

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

**Members Present:**

**26<sup>th</sup> November, 2010**

**Chairman:** Mr.G.T.Pullen

**Vice Chairman:** Mrs.L.J.Rees

**Independent Member:** Mrs.J.E.Howells

**NPTCBC Member:** Councillor Mrs L.H.James and P.D.Richards

**Community Committee**

**Member:** Councillor Mrs S.Davies

**Officers in Attendance:** D.Michael and Miss A.M.Farrell

**Apologies:** Councillors A.J.Taylor and M.Evans

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### 1. **COUNCILLOR MANNY LOARING**

The Committee paid tribute to Councillor Manny Loaring who passed away in August this year. Councillor Loaring was a valued Member of the Committee and his contribution would be missed. It was noted that the condolences of the Standards Committee had been extended to his family.

### 2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, be accepted as a true record, subject to the venue being amended to "Neath".

**Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services/  
Monitoring Officer**

3. **COMPLAINT OF BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members discussed the outcome of the complaint of a breach of the Code of Conduct by a Councillor of Cwmllynfell Community Council, as heard by the Standards Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2010.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer, Mr. David Michael, informed the Committee that, as advised by the Adjudication Panel for Wales on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010, no appeal had been submitted against the decision of the Standards Committee. Therefore, in accordance with the procedure found in the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001, Mr. Michael had placed a statutory advertisement in the press and a copy of the report of the Standards Committee was made available to the public. The report of the decision had previously been circulated to Members of the Committee by Mr. Michael. These actions had concluded the statutory procedure.

**RESOLVED:** that the above Report be noted.

4. **STANDARDS CONFERENCE WALES 2010**

The Committee discussed the above report, including the feedback from the Chair and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer, who both attended the Conference. Members also noted the slides relating to the Adjudication Panel for Wales as tabled at the meeting.

It was noted from the Conference that there were variations to the approach taken by each Standards Committee in Wales in respect of their remit. Members agreed that, whilst not wishing to adopt the approach of some Standards Committee to the extent of checking attendance records, and undertaking other audit/scrutiny functions, there was scope for this Authority's Standards Committee to be more pro-active within its remit. Mr. Michael indicated that he would prepare a yearly programme for the Committee and report the details to the April meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that the above Report be noted.

5. **TRAINING FOR TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

The Committee noted that, although training sessions had been made available to both Clerks and Members of Town/Community Councils, not all had sent representatives to these events. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer was mindful of the Ombudsman's statements that there seemed to be a substantial number of complaints against Members of Town/Community Councils in Wales as a whole and had arranged a further training session, specifically directed at the Town/Community Clerks, to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

Mr Michael indicated that he would also arrange a small Seminar for Standards Committee Members and the newly-elected County Borough Councillors in the New Year.

**RESOLVED:** that the above Report be noted.

6 **PLANNING PROTOCOL**

The Committee were informed that the County Borough Council would shortly be invited to look at some amendments to the Planning Protocol. This Protocol supplemented the Members' Code of Conduct in relation to particular aspect of planning law and practice.

It was confirmed that the draft Protocol would be circulated to Members of the Committee for individual comment.

**RESOLVED:** that the above Report be noted.

**CHAIRMAN**