



Complete Agenda

Democracy Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

SPECIAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.30 am, MONDAY, 7TH APRIL, 2025

Location

Virtual Meeting

Contact Point

Iwan Edwards

01286 679018

IwanEdwards@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

(DISTRIBUTED 28/03/25)

SPECIAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Membership

Elected Members (3)

Councillors

Anne Lloyd-Jones

Beth Lawton

Dewi Owen

Independent Members (with a vote) (5)

Aled Jones

Hywel Eifion Jones

Mark Jones

(Vacant Seat)

(Vacant Seat)

Community Committee Member (with a vote) (1)

Richard Parry Hughes

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

4. APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION - COUNCILLOR MORWENNA PUGH, FFESTINIOG TOWN COUNCIL 4 - 9

To decide on the Application.

COMMITTEE:	Standards Committee
DATE:	7 April 2025
TITLE:	Application for Dispensation – Councillor Morwenna Pugh, Ffestiniog Town Council
AUTHOR:	Propriety and Elections Manager
ACTION:	To Decide on the Application

Background

1. I attach a copy of the application form of Councillor Morwenna Pugh of Ffestiniog Town Council.
2. The Standards Committee is entitled to allow dispensation if the situation falls within one (or more) of the situations listed below:
 - " (a) no fewer than half of the members of the relevant authority or of a committee of the authority (as the case may be) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business;
 - (b) no fewer than half of the members of a leader and cabinet executive of the relevant authority by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business and either paragraph (d) or (e) also applies;
 - (c) in the case of a county or county borough council, the inability of the member to participate would upset the political balance of the relevant authority or of the committee of the authority by which the business is to be considered to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;
 - (d) the nature of the member's interest is such that the member's participation in the business to which the interest relates would not damage public confidence in the conduct of the relevant authority's business;
 - (e) the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the general public;
 - (f) the participation of the member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the member's particular role or expertise;

- (g) the business to which the interest relates is to be considered by an overview and scrutiny committee of the relevant authority and the member's interest is not a pecuniary interest;
- (h) 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; or
- (i) it appears to the committee to be in the interests of the inhabitants of the area of the relevant authority that the disability should be removed provided that written notification of the grant of the dispensation is given to the National Assembly for Wales within seven days in such manner as it may specify.”

(‘The Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001)

The current application has been made on the basis of paragraph **(f)**.

Background

4. In accordance with the Committee’s procedures background information was sought from the clerk to the council. The matter that will be before the Town Council is consideration of whether it wishes to accept Barnardos' proposal to transfer the building into council ownership. Barnardo’s are the owners and operated from one part of the building while the other part is let to the ‘O Law i Law’ nursery. The Clerk has confirmed that the matter is now public knowledge and is no longer confidential as is noted in the application form, and has provided the following written information as background:

“An official from Barnardo's contacted the Town Council to discuss the future of the Caban Bach building in Blaenau Ffestiniog. Barnardo's wishes to leave the building, but wants to ensure that the building stays "in the community" and is therefore looking for a public body to take over, rather than selling it on the open market and the building going into private hands. The Council therefore wants to consider the possibility of doing this. Although Councillor Morwenna Pugh has no interest in the building itself, she has a personal and prejudicial interest. The Councillor has explained the relationship in her application for a dispensation.”

5. I have also contacted the applicant to inform her of her right to attend the meeting in order to be able to answer any questions the Committee may have, but she has confirmed that she will, unfortunately, not be able to attend

The Ombudsman’s Guidelines

6. The Ombudsman's guidelines on the Code of Conduct note the following in relation to dispensations in general:

"3.51 Only the Standards Committee can grant the dispensation and will do so at its discretion. 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 Council. ..."

Summary

7. The existence of a prejudicial personal interest is implicit in a request for a dispensation, and therefore the committee does not need to decide on that point. In reaching a decision the Committee is required to balance the factors outlined in the Ombudsman's guidance above.

