

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP HELD AT COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS ON FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER, 2010

PRESENT: County Councillor Mrs S.C. Davies [Chair]
County Councillors P.J. Ashton, E.A. Jones, Miss S.J. Millington, Mrs M.E. Morris and G.W Ratcliffe.

Officers in Attendance: Stephen Boyd (Board Business Manager) and Carol Johnson (Committee Clerk), Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Services Manager) and Shane Thomas (Member Support Manager).

Apologies were received from County Councillor S.M. Hayes.

1. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The notes of the previous meeting held on 28 July, 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

- Implications of an adverse CRB check for a newly appointed councillor – Steve Boyd and Wyn Richards advised that although this would not overturn the democratic vote for a councillor, the individual would be restricted in their role in the Council and would not have access to vulnerable groups.

Agreed that information on the impact of an adverse CRB check on a councillor's role should be included in the Candidates pack.

Agreed that a letter should be sent from the Working Group to the Minister highlighting the impact of an adverse CRB check on a councillor's role.

- Casework – it was noted that “Outlook” was being rolled out to all staff and Members and the “Task” facility could be used for casework.
- Data Protection – Wyn Richards advised he was unhappy with the advice from Data Protection Section and advised he would seek further clarification.

Members discussed concerns about the accessibility of ICT systems and how these could restrict rather than support councillors in their work.

Agreed to invite the Portfolio Holder, Customer Services & ICT, Councillor R.I. George, Nick Philpot and an ICT Member Support officer to the next meeting to discuss issues regarding ICT.

2. MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE

The revised draft questionnaire was considered. The following amendments were agreed: Include length of time with the Council and add a section regarding other skills. Members noted that the questionnaire would be used within six months of the Council elections and also during the term of a Council. Members could also use their Questionnaire results when undertaking their Performance Development Reviews [PDRs]. A computer based version would be developed.

IT questionnaire

It was noted that this had been distributed to Members. Members asked how the analysis from this was being used. **Agreed to follow this up.**

Training Programme

Members were advised that some training was either statutory or mandatory. In addition, in depth training for example would be provided to Planning Committee Members and more general training would be provided to all other Members on planning issues. **The Training Programme would be brought to the Working Group for discussion.**

3. PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE

The Working Group received, for information, a copy of the presentation made to the recent Joint Member Champion and Member Support Officer Network meeting which summarised the main proposals.

Councillor Mrs Morris, Member Champion, advised that the majority of Councils at the above meeting supported the direction of the proposals as much was already in place. However, concerns were expressed about too much prescription, the cost of some proposals and the lack of clarity in respect of some issues.

The Group noted that the Welsh Local Government Association [WLGA] and Solace would forward views. Political Groups could submit views if they wished to do so.

4/5. MEMBER SUPPORT AND MEMBER ACCOMMODATION

Shane Thomas advised that he had been asked to look at the range of support which Members required. It was noted that currently the Chairs of Council and Board had dedicated support and there was also a Member secretary. An option being considered was to have a dedicated team of staff in an accessible location in County Hall. Wyn Richards advised that he and the Property Section were looking at the need for rooms/use of rooms by Board Members and Chairs of Committees. Any changes in these two areas would contribute to the Member Development Charter.

Shane Thomas advised that he would forward a questionnaire on the administration and support needs of Members to the political groups. It was noted that Wyn Richards would write to the Board Members asking for information on their accommodation needs relating to their portfolios.

Councillor G.W. Ratcliffe and Shane Thomas left the meeting.

6. JOINT MEMBER CHAMPION AND MEMBER SUPPORT OFFICER NETWORK MEETING 16 SEPTEMBER, 2010

Councillor Mrs M. Morris provided a written report [copy with minutes].

- Member Development Charter – a number of Authorities offered advice and copies of their Charter submissions to Powys when developing its submission. A number of authorities were now progressing to the Advanced Level of the Charter Award.
- Proposed Local Government [Wales] Measure
- Postgraduate qualification for Members – Professor Catherine Farrell spoke on the qualification offered by the University of Glamorgan which could be tailored to Members' needs.

7. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE, 26 NOVEMBER, 2010 METROPLOE HOTEL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS

Agreed that Councillors Miss S. Millington and Mrs M. Morris and Carol Johnson would attend. It was agreed that Councillor S. Hayes would be asked if he also wished to participate.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

The Working Group received the Work Programme.

Personal Development Reviews [PDRs] - Agreed to invite Powys Councillors on the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority to the next meeting to discuss how PDRs were introduced in the Park and their experiences.

9. Date of next meeting

5 November, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

Draft dates for 2011 to be provided at the next meeting.

County Councillor Mrs S.C. Davies
Chair

NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND THE STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEES HELD AT COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS ON THURSDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2010

PRESENT: County Councillor J G Morris. (Chair)
County Councillors J. H. Brunt, G. Morgan, A W Davies, Mrs J.G. Shearer, Mrs S C Davies, Mrs K Roberts-Jones, Mrs D. G. Thomas and Independent Member P. Swanson.

Officers in Attendance: Geoff Petty (Strategic Director – Finance and Infrastructure), Clarence Meredith (Strategic Director Law and Governance), Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Services Manager).

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Price and Independent Member R. Miller.

2. Notes of Last Meeting

The notes of the last meeting held on 3rd September 2010 were received

3. Treasury Management.

The Joint Chairs received a briefing note regarding the current reporting procedures for Treasury Management from the Strategic Director – Finance and Infrastructure. It was noted that currently reports relating to Treasury Management were submitted to the Board, the Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee and the Audit Committee.

