

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

14th August, 2009

Chairman: Mrs.L.J.Rees

Independent Member: Mrs.J.E.Howells

NPTCBC Members: Councillor Mrs L.H.James

**Community Committee
Member:** Councillor M.Evans

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

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of 29th May, 2009 be accepted as a true record, subject to the venue of the meeting being amended to read "Neath".

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

2. APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 81(4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - COUNCILLOR P.D.RICHARDS

The Committee considered the application from the above Councillor in respect of a dispensation relating to his role as a member of the West Wales Area Committee of the Cymru/Wales Region of the Co-operative. It was noted that Councillor Richards was previously a manager with the Co-operative and on his retirement had become a member of the above Area Committee (details of which were set out in an appendix to the circulated report)

The Committee was advised by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, that Cllr Richards' membership on the Area Committee was likely to be a personal interest under Paragraph 10(ii)(iv)(bb) of the Code of Conduct. It was also taken into account by the Committee that Councillor Richards was a Member of the Council's Planning and Development Control Committee and, for that reason, would quite obviously have matters before him from time to time where the retailers would be involved.

RESOLVED: that, having considered the above report submitted by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, a dispensation be granted to Councillor P.D.Richards to speak only and not vote, on matters of general, commercial and retail development, subject to the condition that the dispensation will not apply to any planning application by or transaction with the Co-operative Group, or with any subsidiary or related enterprise.

3. **GOVERNANCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Members received an update on the above matter which had previously been reported to Committee. It was noted that the meeting between the Chairman of this Committee and the Wales Audit Office had to be postponed and would be re-arranged in due course.

RESOLVED: that the above matter be noted.

4. **INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL OF WALES: "WAY FORWARD" POLICY CONSULTATION**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed Members that one specific part of the above Consultation Report related to co-optees' allowances.

The Report commented that the decision on whether to remunerate statutory co-optees with voting rights was one for each Council to determine. A significant minority of Councils had chosen not to remunerate co-optees. The Council Borough Council was one of those Authorities where no provision had been made in the statutory allowances and expenses scheme to remunerate co-optees.

A letter from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services containing the consultation document and response form was due to be sent to all Members of the Council and its Co-opted Members.

RESOLVED: that the above Report be noted.

5. **DRAFT LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CARE AND INTERIM CASE TRIBUNALS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEES) (AMENDMENT) (WALES) REGULATIONS 2009**

The Committee note that, due to the deadline, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services had consulted with the Chairman to agree a response to the above consultation document. The purpose of the draft regulations was to remove certain restrictions from the current regulations regarding the procedure for dealing with complaints at Standards Committee which had been referred to it by the Ombudsman. Full details were contained in the circulated report.

Members noted that the response submitted on behalf of this Authority was similar to that put forward on behalf of the Monitoring Officers generally in Wales.

RESOLVED: that the above Report and representation to the Welsh Assembly Government, be noted.

CHAIRMAN