

MEETING	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE	11, OCTOBER, 2010.
SUBJECT	THE GWYNEDD STANDARD
PURPOSE	REQUEST THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION AND SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL.
AUTHOR	DILYS PHILLIPS, MONITORING OFFICER.

1. On the 5th July, 2010 at its meeting with the political groups' representatives, the Committee approved the draft of "The Gwynedd Standard" for consultation purposes.
2. I append to this report the document which received the Committee's approval. Members will recall that the purpose of the Standard document is to establish what behaviour by a member is acceptable and what is not acceptable. It is not intended to replace the Code of Conduct. Rather it is intended to sit alongside the Code of Conduct and fill the gap between behaviour which possibly in itself is not serious, but creates unpleasantness between Council members, and behaviour that is approaching the threshold and serious enough for the Ombudsman to hold an investigation.
3. Should the Council adopt "The Gwynedd Standard", the intention would then be for any transgression to be dealt with under the local procedure. The same procedure will be adopted as the one the Council has for solving complaints between members and officers.
4. Under that procedure there are three steps, namely the advice of the Monitoring Officer or her representative, an informal meeting between members to try and resolve the matter (and if there is no solution) then a hearing before the Standards Committee. The members (the complainant and the subject of the complaint) have the right to appear before the Committee to present their case. There would also be an invitation for them to present any documentation before hand to be distributed with the committee papers.
5. Following the hearing the Committee can come to one of three conclusions, namely:
 - (a) there is no basis to the allegation;
 - (b) that there is basis to the allegation but there is no need to act further;
 - (c) there is basis to the allegation and the member should be reprimanded.

6. Following approval of the Committee, a draft of “The Gwynedd Standard” was sent to all members inviting their observations. Only four responded, all of which were supportive in principle but with one showing some concern on the practicality of the last point in the Standard. Perhaps this could be a matter the committee would wish to consider further?
7. A copy was also sent to the Ombudsman. At the time of writing this report no response had been received. A verbal report will be presented to Committee on any observations received from him.

RECOMMENDATION.

8. The Committee is requested to consider the response to the documents and recommend The Gwynedd Standard to the full Council for adoption.

THE GWYNEDD STANDARD.

This document explains the standard of conduct expected from Gwynedd Council's councillors in dealing with each other. It should be read in conjunction with the Members Code of Conduct and the Protocol Member-Officer Relations. It adds to those documents and not detract from them.

Gwynedd Council members are expected to :-

Public behaviour:

- Show respect to each other
- Not to make personal abusive comments about each other.
- Not to publish anything insulting about each other.
- Not to make malicious allegations against each other.
- Not to publish or spread any false information about each other.
- Show respect to diversity and equality.

Behaviour in committees:

- Behave with dignity in the Chamber.
- Show respect to the Chairman and obey his decisions.
- Not to use indecent language nor make racial remarks or remarks which prejudice any section of society.

Confidentiality:

- Keep the confidentiality of exempt papers and any other documents which are not public.
- Not to release confidential information to the press or the public.
- Return confidential papers.
- Not to use confidential information for purposes other than intended.

Local members

- Work with members of adjoining wards for the benefit of the locality.
- Inform the local member if dealing with any matter relating to his/her constituency.