It was suggested that the Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee should be the main recipient of reports relating to the performance of treasury management and the scrutiny of policies and practices in addition to the Board with the Audit Committee receiving the minute of the scrutiny committee, unless there were any matters which it needed to address specifically. The Wales Audit Office had been consulted who were content with the suggested revised arrangements.

In relation to the reporting framework for Treasury Management, concern was expressed that the Council diary currently did not allow for reports to be submitted to the Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee prior to consideration by the Board and the Council before the 1st April deadline. It was suggested that this needed to be addressed in future editions of the Council diary.

Action:
That Treasury Management Reports be submitted to the Corporate Governance Committee only unless there are specific matters which require the consideration of the Audit Committee.
That the Audit Committee receives the minutes of the Corporate

<p>Governance Committee relating to Treasury Management. That the Council diary reflect the need for a Corporate Governance Committee prior to the meeting of the Board and Full Council to consider the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices.</p>

4. Approving Member Attendances at Conferences / Training Events.

The Joint Chairs received an oral presentation by the Scrutiny Services Manager. It had come to light that arising from a request from a Member to attend a training event, there currently was no process for the approval of member attendances at conferences / training events held outside of the Council.

It was suggested that attendance at conferences was generally undertaken by Board Members rather than other Members of the Council as they related to individual portfolios, particularly if these were annual events. It was also the case that many of the training courses offered were either too expensive or not relevant to Wales due to the different legislative background in Wales. It was suggested that a list of conferences which Board members attend on a regular basis should be produced. It was also suggested that the costs of conferences were paid from service budgets.

Members suggested that there would need to be an assessment of the value of conferences, and that the budget for Member Development should be reported to the Member Development Working Group. It was further suggested that there should be a moratorium on attendances at courses and other training events until the financial position was known, and that any Member Development requirements should be identified by means of an individual Member's Review and Development Interview.

<p>Action:</p>
<p>That the issue of attendance by Members at courses be considered by the Member Development Working Group.</p>

5. Scrutiny Structures.

The Joint Chairs received the notes of the meeting of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Committees held on 17th September, 2010 together with details of committee structures from other Welsh authorities and staffing arrangements for scrutiny across Wales.

It was suggested that additional detail would be needed for the four improvement priorities under the strategic change programme, including which services fell within each priority area, and the revised portfolio areas when the Cabinet came into existence. The suggestion was noted that the Joint Chairs should have responsibility for those areas of work which did not fit anywhere else or were cross cutting.

With regard to numbers on scrutiny committees, Members considered that these should not be changed at present, although they would have to be

amended if the numbers of councillors were reduced. It was suggested that this be considered by the Principal Scrutiny Committee initially.

Action:

That the Principal Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider the issue of numbers on scrutiny committees.
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That information be gathered on the numbers of councillors on other Councils' scrutiny committees.

6. Allocation of Work/Work Programmes

(i) Board

Concern was expressed that not all portfolio areas were included in the work programme. The work programme for the Social Services Steering Group was requested for future meetings.

Action

That the forward work programme of the Social Services Steering Group be included with the Board work programme for future meetings.

(ii) Scrutiny Committees

Principal Scrutiny and Crime and Disorder Committee

Catering Review – the portfolio holders with responsibility for catering had been requested to attend the next meeting.

Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee

Contract Management was the only scrutiny review currently taking place.

People Scrutiny Committee

No issues.

Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Windfarm Review – issues over the date for a Council seminar.

Care and Repair – Final report prepared in draft.

Workshops – awaiting an external report so that the review could be completed.

Repairs and Refurbishment of properties in Conservation Area – ongoing.

It was noted that the paperless meetings process was working well.

Audit Committee

No issues raised.

(iii) Chairs and Vice Chairs

No issues raised.

(iv) Standards

No issues raised. The Chair advised the Joint Chairs that the Committee had written to chairs of committees relating to the dispensation granted in respect of the Council's modernisation of schools programme.

Action:
That the scrutiny committee work programmes be updated regularly to remove any repetitive items and to make it clear to the public what was due for consideration at future meetings.
That for completed reviews a table indicating outcomes be established and circulated with work programmes.

7. Powys Teaching Local Health Board Merger update

Arrangements for the Chief Executive of Powys Teaching Local Health Board (PTLHB) acting as statutory director, and member of the Council's Management Team were in place. The Welsh Assembly Government had indicated that it wanted the post of Chief Executive of the PTLHB being filled on a permanent basis. The impact of this on the pilot with the County Council was unknown. A pilot scheme in the south of Powys was being undertaken regarding the integration of services and draft skeleton operational arrangements had been established.

8. Items for the next meeting 6th December 2010 – 10.00am

Joint Working between Councils – information regarding Shared Services.
Principal Scrutiny and Crime and Disorder Committee – Constitution.
Member Development Working Group – Training and Development.

Clarence Meredith
Cyfarwyddwr Strategol – Y Gyfraith a
Llywodraethu.
Strategic Director – Law and Governance,

To: County Councillors P. J. Ashton, G. R. Banks, A. W. Davies, W. J. Evans, E. M. Jones, J. G. Morris, Mrs K. Roberts-Jones and F. A. Torrens.

