



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

STANDARDS MEETING

FRIDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 2017

PRESENT: J Morgan (In the Chair)

Councillors:

J Amos, G Richards and C Tovey

Independent Members:

Ian P Cathrew and David McCarthy

Community Council Representative:

Helen Thomas

Officers:

Carys Kennedy (Head of Legal and Governance Services -
Monitoring Officer)

Karen Vokes (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
422	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Nathan Fear and Anne Morgan.
423	Declarations of Interest	<p>Councillor Julian Amos queried whether he would need to declare an interest in item 5 (Councillor Howard Barrett's dispensation request on the 18th September 2017) as he had declared a prejudicial interest when the original dispensation request was considered by the Standards Committee in July 2017.</p> <p>Carys Kennedy advised Councillor Amos that he did not have to declare an interest and leave the meeting as she was only giving an update on the matter.</p>
424	The Public Services for Ombudsman	Carys Kennedy advised members that the Annual Report of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales was a very

	<p>Wales' Annual Report (to include any current referrals to the Ombudsman)</p>	<p>helpful overview of the work of the Ombudsman and his staff over the year. It provides details of issues relating to the Authority specifically in the appendices and members will see that one complaint in respect of a Merthyr Tydfil Councillor was brought to a conclusion in that year.</p> <p>It also comments that there was a decrease in code of conduct complaints during the year which is unusual as complaints normally rise during an election year.</p> <p>She also gave an update to members on current referrals to the Ombudsman in the period leading up to and since the elections of May and June 2017.</p> <p>She advised members that when a referral is made to the Ombudsman she is not allowed to disclose anything at all beyond reporting the fact that a referral has been made. She stressed the importance of the role of the Standards Committee as the Ombudsman may refer matters to this Committee for an internal resolution and, for this reason, it is imperative that members of the Standards Committee do not have any further details unless a referral is made for investigation.</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>The Committee notes the information contained within the Ombudsman's report.</p> <p>Members are advised of any updates in relation to referrals made to the Ombudsman if required.</p>
425	Standards Conference 2018	<p>Carys Kennedy advised members that there will be a Standards Conference in 2018, and will update members when the date and venue have been confirmed by the Monitoring Officers Group.</p> <p>In relation to the previous Standards Conference in 2015, discussion ensued in relation to the workshops carried out throughout the day.</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Vokes will update members when details are confirmed. • Carys Kennedy will liaise with the Monitoring Officer Group members closer to the date of the 2018 Standards Conference to enquire whether feedback notes are available following the scheduled workshops.
426	To discuss the dispensation request considered at the Standards Committee on the 18th September 2017	<p>Carys Kennedy referred members to Councillor Barrett's original dispensation request considered at the Standards Committee on the 28th July 2017, where dispensation was granted to speak and vote on matters in relation to the new build of Ysgol Y Graig, Cefn Coed.</p> <p>A further Standards Committee was called on the 18th</p>

		<p>September 2017 as it had been brought to the Committee's attention that Councillor Barrett is a Director of Cefn Coed RFC and not a Committee member as outlined in his original application. As a result, the Committee determined that Councillor Barrett be given dispensation to speak but not vote.</p> <p>Carys Kennedy advised that Councillor Barrett has now resigned his directorship at Cefn Coed RFC and, following communication with members of this Committee, it was agreed via e-mail that with effect from the 6th October 2017 Councillors Barrett's original dispensation be reinstated, i.e. be entitled to speak and vote on matters in relation to the new build of Ysgol Y Graig, Cefn Coed.</p>
427	Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members: Request for Dispensation - Councillor Chris Davies	<p>Carys Kennedy led members through Councillor Chris Davies' dispensation request to speak and vote on matters relating to the Flying Start Programme and Early Years and Child Care matters. Councillor Davies has requested this dispensation as he is the Chairman of Plant Bach Pre School Setting Committee.</p> <p>Questions were raised by members and were answered by Carys Kennedy and it was RESOLVED that:</p> <p>Councillor Chris Davies be entitled to speak and vote on matters relating to the Flying Start Programme and Early Years and Child Care matters except where any financial/funding matters are being discussed.</p>
428	Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members: Request for Dispensation - Councillor Ernie Galsworthy	<p>Carys Kennedy led members through Councillor Ernie Galsworthy's dispensation request to speak and vote on matters relating to the Nuclear Free Local Authorities. Councillor Galsworthy has requested this dispensation as he is the Authority's representative on Nuclear Free Local Authorities.</p> <p>Questions were raised by members and were answered by Carys Kennedy and it was RESOLVED that:</p> <p>Councillor Ernie Galsworthy be entitled to speak and vote on matters relating to the Nuclear Free Local Authorities.</p>
429	Update on Training and Development	<p>Carys Kennedy referred to the presentation by Paul Lucas (the then Monitoring Officer at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council) to a previous Standards Committee meeting. At this meeting it was agreed to have joint training with RCT in relation to Standards Committees dealing with cases under their respective Local Resolution processes.</p> <p>Carys Kennedy advised the Committee that RCT are currently in the process of recruiting members to their Standards Committee and they will be looking to arrange training when this process is complete.</p>

		<p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>Carys Kennedy will liaise with members when further details have been received from RCT.</p>
430	Appointment of Independent Member of the Standards Committee	<p>The Chair advised that following the interviews for the vacancy of an independent member of the Standards Committee, Anne Morgan was appointed.</p> <p>He advised that Carys Kennedy, Simon Jones and himself attended the interviews but that he had declared an interest in relation to Anne Morgan and therefore did not sit in on that interview.</p>
431	Date of Next Meeting	It was agreed that the date of the next meeting will be Friday, 16 th March 2018 at 2.00 pm.
432	Any other item deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.