

Standards Committee

Tuesday, 24 January 2023

PRESENT: M. Dodd (Chair)(Ph)

Independent Members:

C. Davies (R), D. Evans (Ph), J. James (Ph)

Community Member:

Councillor P. Rogers (R)

Councillors:

B.W. Jones (R) and G.B. Thomas (R)

The following Officers were in attendance (In Person):

R. Edgecombe, Legal Services Manager

K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present (Virtually)

L. Rees-Jones – Head of Administration and Law

S. Hendy, Member Support Officer

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator

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

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 2.00 - 2.25 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Mr F. Phillips.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST.

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 12TH DECEMBER, 2022

Reference was made to the decision at the Committee's previous meeting for an action register to be included onto the normal agenda of each Committee and that the register be included on the agenda for the next normal meeting

RESOLVED:

3.1 that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 12th December, 2022 be signed as a correct record.

3.2 That the action register be included on the agenda for the next normal meeting of the Standards Committee

4. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR A DAVIES

The Committee considered an application submitted by County Councillor Ann Davies for the grant of a dispensation under the provisions of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations to speak and make written representations to the Council's Advisory Panels undertaking a review of the Council's rural estate.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought as Councillor Davies had a personal interest in the review as her husband was currently a tenant on a Council farm which they had occupied since 1991, and that a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of those facts would be likely to conclude it would influence the Councillors View of the wider public interest when it came to that review.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought by Councillor Davies by virtue of Regulation 2(f) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations in that her participation was justified by her particular role and expertise. In addition, the Committee was advised that it may wish to consider her participation would also be relevant under Regulation 2(d) in that it would not damage public confidence

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 Councillor A Davies to speak and make written representations on the review currently being undertaken of the Council's rural estate and the dispensation be granted for a period of six months.

5. DISPENSATION APPLICATION BY COUNCILLOR P H THOMAS

The Committee considered an application submitted by Community Councillor P.H. Thomas of St Ishmael's Community Council 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 regarding the foreshore and cockling activities in the Three Rivers Estuary.

It was reported that a dispensation was sought as Councillor Thomas had a personal interest in the matter as he works in the cockling industry, and that a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of those facts would be likely to conclude it would influence the Councillors View of the wider public interest when it came to that review.

It was reported that whilst the Community Council had no decision making role on the use of the foreshore, the permitting of cockling activities and does not own any land affected by those activities they were the subject of frequent discussion at council meetings. Councillor Thomas was therefore seeking dispensation under Regulation 2(c)(d) and (f) of the Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations) (Wales) Regulations

The Legal Services Manager advised the Committee that with regard to the grounds of Councillor Thomas' application, it should note that Regulation 2(c) was not relevant in this instance and therefore the application fell to be considered under Regulations 2(d) and (f)

The Committee having regard to the application, and in terms of consistency of decision meeting, felt that given the nature of Councillor Thomas' employment it would not be appropriate to grant dispensation to vote. It was however felt appropriate to grant dispensation to speak and to make written representations.

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 Councillor P.H. Thomas to speak and make written representations, but not vote, at meetings of St Ishmaels Community Council in relation to Council business regarding the foreshore and cockling activities in the Three Rivers Estuary, and the dispensation be valid until the end of the current electoral term.

6. **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