Atebwch os gwelwch yn dda /Please reply to:

Gwasanaethau Craffu / Scrutiny Services
 Cyngor Sir Powys County Council
 Neuadd y Sir/ County Hall
 Llandrindod Wells
 Powys
 LD1 5LG

Ffôn/ Tel: 01597-826980

Ffacs/ Fax: 01597-826220

E-bost/Email: elizabeth.patterson@powys.gov.uk

Eich cyf/Your ref:

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Dyddiad/Date: 24 November 2010

Os yn galw gofynnwch am / If calling please ask for:

Liz Patterson

Dear Chair

Personal and Prejudicial Interests relating to School Modernisation -

You will recall that Standards Committee have granted a blanket dispensation for Members to speak and vote on matters relating to School Modernisation providing they have completed the required form indicating their interests and providing they have no overriding pecuniary interest whereby they may speak only. The exact resolution is copied below.

RESOLVED that	REASON for decision
All County Councillors be granted a dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to school modernisation save where they have a pecuniary interest where they may speak only	To ensure that the issue of school modernisation is discussed fully and no community is disadvantaged. But to also ensure that no Member can be accused of taking part in a decision which would be financially advantageous/disadvantageous.
That each County Councillor submit a full and detailed outline of their personal and prejudicial interests to the Monitoring Officer and this be collated and circulated to all Members before any discussion on school modernisation.	To ensure that all Members and the public are fully aware of each Member's interest in relation to school modernisation
That those Councillors who believe that they have a pecuniary interest may make an individual application to the Standards Committee for dispensation	To allow Members with a pecuniary interest to make individual applications for dispensation.

Most Members have fulfilled their obligation in providing details of their interests and the remaining 8 Members have received reminder letters. Where School Modernisation is an agenda item the summary of Members interests will be circulated with the agenda papers.

Chairs are reminded that this blanket dispensation may only be relied upon in matters relating to the School Modernisation Programme and should not be relied upon for other school related matters. The Standards Committee at its last meeting clarified that this means the area projects only relating to the reorganisation/modernisation of the Schools Services generally, and would not include single school refurbishment or other projects relating to individual schools.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact your Committee Clerk.

Yours sincerely

For Strategic Director – Law and Governance

Powys County Council

Standards in Local Government

The County of Powys covers 2000 square miles – about a quarter of Wales. It is a sparsely populated upland area with a scattered population of 131,000 centred on a number of towns including Welshpool, Newtown, Llandrindod Wells, Builth Wells and Brecon.

Powys County Council is a unitary authority with 110 Town and Community Councils across the area and over 1,000 Town and Community Councillors.

What the Standards Committee does

Powys County Council has established a Standards Committee since 1999 following regulations from the Welsh Office prior to the requirement to constitute such a Committee by the Local Government Act 2000.

The Standards Committee covers matters relating to Powys County Council and there is a Standards Community Sub-Committee which covers matters relating to the Town and Community Councils within Powys. Both Committees have 9 Members.

The role of the Committees is as follows:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members;
- (b) assisting the councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (e) advising and arranging to train councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (f) granting dispensations to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (g) providing advice to individual councillors on such issues as the treatment of personal interest and on conduct matters generally;
- (h) determining appropriate action on matters referred to it by the Public Services Ombudsman.

Standards Committee only

- (i) overseeing the Council's whistle-blowing regime;
- (j) overseeing the Register of Interest of Members and Officers.
- (k) overseeing the Council's rules and protocols on accountability of members.
- (l) overseeing the training of Members serving on planning and other regulatory committees.
- (m) the independent members will exercise an appellate role under the Habitual or Vexatious Complainants policy.
- (n) Monitoring attendance by County Councillors.

The Membership as at May 2010 is as follows:

Standards Committee

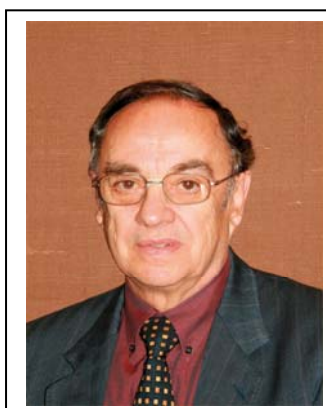
Independent Members



Peter Swanson (Chairman)

Term of office: Appointed 4th March 2002 for six years. Reappointed 3rd March 2008 for four years. Term expires 2nd March 2012

Peter Swanson has been a Member of the Powys Standards Committee since 2002 and Chairman since July 2004. He is a serving magistrate having been appointed as a Justice of the Peace in 1983. In the past he has chaired the Powys Health Board, Coleg Powys and was a member of the Wales Agricultural Training Board. He has farmed in Montgomeryshire since 1970 before which he ran a chain of hotels and restaurants in Birmingham.



Ralph Miller (Vice-Chairman)

Term of office: Appointed 27th January 2006 for six years. Term expires 26th January 2012.

Ralph Miller has been a Member of the Powys Standards Committee since 2006 and Vice-Chairman since 2009. He is a Governor at Gwernyfed High School. He is a retired scientist who had a varied career in the public and private

sector including posts in the Scientific Civil Service, Welsh Water, Royal Mail and the BBC.

Marian Harris

Term of office: Appointed 22nd June 2004 for six years. Reappointed 29th April 2010 for four years. Term expires 21st June 2014.

Marian Harris was appointed to the Powys Standards Committee in 2004. Now retired she worked as a secretary in a Solicitors' office in Abergavenny and Llanidloes, at Neville Hall Hospital, Abergavenny and as Deputy Practice Manager in Rhayader Surgery. She has served on the Rhayader Primary and Llanidloes High School Governing Bodies. She believes that fair play and common sense are of utmost importance.

