

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 3, CIVIC CENTRE, SWANSEA ON
FRIDAY, 9 JANUARY 2015 AT 9.30 AM**

PRESENT: A Novis (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J C Bayliss
C E Lloyd
L G Thomas

Independent Members:-

J Burgess
J Gomes
M Howells
C Walton

Officers:-

T Meredith - Deputy Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Procurement
H Evans - Head of Democratic Services
J Tinker - Democratic Services Coordinator

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P Downing.

38 DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

39 MINUTES.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 21 November 2014 be accepted as a correct record.

40 **STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2015 - 2016.**

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report regarding formulating a workplan for the Standards Committee for 2014 – 2016 based on feedback discussions held. The recurring themes and key issues raised at these discussions were summarised in the report.

The merger of the Standards Committee and the Community/Town Councils Standards Sub Committee was discussed and the Committee were in support of a merger. However, as it was anticipated that this would take some time it was considered beneficial that in the meantime a meeting take place with representatives of all the Community Councils to discuss the Councillor Local Dispute Resolution, Treating People with Respect, the Merger and training. It was considered that the work plan should be timetabled in the following order:-

- Treating People with respect
- Local Dispute Resolutions
- Declarations of Interest
- Inconsistency in Ombudsman Decisions
- Councillor Training
- Standards Committee attend Committees
- Annual link with Scrutiny
- Good governance and best practice
- Merger of the Standards Committee and the Community/ Town Councils Standards Sub Committee

It was also suggested that the Annual meetings with Group Leaders and Chairs also be built into this work plan.

RESOLVED that

- (1) The merger of the Standards Committee and the Community/ Town Councils Standards Sub Committee be supported in principle and be referred to Council for approval.
- (2) A meeting be arranged with representatives of the Community Councils and that attendance be restricted to 3 from each (i.e. Chair, Clerk and one other) to discuss the various matters indicated above.
- (3) The work plan be timetabled as indicated above and that the Annual meeting with Group Leaders, etc be built into this.

41 **SWANSEA COUNCILLOR PLEDGE ON STANDARDS.**

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report on a review of the sign up to the Swansea Councillor Pledge on Standards following comments made by Political

Group Leaders and Chairs of Committee to the Standards Committee. The pledge was attached as Appendix A to the report. It was stated that Opposition Councillors had prepared their own version of the pledge which was attached as Appendix B. The Committee discussed the pledge and the recommendation that this be compulsory.

It was indicated that the Welsh Government recognised a pledge as best practice and had included this in their model Constitution.

RESOLVED that the recommendation made by the Standards Committee to Council that it be compulsory that Councillors sign the “ Swansea Councillor Charter and Councillor Pledge on Standards” remain.

42 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee were informed that the next meeting of the Standards Committee was 13 February 2014. However, a request had been received that the subsequent meeting scheduled for 27 March 2015 be rearranged.

RESOLVED that the meeting on 27 March 2015 be rearranged to 17 April 2015.

The meeting ended at 10.25 a.m.

CHAIR