
STANDARDS COMMITTEE, 09/06/25

Present:-

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

Independent Members: Hywel Eifion Jones (Chair), Aled Jones, Mark Jones, Non Gibson and Sonya Khade

Political Group Leaders: Councillor Menna Trenholme (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Community Committee Member: Mr Richard Parry Hughes

Also in Attendance: Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader) and Iwan Edwards (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Sion Huws (Propriety and Elections Manager)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

None to note.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 7 April, 2025 as a true record.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025

Presented – the Monitoring Officer's annual report asking for any comments from the committee before being presented to the Full Council at its next meeting. It was noted that a great deal of issues had been addressed during the year and that the Committee had dealt with requests for dispensations in areas of importance for town councils as well as Members who had applied.

It was explained that the standards committee had an important role in promoting high standards of behaviour and that it was a core part of the committee's work. The committee achieved this through a combination of on-demand advice, proactive advice and training – training on and an understanding of the Code of Conduct gave members a foundation upon which they could familiarise themselves with the basics of the code. It was noted that this was particularly related to the personal interests' provisions, where they arose and how to respond. Disappointment was expressed with the number of members who still hadn't attended the full courses that had taken place.

It was asked if the members completed the training on-line, would this information be public? It was confirmed that this was noted and that this information was available on-line.

DECISION

To approve the Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2024/25

6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS

A report was presented by the Monitoring Officer providing information to the committee about the Ombudsman's decisions on formal complaints against members. It was noted that these allegations had not gone further.

Attention was drawn to a series of reported allegations not supported with evidence. Submitting allegations to the Ombudsman without evidence was not thought to be acceptable.

Concern was expressed regarding these allegations not supported with evidence and attention was drawn to the fact that most of them had come from the town council. It was felt that the community clerks should have a course on how to advise members on standards which would be of great help to members in community councils.

DECISION

To note the information.

7. ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

A report was presented by the Monitoring Officer on the annual self-assessment of the Standards Committee.

The committee went through the self-assessment table and completed it as follows:

FUNCTION	ASSESSMENT (1/2/3/4)	Evidence	Further action
Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members	1	The Chair and Vice-chair had joined the Wales Standards Forum to share experiences with other standards committees.	Continue to attend and support

		Submit an annual report to the Full Council	
Assist the members to adhere to the Code of Conduct	1	The Monitoring Officer and his team provide advice and guidance in meetings and on a one-to-one basis to members.	
Advise the Council with regard to adopting or amending the Code of Conduct	1	No occasion had arisen to amend the Code. However, the Internal Resolution Procedure had been reviewed to support the duty of Leaders of Political Groups under 52A(1) of the Local Government Act 2000;	
Monitor the implementation of the Code of Conduct	1	Receive regular reports on allegations against members Receive the annual reports of the Ombudsman and the Adjudication Panel for Wales.	Continue to monitor the consideration of alternative methods of receiving information. Receive annual reports on the register of interests and hospitality.

Advise, train or arrange training for members on matters relating to the Code of Conduct	2	A full Code of Conduct training had been arranged for members with the first session taking place during December and the second in April. The provision was now available on-line.	Need to look at delivering further training as several members had not attended
Granting dispensations to members	1	No occasion of a decision had come forward during the year.	
Deal with reports of case tribunals and any reports from the Monitoring Officer on matters referred by the Ombudsman	1	There had been no relevant instance during the year.	
Authorise the Monitoring Officer to pay allowances to persons assisting with an investigation	1	Nothing to report	
<p>To monitor the compliance of leaders of political groups on the council with 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>	2	<p>A joint session was organised with Group Leaders and members of the Standards Committee to consider the duty</p> <p>A meeting was held between the Chair and the Monitoring Officer with the new Leader of the Plaid Cymru Group in regard to the duty.</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer met with the Group Leaders</p>	Arrangements will be made in accordance with statutory guidance

		individually to discuss Code of Conduct issues	
Exercise the above relevant functions in relation to community councils	2	<p>The Monitoring Officer and his team provide advice and guidance to councillors, clerks and members.</p> <p>A training programme had been initiated during the year with two sessions held during March.</p>	To continue with the arrangements and offer an on-line resource.

DECISION

To adopt the following as the Standards Committee's self-assessment of its performance in 2024/25

8. COMMUNITY COUNCILS TRAINING

A report was presented by the Monitoring Officer providing information on training councillors on issues relating to the code of conduct which forms part of the statutory function of the Standards Committee. It was noted that the Committee had identified the need to undertake such training but accepted that delivering this had proved challenging recently due to a lack of resources.

It was noted that sessions had been prepared and piloted for community councils with the intention of enabling members and clerks to gain an understanding of the fundamentals of the Code of Conduct, equip members to operate within the framework and highlight where to access further guidance and information.

DECISION

To note the information.

9. DECLARATION AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

A report presenting background information on the declaration and registration of interests in meetings. It was noted that the code of conduct for Members placed a duty on members to disclose orally at any meeting, the existence and nature of any personal interest they had in a business being considered. It was explained that the further duty to register that interest involved giving written notice to the Monitoring Officer. It was explained that the practice in Cyngor Gwynedd was for a democratic

services officer to hand out a paper form when members made a declaration at a Committee meeting and collect it at the end.

It was explained that a new process had now been developed with the democratic and IT services which created a process to register interests on-line using the Microsoft Forms resource.

It was noted that the intention was to use this procedure for all declaring members including those present in the meeting room.

DECISION

To accept and note the information.