

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Special Meeting of the

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

At: Cabinet Conference Room, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Friday, 13 November 2015

Time: 9.30 am

AGENDA

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- | | | |
|----------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence | |
| 2 | Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests | 1 - 2 |
| 3 | Annual Meetings with Political Group Leaders | 3 - 4 |
| | 09.40 am Councillor Chris Holley | |
| | 10.10 am Councillor Wendy Fitzgerald | |
| | 10.40 am Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams | |
| 4 | Exclusion of the Public. | 5 - 8 |
| 5 | Interview Community / Town Councillors to sit on the Standards Committee. | 9 - 24 |

Next Meeting - Friday, 4 December 2015 at 9.30 am



Patrick Arran
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Friday, 6 November 2015

Contact: Democratic Services
07192 636923

STANDARDS COMMITTEE (4)

Councillors

Labour Councillors: 3

Joe A Hale	Clive E Lloyd
Phil Downing	

Liberal Democrat Councillor: 1

L Graham Thomas	
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Name	Term of Office	Name	Term of Office
Jill Burgess	19.10.2012 to 18 10.2018	Jennifer Gomes*	05.12.2008 to 04.12.2016
Gareth Evans	01.04.2015 to 31.03.2021	Margaret Williams	01.04.2015 to 31.03.2021
Meirion Howells*	01.08.2008 to 31.07.2016		

Others:

Executive	One copy
Patrick Arran	Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement – Electronic
Tracey Meredith	Deputy Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement
Huw Evans	Head of Democratic Services
Mike Hawes	Head of Financial Services
Democratic Services	1 Copy
Archives	
Councillor M H Jones	Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee – public agenda pack

Total Copies Needed – 20

NOTE:

1. * Denotes that the **period of office cannot be extended further.**
2. The **term of office for Independent Members** can be for not less than 4 nor more than 6 years. They can be reappointed for one further consecutive term but that term cannot be for more than 4 years.
3. **Members of the Local Authority** who are members of the Standards Committee will have a term of office of no more than 4 years or ending at the next ordinary local government election following their election, whichever is the shorter.
4. The Standards Committee **shall not sit if the Independent Members are outnumbered by Councillors.** A Councillor shall remove him/herself from the meeting in order for the business to be transacted.

Disclosures of Interest

To receive Disclosures of Interest from Councillors and Officers

Councillors

Councillors Interests are made in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea. You must disclose orally to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest.

NOTE: You are requested to identify the Agenda Item / Minute No. / Planning Application No. and Subject Matter to which that interest relates and to enter all declared interests on the sheet provided for that purpose at the meeting.

1. If you have a **Personal Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 10** of the Code, you **MAY STAY, SPEAK AND VOTE** unless it is also a Prejudicial Interest.
2. If you have a Personal Interest which is also a **Prejudicial Interest** as set out in **Paragraph 12** of the Code, then subject to point 3 below, you **MUST WITHDRAW** from the meeting (unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Standards Committee)
3. Where you have a Prejudicial Interest you may attend the meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, **provided** that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise. In such a case, you **must withdraw from the meeting immediately after the period for making representations, answering questions, or giving evidence relating to the business has ended**, and in any event before further consideration of the business begins, whether or not the public are allowed to remain in attendance for such consideration (**Paragraph 14** of the Code).
4. Where you have agreement from the Monitoring Officer that the information relating to your Personal Interest is **sensitive information**, as set out in **Paragraph 16** of the Code of Conduct, your obligation to disclose such information is replaced with an obligation to disclose the existence of a personal interest and to confirm that the Monitoring Officer has agreed that the nature of such personal interest is sensitive information.
5. If you are relying on a **grant of a dispensation** by the Standards Committee, you must, before the matter is under consideration:
 - i) Disclose orally both the interest concerned and the existence of the dispensation; and
 - ii) Before or immediately after the close of the meeting give written notification to the Authority containing:

- a) Details of the prejudicial interest;
- b) Details of the business to which the prejudicial interest relates;
- c) Details of, and the date on which, the dispensation was granted; and
- d) Your signature

