

## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Standards Committee  
4<sup>th</sup> April 2012

**REPORT BY:** Strategic Director – Law and Governance

**SUBJECT:** Matters appertaining to Standards Issues

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision, Information and Discussion

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**A. General Training for Members**

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

**A1.1** A meeting of the Member Development Working Group took place on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012. A copy of the minutes will be circulated at the meeting.

**B. Referral of Councillors to Public Services Ombudsman**

**B1. County Councillor Referrals**

**B1.1** The Ombudsman received a complaint regarding one County Councillor in February 2012 (ref 1/12/CC) which he has decided not to investigate.

**C. Other Standards Issues**

**C1.1 Social Networking**

This Protocol has been sent to the Political Group Leaders for discussion with their groups and forward their comments to the Member Development Working Group who will consider those comments at the next meeting and a final draft will then be prepared for adoption by Council.

**D. Minutes of Meetings**

**D1. Meeting of Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, Audit and Standards Committees**

A summary of the recent work of the Joint Chairs is attached at **Appendix 1**.

**E. Dispensations**

**E1. Applications - County Councillors**

**E1.1** No applications for dispensation have been received.

**F. Renewable Energy Issues (Electricity Sub Station, Pylons, Overhead Power Lines, Wind Farms etc)**

Further responses have now been received from Members to the questionnaire on Windfarm interests. To date 62 replies have been received. 17 Members outline interests and 45 Members have no interests.

## **G. Independent Remuneration Panel – Care Allowances**

To receive an oral update.

## **H. Meeting Dates**

### **I.1 To note dates of future meetings as follows:**

4<sup>th</sup> July 2012  
5<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
5<sup>th</sup> December 2012

All meetings to commence at 10.00am with the option of training available afterwards.

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
<i>Clarence Meredith, Strategic Director – Law and Governance</i>	<i>01597 826395</i>	<i>01597 826220</i>	<a href="mailto:clarence.meredith@powys.gov.uk">clarence.meredith@powys.gov.uk</a>

X/Admin/Committee Reports/Standards/2011/2012-04-04 Standards Committee Report



## Standards Committee

4<sup>th</sup> April 2012

### Scrutiny Committee Structure Review

#### **Purpose of Report:**

To inform Standards Committee Members of the work undertaken by the Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs of the four Scrutiny Committees and Audit Committee and to develop scrutiny and respond to the Local Government Measure 2011 (the Measure).

Scrutiny is facing a number of pressures which need to be addressed including:

- An increased desire by Regulators to see robust self regulation by Councils based on sound scrutiny
- An increased role and responsibility for scrutiny members as a result of the Local Government Measure to be introduced in May 2012.
- Criticism of scrutiny in Powys in the CSSIW Joint Inspection report and the WAO Annual Improvement Report
- Growing concern of scrutiny elsewhere in Wales by Regulators.

The Chief Executive has tasked the Joint Chairs and Scrutiny Services with improving scrutiny to address the above. In addition, the Measure makes provisions which requires a review of the Audit Committee.

The development of scrutiny started last summer with the identification of items for review, analysis and suggested questions being developed for committees and pre-meeting briefings. One Committee has decided to double the number of meetings and focus on one service area only at each meeting. Further work on the provision of information to Members and the analysis of that information is being developed.

The Joint Chairs has identified that the most effective scrutiny work occurs through Working Groups rather than in committees. There is also a need to release scrutiny officer resources to provide better support to Members. Consideration was therefore given to revising the scrutiny committee structure. This was extended at the last meeting to include the whole committee process to provide a holistic view in preparation for the new Council after May.

Initial recommendations have been drafted, but these are the subject of further discussions by the Joint Chairs with the intention that a paper outlining the proposals will be sent to Group Leaders for consultation in the near future.

Any proposals will require agreement at the County Council meeting in April 2012 prior to implementation after the Annual Council Meeting in May 2012.

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**Report contact:** Liz Patterson, Scrutiny Officer, Legal, Scrutiny and Democratic Services.

**Contact details:** 01597 826980, [elizabeth.patterson@powys.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.patterson@powys.gov.uk)

**Sources/background papers:** Notes from meetings of Joint Chairs