The Committee may decide to:

- a. Grant a dispensation ,
- b. Grant a partial dispensation, or
- c. Refuse the application

Recommendation

8. The Committee is asked to consider and decide on the application.

Application to the Standards Committee for a Dispensation

YOUR APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED UNLESS EVERY PART OF THIS FORM IS COMPLETED

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

1.1 Your name
Morwenna Pugh

1.2 Your council
Ffestiniog Town Council

1.3 Your address and contact telephone no.

2. DETAILS OF YOUR INTEREST

2.1 What is the item in question?

Discussing the future of the Caban Bach building, Barnados in Blaenau Ffestiniog

2.2 How does your interest in the item arise?

I have grandchildren who attend the childcare provision in the building which is run by one of the tenants in the communal building (who does not pay rent, only costs facilities) the tenant is also the daughter of my first cousin

3. DETAILS OF YOUR APPLICATION

3.1 Are you applying for a dispensation to (a) speak and vote or, (b) to speak only?

To speak and vote

3.2 Are you requesting:

~~(a) a dispensation for a particular meeting? If so please provide details below:~~

~~or~~

(b) a general dispensation so that you can take part whenever the matters arises?

Please return to the Monitoring Officer, Gwynedd Council, Caernarfon, LL55 1SH.

*If you have any questions regarding this form, contact the Propriety and Elections Manager:
Tel. 01286 679168 e-mail – sionhuws@gwynedd.llyw.cymru*

4. Regulations prescribe the circumstances in which the Standards Committee may grant a dispensation. These grounds for granting a dispensation are summarised below and are set out in full in the attached guidance notes. On which of the following grounds do you believe that a dispensation should be granted in this case? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

• at least half of the members considering the business has an interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my inability to participate would upset the political balance of the meeting to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my participation would not damage public confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>
• the interest is common to me and a significant proportion of the general public;	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my participation in the business is justified by my particular role or expertise;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• the business is to be considered by a scrutiny committee and my interest is not pecuniary	<input type="checkbox"/>
• the business relates to the finances or property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board I am a member and I have no other interest	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Please explain below why you believe the Standards Committee should grant your application (i.e. why do you think that you should be allowed to be present as a member when the matter is discussed, even though you have a prejudicial interest?).

I have grandchildren who attend childcare provision.

One of the tenants in the communal building (who doesn't pay rent, only facilities costs) is the daughter of my first cousin.

At the moment, I am the only female councillor on the council.

A similar situation has occurred before, when the previous childcare provision had to end under different circumstances, and many family members and friends were affected.

All details are treated as confidential information by the council and the building owner due to concern of causing stress on the current tenant, because of this, I am not sure what additional information I can provide at this time without breaching any confidentiality rules.

Under local government section 33 2011, I would like to apply for a dispensation to ,

Participate in the discussions relating to this issue and vote on any resolutions, where appropriate (is it possible also to receive information where this is not appropriate).

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As the only female councillor, I believe that my input can be important to ensure that the discussion is equal and fair, gendered in issues relating to childcare and communal wellbeing provision. Without this dispensation, there is a risk that valuable perspective will be lost in the decision-making process.

If you need any further details to consider this application, please let me know, and I will be happy to provide more information where possible.

(please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Signed _____ Morwenna Pugh _____ Dated _____ 3rd March 2025 _____

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www.gwynedd.gov.uk



Guidance Notes

1. This is the form for submitting an application for a dispensation, i.e. permission to take part in a discussion even though you have a 'prejudicial interest' under the Code of Conduct. Further information regarding interests can be found in the Code of Conduct itself, the Ombudsman's Guidance and the Gwynedd Council 'Interests' leaflet.

2. Circumstances in which dispensations may be granted

The Standards Committee may grant a dispensation if the application comes within one or more of the circumstances listed in *The Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations 2001*:

“(a) no fewer than half of the members of the relevant authority or of a committee of the authority (as the case may be) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business;

(b) no fewer than half of the members of a leader and cabinet executive of the relevant authority by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business and either paragraph (d) or (e) also applies;

(c) in the case of a county or county borough council, the inability of the member to participate would upset the political balance of the relevant authority or of the committee of the authority by which the business is to be considered to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;

(d) the nature of the member's interest is such that the member's participation in the business to which the interest relates would not damage public confidence in the conduct of the relevant authority's business;

(e) the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the general public;

(f) the participation of the member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the member's particular role or expertise;

(g) the business to which the interest relates is to be considered by an overview and scrutiny committee of the relevant authority and the member's interest is not a pecuniary interest;

(h) 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; or

(i) it appears to the committee to be in the interests of the inhabitants of the area of the relevant authority that the disability should be removed provided that written notification of the grant of the dispensation is given to the National Assembly for Wales within seven days in such manner as it may specify.”

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