

Y Pwyllgor Safonau Ymddygiad

Standards of Conduct Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



To: Chairs of Cross-Party Groups
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

22 May 2013

Dear Colleague

Report on Lobbying and Cross-Party Groups – New Rules for Cross-Party Groups and a Code of Practice on Lobbying Activity

I write to you in your capacity as Chair of an Assembly Cross-Party Group, to draw your attention to the Standards of Conduct Committee's recommendation for new, more robust, rules for the operation of Cross-Party Groups to replace the existing guidance.

These rules are being proposed following a Committee inquiry into the Assembly's arrangements in relation to lobbying activity, with a view to making recommendations to the Presiding Officer about any additional arrangements that might be needed to strengthen them. The Committee published its report on 2nd May and it is available on the website:

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=231>

Y Pwyllgor Safonau Ymddygia
Gwasanaeth y Pwyllgorau
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

—
E-bost: Safonau@cymru.gov.uk
Ffôn: 029 2089 8429

Standards of Conduct Committee
Committee Service
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

—
Email: Standards.Committee@wales.gov.uk
Phone: 029 2089 8429

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg. Rwy'n croesawu galwadau a wneir drwy wasanaeth Text Relay

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We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh. I welcome calls from people using the Text Relay service



The Assembly will be invited to endorse the Cross-Party Rules, along with general guidance for Members on contact with lobbyists, in plenary. The provisional date for consideration in plenary is 26 June.

If endorsed, the new Cross-Party Group Rules would not come into effect until the start of the autumn term, on Monday 23 September. Assembly Commission staff will therefore be in touch after June to provide further information about the practical implications of the rules, and to ensure that your group has the tools, guidance and support necessary in advance of the rules coming into effect.

In advance of the plenary debate, I attach a briefing to summarise the main changes proposed and the rationale behind them. I hope you will find this helpful to raise awareness with members of your Cross-Party Group who are from external organisations.

The Committee has given careful consideration to the content of these new rules and guidance. The intention is to provide the greater level of transparency and accountability expected by the public, without introducing measures that are overly onerous on Cross-Party Groups or Members. We have also recommended that these arrangements are reviewed again before the end of this Assembly to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

I am writing in similar terms to all Assembly Members to draw their attention to the proposals in the Committee's report, and would be happy to discuss the report with any Member if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Mick Antoniw AC / AM

Cadeirydd / Chair

Enc: Briefing: Lobbying and Cross-Party Groups – Assembly Rules and Guidance

CC: Rosemary Butler AM, Presiding Officer
Gerard Elias QC, Standards Commissioner for Wales