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19 June 2009

Mr D Perkins
Head of Legal Services
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Penallta House, Tredomen Park
Ystrad Mynach
Hengoed CF82 7GP

PENALLTA

23 JUN 2009

HOUSE

Dear Mr Perkins

Following a meeting with the Remuneration Committee on 9 March 2009, lay members of the Standards Committee considered it appropriate to call a meeting to discuss potential changes in the approach taken by the SC towards monitoring of the Code of Conduct.

Realising that the role of the Standards Committee is limited and obviously of a non-political nature, the question was asked how the committee could best operate more effectively within the existing framework.

Political fallout and public awareness of recent events prompts the question of how the committee could become proactive in ensuring that the Code of Conduct is fully implemented at local level. It was generally felt that the Standards Committee could become more proactive using the principles enshrined in the Nolan Report, viz. Honesty, Integrity and Propriety, Accountability, Registration of Members' Interests, Gifts and Hospitality, and by using these categories as monitors. It was suggested that a more formal auditing procedure could be adopted.

Another issue discussed was that of *Whistleblowing*. Whilst it is appreciated that the Caerphilly County Borough Council has a clear policy on *whistleblowing* it was felt by lay members that the Standards Committee could play a far more active role in its implementation. The independence of the

Committee could provide a more confidential and objective platform for the registration of allegations.

Following the meeting with the Remuneration Committee it was also felt that the Standards Committee could become more involved in the less complicated complaints registered with the Ombudsman. This matter has already been raised at the Standards Committee Conference held at Aberystwyth during 2008.

The 'lay' meeting was followed by a familiarisation meeting with Mr Jonathan Jones and Mr Gary George who are aware of the points discussed.

It is suggested that these issues be discussed at the next scheduled Standards Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely
On behalf of lay members



M Warrender

Ccfi: Mr J Jones
Mr G George