

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 6 JULY 2023

PRESENT: M. Dodd (Chair)

Independent Members:

C. Davies

D. Evans

J. James

F. Phillips

Community Member:-

Councillor P. Rogers

Councillors:

B.W. Jones

G.B. Thomas

Also Present (Virtually):

R. Edgecombe, Legal Services Manager

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

A. Eynon, Principal Translator

R. Morris, Members Support Officer

K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting - 1.30 - 2.12 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST.

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR BETHAN CHARLES DAVIES

The Committee considered an application submitted by Councillor Bethan Charles Davies for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak and vote in relation to council business at meetings of LLanwrda Community Council regarding the proposals to erect electricity pylons from the Nant Mithil Energy Park to the grid connection in Carmarthenshire as part of the Bute Energy Towy Usk Grid connection scheme.

It was reported that Councillor Charles Davies would have a personal and prejudicial interest in such business as she, and close personal associates of hers, would be affected by the proposals put forward by Bute Energy.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought by Councillor Charles Davies by virtue of Regulation 2(2)(d) – the nature of the member's interest was such that

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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 and Regulation 2(2)(e) – the interest is common to the member and significant proportion of the public.

The committee was advised that if it was minded to grant Councillor Charles Davies' request, it would also need to determine the duration of that dispensation.

Following a discussion it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2(2)(d) and (e) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to Councillor Bethan Charles Davies to speak only, but NOT vote, on council business at meetings of Llanwrda Community Council regarding electricity pylons from Nant Mithil Energy Park to a grid connection in Carmarthenshire and the dispensation be valid until the end of the current electoral term.

4. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR JOHN MACLAUGHLAND

The Committee considered an application submitted by Councillor John Maclaughland for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak only in relation to council business at meetings of Kidwelly Town Council Community Council regarding the Princess Gwenllian Centre in Kidwelly.

It was reported that Councillor Maclaughland would have a personal and prejudicial interest in such business as he was a trustee of the Centre.

It was reported that whilst Councillor Maclaughland had not specified upon which grounds the dispensation was being sought it was suggested that regulations 2(2)(d) and 2(2)(f) would be appropriate in this case ie:-

Regulation 2(2)(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.

Regulation 2(2)(f) – the participation of the member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the members particular role or expertise.

The committee was advised that if it was minded to grant Councillor Maclaughland's request it would also need to determine the duration of that dispensation.

Following a discussion it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2(2)(d) and (f) of the Standards Committees (Grant of

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Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to Councillor John Maclaughland to speak only on council business at meetings of Kidwelly Town Council regarding the Princess Gwenllian Centre and the dispensation be valid until the end of the current electoral term.

5. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR NEIL LEWIS

The Committee considered an application submitted by County Councillor Neil Lewis for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak, vote, make written representations and exercise executive powers in relation to council business at meetings of Carmarthenshire County Council regarding renewable energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency and decarbonisation.

It was reported that Councillor Lewis would have a personal and prejudicial interest in such business as he had a personal involvement in several organisations operating in those fields within the County.

It was reported that while a dispensation was sought by Councillor Lewis by virtue of Regulation 2(2)(a-g), as detailed within the report, it did not appear that grounds 2(2) (a)(b)(c) and (e) were applicable in this case. With regard to the request to exercise executive powers, the Committee noted that, as Councillor Lewis was not a member of the Council's Cabinet, he had no executive functions to exercise.

The Committee was advised that if it was minded to grant Councillor Lewis' request it would also need to determine the duration of that dispensation.

The Committee having regard to Councillor Lewis' positions as a Manager and Non-Executive Director of businesses involved in the energy sector, considered that whilst it would be pertinent to grant dispensation to speak and make written representations, dispensation to vote should not be granted given his involvement within the energy sector.

Following a discussion, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2(2)(d)(f) and (g) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to County Councillor Neil Lewis to speak and make written representations, but NOT vote, in relation to council business at meetings of Carmarthenshire County Council regarding renewable energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency and decarbonisation and the dispensation be valid until the end of the current electoral term.

6. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR WENDY HERON

The Committee considered an application submitted by Councillor Wendy Heron for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak and vote in relation to

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council business at meetings of Henllanfallteg Community Council regarding the provision of a sewerage solution for the community hall, pub and several homes within the village.

It was reported that Councillor Heron would have a personal and prejudicial interest in such business as she was a trustee of the village hall.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought by Councillor Heron by virtue of Regulation 2(2)(d)(e)(f) and (h) ie:-

- Regulation 2(2)(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.
- Regulation 2(2) (e) – the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the public.
- Regulation 2(2)(f) – the participation of the member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the members particular role or expertise
- Regulation 2(2)(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.

The committee was advised that whilst Councillor Heron had also sought dispensation by virtue of Regulation 2(2)(c) relating to political balance, that was not applicable in this case. Additionally, Regulation 2(2)(e) was not applicable as it did not affect a significant proportion of the public.

If the Committee was minded to grant Councillor Heron’s request, it would also need to determine the duration of that dispensation.

The Committee in considering the request, commented on the reference within Councillor Heron’s application to the potential for the Community Council to not be quorate when the above matter was being discussed and, should such a circumstance arise, she be granted dispensation to also vote.

The Committee having regard to the above, considered that without further supporting evidence relating to quoracy, it would be unable to accede to the request to grant dispensation to vote should such a circumstance arise. However, being mindful that the meeting to which Councillor Heron sought dispensation was to be held in July 2023, it was suggested that any dispensation granted could be up to the end of July thereby enabling Councillor Heron to submit a further dispensation application at a later stage and to also provide clarification within that application on the quorate situation at the Community Council’s meetings.

Following a discussion it was

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UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2(2)(d)(f) and (h) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to Councillor Wendy Heron to speak, but NOT vote on council business at meetings of Henllanfallteg Community Council regarding the provision of a sewerage solution for the community hall, pub and several homes within the village, and the dispensation be valid until the end of July 2023.

7. **ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.**

There were no items of urgent business.

CHAIR

DATE

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