

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(Committee Room 3 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

23 November, 2018

Chairperson: C.L.Jones

Independent Member: L.Fleet

NPTCBC Members: **Councillors** A.L.Thomas and S.E.Freeguard

Community Committee Member: **Councillor A.Carter**

Officers In Attendance: C.Griffiths, M.Shaw and T.Davies

Apologies: T.Ward and Mrs.B.Richards

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor S.Freeguard - Agenda Item No. 3 – Car Parking Dispensations – as she is a member of the Car Parking Scheme.

Councillor A.L.Thomas - Agenda Item No. 3 – Car Parking Dispensations – as he is a member of the Car Parking Scheme.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 13 July, 2018 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3. **CAR PARKING DISPENSATION**

At this point in the meeting, Councillors S.Freeguard and A.L.Thomas withdrew from the room, and took no part in the discussion and voting thereon.

RESOLVED: That a dispensation be granted to all Elected Members of the Council to speak and vote on issues relating to the business of car parking charges for Staff and Members, provided that Members using the dispensation must understand that it cannot be used if the matter under consideration would confer a greater benefit on the employed family member than on other tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Council's area, or be such that a member of the public might reasonably conclude it would significantly affect the Member's ability to act purely on the merits of the case and in the public interest if the Member were to take part in the discussion.

4. **THE ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES - GUIDANCE ON THE IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS**

Councillors S.Freeguard and A.L.Thomas returned to the room, and took part in all further discussion and voting thereon.

RESOLVED: That the Sanctions Guidance issued by the Adjudication Panel for Wales, which came into force on 1 September 2018, as detailed within the circulated report, be noted.

5. **SUMMARY OF CASES UNDERTAKEN BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES**

RESOLVED: That the summary of cases that have been undertaken by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales, as detailed within the circulated report, be noted.

6. **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILLORS**

Members noted that there would be a Social Media training event in the New Year for all elected Members, which would be tailored to their own skill sets and competencies.

RESOLVED: That the recent guidance produced by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) regarding social media guidance for Councillors, as detailed within the circulated report, be noted.

7. **RECENT DECISION OF THE ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES**

RESOLVED: That a recent decision of the Adjudication Panel for Wales, as detailed within the circulated report, be noted.

8. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: That pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following item of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 18c of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

9. **REFERRAL BY THE OMBUDSMAN**

Councillor S. Freeguard withdrew from voting on this item, in order to maintain the Quorum of the meeting (at least three Members including the Chairperson (or in their absence, Vice Chairperson). At least half the Members present (including the Chair) must be Independent Members. (e.g. if only two Independent Members attend, there must only be two other Members of the Committee present.).

Members engaged in a lengthy discussion concerning the private, circulated report, as well as the Member's Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED:

That pursuant to Regulation 7 of the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001 and all and any other powers, having received a report from the Monitoring Officer, the Community Councillor be given the opportunity to make representations, either orally or in writing in respect of the findings of the investigation referred to in that report and any allegation of a failure to comply with the Code, and that the Monitoring Officer and Chair of the Standards Committee be given delegated authority to arrange a suitable timetable to take the matter forward.

CHAIRPERSON