

STANDARDS & ETHICS COMMITTEE

23 NOVEMBER 2010

Present: Independent Members: Akmal Hanuk (Chairperson),
Anne Morgan (Deputy Chairperson), Deirdre Jones
and Paul Stockton.

County Councillors: Delme Bowen and Tim Davies

Community Councillor John Hughes

Apologies: Maureen Hedley-Clarke (Independent Member)
County Councillor Wakefield

S17 : MINUTES

Subject to the following amendment to Minute No. 13, the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Ethics Committee held on 28 September 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson:-

“RESOLVED – The Committee considered all the information before it and determined that:-

- (1) There was no evidence of any failure to comply with the Members’ Code of Conduct for Cardiff Council for the following reason:-
 - *The Committee found* that Councillor Dixon was *not* acting in his official capacity at the time the comment was made;
- (2) As prescribed in the legislation governing this matter, the City and County Solicitor be instructed to notify all required parties of the Committee’s decision.”

S18 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairperson reminded Members of their responsibilities under Part III of the Members’ Code of Conduct, to declare any interests in general terms and complete “personal interest” forms at the start of the meeting and then, prior to the commencement of the discussion of the item in question, specify whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest. If the interest is prejudicial,

Members would be asked to leave the meeting, and if the interest is personal, but not prejudicial, Members would be invited to stay, speak and vote.

S19 : ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES CASE TRIBUNAL – NOTICE OF DECISION

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales had referred allegations about a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members by Councillor Ralph Cook to the Adjudication Panel for Wales for consideration. The Committee noted that a case tribunal, drawn from the Adjudication Panel for Wales was held in public from Monday 8 November to Wednesday 10 November 2010.

In accordance with Section 79(8) of the Local Government Act 2000, the Adjudication Panel for Wales has provided formal written notification to the Council's Standards and Ethics Committee following the decision of the case tribunal. In addition the notice of decision has been provided to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in accordance with Section 79(12) of the Local Government Act 2000 and has also been published in the local press.

RESOLVED – That the decision of the Adjudication Panel for Wales set out in Appendix A to the report of the Monitoring Officer be noted.

S20 : PROPOSED FUTURE MEETING WITH POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS AND WHIPS

The Committee's Work Programme for 2010/11 includes an intention to meet with Group Leaders and Party Whips in order to support an objective that aims 'to develop trust and engage with all Members'.

The Committee at its meeting on 29 September 2009 resolved to request Group Leaders to:

- (a) establish an informal group of appropriate representatives of all the Political Groups to discuss matters of general behaviour at full Council meetings and specific incidents, where necessary, and make arrangements for it to meet before the next meeting of this Committee;
- (b) investigate how the role and responsibilities of the Council's Business Committee can be expanded, in order to provide greater help and

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assistance to the Lord Mayor to help him chair future full Council meetings in a more effective manner; and

- (c) meet again with the Committee in 6 months time.

S21 : APPOINTMENT OF NEW INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Council at its meeting on 17 December 2009 re-appointed Mr Akmal Hanuk for one further term as Independent Member of the Standards and Ethics Committee commencing on 1 November 2009. The remaining four Independent Members of the Committee namely Maureen Hedley-Clarke, Deirdre Jones, Anne Morgan and Paul Stockton were also re-appointed by Council on 22 July 2010 for a further term of 4 years commencing on 27 July 2010.

The willingness and intention of one of the existing Independent Members to step down prior to the expiry of their current term of office in order to retain the level of experience among Members of the Committee was noted. The Committee was advised that formal written notification should be given to the Monitoring Officer of the intention to step down together with confirmation of the proposed date of expiry in order that the staggered appointment process can be commenced.

RESOLVED – That

1. The report be noted;
2. Advertisement of any future vacancies for independent members of the Standards and Ethics Committee that may arise be approved and the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary arrangements for the publication of the adverts in line with the Regulations;
3. The Appointment Panel process that has been followed previously by the Council in line with the Regulations be approved and the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary arrangements for the establishment of an Appointments Panel; and
4. The future outcome of any appointments process be reported to a full meeting of Council for approval prior to commencement of the

appointment.

S22 : MONITORING OFFICER'S VERBAL UPDATE

(i) Standards Conference Wales 2010 – Feedback

The Monitoring Officer reported there had been a good attendance at the Conference and that there had been positive feedback in respect of the high profile speakers on the Panel and the quality of the Workshops which had been well attended by delegates and were very topical covering issues such as the Code of Conduct, Role of Community Councils, Role of the Monitoring Officer, Proactive Standards and Ethics Committees and Social Media in local Authorities, it was noted that the level of engagement at the workshops was high.

In conclusion the Committee noted that Cardiff had come to the end of its term of responsibility for hosting the Conference and discussions would take place between Monitoring Officers at their regular meetings in respect of hosting the 2011 Conference. It was noted that Powys Council had expressed an interest in hosting the 2011 Conference and Cardiff would be prepared to assist with advice and share experience if required.

The Monitoring Officer and the Chairperson expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Committee and the Staff for their contribution and hard work in organising the Standards Conference Wales over the past two years which had been successful and well received by delegates.

(ii) Appointment to the Adjudication Panel

The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that she had been appointed to the Adjudication Panel for Wales as Legal Chair commencing on 1 November 2010 and that Liz Weale would be taking over responsibility of advising the Committee in her absence.

The Chairperson thanked Kate Berry on behalf of the Committee for all her hard work in supporting the Committee and congratulated her on her appointment.

S23 : WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee's Work Programme for 2010/11 was developed at a Forum of the Committee on 17 November 2009. In order to develop a Work

Programme for 2011/12 the Committee would need to agree to make suitable arrangements to discuss the issues it wishes to consider over the forthcoming year.

The Committee discussed the fact that the timescale for (i) Inviting Party Leaders and Whips and (ii) the Chairperson and Chief Officer of Planning to attend the Committee had slipped. Following discussion it was agreed that an invitation be extended to the Group Leaders and Party Whips and the Chairperson and Chief Officer of Planning to attend the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 1 February 2011.

The Committee also requested that Equalities Training and Social Media be timetabled into the Work Programme.

RESOLVED –

1. That subject to the alteration of the timings of a number of items, the Work Programme was agreed;
2. That the Group Leaders and Party Whips together with the Chairperson and Chief Officer of Planning be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee on 1 February 2011.

S24 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 1 February 2011