Susan Jarman

Term of office: Appointed 25th November 2007 for six years. Term expires 24th October 2013.

Susan Jarman was appointed to the Powys Standards Committee in 2007. She has worked in the Banking business and for the Post Office. In 1992 she became a magistrate on the Montgomeryshire Bench and has been Deputy Chairman since 2006. She served on the Dyfed Powys Magistrates Court Committee before Her Majesty's Courts Service undertook management of magistrates' courts.

Helen Rhydderch-Roberts

Term of office: Appointed 14th May 2009 for six years. Term expires 13th May 2015.

Helen Rhydderch-Roberts was appointed to the Powys Standards Committee in 2009 and had a career in human resources and executive search in the City before moving to Wales with her family. She is Chair of Governors at her local primary school and takes a keen interest in politics. She believes strongly in the democratic process and the importance of up-holding standards in public life as integral in the workings of democracy.

County Councillors

Fred Barker

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Fred Barker has been a County Councillor since 1995 when elected onto the shadow Powys County Council. Prior to that he was a District Councillor at Radnor District Council.

He served as an elected member of Chester County Borough Council from May 1954 – 1974 including six years as an Alderman. He was appointed Sheriff of the City in 1964 and Mayor of the City in 1968 serving time as a member of the Investiture Committee. He was a Justice of the Peace between 1957 and 1984, and has been a member of the Supplementary Panel since that date. He was a member of the Liverpool Regional Hospital Board 1977 – 1983.

Kelvyn Curry

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Kelvyn Curry has been a member of the Powys County Council Standards Committee for over ten years, firstly as a Community Council representative and since 2008 as a County Councillor. Formerly a teacher, he retired from his post with the University of Warwick in 2007. He has been a magistrate for ten years, served as Chair of Governors of a primary School for over ten years and a Chair of the East Wales Valuation Tribunal for over fifteen years. He is currently a member of the governing body of a primary and secondary school and is very involved in the local community which he represents as a County Councillor. Kelvyn believes that public confidence in local government requires a strong ethical approach, which also fosters better governance.

Viola Evans

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Viola Evans was elected to Powys County Council in 1999 and has been a Member of Llanfair Caereinion Town Council since 1974. She has chaired numerous committees including Chair of Montgomeryshire and Chair of Powys County Council in 2008-09. Viola has also been a Member of the Mid Wales Film Commission. Before becoming a Councillor Viola had 30 year career working for the Wales Tourist Board becoming the Director of the Mid Wales Region.

Mike Hodges

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Michael Hodges has been a Town Councillor since 2004, being elected a County Councillor in 2008 since when he has served on the Powys Standards Committee. He was appointed onto the Dyfed Powys Police Authority in June 2008 where he chairs the Audit Committee. Michael believes there should be a stronger role for Standards Committees enabling complaints to be dealt with faster. His main outside interest is St John Wales of which he is an elected Trustee. Michael is a well known figure in Llandrindod Wells running a Post Office and General Store.

Standards Community Sub-Committee

Independent Members

Peter Swanson (Chairman)
Ralph Miller (Vice-Chairman)
Marion Harris
Susan Jarman
Helen Rhydderch-Roberts

County Councillor

Kelvyn Curry

Community Councillors

In Powys elections are held to appoint Community Council representatives at the beginning of their four year term of office. Community Councillors are eligible to stand for two consecutive terms of office.

Clare Evans – representing Radnorshire

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Clare Evans has worked in local government for urban and rural areas and was a former Head of European Affairs with Newport City Council before leaving to undertake various consultancy roles and to develop her own business. Clare has always been interested in local affairs and has been an independent member of Rhayader Town Council for over 10 years and was the first female mayor of that Council. Clare is an appointed member of the Wales Committee of the Consumer Council for Wales. Clare strongly believes that confidence in our representatives and institutions is a pre-requisite for an enabling local democracy.

Hywel Evans – representing Montgomeryshire

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Hywel Evans has served as Community Councillor for Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa since 1982 as past chairman and is the current chairman. He has served on the Powys Standards Committee since 2004.

Hywel holds a firm belief in maintaining high ethical standards and clarity in every level of life whether it be local government or business. He also believes in keeping things simple to understand and maintaining a commonsense approach.

Revd Alan Jevons – representing Brecknockshire

Term of office May 2008 – May 2012

Alan Jevons is a cleric in the Church in Wales, at present working in and around Llangors. In the past he has worked in the rural parts of Herefordshire, as well as urban areas around Birmingham and Manchester. His interests have always veered away from church to community issues. At present he is Chair of a local Community Council and an Officer for the Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility

Officers who support the Standards Committees

Clarence Meredith – Strategic Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

01597 826395 – clarence.meredith@powys.gov.uk

Janet Kealey – Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

01597 826385 janet.kealey@powys.gov.uk

Saira Tamboo – Solicitor

01597 826701 saira.tamboo@powys.gov.uk

Wyn Richards – Scrutiny Services Manager

01597 826375 wyn.richards@powys.gov.uk

These officers are able to provide legal and procedural advice on the Code of Conduct to members, co-optees, town and community councillors and clerks, and members of the public.

Training

All Councillors and co-opted Memebrrs of Powys County Council received training on the Members' Code of Conduct on taking office in 2008.