Officers

Financial Interests

1. If an Officer has a financial interest in any matter which arises for decision at any meeting to which the Officer is reporting or at which the Officer is in attendance involving any member of the Council and /or any third party the Officer shall declare an interest in that matter and take no part in the consideration or determination of the matter and shall withdraw from the meeting while that matter is considered. Any such declaration made in a meeting of a constitutional body shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting. No Officer shall make a report to a meeting for a decision to be made on any matter in which s/he has a financial interest.
2. A "financial interest" is defined as any interest affecting the financial position of the Officer, either to his/her benefit or to his/her detriment. It also includes an interest on the same basis for any member of the Officers family or a close friend and any company firm or business from which an Officer or a member of his/her family receives any remuneration. There is no financial interest for an Officer where a decision on a report affects all of the Officers of the Council or all of the officers in a Department or Service.

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Standards Committee – 13 November 2015

Annual Meeting with Political Group Leaders, Chairs of Committees and Chief Executive

Purpose:	To seek the views of the Political Group Leaders, Chairs of Committees and the Chief Executive in relation to a number of set questions relating to the Standards Committee.	
Policy Framework:	None.	
Reason for Decision:	To consider the responses to the questions and to implement any necessary changes that stem from them.	
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.	
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:	
1)	The views of the Political Group Leaders, Chairs of Committees and the Chief Executive be noted and used to improve the effectiveness of the Standards Committee.	
Report Author:	Huw Evans	
Finance Officer:	Carl Billingsley	
Legal Officer:	Patrick Arran	
Access to Services Officer:	Phil Couch	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Standards Committee resolved to hold annual meetings with the Political Group Leaders, Chairs of Committees and the Chief Executive in order to seek their opinions on the work of the Standards Committee.
- 1.2 The Standards Committee stated that they wished to question the Chairs of the following Committees: Audit Committee, Democratic Services Committee, General Licensing Committee, Planning Committee and Scrutiny Programme Committee.
- 1.3 The Standards Committee agreed that views be sought in respect of the questions set out in **Appendix A**.
- 1.4 Three of the four Political Group Leaders will be questioned at the meeting on 13 November 2015 and the others commencing on 4 December 2015.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix A - Standards Committee Questions

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE QUESTIONS FOR POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHAIRS OF AUDIT COMMITTEE, DEMOCRATIC
SERVICES COMMITTEE, GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE, PLANNING
COMMITTEE AND SCRUTINY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE**

- 1) What is the role of the Standards Committee?
- 2) What is the future role of the Standards Committee?
- 3) How can Political Group Leaders / Committee Chairs promote standards and good governance through Leadership?
- 4) How can the Standards Committee become more active in promoting ethical conduct among Councillors / Co-opted Members?
- 5) What is your understanding of the Nolan Principles and how they impact on public life?
- 6) Are you aware of the Calver decision and do you think that it's had an influence on Councillors / Co-opted Members?
- 7) What are your views on the Authority's Code of Conduct training? How could it be improved so as to raise the ethical standards of Councillors / Co-opted Members?
- 8) Training for Councillors / Co-opted Members is vitally important. How can the Standards Committee tackle those that don't see training as important?
- 9) How could Standards Committee encourage the use of the Authority's Internal Dispute Resolution Process (Cllr v Cllr)?
- 10) During the past year, members of the Standards Committee have attended a number of meetings. Has this had an impact on behaviour and standards? What Committees do you feel the Standards Committee members should attend as observers?

Report of the Head of Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement

Standards Committee – 13 November 2015

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Purpose:	To consider whether the Public should be excluded from the following items of business.	
Policy Framework:	None.	
Reason for Decision:	To comply with legislation.	
Consultation:	Legal.	
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:	
1)	The public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it / they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Paragraphs listed below of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 subject to the Public Interest Test (where appropriate) being applied.	
	Item No.	Relevant Paragraphs in Schedule 12A
	5	12 & 13
Report Author:	Democratic Services	
Finance Officer:	Not Applicable	
Legal Officer:	Patrick Arran – Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Procurement (Monitoring Officer)	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, allows a Principal Council to pass a resolution excluding the public from a meeting during an item of business.
- 1.2 Such a resolution is dependant on whether it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as defined in section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.

