

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

12 DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Mrs. M. Dodd (Ph) (Chair)

Independent Members:

Ms. D. Evans (Ph), Mrs. J. James (Ph), Mr. F. Phillips(R) and Mrs. C. Davies (R).

Community Member:

Councillor P. Rogers (R).

Councillors

B. Jones (R) and R. James (R).

Also Present (In Person):

R. Edgecombe, Legal Services Manager;
A. Eynon, Principal Translator;
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer;
M. Runeckles, Member Support Officer (Agency);
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer [Minute Taker].

Also Present (Virtually):

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer.

[Ph = physical attendance at County Hall R = remote attendance via Zoom]

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP and remotely: 2:00pm - 2:45pm

[Note:

- A change in the order of business on the agenda was deemed necessary by the Chair and item 7 was taken prior to item 6. However, for ease of referencing these minutes reflect the order of business itemised on the agenda for the meeting.]

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology was received from G.B. Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST.

Councillor Rob James	6 – Dispensation Application by Councillor A.R. Bargoli.	Cllr. James has an ongoing prejudicial interest in regard to the community group Caru Lliedi.
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3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE:

3.1. 21ST NOVEMBER 2022

An observation was raised that the minutes incorrectly stated M. Dodd as a Councillor.

RESOLVED that subject to the amendment, the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 21st November, 2022 be signed as a correct record,

3.2. 17TH NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 17th November, 2022 be signed as a correct record,

4. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR EDWARD THOMAS

The Committee considered an application submitted by Councillor Edward Thomas of Carmarthenshire County Council for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak and make written representations in respect of business relating to 30 Bridge Street, Llandeilo which is in a state of disrepair.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought as Councillor Thomas had a personal and prejudicial interest in this matter by virtue of paragraph of paragraph 10 (2)(a) of the Members Code of Conduct as a local member for Llandeilo and Dyffryn Cennen and 30 Bridge Street, Llandeilo which adjoins his property.

Members noted that Councillor Edwards' application was not to seek dispensation to exercise any executive or cabinet function in relation to the property and that should the matter reach a position of discussion in Council or Cabinet, he would declare an interest and withdraw from any vote.

Following a discussion it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2 (d) and (f) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to enable County Councillor Edward Thomas in his capacity as the local member for Llandeilo and Dyffryn Cennen to SPEAK AND MAKE WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS in regard to reporting matters relating to 30 Bridge Street, Llandeilo and the dispensation be valid until the end of the current electoral term.

5. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR RUSSELL SPARKS

The Committee considered an application submitted by Councillor Russell Sparks of Carmarthenshire County Council for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak and make written representations in respect of business regarding the provision of leisure services in the County, particularly the provision of swimming pools and swimming lessons by the Council.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought as Councillor Sparks had a personal and prejudicial interest in this matter by virtue of paragraph of paragraph 10 (2)(a) of the Members Code of Conduct as he provided provision of leisure services in the County particularly the provision of swimming pools and swimming lessons by the Council.

In consideration of the fact that Councillor Sparks provided a provision of swimming lessons at Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Members were of the opinion that a dispensation should not extend to any Council business directly relating to Carmarthen Leisure Centre swimming pool or the provision of swimming lessons at that pool.

Following a discussion, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2 (c), (d) and (f) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to Councillor Russell Sparks to **SPEAK AND MAKE WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS ONLY BUT NOT VOTE** at meetings of Carmarthenshire County Council on any council business relating to provision of leisure services in the County and that the dispensation does not extend to any council business relating to Carmarthen Leisure Centre swimming pool or the provision of swimming lessons at that pool.

6. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR A. R. BRAGOLI

[Note:

- This item was taken after Agenda Item 7.
- Councillor Rob James having earlier declared a personal interest in this item and duly left the meeting prior to the consideration of the item].

The Committee considered an application submitted by Councillor Andrew Ronald Bragoli of Llanelli Town Council for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak and make written representations in respect of business regarding Penygaer changing rooms.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought as Councillor Bragoli had a personal and Prejudicial interest in this matter by virtue of paragraph of paragraph 10 (2)(a) of the Members Code of Conduct as he is a member of a community group called Caru Lliedi which is currently working with the Town Council in relation to a grant application in respect of the changing rooms.

Following a discussion, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that dispensation be granted under Regulations 2 (c), (d) and (f) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensation) (Wales) Regulations 2001 to Councillor Andrew Ronald Bragoli to **SPEAK AND MAKE WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS ONLY BUT NOT VOTE** at meetings of Llanelli Town Council on any council business relating to Penygaer Changing Rooms.

7. RECENT ADJUDICATION PANEL DECISIONS

[Note: This item was taken prior to Agenda Item 6.]

The Committee considered three separate reports recently published by the Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) detailing its findings in the cases of

- Former Councillor Paul Dowson;
- Former Councillor Caryl Vaughan;
- Former Councillor Gordon Lewis.

The Committee noted that in all 3 cases the individual in question was no longer a serving councillor but that the APW still imposed periods of disqualification ranging from 1-3 years.

In reference to the former Councillor Dowson case, the importance of including reference to the use of social media in Code of Conduct training was highlighted and requested that this be included in the future Code of Conduct training delivered by Carmarthenshire County Council.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Reference was made to the local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the requirement to write to the current Group Leaders to ensure that they were aware of the new duties placed upon them under the Act as discussed at the meeting held on the 8th March 2022 [Minute 5 refers]. It was asked if the letter was in progress. The Legal Services Manager, in assuring the Committee members that the group leaders were fully aware of their duties in accordance with the Act, confirmed that a draft letter had been prepared and was in the process of being finalised.

In commenting that it would be beneficial for the Committee to receive progress on its actions, it was proposed that a rolling action register which provided a progress status on each of actions raised at a meeting of the Standards Committee be included onto the normal agenda of each Committee meeting as a standard agenda item. This was duly seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that an action register be included onto the normal agenda of each Committee meeting as a standard agenda item.

CHAIR

DATE