All Chairmen and Clerks of Town and Community Councils or their representatives were offered training on the Members' Code of Conduct during 2008. These sessions covered compliance with the new Members' Code of Conduct and encouraged councillors where appropriate to apply to the Standards Committees for dispensations. Refresher training was provided mid term in the summer of 2010

Future Training

Training is offered at the beginning of the term of office to enable new Members to receive prompt training on the Code of Conduct. Refresher training is offered.

The Standards Committees appreciate the time constraints of particularly voluntary town and community councillors but would stress the importance of all councillors understanding the ethical framework which governs their role as councillors. Attendance training on Code of Conduct helps to guard against behaviour which could result in a complaint to the Ombudsman.

Dispensations

Any County Councillor, co-opted Member or town or community councillor who considers that they have a personal and prejudicial interest in a matter may apply to the Standards Committee (in the case of County Councillors or co-opted Members) or the Standards Community Sub-Committee (in the case of town and community councillors) for a dispensation to allow them to speak, or speak and vote on a matter which they would otherwise have to leave the room. The relevant committee will consider their application and advise the applicant and the clerk of the decision.

Applications for dispensation by Town and Community Councillors should be submitted by the Clerk. Application forms can be obtained from elizabeth.patterson@powys.gov.uk.

Public Services Ombudsman Wales

The Public Services Ombudsman Wales receives complaints that Councillors or co-opted Members have broken the Code of Conduct. The Ombudsman decides whether or not there is a case to investigate and if so if the case were to be proved whether it would result in a sanction. If it is found that there is a case to investigate and it is proved then the case is either sent to the local Standards Committee or to the Adjudication Panel for Wales to consider the case depending on the severity of the matter, and the likely sanction. The Standards Committees have the power to suspend a councillor for a period of up to six months. The Adjudication Panel has the power to disqualify a councillor for a period of up to five years.

For further information see www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Annual Standards Conference

Powys send a delegation of Standards Committee Members and Officer/s to attend the Annual Standards Conference. The outcomes of the Conference are fed back to the Committees. In 2010 the conference was held in Cardiff and delegates were given the opportunity to network with Members and Officers from across Wales. The conference explored the current public perception of standards and ethics in the public arena and of the importance in maintaining openness and transparency in the work of Councils.

Register of Members' Interests

It is a requirement that all Councillors make a declaration of personal interests in a public register together with signing a declaration of acceptance of office in which they agree to abide by the Code of Conduct within 28 days of taking office. Any amendments must be notified within 28 days of a Member becoming aware of a change. The register for County Councillors is a public document available for inspection at County Hall during office hours. It is available for public inspection on-line at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/index.php?id=7280&L=0>

Councillors are also required to disclose personal and prejudicial interests at meetings which they attend, or when they are in discussions with other Members and Officers where they have such interest, as well as making the requisite written declarations, which are also available online as above.

Constitution

The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by the law, while others are a matter for the Council to determine based on local requirements.

Article 9 of the Constitution sets out the role, purpose and objectives of the Standards Committee together with its composition.

The Constitution also includes codes and protocols which provide guidance to both Members and Officers in undertaking their roles whilst meeting the high standards of conduct expected of public servants together with a copy of the Members' Code of Conduct. (See Parts 4 and 5 of the Constitution).

Powys County Councils' Constitution can be found at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/index.php?id=4108>

Report by County Councillor Michael Hodges
Member of Powys County Council's Standards Committee

Standards Conference
13th – 14th October 2010
CARDIFF

The evening of Wednesday 13th was an occasion for everyone to meet at Cardiff Mansion House prior to the conference and I found it most interesting and helpful to talk to other Standards and Ethical Committee Members from across Wales. Indeed, there are a number of reoccurring issues common across Wales - Councillors are not declaring when they have an obvious interest in items. Planning with Community/Town Councillors appear to be at the forefront of this problem as they are ignoring or refusing to declare an interest, but are not alone.

On Thursday 14th October I attended the main conference. The first speaker was Paul Hoey (Chairman of Standards for England). Considering the Coalition Government is to abolish this body, Mr Hoey did not come across as bitter, but he was honest! I learned that there will not be a Code of Conduct (England), nor a Standards Committees, although there may be an option for English County Councils to adopt a form of Standards/Committees, but these will be Chaired by Councillors and if individual councils decide not to adopt these, the only action taken for serious issues is an approach to the Police. There was discussion that there would be very little or indeed no action taken in the majority of cases. However, if the Police in England took action for defamation it would be considered serious and if proven would carry a twelve month ban. My feeling is that it will be interesting to see the final outcome for English authorities.

Kate Berry, Senior Monitoring Officer for Cardiff City Council, spoke about the Ethical Framework, the values of Standards Committees, much less contentious in Wales than in England (used for many minor vexatious complaints) and questioned that it was strange that the MP's who lost the trust of the general public through poor standards of office should choose to abolish Standards Committees rather than strengthening them. Kate Berry's understanding is that Welsh Assembly Government intended to keep the status quo in Wales with the stance 'why fix/scrap when it's working here'.

Jeff Cotterell, Independent Chair of Anglesey's Standards Committee, was most damning in the way business had been conducted in Anglesey, and expressed the wish that more County Councillors should assume the same responsibilities of Senior Managers and act in the proper manner. He felt that less political attacks of other Members would help to strengthen all Councils. Furthermore, all County Councillors should ask more challenging questions at the appropriate time rather than complaining about poor Council or Councillor performance in the Press at a later date. At this point I was content to be a Powys Councillor rather than one of the Anglesey Members!