2. Exclusion of the Public / Public Interest Test

- 2.1 In order to comply with the above mentioned legislation, Cabinet will be requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendation(s) to the report on the

grounds that it / they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Exclusion Paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

- 2.2 Information which falls within paragraphs 12 to 15, 17 and 18 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended is exempt information if and so long as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
- 2.3 The specific Exclusion Paragraphs and the Public Interest Tests to be applied are listed in **Appendix A**.
- 2.4 Where paragraph 16 of the Schedule 12A applies there is no public interest test. Councillors are able to consider whether they wish to waive their legal privilege in the information, however, given that this may place the Council in a position of risk, it is not something that should be done as a matter of routine.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The legislative provisions are set out in the report.
- 4.2 Councillors must consider with regard to each item of business set out in paragraph 2 of this report the following matters:
 - 4.2.1 Whether in relation to that item of business the information is capable of being exempt information, because it falls into one of the paragraphs set out in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended and reproduced in Appendix A to this report.
 - 4.2.2 If the information does fall within one or more of paragraphs 12 to 15, 17 and 18 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the public interest test as set out in paragraph 2.2 of this report.
 - 4.2.3 If the information falls within paragraph 16 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in considering whether to exclude the public members are not required to apply the public interest test but must consider whether they wish to waive their privilege in relation to that item for any reason.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix A – Public Interest Test.

Public Interest Test

No.	Relevant Paragraphs in Schedule 12A
12	Information relating to a particular individual.
	<p>The Proper Officer (Monitoring Officer) has determined in preparing this report that paragraph 12 should apply. His view on the public interest test was that to make this information public would disclose personal data relating to an individual in contravention of the principles of the Data Protection Act. Because of this and since there did not appear to be an overwhelming public interest in requiring the disclosure of personal data he felt that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.</p>
13	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
	<p>The Proper Officer (Monitoring Officer) has determined in preparing this report that paragraph 13 should apply. His view on the public interest test was that the individual involved was entitled to privacy and that there was no overriding public interest which required the disclosure of the individual's identity. On that basis he felt that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.</p>
14	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
	<p>The Proper Officer (Monitoring Officer) has determined in preparing this report that paragraph 14 should apply. His view on the public interest test was that:</p> <p>a) Whilst he was mindful of the need to ensure the transparency and accountability of public authority for decisions taken by them in relation to the spending of public money, the right of a third party to the privacy of their financial / business affairs outweighed the need for that information to be made public; or</p> <p>b) Disclosure of the information would give an unfair advantage to tenderers for commercial contracts.</p> <p>This information is not affected by any other statutory provision which requires the information to be publicly registered.</p> <p>On that basis he felt that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.</p>

No.	Relevant Paragraphs in Schedule 12A
15	<p>Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.</p>
	<p>The Proper Officer (Monitoring Officer) has determined in preparing this report that paragraph 15 should apply. His view on the public interest test was that whilst he is mindful of the need to ensure that transparency and accountability of public authority for decisions taken by them he was satisfied that in this case disclosure of the information would prejudice the discussion in relation to labour relations to the disadvantage of the authority and inhabitants of its area. On that basis he felt that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.</p>
16	<p>Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.</p>
	<p>No public interest test.</p>
17	<p>Information which reveals that the authority proposes: (a) To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) To make an order or direction under any enactment.</p>
	<p>The Proper Officer (Monitoring Officer) has determined in preparing this report that paragraph 17 should apply. His view on the public interest test was that the authority's statutory powers could be rendered ineffective or less effective were there to be advanced knowledge of its intention/the proper exercise of the Council's statutory power could be prejudiced by the public discussion or speculation on the matter to the detriment of the authority and the inhabitants of its area. On that basis he felt that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.</p>
18	<p>Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</p>
	<p>The Proper Officer (Monitoring Officer) has determined in preparing this report that paragraph 18 should apply. His view on the public interest test was that the authority's statutory powers could be rendered ineffective or less effective were there to be advanced knowledge of its intention/the proper exercise of the Council's statutory power could be prejudiced by public discussion or speculation on the matter to the detriment of the authority and the inhabitants of its area. On that basis he felt that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.</p>

Agenda Item 5

By virtue of paragraph(s) 12, 13 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972
as amended by the Local Government (Access to
Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

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