



MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL

MINUTES OF MEETING

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

FRIDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER, 2015

PRESENT: J Morgan (In the Chair)
I Cathrew (Vice Chair)

Councillors:

H Barrett, S P Brown and C T Jones

Independent Members:

Nathan Fear, David McCarthy and Peter Young

Community Council Member:

Helen Thomas

Officers:

Carys Kennedy (Head of Legal and Governance Services -
Monitoring Officer) and Simon Jones (Senior Solicitor)

Karen Vokes, Democratic Services Officer

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
726	Apologies for absence	No apologies for absence, as all members of the Committee were present.
727	Declarations of Interest	Ian Cathrew advised the Committee that he wished to declare a personal interest in respect of Item No. 3 (Merthyr Town Football Club) as he is a lifelong member of the Club. Carys Kennedy advised that Mr Cathrew could remain in the meeting to consider this item.

		<p>Councillor Clive Jones declared an interest in respect of Item No. 3 (Merthyr Town Football Club), as he is a lifelong member of the Club, but has dispensation to speak and vote.</p>
728	<p>Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members - Request for Dispensation</p>	<p>Carys Kennedy advised the Committee on the process of Members declaring an interest at Council meetings and also the consideration and granting of dispensations to Councillors by the Standards Committee in relation to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and associated local protocols.</p> <p>Ian Cathrew advised that Merthyr Tydfil Football Club is now known as "Merthyr Town Football Club" and consideration needs to be given to the current dispensations granted to Councillors under the previous Merthyr Tydfil Football Club. Carys Kennedy advised that she would look into this.</p> <p>In relation to the application, concern was expressed whether sufficient information had been provided to consider this matter, and a recommendation was put forward to:</p> <p>"defer this item and request further information from the Councillor".</p> <p>This recommendation was not carried.</p> <p>A further recommendation was put forward to accept this dispensation, and it was RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dispensation be granted to Councillor Allan Jones to speak only on matters relating to the Merthyr Town Football Club except where any financial/funding matters are being discussed. <p>It was further RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter be sent by the Chair to All Councillors expressing the importance of providing detailed information in relation to their request for dispensation. • Following publication of future agendas and prior to meetings, Members to contact Carys Kennedy if more information is required to avoid any delays in considering future dispensations. Carys Kennedy to liaise with the Chair if the need arises.
729	<p>Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members - Request for Dispensation</p>	<p>Discussion ensued in relation to this application, and Carys Kennedy advised that Councillor Jones had previously been granted a dispensation as General Secretary for the Merthyr Tydfil Association Football League.</p> <p>Concern was again expressed whether sufficient information had been provided to consider this matter, and a recommendation was put forward to:</p>

		<p>“defer this item and request further information from the Councillor”.</p> <p>This recommendation was not carried.</p> <p>A further recommendation was put forward to accept this dispensation, and it was RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dispensation be granted to Councillor Allan Jones to speak only on any matters which may affect him as President of the Merthyr Tydfil Association Football League except where any financial/funding matters are being discussed.
730	Feedback from Standards Conference	<p>Simon Jones referred Members to the Standards Conference held in Cardiff on the 20th October, and advised that the Conference provided a good opportunity to share practice, particularly in the context of promoting proactively the work that the Committee does.</p> <p>The Committee discussed in detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key note speech from Nick Bennett, Ombudsman in relation to his annual report. • Code of Conduct statistics from the Ombudsman’s office. • The speech by Lyn Cadwallader (Chief Executive of One Voice Wales) in relation to Community Councils and concerns about their ability to handle increased responsibilities without making significant changes. • The Workshops that were scheduled throughout the day, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Media - Whistleblowing - Community Councils (Governance and Standards) - Nolan Principles - Local Complaints Resolution <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contents of the report be noted. • A further report be presented at the next meeting picking up suggestions for taking forward the key issues identified by PSOW. • Notes of the Conference to be distributed to Members when received from Cardiff. • Material from the Social Media Workshop, which was distributed at the Standards Committee, be sent to all Councillors within the Authority.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Vokes to contact Cardiff Council to obtain a copy of the information supplied at the Community Council Workshop for Helen Thomas.
731	Training and Development	<p>The Committee discussed in detail a timetable on how to progress training and development as a Committee and it was:</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities be identified to bring together Merthyr Tydfil and RCT Standards Committees for workshop training. Karen Vokes to liaise with the Chair and Carys Kennedy on this prior to the next meeting. • Local Dispute Resolution Procedures (which were agreed by the Standards Committee on the 4th November 2013 and adopted by Council on 4th December 2013) be scheduled for the next meeting. • The Committee view selected clips of recorded Council meetings at the next meeting. • A programme of attendance at Council meetings be arranged at the next meeting. • Consideration be given to attending meetings at neighbouring Authorities. <p>The following programme of meetings were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday, 18th March 2016 at 2.00 pm to discuss Complaints. • Friday, 15th July 2016 at 2.00 pm to discuss the Council's Whistleblowing Policy. <p>Discussion ensued in relation to the Local Government Wales Bill. It was agreed that Karen Vokes e-mail a copy to all Members and any comments on the Bill be sent to Carys Kennedy.</p>
732	Any other item deemed urgent by the Chair	No business was deemed urgent by the Chair.