Peter Tyndall, Ombudsman(Wales) spoke about the work of his office, the role of the Ombudsman, the way complaints are filtered so that the vast majority are dealt with, most being signed off without further action. However, in the event of serious complaints, Councillors are suspended varying from months

to a year or more, in the latter effectively terminating the career of the Councillor.

Peter Tyndall felt the time was right to review and improve the ethical framework, but not to disrupt the current good practice in doing so.

Peter Davies, President of the Adjudication Panel (Wales) addressed everyone about the English Model (to follow) and his belief that the Police in most cases will not have the resources to investigate, unless in the most extreme cases, especially in the present economic climate with cuts to Policing budgets. In the past seven and half years he has overseen four disqualifications, sixteen suspensions, two censored; three breaches where no action was taken and four no breaches. I did wonder if this Panel represented value for money and thought that the Ombudsman's Office could undertake this work.

It was a long morning.

During the afternoon I attended a session on Police Authority issues, however it left more questions than answers – with the disbandment of the Standards Board for England the question is who will set the Standards for Police Authorities in Wales? Who will watch the new Police Commission and indeed if there are to be Police Boards who will set the standards? There is a challenge in Wales for all the present Police Authorities and there are checks and balances from Ethical Standards. Where and what is the future?

The final session presented the Code of Conduct Guidelines. Following an introduction around the new Guide by Peter Tyndall, he opened the session to the floor for questions and many of these were concerned with the interpretation of bad practice, honesty, integrity, confidentiality (main four) and also respect for others. One item that was discussed was Cabinet members stamping 'Confidential' on a report in order to prevent debate – this came from a Council that was planning to close nine primary schools. The Councillor from this particular Authority asked whether this is considered ethical, open Council? Peter Tyndall avoided answering this question stating that he would require more information, but in principle confidential was just that at times it was in the public interest to remain so. This question was debated long – other examples came from declarations around planning issues. This session was very interesting and could have continued long into the evening.

Mr Akmal Hanuk (Chairman of Cardiff Standards) gave the closing remarks. He thanked all those who had contributed to the event, the high standard of general practice across Wales, the need to develop a good work framework, the role of members 24/7 (The Livingstone Case); One Voice Wales might be able to do more mediation work (contact name Ken Burton) at an early stage, and all Standard committees need to lead by example. He also asked for a County to stage 2011 conference and I had talked to him earlier in the day together with a Powys Senior Legal Officer and left this matter with him.

County Councillor Michael Hodges.

