

**APPLICATION TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
FOR DISPENSATION**

Please note that each section MUST be completed. Please refer to the attached
Guidance Notes when completing the form.

1. YOUR DETAILS

Your full name: Dorothy Louise Jones

Name of your Council: Carmarthenshire County Council

Your address and postcode: Highfield, Gors Road, Upper Tumble, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire,
SA14 6BS

Contact telephone number(s): 01269 832153/07597 363524

Email address: dotjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

2. DETAILS OF YOUR INTEREST

What is the matter under consideration?

Home to school transport in the County of Carmarthenshire

What is your interest in the above matter?

I have children of school age

When will the above matter be considered?

At various times yet to be determined

Are you applying for dispensation to:

Speak only: ☐

Speak and vote: x ☐

Make written
Representations ☐

Exercise Executive
Powers ☐

3. GROUNDS FOR DISPENSATION

Regulations issued by the National Assembly for Wales prescribe the circumstances in which the Standards Committee may grant a dispensation. These grounds for granting a dispensation are summarised below and are set out in full in the attached guidance notes. On which of the following grounds do you believe that a dispensation should be granted in this case? Please tick the appropriate box(es).

• at least half of the members considering the business has an interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my inability to participate would upset the political balance of the meeting to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;	<input type="checkbox"/>
• my participation would not damage public confidence	x <input type="checkbox"/>
• the interest is common to me and a significant proportion of the general public;	x <input type="checkbox"/>
• my participation in the business is justified by my particular role or expertise;	x <input type="checkbox"/>
• the business is to be considered by an overview and scrutiny committee and my interest is not a pecuniary interest;	<input type="checkbox"/>
• the business relates to the finances or property of a voluntary organisation of whose management committee or board I am a member and I have no other interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• it is appropriate to do so in all the circumstances where not otherwise possible to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a person's disability	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION

Please set out below the reasons why you consider that the Standards Committee should grant a dispensation in this case:

(Please note that failure to complete this section will result in the application form being returned to you)

The Council currently provides free home to school transport for circa 8,500 pupils each day. In addition, some pupils who were ineligible for free home to school transport were able to access such services on a fare paying basis provided through a number of channels, including;

- (1) via the general public transport network,
- (2) through services provided on a commercial basis by bus operators and
- (3) through spare seats on dedicated school transport vehicles.

In January 2020 the Public Service Vehicle Access Regulations came into force which primarily affect public transport services. However, the Department for Transport has confirmed that the regulations also apply to school transport services which are also registered to carry fare paying passengers.

Bus operators who provide school transport services in the County have reviewed the cost of complying with the new regulations and have determined that it is not viable to do so where fares are charged. 329 pupils across the County are directly affected.

On the 20th January 2020 the Executive Board resolved to adopt a number of measures to address this situation including the appointment of a politically balanced advisory panel made up of 6 county councillors to look at all issues relating to Home to School transport and thereafter report back to the Executive Board.

I have been nominated as one of the Labour Group members on this advisory panel. I believe that I should be granted dispensation to speak and vote both at meetings of the advisory panel and in any discussions at Full Council relating to Home to School Transport for the following reasons;

1. My participation would not damage public confidence

As the panel is an advisory body it does not have any formal decision making powers (which rest with the Executive Board). Therefore my role will purely be to help shape, any recommendations that the Panel puts to the Executive.

2. My interest is common to me and a significant proportion of the general public

With over 8000 pupils currently receiving home to school transport this issue is common to the majority of families in the County, either because they currently have children using these services or have children who will do so in the future. This issue does not just affect parents of school age children but also grandparents and other family members who help out with the daily 'school run'

3. My participation is justified by my particular role or expertise

As one of the few County Councillors with school age children I have insight into the current challenges of being a working parent and the importance of home to school transport to everyday family life. As such I can bring to the work of the panel a knowledge which my fellow members may no longer have.

I was granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to speak and vote on this issue on the 14th February. This dispensation has now expired. I did not have any opportunity to use the dispensation granted due to council meetings being stopped by the Coronavirus pandemic. I still feel that I need a dispensation however as the pandemic has had a significant impact upon school bus operators and the need for social distancing and other safety measures on school buses means that the service is under increased pressure.

(please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

I confirm that the information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge. I agree that this application and all the information contained within it may form part of a public report to the Standards Committee. I request a dispensation in respect of the above matter.

Signed: Cllr Dot Jones

Date: 20/08 /20

Please return this form to the Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive's Department, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP.

Guidance notes

(1) Please read through the Code of Conduct and decide which of the paragraphs is most appropriate to your case. Brief details of the relevant paragraphs are noted in the table below. If you are unsure, please contact the Monitoring Officer for advice.

Para.	Type of personal interest	
10(2)(a)	Council business which relates to or is likely to affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your employment or business, • your employer, firm or company • a contract made between the Council and you • any land, lease or licence in which you have an interest • a public body or other association in which you have membership or hold a position of general control or management 	
10(2)(c)	Council business which affects your well-being or financial position, or the well-being, financial position or other interests of a person with whom you live or have a close personal association	
13	Council business which is being considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and which relates to a decision of the Cabinet or another Committee of which you were a member at the time [County Council only]	

(2) The Standards Committees (Grant of Dispensations)(Wales) Regulations 2001(as amended) state that a Standards Committee may grant dispensations where:

- (a) no fewer than half of the members of the relevant authority or of a committee of the authority (as the case may be) by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business;
- (b) no fewer than half of the members of a leader and cabinet executive of the relevant authority by which the business is to be considered has an interest which relates to that business and either paragraph (d) or (e) also applies;
- (c) in the case of a county or county borough council, the inability of the member to participate would upset the political balance of the relevant authority or of the committee of the authority by which the business is to be considered to such an extent that the outcome would be likely to be affected;
- (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;
- (e) the interest is common to the member and a significant proportion of the general public;
- (f) the participation of the member in the business to which the interest relates is justified by the member's particular role or expertise;
- (g) the business to which the interest relates is to be considered by an overview and scrutiny committee of the relevant authority and the member's interest is not a pecuniary interest;
- (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; or

- (i) it appears to the committee to be in the interests of the inhabitants of the area of the relevant authority that the disability should be removed provided that written notification of the grant of the dispensation is given to the National Assembly for Wales within seven days in such manner as it may specify.
- (j) It is considered appropriate in all the circumstances to do so where not otherwise possible to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a persons disability