

CYNGOR GWYNEDD STANDARDS COMMITTEE DECISION NOTICE
(Section 100C of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020))

26 June 2023

Virtual Meeting

Present:

Elected Members: Councillors Anne Lloyd Jones, Beth Lawton and Dewi Owen.

Independent Members: Mr Aled Jones, Mr Hywel Eifion Jones (Chair), Mr Mark Jones and Mr Dave Wareing

Also in attendance: Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

Apology: Mr Richard Parry Hughes

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SUBJECT

Item 5: REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNCILLOR LOUISE HUGHES OF CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DECISION

To approve the report on the outcome of the investigation of a complaint against Councillor Louise Hughes of Cyngor Gwynedd, noting a minor editorial amendment, to be submitted to the Monitoring Officer, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, Councillor Hughes and the complainant in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations.

THE RESULT OF THE VOTE

Unanimously accepted.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PROTOCOL MATTERS

No declarations of personal interest or relevant dispensations were received.

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SUBJECT

Item 6: REVIEW OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK FOR WALES - WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

DECISION

To approve the draft responses to the Welsh Government Consultation on the Review of Ethical Standards Framework for Wales (in Appendix 2 of the report), for submission to the Welsh Government, with the following addition:-

- To include elements of the committee's discussion regarding how mandatory training would work in practice, declaration of crimes and enforcing witnesses.
- In addition, to note under Q6 (*procedure to refer appeals decisions back to the standards committee*) that it was essential that the rationale for disagreeing with the appeal tribunal opinion was clearly recorded, in order to demonstrate that the appeal decision had received due attention, however on balance, that the committee continued to be of the opinion that their original decision should stand.

THE RESULT OF THE VOTE

Unanimously accepted.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PROTOCOL MATTERS

The Chair, Mr Hywel Eifion Jones, declared a personal interest as he was a member of the Adjudication Panel for Wales, a panel that was referenced in the report.

He believed it was not a prejudicial interest, and he did not withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

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SUBJECT

Item 7: SELF-ASSESSMENT AND WORK PROGRAMME

DECISION

(a) To adopt the following as the Standards Committee's self-evaluation of its performance in 2022/23.

FUNCTION	ASSESSMENT (1/2/3/4)	Evidence	Further action
1. Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members	1.	The Chair and Vice-chair have attended the Wales Standards Forum to share experiences with other standards committees. Submit an annual report to the Full Council The Committee had received a report on the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021	Continue to attend and support.
2. Assist the members to adhere to the Code of Conduct	2.	The Monitoring Officer and his team provide advice and guidance at meetings, and on a one-to-one basis for members.	Organise further courses to be held on the Code of Conduct during the coming year.
3. Advise the Council with regard to adopting or amending the Code of Conduct	1.	No occasion had arisen to revise the Code.	
4. Monitor the implementation of the Code of Conduct	3.	Receive regular reports of allegations against members Receive the annual reports of the Ombudsman and the Adjudication Panel for Wales	Continue to monitor and consider alternative methods of receiving information.

			<p>Receive regular reports from the Ombudsman's Code of Conduct Casebook.</p> <p>Receive annual reports on the register of interests and hospitality.</p>
5. Advise, train or arrange for members to receive training on matters relating to the Code of Conduct	3.	Induction training was arranged for all members of Cyngor Gwynedd following the elections.	Set a specific requirement to proceed with the training in the work programme for next year.
6. Granting dispensations to members	1.	No applications had been considered under the new procedure.	
7. Deal with reports of case tribunals and any reports from the Monitoring Officer on matters referred by the Ombudsman	1.	One hearing was held during the year regarding a Member of a Town and Community Council	
8. Authorise the Monitoring Officer to pay allowances to persons assisting with an investigation	No action required.		
<p>9. Monitor the compliance of Leaders of Political Groups on the Council and their duties under Section 52A(1) of the Local Government Act 2000.</p> <p>Advise, train or arrange for the Council's Political Group Leaders to receive training on matters relating to those duties.</p>	3.	<p>A briefing session was conducted with Political Group Leaders regarding the new duty.</p> <p>The Protocol to implement the duty was agreed.</p>	Proceed to develop the system, together with the system to report back to committee.
10. Exercise the above functions in	2.	The Monitoring Officer and his team provide advice and	Need to restore the programme on a

<p>relation to community councils</p>		<p>guidance to councillors, clerks and members.</p> <p>A substantial engagement project was undertaken by the Chair and the Town and Community Member that led to a report with specific recommendations and a work plan.</p>	<p>virtual basis next year.</p>
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(b) To approve the following work programme for 2023/24:-

26 June 2023

Annual Report

Allegations against Members

The Ombudsman's Casebook

Welsh Government Consultation on the Response to the Penn Report

6 November 2023

Register of Gifts and Hospitality

Declaration of Interests Register

The Ombudsman's Annual Report

Allegations against Members

Review of the Protocol for Political Group Leaders

Review Internal Solution Arrangements

To accept the Report from the Wales Standards Forum

Report on Arrangements to deal with communication following hearings

19 February 2024

Adjudication Panel's Annual Report

Allegations against Members

Self-assessment and Work Programme

The Committee's Annual Report

THE RESULT OF THE VOTE

Unanimously accepted.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PROTOCOL MATTERS

No declarations of personal interest or relevant dispensations were received.

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SUBJECT

Item 8: THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

DECISION

To approve the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2022-23 to be submitted to the full Council on 6 July, subject to minor amendments to the members' biographies.

THE RESULT OF THE VOTE

Unanimously accepted.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PROTOCOL MATTERS

No declarations of personal interest or relevant dispensations were received.

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SUBJECT

Item 9: ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS

DECISION

To note the information.

THE RESULT OF THE VOTE

Unanimously accepted.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PROTOCOL MATTERS

No declarations of personal interest or relevant dispensations were received.
