

Agenda – Standards of Conduct Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 5 – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 17 April 2018

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Meriel Singleton

Committee Clerk

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- 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest**
(09.30)
- 2 Paper(s) to note**
(09.30 – 09.40) (Page 1)
 - 2.1 Resourcing for Brexit scrutiny: Letter from the Llywydd (16 March 2018)**
(Pages 2 – 7)
- 3 Lobbying: Consideration of response to the Committee's Report**
(09.40 – 10.00) (Pages 8 – 9)
SoC(5)-07-18 Paper 1 – Response from the Assembly Commission
- 4 Code of Conduct – Review: Progress Report on the Committee's Inquiry**
(10.00 – 11.00) (Pages 10 – 11)
SoC(5)-07-18 Paper 2 – Letter from the Chair to the First Minister (7 March 2018)
SoC(5)-07-18 Paper 3 – Letter from the First Minister to the Chair (4 April 2018)



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Jayne Bryant, AM
Chair
Standards of Conduct Committee
National Assembly for Wales

16 March 2018

Dear Jayne,

Thank you for your letter of 11 January and to you and the committee, and all contributors to the inquiry, for being involved in producing this interim report.

As requested, please find the Commission's response to the committee's recommendations below:

The Standards Committee's recommendations:

Recommendation 1. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Commission works with a group of Assembly Members to develop a pilot scheme of voluntarily disclosing AMs meetings with lobbyist and interest groups with an evaluation to be undertaken in 2020.

Accept. In support of the Standards Committee's aspiration to increase transparency and provide a greater insight into the work of an elected Member, the Commission will work with the four members of the Standards Committee, as the pilot group of Members, to facilitate the trial of voluntary publishing of Members' meetings with lobbyist and interest groups.

Recommendation 2. We recommend that the Assembly Commission ensure all National Assembly staff security passes are deactivated on their last day of employment. This would ensure that no lobbyist possess a National Assembly pass making it easier to maintain the reputation of the Assembly as an institution which allows fair and equal access to all.

Accept. No change is necessary. It is already the current practice to deactivate staff and Member passes promptly, as soon as they cease employment with the Commission or AM, or cease their role as a Member. This practice is very important to preserve the integrity of the estate.



Recommendation 3. We recommend that information about all Assembly Member sponsored events held on the Assembly Estate and not just those events in public spaces is included within the Calendar. We feel this will ensure that the National Assembly is displaying its commitment to the utmost transparency, and enable the public to see what events are being held on the Estate.

Accept. The Assembly published Calendar is intended to be a useful source for anyone using the website to find out what activity is taking place. The system of publishing information in the Calendar on all Member sponsored events held in the public areas of the Assembly Estate (Oriol and Neuadd in the Senedd and the Pierhead) will be extended from Easter recess to include new bookings made for Member sponsored activity involving external guests in other bookable locations on the estate and meetings of Cross Party Groups.

Recommendation 4. We recommend that research is commissioned by the Assembly Commission, mapping out routes of influence to build an informed evidence base and consider alternative, and potentially more effective ways to increase transparency other than a Statutory register.

Each committee is free to seek the information it feels is necessary to undertake its inquiries. It is for the Committee to do this. The Commission provides budget to enable committees to receive the support they need, from Commission staff and to access external expertise if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Elin Jones AM
Llywydd

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Safonau Ymddygiad

National Assembly for Wales
Standards of Conduct Committee

Agenda Item 4

Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM
First Minister
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NO

07 March 2018

Review into Code of Conduct for Assembly Members: Dignity and Respect Policy

Dear First Minister,

The Standards of Conduct Committee is currently considering the Code of Conduct for Assembly Members. This forms part of the commitment made in the [joint statement](#) on tackling inappropriate behaviour at the National Assembly for Wales issued on 15 November 2017. Through this work, questions have been raised regarding at which point the Ministerial Code and the Assembly Member's Code of Conduct is applicable to Ministers of the Government.

The Committee appreciates that the Ministerial code states: *(viii) Ministers must keep separate their roles as Minister and Assembly Member*, there does appear to be a perception of ambiguity regarding when a Minister is performing his/her duties as a Minister and when they are acting as an AM. Particularly as the two roles may not be necessarily be incompatible.

To ensure clarity, the Committee would welcome your views on the potential of an amendment to the Ministerial Code and/or Assembly Member Code of Conduct.

Yours Faithfully



Jayne Bryant AM

Chair, Standards of Conduct Committee



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Y Gwir Anrh/Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AC/AM
Prif Weinidog Cymru/First Minister of Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Jayne Bryant AM
Chair, Standards of Conduct Committee
National Assembly for Wales

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4 April 2018

Dear Jayne,

Thank you for your letter of 7 March regarding the Standards of Conduct Committee's consideration of the Code of Conduct for Assembly Members.

I welcome the work the Committee has undertaken in this important area.

You will know that I take the obligations placed on myself and members of the Government by the Ministerial Code very seriously and the Code is explicit in this regard.

I expect the highest standards from Ministers, particularly when separating official and political duties and there have been many occasions when Ministers, or their Private Offices, have referred issues to my office for handling advice when they have identified a potential conflict of interest.

In light of the Committee's review, I shall be writing to Ministers to remind them of the need for a separation of roles.

If the Committee's aim is to make Assembly Member and Ministerial roles and activities more transparent and distinguishable you may wish to replicate the relevant extract from the Ministerial Code in the Code of Conduct for Assembly Members.

Yours sincerely

CARWYN JONES

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.