

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMUNITY SUB-COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS ON 27TH APRIL 2011

PRESENT: P. Swanson (Chair)

Mrs H. Rhydderch-Roberts, Mrs M. Harris, Mrs S. Jarman and R. Miller, Community Councillors Ms C. Evans and H. Evans and County Councillor K. Curry.

Observers: County Councillors Miss V. E. Evans and M. Hodges.

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

1.	APOLOGIES	STCS6-2011
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Apologies were received from Revd A. Jevons.

2.	MINUTES	STCS7-2011
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2011 as a correct record.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	STCS8-2011
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Cllr Miss Evans declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Item 5 in relation to the Scottish Power Energy Network proposal to connect the windfarms to the National Grid on the grounds that one of the proposed routes for the pylons passes through her ward which will also be affected by construction traffic if the Cefn Coch site is chosen for the Hub. Cllr Miss Evans is also a Town Councillor for Llanfair Caereinion.

4.	CORRESPONDENCE	STCS9-2011
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No correspondence was received.

5.	REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – LAW AND GOVERNANCE - STANDARDS COMMUNITY SUB-COMMITTEE BUSINESS	STSC10-2011
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The Sub-Committee received the report of the Strategic Director – Law and Governance (Copy filed with signed Minutes).

A. Referral of Councillors to Public Services Ombudsman

The Ombudsman had received one new Code of Conduct complaint (ref 1/11TCC) which he had decided not to investigate as he did not believe that based on the information provided that the Councillors behaviour could be said to be sufficient to amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

B. Dispensations

B1.1 Llanbadarn Fynydd Community Council

Applications for dispensation had been received from three Members of Llanbadarn Fynydd Community Council on the grounds that out of the 7 Community Councillors 5 had interests relating to Wind Farms and any meeting would be inquorate. Further information had been requested from the Clerk but this had not been forthcoming.

B1.2 School Modernisation Interests

The Standards Committee had granted a dispensation to County Councillors (who were decision makers) at the last meeting. Applications for dispensation relating to the Powys County Council School Modernisation Programme had now been received from two Town Councillors in Presteigne and Norton. It was agreed that a blanket dispensation should be granted to Town and Community Councillors (who would be consultees in the process) to bring them into line with the position of County Councillors.

RESOLVED THAT	REASON FOR RESOLUTION
All Town and Community 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. To also ensure that no Member can be accused of taking part in a decision which would be financially advantageous/disadvantageous.
That those Councillors who believe that they have a pecuniary interest may make an individual application to the Standards Community Sub-Committee for dispensation	To allow Members with a pecuniary interest to make individual applications for dispensation.

B1.3 Scottish Power Energy Networks proposal to connect windfarms to the National Grid

The Strategic Director explained that there is a proposal in Montgomeryshire to build an electricity sub-station ('Hub') at either Abermule or Cefn Coch to collect electricity from proposed windfarms in the area and convert it to a higher voltage which will then be sent down the Severn Valley by overhead pylons to join the National Grid in Shropshire. The planning application to build the Hub will be dealt with by the Planning Committee at Powys County Council whereas the planning application to build the pylons will be dealt with by the IPC (Infrastructure Planning Commission). Powys County Council will be a consultee for the Pylons planning application.

The Sub-Committee noted that there were a number of Town and Community Councillors who were also County Councillors. The issues relating to County Councillors had been addressed separately at the Standards Committee.

The Sub-Committee was advised that in relation to planning applications regarding the hub and pylons, Town and Community Councils would operate as a consultee in the process. It was therefore agreed that a blanket dispensation be granted to all Town and Community Councillors, irrespective of any potential interests, to speak and vote in relation to these matters. The issue of pre-determination was also raised and the Strategic Director – Law and Governance advised that this was less of an issue for Town and Community Councillors as they were not final decision makers.

RESOLVED THAT	REASON FOR RESOLUTION
All Town and Community Councillors with Personal and Prejudicial interests in the electricity hub, power lines and pylons development in North Powys be granted a dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to the hub/pylons, subject to the disclosure of the reliance of a dispensation to be able to speak and vote.	To allow all Town and Community Councillors as consultees to take part in any discussion, debate or meeting relating to the hub/pylons.

D. Standards Conference

This item to be discussed at the Standards Committee.

E. Meeting dates

Wednesday 29th June, 2011
Wednesday 7th September, 2011
Wednesday 30th November, 2011

P. SWANSON
Chairman