

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>THE COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>21, OCTOBER, 2010.</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>THE GWYNEDD STANDARD</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>TO REQUEST THE COUNCIL TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE AND TO ADOPT THE GWYNEDD STANDARD</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>DILYS PHILLIPS, MONITORING OFFICER.</b>

1. The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst members and to assist them to keep to the Code of Conduct. As part of this work the committee has been considering how best to assist the Council to resolve minor complaints of misconduct between members, that is those complaints that are not sufficiently serious to be referred to the Ombudsman as breaches of the Code of Conuct.
2. The result of this work, which was carried out in consultation with representatives of the political groups, is the attached document - "The Gwynedd Standard". The document was sent to all members for consultation at the beginning of September and a report was presented to the Standards Committee on the responses. