

## Committee on Standards of Conduct STD 03-01 (minutes)

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Date: 28th June 2001, at 14.00hrs

Venue: Committee Room 1, Cardiff Bay

Attendance:

### *Members*

David Melding, South Wales Central (Chair)

Cynog Dafis, Mid and West Wales

Janice Gregory, Ogmore

Brian Hancock, Islwyn

Gareth Jones, Conwy

Gwenda Thomas, Neath

Eleanor Burnham, North Wales

Karen Sinclair, Clywd South

### *Officials*

Andrew George, Committee Clerk

Jill Thomas, Deputy Clerk

David Lambert, Legal Adviser to the Presiding Office

### *Other*

Richard Penn, the Assembly's Independent Adviser on Standards

### **Item 1: Minutes of the last meeting and Chair's introductory remarks**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Christine Gwyther, and Janice Gregory for the first part of the meeting. He also thanked Jill Thomas, the outgoing Deputy Clerk for her assistance to the Committee.

2. The Committee confirmed that the minutes of the last meeting (STD 02-01 min) were an accurate record.

### **Item 2: Quarterly update and review of action arising from STD-02-01**

Paper STD-03-01 (1)

3. The Committee noted the Secretariat's paper.

4. The Deputy Clerk reported on a meeting with the Secretariat to the House Committee about establishing closer links between the committees and in particular revisiting the guidance on the use of Assembly Resources. The House Committee Secretariat agreed that both Committees would benefit from improved communications and that consideration would be given to revisiting the guidance on use of resources to take on board comments from the Committee on Standards of Conduct.

### **Item 3: Update on the Register of Members interests**

Oral Item

5. The Clerk to the Committee provided an oral update on the Register of Members Interests. The fifth quarterly report was published in April, the second annual report by the Presiding Officer on the register will be prepared at the end of July.

### **Item 4: Indirect Interests**

Papers STD-03-01(2,3,&4)

6. The Chair introduced this item by reminding Members of the decisions taken in the Committee meeting on 4 April. The definitions of "partner" and "dependant child" had been further refined in light of the Committee's comments on 4 April. The Committee was content with the refined definitions, subject to a minor correction to the definition of "partner". It also agreed that once the new requirements had become established, the Committee could consider reviewing the registration of interests by other family members. The Committee also approved the draft paper for the Business Committee, STD 03-01(04), which summarised the conclusions and recommendations of the review.

*Action* :- Secretariat to amend the to definition of "partner" and arrange for conclusions and recommendations to be brought before the Business Committee then the Assembly.

### **Item 5: Update on Protocol with Police**

Oral Item by David Lambert

7. The Secretariat and David Lambert had met South Wales Police to discuss arrangements for extending the existing protocol with them to other police forces in Wales. It was established that subject to a few minor changes to the protocol to bring it up to date, this could be achieved by utilising the current arrangements and the regular liaison meetings between the forces.

*Action* :- Secretariat to prepare revised protocol and arrange signature by both parties.

Janice Gregory joined the meeting at 14.50

## **Item 6: Review of Procedures for Standards**

Paper STD 03-01(5)

8. The Committee considered options for taking forward three connected items of the forward work programme which involve the Assembly's procedures for considering Standards of Conduct for Assembly Members, these are:-

- Committees jurisdiction
- complaints procedure, and
- Independent Advisor on Standards of Conduct

9. The Committee's opinion was that an overarching review of these procedures would be appropriate, and, to ensure the Assembly's objectivity in this matter, that it should be undertaken by a person or organisation outside of the Assembly's present arrangements. The appointment of a special advisor to the Committee under standing order 8.17, as detailed in Option three of the annex to STD 03-01(5) was preferred in the first instance.

## **Item 7: Any Other Business and date of next meeting**

*Date of Next Meeting*

10. The Committee noted that the next meeting should take place on Wednesday 17 October.

Cynog Dafis and Gareth Jones left the meeting at 15.30.

## **Item 8: C014-00**

11. Hearing held in closed session. A summary of the views and conclusions reached will be presented to the Assembly in due course.

*Standards Committee Secretariat*