Reason for decision

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