Surname	Initials	Member	C.C.	BOARD			PSC	People		Regen	CORP		BREC	MONT	RAD		Pg	Lic	RoW		Audit		Emp		Stds		P&I		Actl	Pos	Missed	Total %	
				Actl	Pos	Actl		Pos	Actl		Pos	Actl			Pos	Actl			Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl					Pos
May 10 - 31 Oct 10																																	
Davies	A.W.	Member	5	5										6	6							2	2							16	16	0	100.0%
Evans	W. J.	Member	5	5				5	5						7	7				1	1								18	18	0	100.0%	
Evans	G.T.	Member	5	5							3	3																	26	26	0	100.0%	
Holmes	J.	Member	5	5							3	3								1	1								14	14	0	100.0%	
Jump	F.H.	Member	5	5				5	5					6	6						1	1							29	29	0	100.0%	
Lewis	W.G.	Member	5	5								3	3							7	7								16	16	0	100.0%	
Jones	M.J.	Member	5	5											6	6					1	1			2	2			25	26	1	96.2%	
White	R.J.	Member	5	5							3	3			6	6			2	3				2	2				18	19	1	94.7%	
Hodges	M.	Member	4	5																	1	1					2	2		17	18	1	94.4%
Mackenzie	M.	Member	5	5				5	5							6	7												16	17	1	94.1%	
Pathak	K.	Member	5	5			3	3														2	2	1	2				16	17	1	94.1%	
Vaughan	B.	Member	5	5								2	3								1	1			2	2			16	17	1	94.1%	
Evans	D.O.	Member	4	5							3	3									1	1							15	16	1	93.8%	
Mills	R.H.	Member	4	5			3	3							6	6													15	16	1	93.8%	
Thomas	W.B.	Member	5	5							2	3			6	6													13	14	1	92.9%	
Jones	E.Michael	Member	5	5	12	13											6	7											23	25	2	92.0%	
Jones	W.T.	Member	5	5	12	13									5	6													22	24	2	91.7%	
Fitzpatrick	W A	Member	5	5	12	13							4	5															21	23	2	91.3%	
Harris	M.R.	Member	5	5	12	13							4	5															21	23	2	91.3%	
Hopkins	G.G.	Member	5	5	12	13							4	5															21	23	2	91.3%	
Bailey	D.	Member	5	5					3	5					6	6			3	3			2	2					19	21	2	90.5%	
Roberts-																																	
Jones	K.M.	Member	5	5					5	5					6	6			1	3				2	2				19	21	2	90.5%	
Davies	E.R.	Member	5	5			2	3				3	3									2	2						28	31	3	90.3%	
Davies	L.R.E.	Member	3	5					5	5					6	6					1	1	2	2					17	19	2	89.5%	
Brunt	J.H.	Member	5	5							3	3					6	7											16	18	2	88.9%	
Corfield	L.V.	Member	5	5							3	3			6	6						2	2	0	2				16	18	2	88.9%	
Torrens	F.A.	Member	5	5							3	3			6	6													23	26	3	88.5%	
Jones	T.	Member	5	5																									15	17	2	88.2%	
Davies	L.G.	Member	5	5	12	13																							22	25	3	88.0%	
Price	G.D.	Member	5	5	10	13											7	7											22	25	3	88.0%	
Gwillim	C.G.	Member	5	5	11	13							4	5															20	23	3	87.0%	
Davies	M.J.B.	Member	5	5			2	3														2	2	2	2			4	5	19	22	3	86.4%
Banks	G.R.	Member	5	5								3	3									2	2						17	20	3	85.0%	
Evans	V.E.	Member	5	5							0	3			6	6			3	3						2	2		16	19	3	84.2%	
Jones	Eldrydd	Member	5	5			2	3	3	5					6	6													26	31	5	83.9%	
George	R.I.	Member	4	5	12	13									4	6													20	24	4	83.3%	
Hayes	S.M.	Member	4	5	12	13									4	6													20	24	4	83.3%	
Davies	D.	Member	5	5							1	3			6	6					0	1	2	2					14	17	3	82.4%	
Shearer	J.G.	Member	4	5											6	6					1	1			2	2			14	17	3	82.4%	
Thomas	A.G.	Member	3	5	11	13																					5	5	23	28	5	82.1%	
Baynes	S.R.M	Member	4	5			2	3							6	6					3	3					3	5	18	22	4	81.8%	
Millington	S.J.	Member	5	5					3	5	2	3					7	7						1	2				18	22	4	81.8%	
McNicholas	S.	Member	5	5			1	3																					13	16	3	81.3%	
Morgan	G.	Member	4	5							2	3			5	6								2	2				13	16	3	81.3%	
Powell	W.D.	Member	4	5							3	3							1	3									13	16	3	81.3%	
Williams	J.M.	Member	5	5											5	6					2	3			1	2			13	16	3	81.3%	
Jones	E.A.	Member	4	5								3	3			6	6						1	2			3	5	17	21	4	81.0%	
Harris	K.A.	Member	3	5	11	13											6	7											20	25	5	80.0%	
Morris	J.G.	Member	4	5			3	3															1	2					12	15	3	80.0%	
Price	D.R.	Member	5	5																									20	25	5	80.0%	
Weale	A M C	Member	4	5							3	3											0	2					12	15	3	80.0%	
York	A.	Member	5	5			2	3											2	2									12	15	3	80.0%	
Jones	D.R.	Member	4	5	10	13									5	6													19	24	5	79.2%	
Thomas	D.G.	Member	4	5									4	5									1	2					21	27	6	77.8%	
Holloway	A.	Member	3	5			1	3	4	5					6	6									2	2			16	21	5	76.2%	
Ashton	P.J.	Member	4	5								1	3	5	5							1	1		1	2			12	16	4	75.0%	
Brown	R.G.	Member	5	5	11	13									2	6													18	24	6	75.0%	
Curry	K.W.	Member	4	5					2	5																	2	2	23	31	8	74.2%	
Harris	P.	Member	4	5					3	5					3	6													23	31	8	74.2%	
Ratcliffe	G.W.	Member	4	5	11	13																							17	23	6	73.9%	
Morgan	E.T.	Member	4	5							1	3														4	5	14	19	5	73.7%		

Surname	Initials	C.C.	BOARD				PSC	People				Regen	CORP				BREC	MONT	RAD		Pg	Lic	RoW		Audit		Emp		Stds		P&I	Actl	Pos	Missed	Total %					
			Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos		Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos		Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos			Actl	Pos			Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos						Actl	Pos	Actl	Pos	Actl
ct 09 - 12 May 10																																								
Morgan	R.W.	Member	5	5								1	3																							19	26	7	73.1%	
Silk	K.S.	Member	3	5			2	3								5	5																	18	25	7	72.0%			
Vaughan	G.P.	Member	5	5									1	3												1	2			3	5	15	21	6	71.4%					
Morris	M.E.	Member	5	5			0	3																										19	27	8	70.4%			
Van-Rees	T.J.	Member	3	5									2	3		2	5																	17	25	8	68.0%			
Davies	S.C.	Member	4	5									1	3		3	5									2	2							13	20	7	65.0%			
Lewis	P.E.	Member	3	5			2	3										5	6															10	16	6	62.5%			
Steadman	J.	Member	3	5												3	5									1	1							14	23	9	60.9%			
Powell	C.E.	Member	4	5									1	3		3	5									0	1							8	14	6	57.1%			
Meredith	D.W.	Member	4	5									1	5																				8	17	9	47.1%			
Barker	F.	Member	2	5									2	5																				8	22	14	36.4%			
Pritchard	P.C.	Member	2	5			0	3										2	6															4	14	10	28.6%			
Surname	Initials	Shire	C.C.	BOARD		PSC	People		Regen	CORP	BREC	MONT	RAD	Pg	Lic	RoW	Audit	Emp	Stds																					
Jevons	Revd A																																		2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Harris	Mrs M	Ind Member																																	2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Jarman	Mrs S	Ind Member																																	2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Miller	R	Ind Member																																	2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Swanson	P	Ind Member																																	2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Rhydderch-Roberts	Ms H																																		2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Evans	H	Ind Member																																	2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Evans	Ms C	Ind Member																																	2	2	2	2	0	100.0%
Surname	Initials	Shire	C.C.	BOARD		PSC	People		Regen	CORP	BREC	MONT	RAD	Pg	Lic	RoW	Audit	Emp	Stds																					
Thomas	A	PGR						1	5																												1	5	4	20.0%
Davies	G	PGR						0	5																												0	5	5	0.0%
Owen	W	PGR						1	5																												1	5	4	20.0%
Jones	G	Staff rep																																	3	5	3	5		60.0%
Statutory Outside Bodies Attendance																																								
Fire Authority 2009/2010			Act	Poss	%																																			
Williams	J.M		16	17	94%																																			
Torrens	F.A		9	12	75%																																			
Thomas	D. G.		11	12	92%																																			
Holmes	J.C		14	19	74%																																			
Police Authority 2009/2010																																								
Curry	K.W		12	17	71%																																			
Evans	D.O		20	20	100%																																			
Hodges	M.D		11	15	73%																																			
Brecon Beacons National Park 2009/10																																								
Jones	M.J		36	51	71%																																			
Morgan	E.T		59	61	97%																																			
Pathak	K		52	65	80%																																			
Powell	W.D		67	71	94%																																			
Ratcliffe	G.W		33	51	65%																																			
Silk	K.S		51	60	85%																																			
Weale	A.M.C		42	53	79%																																			
Steadman	J		50	57	88%																																			

