

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS ON WEDNESDAY 1ST DECEMBER 2010

PRESENT: P. Swanson (Chair)

Mrs H. Rhydderch-Roberts, County Councillors, K. Curry, and M. Hodges

Observers: Community Councillors Revd A. Jevons, Ms C. Evans and H. Evans

Officers in attendance: C. Meredith (Strategic Director – Law and Governance), Ms S. Tamboo (Solicitor), W. Richards (Scrutiny Services Manager) and Mrs E. Patterson (Committee Clerk).

1.	APOLOGIES	S21– 2010
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Apologies were received from County Councillor F. Barker and Miss V. E. Evans, Mrs M Harris, Mrs S. Jarman and R. Miller.

2.	MINUTES	S22– 2010
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2010 as a correct record subject to the correction of Mrs H. Rhydderch-Roberts name at Item I on page 4.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	S23 – 2010
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No declarations of interest were received.

4.	CORRESPONDENCE	S24 – 2010
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No correspondence was received.

5.	REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – LAW AND GOVERNANCE	S25 – 2010
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The Committee received the report of the Strategic Director – Law and Governance. (Copy filed with signed minutes).

A. General Training for Members

A1 Training of County Council Members – Member Development Strategy/Programme

The notes of the meeting of the Member Development Working Group held on the 24th September 2010 were received for information. (Copy filed with signed minutes).

B. Referral of Councillors to the Public Services Ombudsman

B1 County Councillor referrals

The Ombudsman is still investigating the complaint made against two Members reported to the last Standards Committee.

C. Other Standards Issues

C1 Meeting with the Brecon Beacons National Park Standards Committee.

The Joint meeting with the Brecon Beacons National Park Standards Committee had been held on the morning of the 1st December 2010.

D. Recording of Members' Interests

D1 Placing the Register of Members' Interests on the Council's Public Website

The Register had been published on the Council's website on 20th October 2010. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that it was not necessary for Members of the Council's Statutory Outside Bodies (the Brecon Beacons National Park, the Mid and West Wales Fire Authority and the Dyfed Powys Police Authority) to complete written declarations of interest each time they discuss matters from their relevant Outside Body. It was sufficient for these Members to complete one written declaration at the beginning of their term of office and then ensure that a verbal declaration is made when any discussion relating to their Outside Body is undertaken. The requirement for all Members to complete a written declaration each time was recommended good practice which can help protect Members against claims of non-compliance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

E Meeting of Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, Audit and Standards Committees

The notes of the meeting held on 28th October 2010 were received.

F. Dispensations

F1. Applications – County Councillors

No applications had been received.

G2. Blanket Dispensations

It was confirmed that a letter had been sent to the Chairs of the Council, Board, Shires and Principal Scrutiny and People Scrutiny Committees outlining the exact nature of the blanket dispensation given by the Standards Committee in respect of School Modernisation which was for the overall area modernisation programmes and not individual schemes in schools.

G. Raising the profile of the Standards Committee/Sub-Committee

The document Standards in Local Government was received as part of the work undertaken to raise the profile of the Standards Committee. The document would now be prepared for publication.

H. Standards Conference

A written report from Councillor Hodges on the Standards Conference was received.

Mrs Rhydderch-Roberts confirmed that the Conference had been well run with informative speakers and workshops and it had been interesting to see how proactive Standards Committees in other authorities were. In particular Cardiff appeared to be the most proactive monitoring Councillors expenses and attending other meetings of the Council.

It was suggested that the Powys Standards Committee could attend other Committee meetings in the morning and then hold their Committee meetings in the afternoon.

It was agreed to look for dates in the second half of 2011 for the Standards Committee to observe other Committees.

I Member Attendance

Councillor Pritchard

The Committee noted that Councillor Pritchard had been given leave of absence by Full Council for the period 22nd May to 31st July 2010 while he was away on FIFA duties at the World Cup.

The Standards Committee however were not satisfied with the explanation given by Councillor Pritchard in relation to his non attendance at two meetings on the same day on 2nd September.

Councillor Meredith

Councillor Meredith had provided a letter of explanation to the Committee and it was noted that Councillor Meredith was Mayor of Brecon and had a number of Mayoral engagements to attend. For the future the Committee expressed the hope that Councillor Meredith would be able to arrange his Mayoral duties so that they did not clash with attendance at Powys meetings.

J. Meeting dates

The following dates for the Standards Committee were confirmed:

Wednesday 2nd February, 2011
Wednesday 27th April, 2011
Wednesday 29th June, 2011
Wednesday 7th September, 2011
Wednesday 30th November, 2011

P.SWANSON

Chairman