

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Standards Committee
3rd April 2013

REPORT BY: Strategic Director – Law and Governance

SUBJECT: Matters appertaining to Standards Issues

REPORT FOR: Decision, Information and Discussion

A. General Standards Issues for County Councillors and Co-opted Members

A1 Code of Conduct Training

Training on the Members' Code of Conduct has been arranged for the outstanding two County Councillors and three Co-opted Members who have yet to receive the training. This training will be held after the meetings of the Standards Committee and Standards Community Sub-Committee on 3rd April 2013.

A2 Member Development

To receive an oral update on Member Development.

B. Referral of Councillors to Public Services Ombudsman

B1. County Councillor Referrals

B1.1 The Ombudsman is still investigating complaint Ref 5/12/CC.

Since the last meeting the Ombudsman has advised that the following complaints have been made:

1/13/CC – deciding whether or not to investigate

2/13/CC – decided not to investigate

3/13/CC – decided not to investigate

B1.2 The Standards Committee have arranged a hearing to determine Ref 2/12/CC which will be held on 9th May 2013.

C. Other Standards Issues

C1.1 Social Networking

The WLGA will be providing training for Members in due course on blogging and social networking. Members of the Standards Committee will be invited to attend this development session.

D Dispensations

D1. Applications - County Councillors

D1.1 No applications for dispensation have been received.

D1.2 Blanket Dispensations

At recent meetings of the Standards Community Sub-Committee consideration has been given to the granting of blanket dispensations in relation to the position when a Member is also a trustee of a charity or when a Member is also a member of a local community group. A copy of the dispensations granted in these respects is attached at **Appendix 1**.

The Committee are asked to consider granting a blanket dispensation to County Councillors in this respect.

E. Late payment of expenses

Claims for payment of expenses have been submitted by the following two Members:

Councillor Graham Brown – a claim for mileage submitted on 1st March 2013 for December 2012.

Councillor John Evans – a claim for broadband expenses submitted on 22nd January 2013 for May to August 2013.

Details will be provided at the meeting and the 2 Members have been invited to attend.

F. Member Attendance

County Councillor George has been invited to attend to discuss attendance with the Committee.

G. Independent Remuneration Panel

The Independent Remuneration Panel has published its Annual Report setting out the range and maximum level of allowances payable for the financial year 2013/14.

Whilst the report makes no recommendations to changing the care allowance from a monthly to annual amount it does allow the following:

'that relevant authorities may decide on the maximum number of days for which co-opted members may be paid in any one year. In addition, payments cannot cover time spent on preparation but can include authorised training events, conferences and pre-meetings with officers'

The Democratic Services Committee will be meeting on 5th April 2013 to make a recommendation to Council which will be considered on 24th April 2013.

The Independent Remuneration Panel is visiting Powys on 1st May 2013 and the Chair of Standards has been invited to meet with the Panel on that date.

H. Meeting Dates

H.1 To note dates of future meetings as follows:

3rd July 2013
4th September 2013
4th December 2013

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

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Dispensation granted at Standards Community Sub-Committee on 6th February 2013.

RESOLVED	REASON FOR DECISION
<p>1. To revoke the blanket dispensation granted at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 5th December 2012 granted to Councillors who are trustees of registered charities – Minute B2.</p> <p>2. That a blanket dispensation be granted to all Town and Community Councillors who are elected, appointed or nominated otherwise than by their Town or Community Council as :_</p> <p>(a) trustees of registered charities (including where they are directors of limited companies running the charities); and</p> <p>(b) members (at whatever level) of Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>to participate, speak and vote in connection with council business relating to the charity of which the councillor is a trustee or the Voluntary Organisation of which the councillor is a member (at whatever level) including</p> <p>(i) regulatory matters concerning the registered charity of which the councillor is a trustee or the Voluntary Organisation of which the councillor is a member; and</p> <p>(ii) the grant, loan or other form of financial assistance of more than £500 to the registered charity of which the councillor is a trustee or the Voluntary Organisation of which the councillor is a member</p> <p>but subject to the following;-</p> <p>(1) that the registered charity or</p>	<p>1. To replace the previous decision. with an amended blanket dispensation.</p> <p>2 & 3 To place all councillors who are trustees of registered charities or members (of whatever level) of Voluntary Organisations (howsoever elected, appointed or nominated) on an equal footing with regard to prejudicial interests so as to facilitate the democratic process and assist council business; the Sub-Committee being of the view that to do so will not damage public confidence in the conduct of the council's business and therefore the Sub-Committee is satisfied that the grounds in Paragraph (d) of Regulation 2 of the Standards Committee (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001 are met.</p>

<p>Voluntary Organisation must be non-profit making and the Councillor (or a close personal associate) must not be in receipt of any financial reward or remuneration from the registered charity or Voluntary Organisation</p> <p>(2) that this blanket dispensation only relates to a prejudicial interest arising from the Councillor's role as a trustee of the registered charity or member or as a member of the Voluntary Organisation and does not confer a dispensation in respect of any other type of prejudicial interest such as a pecuniary prejudicial interest.</p> <p>(3) that this blanket dispensation shall continue in force until the next ordinary council elections in 2017 unless before those elections the Standards Committee revokes, amends or alters this dispensation</p> <p>3. That a blanket dispensation be granted to all Town and Community Councillors who are elected, appointed or nominated by their Town or Community Council as :-</p> <p>(a) trustees of registered charities (including where they are directors of limited companies running the charities); and</p> <p>(b) members (at whatever level) of Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>to participate, speak and vote in connection with council business relating to:-</p> <p>(i) regulatory matters concerning the registered charity of which the councillor is a trustee or the Voluntary Organisation of which the councillor is a member; and</p>	
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(ii) the grant, loan or other form of financial assistance of more than £500 to the registered charity of which the councillor is a trustee or the Voluntary Organisation of which the councillor is a member

but subject to the following;-

(1) that the registered charity or Voluntary Organisation must be non-profit making and the Councillor (or a close personal associate) must not be in receipt of any financial reward or remuneration from the registered charity or Voluntary Organisation

(2) that this blanket dispensation only relates to a prejudicial interest arising from the Councillor's role as a trustee of the registered charity or member or as a member of the Voluntary Organisation and does not confer a dispensation in respect of any other type of prejudicial interest such as a pecuniary prejudicial interest.

(3) that this blanket dispensation shall continue in force until the next ordinary council elections in 2017 unless before those elections the Standards Committee revokes, amends or alters this dispensation