

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>11 July 2011</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Application for dispensation by Councillor John Pughe Roberts</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>Action:</b>	<b>To decide upon the application</b>

## **Background**

1. The Council is currently considering the re-organisation of schools in the catchment area of Ysgol y Gader, Dolgellau. The matter has been discussed by the Children and Young Person's Scrutiny Committee, and the Board will consider the matter on 5 July. The matter will go before a meeting of the full Council on 14 July. The plans have been split into three separate areas – (i) schools in the eastern part of the catchment area (ii) schools in the western part and (iii) schools in the town of Dolgellau.

2. Councillor John Pughe Roberts has declared a prejudicial interest in discussions on the eastern part because his sister's children attend Dinas Mawddwy School. He received a dispensation in respect of this interest on 12/09/10:

*“To allow dispensation for the member to participate in discussions and to vote on matters considered by the Catchment Area Review Panel and by committees of the Council and the full Council”*

3. At the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 23/06/11 the councillor declared a further prejudicial interest as his sister has a child who attends Ysgol y Gader. He has asked for a dispensation to allow him to take part in the meeting of the full Council when the school is discussed. The form was not to hand when preparing this report but will be presented at the meeting.

4. The Standards Committee may grant a dispensation of the situation comes within one (or more) of those listed in the relevant regulations (**Appendix**).

5. The Committee has developed guidelines to consider in applications relating to school reorganisation:

*“a father/mother, grandfather/grandmother, grandson/granddaughter, husband or wife, children, brother or sister would amount to too close a connection to allow dispensation in terms of a specific school, since it would be difficult for the public to gain confidence in the way a decision would be reached.”*

6. The Ombudsman's Guidelines on the code of Conduct notes the following in relation to granting dispensations (p.35):

*The standards committee will need to balance the public interest in preventing members with prejudicial interests from taking part in decisions, against the public interest in decisions being taken by a reasonably representative group of members of the authority.*

## **Recommendation**

7. The Committee is requested to consider and decide upon Councillor John Pughe Roberts' application for a dispensation.