

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale on Thursday, 26 November 2015 at 3.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Independent Members

Mr.M.Jehu, MBE, Mrs.A.Jones and Mr.G.Smith

County Borough Councillors

C.Davies and G.Stacey

Community Councillor

R.Butler

Officers in Attendance

Mr.P.J.Lucas – Monitoring Officer

Mr.A.Wilkins – Head of Legal – Democratic & Corporate

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests in matters pertaining to the agenda.

12 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 10 July 2015.

13 FEEDBACK FROM THE CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING EVENT AT LLANTRISANT TOWN COUNCIL

In accordance with Minute No.8(2) (Standards Committee, 10 July 2015) the Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that he had provided refresher 'Code of Conduct' training for Llantrisant Community Councillors.

Following the event, the Clerk of the Council thanked the Monitoring Officer for providing the training and commented that Councillors had found the session useful. Several areas which were causing confusion had now been clarified.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the feedback.

14 FEEDBACK FROM THE STANDARDS CONFERENCE 2015

In his report, the Monitoring Officer provided feedback from the Standards Conference 2015 held at City Hall, Cardiff on Tuesday, 20 October 2015. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Standards Committee attended the event along with the Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal – Democratic & Corporate.

The theme for the Conference was “Standards and Ethics in a Changing World” delivered through a full programme of plenary sessions and workshops and copies of the materials and presentations made available were attached to the report.

The Chairman commended the Monitoring Officer for his excellent presentation at the workshop entitled ‘Local Complaints Resolution – Practicalities and the RCTCBC experience – Future Role’. The Chairman had chaired this particular workshop and had received complimentary feedback from attendees.

The Vice-Chairman spoke about the workshops she attended – “Social Media – Staying Out of Trouble” and “Community Councils – Governance and Standards” and was particularly impressed by the excellent presentation by Daniel Hurford of the Welsh Local Government Association on Social Media Training.

The Committee was informed that more detailed feedback from the Conference would be presented in a document to be published by Cardiff City Council in the New Year.

The Monitoring Officer highlighted in his report a number of issues that arose from the Conference which the Committee might wish to consider addressing in their future Work Programme and following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to await the detailed document being produced by Cardiff City Council.

15 MEMBERS’ ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Pursuant to Minute No.9(2) (Standards Committee, 10 July 2015) when the Standards Committee agreed that as part of its Work Programme, it would give consideration to the issue of “Members’ Attendance at Meetings”, the Monitoring Officer provided his initial report setting out the types of Committee that Council Members are appointed to and attend.

In view of the fact that Council Members are regularly invited to attend meetings of full Council, Regulatory Committees, the various Scrutiny Committees and the Audit Committee, it was suggested that the Standards Committee monitors individual Members’ attendance at these meetings along with their attendance at any associated training events.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to agree to initially monitor in greater detail Members' attendance at meetings of the full Council, all Regulatory and Scrutiny Committees as well as the Audit Committee together with any associated training sessions held since May 2015 based on current data.

16 DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN (WALES) BILL 2015

In his report, the Monitoring Officer advised the Committee of the draft Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill 2015 and following consideration of the Monitoring Officer's comments on the matter, it was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the document.

17 APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION – COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCILLOR P.JARMAN

In his report, the Monitoring Officer outlined an application from County Borough Councillor Pauline Jarman for dispensation to speak and vote on all matters for the duration and adoption of the 2016-17 budget process in her capacity as Leader of an Opposition Group.

Following consideration of the report, it was **RESOLVED** to grant County Borough Councillor Pauline Jarman a dispensation to speak and vote on all matters for the duration and adoption of the 2016-17 budget process in her capacity as Leader of an Opposition Group.

18 DRAFT LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) BILL

The Monitoring Officer informed the Standards Committee that earlier this week, the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill was published for consultation and comments on the document were requested by 15th February 2016.

The Monitoring Officer commented on the aspects of the document that relate to the future role of the Standards Committees and it was **RESOLVED** to receive a more detailed briefing from the Monitoring Officer at the next meeting of the Standards Committee in order to respond by the deadline date.

**M.JEHU, MBE
CHAIRMAN**

The meeting terminated at 4.05 p.m.