

**Senedd Cymru**  
**Y Pwyllgor Safonau Ymddygiad**  
**[Adolygiad o God Ymddygiad Aelodau o'r Senedd](#)**  
**RC01**  
**Ymateb gan: Douglas Bain, Comisiynydd Safonau**

-  
**Welsh Parliament**  
**Standards of Conduct Committee**  
**[Review of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Senedd](#)**  
**RC01**  
**Evidence from: Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner**

**RESPONSE BY THE SENEDD COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

**TO THE**

**SENEDD STANDARDS OF CONDUCT COMMITTEE CONSULTATION ON THE CODE OF  
CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF THE SENEDD**

*Proposal 1*

I welcome the proposed new rules but without further detail on their content and the procedure to govern them I am unable to offer further comment.

*Proposal 2*

*I welcome the proposal.*

*Proposal 3*

I welcome the proposed new rule which will make Members responsible for anything posted in their name by their staff. The new rule would be even more effective if it made Members responsible for anything posted in their name not just posts by their staff. Without such an extension it might still be possible for Members to avoid responsibility for posts made in their name by, for example, family members or constituency volunteers.

*Proposal 4*

If this sensible proposal is implemented, consideration should be given to amending Rule 24 to impose on Members a duty to take reasonable measures to ensure their staff are aware of and have access to the new Code of Conduct for their staff, to the Staff Handbook and to the Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources.

### *Proposal 5*

I welcome the proposed clarification.

### *Proposal 6*

I am grateful to the Committee for taking up my proposal on this matter.

### *Proposal 7*

Whilst I support the policy intention behind this proposal I question whether a new rule is the best way of achieving it.

Rule 12 of the current Code provides –

*Members must be open and transparent with other Members, officials of the Senedd Commission and officials of any other public body or authority, in disclosing any activities undertaken in relation to, or undertaken on behalf of, an individual or organisation with which a Member has a financial relationship, including activities which may not be a matter of public record such as informal meetings and functions.*

These provisions already cover some of the subject matter of the proposed new rule and it would, I believe, be better to extend Rule 12 rather than introducing a new rule.

However, Rule 12 requires disclosure only of financial interests and only in dealings with a limited number of specified office holders or organisations. I believe that consideration should be given to requiring disclosure not just of financial interests but of all interests that might reasonably be thought by others to be influencing the Member. Standing Order 13.8A already imposes Members a duty to declare, before taking part in plenary proceedings, any interest financial or otherwise which might reasonably be thought by others to influence the Member's contribution to the proceedings. Standing Order 17.24A imposes the same duty in respect of Committee proceedings. I do not believe that a lower standard is appropriate for other work of Members. There would be merit in aligning the language of any Code provision with the language in Standing Orders.

I recommend that consideration be given to revising Rule 12 to make clear that it applies to all communications and conduct by Members. It should extend to any interest financial or otherwise that the Member, or to their knowledge their family, has or expects to have in the subject under consideration.

Such a revision might be along the lines –

*12. Members must in all communications declare any interest financial or otherwise which they, or to their knowledge their family has, or expects to have, in the subject under consideration and which might reasonably be thought by others to influence the Members.*

Douglas Bain CBE TD

Senedd Commissioner for Standards

23 December 2025