

Committee:	Standards Committee
Date:	1 July 2013
Title:	Application for dispensation by Councillor Mike Stevens
Author:	Monitoring Officer
Action:	To decide upon the application

Background

1. Cllr Mike Stevens of Tywyn Town Council has applied for a dispensation to take part in discussions, in the Town Council, relating to the Tywyn Chamber of Tourism and Commerce. The Council provides an annual grant to the Chamber but this year it wishes to discuss the matter further before making a decision because of developments within the Chamber over the last year.

2. The Councillor has declared a prejudicial interest because he is the Chairman of the Chamber. He wishes to attend the meeting in order to provide information and to allow members the opportunity to question him. He has asked for the right to speak and vote. Further background information will be available and will be presented at the Standards Committee meeting.

3. The Standards Committee may grant a dispensation if the situation comes within one (or more) of those listed in the relevant regulations). The Councillor states that he is asking the Committee to grant a dispensation under paragraph (h), which states that a dispensation may be granted where -

“the business which is to be considered relates to the finances or property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board the member is a member otherwise than as a representative of the relevant authority and the member has no other interest in that business provided that any dispensation shall not extend to participation in any vote with respect to that business;”

He also refers to paragraph (e) - the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the general public;

4. The Ombudsman’s Guidelines on the code of Conduct notes the following in relation to granting dispensations (p.36):

“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

5. The Committee is requested to consider and decide upon Councillor Mike Stevens’ application for a dispensation, along with any others that are received.