



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT DUFFRYN HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON MONDAY, 16TH OCTOBER 2006 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT:

M.G. Warrender - Chairman
K.C. Mock - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

N. Dix and A.J. Pritchard
Community Councillor C. Roberts
Messrs. L.G. Davies, D.R.G. Parry and Mrs. E.J. Rowlands

Together with:

Monitoring Officer (I.G. Medicott), Chief Housing Officer (Cris Davies), Public Sector Housing Manager (Graham North), Members Services Manager (John Fairfax).

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor L.R. Rees.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2006 (minute nos. 1-6, page nos. 1-3) were approved and signed as a correct record.

2. COMPLAINTS TO THE OMBUDSMAN

Details of the complaints made to the Ombudsman which had been rejected as not accepted for formal investigation or that he was satisfied with the action taken and of those which remained at the enquiry stage or were awaiting determination were noted.

3. PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES – COMPLAINT OF NUISANCE

Consideration was given to the reports of the Monitoring Officer and the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales on a maladministration complaint made against the Council. The Chief Housing Officer and the Public Sector Housing Manager were present and a detailed discussion took place on all the issues involved.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Ombudsman's report and the officers' comments be noted;
- (b) the Committee recommends to Cabinet that:-
 - (i) the Ombudsman's report be noted and accepted;
 - (ii) the Council apologies to Mr. and Mrs. R for the failings identified in the report;
 - (iii) the Council pays Mr. and Mrs. R. £2,000 in respect of the distress suffered by them as a result of the maladministration but also their time and trouble in making the complaint;
 - (iv) the Ombudsman's recommendations to improve the process of dealing with complaints be accepted in principle but that a further report be presented to the Cabinet by officers about how that recommendation could be implemented in practice, following discussion with the Ombudsman's office about the points made by officers and referred to in this report;
 - (v) the Council should review the operation of the protocol with the police to ensure that it is working in practice;
 - (vi) officers generally be reminded (in the light of the Ombudsman's comments on this case) of the need to keep proper and accurate contemporaneous notes of meetings, visits and conversations.

4. STANDARDS COMMITTEES OF WALES CONFERENCE

The Vice Chairman reported on the Conference held in Aberaeron on 22nd September 2006 notes from which had been sent to each Member. Discussion ensued on a number of the topics highlighted.

5. APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION – COUNCILLOR R.T. DAVIES

Consideration was given to the report of the Monitoring Officer (copies were circulated at the meeting) on a request which had been received from Councillor R.T. Davies for dispensation to allow him to speak at the Planning Committee in relation to a planning application by the Bedwas Health Centre for an extension to the existing doctor's surgery.

RESOLVED that a dispensation be granted to Councillor Davies on the following statutory grounds:-

- (iv) the nature of the Member's interest is such that his participation in the business to which the interest relates would not damage public confidence in the conduct of the authority's business;
- (v) the interest is common to the Member and a significant proportion of the general public;

The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.

CHAIRMAN