Appendix 7

Extract from Minutes of County Council 11th November 2010

RESOLVED that a leave of absence be granted to County Councillor Fred Barker to cover the period from July 2010 to January 2011.

‘CILMERY’
The Avenue, Brecon, Powys, LD3 9BG.

Mr. Clarence Meredith,
Law & Governance,
Powys County Hall,
Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG.

19th November, 2010

Dear Mr. Meredith,

Re: Non Attendance at Meetings

I refer to your recent letter regarding the above and outline below the reasons for my non attendance and certain Committee/Council Meetings:

Date	Meeting	Reason for Absence
10.06.2010	Employment Committee	First meeting, as local Member, of the St. Johns Family Centre in Pendre development
25.10.2010	Employment Committee not scheduled in County Diary	Prior Engagement
10.06.2010	People's Scrutiny Committee	As above
13.05.2010	County Council	Appointments Meeting – Brecon High
13.05.2010	Brecknockshire	Meeting held at least one hour prior to the time indicated on the Agenda resulting in me having a wasted journey to County Hall at my own expense.
24.05.2010	People Scrutiny Committee	Mayoral event – Brecon Town Council
26.05.2010	Brecknockshire Committee	Priory School – Chairman of Governors
23.07.2010	People Scrutiny Committee	Funeral
12.10.2010	Special Meeting not in Diary	Prior engagement as Mayor of Brecon

I trust my explanation meet the approval of the Standards Committee.

Yours sincerely,



David Meredith

Request for Leave of Absence

County Councillor P.C. Pritchard declared an interest and left the meeting while the next item was being considered.

County Councillor P.C. Pritchard had applied for a leave of absence from 22nd May to the end of July while he was away on FIFA duties at the World Cup.

RESOLVED:	Reason for Decision:
That the request for a leave of absence by County Councillor P.C. Pritchard be approved.	To clarify Council's view of Councillor Pritchard's forthcoming absence from meetings due to involvement with the FIFA World Cup in the context of the review of Members' attendances at Committees undertaken by the Standards Committee.

County Councillor G.P. Vaughan had applied for a leave of absence following a recent operation as he would be unable to drive for 6 weeks.

RESOLVED:	Reason for Decision:
That the request for a leave of absence by County Councillor G.P. Vaughan be approved.	To comply with legislative requirements regarding the non-attendance of members at meetings and the periodic review undertaken by the Standards Committee.

County Councillor Mrs C.E. Powell had applied for leave of absence for maternity leave from August.

RESOLVED:	Reason for Decision:
That the request for a leave of absence by County Councillor C.E. Powell be approved.	To comply with legislative requirements regarding the non-attendance of members at meetings and the periodic review undertaken by the Standards Committee.

County Councillor G. Morgan had applied for a leave of absence as he would be unable to drive following an operation.

RESOLVED:	Reason for Decision:
That the request for a leave of absence by County Councillor G. Morgan be approved.	To comply with legislative requirements regarding the non-attendance of members at meetings and the periodic review undertaken by the Standards Committee.

Attendance at Statutory Outside Bodies by Powys County Council Members

Mid and West Wales Fire Authority 2009-2010

Member	No. Of meetings eligible to attend	No. of meetings attended	Percentage attendance
Cllr J Holmes	19	14	74%
Cllr G. Thomas	12	11	92%
Cllr F. Torrens	12	9	75%
Cllr M Williams	17	16	94%

Brecon Beacons National Park 2009-2010

Member	No. Of meetings eligible to attend	No. of meetings attended	Percentage attendance
Cllr M Jones	51	36	71%
Cllr E T Morgan	61	59	97%
Cllr K Pathak	65	52	80%
Cllr W Powell	71	67	94%
Cllr G Ratcliffe	51	33	65%*
Cllr K Silk	60	51	85%
Cllr M Weale	53	42	79%
Cllr J Steadman	57	50	88%
<i>NB. This does not include all external meetings which were not recorded last year. Nor does it include the Chairman's external duties, or informal briefing meetings.</i>			
<i>*Lower attendance due to clash between BBNPA Planning Committee and the Powys Board meetings</i>			

Dyfed Powys Police Authority 2009-2010

Member	No. Of meetings eligible to attend	No. of meetings attended	Percentage attendance
Cllr K. Curry	17	12	70.6%
Cllr D. Evans	20	20	100%
Cllr M. Hodges	15	11	73.3%