

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(Teams/ hybrid at Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

10 October 2023

Chairperson: L.Fleet

Vice Chairperson: T.Ward

Independent Members: A.Davies

NPTCBC Members: **Councillors** W.Carpenter and S.Thomas

Community Committee Members: **Councillor** C.Edwards

Officers In Attendance: C.Griffiths, L.Thomas and T.Davies

Apologies: D.Lewis

1. **WELCOME AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 June 2023, were agreed as an accurate record.

4. **GROUP LEADER INVITATION - COUNCILLOR H.C.CLARKE**

The Committee welcomed Councillor H.C.Clarke (Leader of the Coedffranc Liberal and Green Group) to answer the circulated form of questions to Group Leaders, and to discuss Code of Conduct related matters.

Committee Members discussed using a less formal meeting room for meetings of the Standards Committee, as they felt this would be more appropriate when meeting elected Members in future meetings.

RESOLVED: That the attendance of the Group Leader of the Coedffranc Liberal and Green Group be noted, to ensure that the legal obligations under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, were fulfilled.

5. **STANDARDS COMMITTEE FORUM - WALES**

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6. **GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

Members discussed the reworded Policy, and felt it would be helpful for a letter to be sent to all Councillors, explaining that although the new threshold would be £25 for the declaration of gifts and hospitality, it would be best practice to disclose all gifts or hospitality offered, whether above or below the threshold, whether accepted or refused.

RESOLVED:

1. That a threshold of £25 be set for the value of gifts and hospitality that should be notified to the Monitoring Officer.
2. That the amended Gifts and Hospitality Policy be commended to Council for adoption.

7. **OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT**

Members discussed the complaints process, and felt it would be useful for a report to be brought back to Committee, giving

information on breaches, and the criteria used by the Ombudsman to establish a breach, and so on.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

8. **ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES**

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

9. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Any newly requested items from this meeting would be added to the Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Work Programme be noted.

10. **URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent items were received.

CHAIRPERSON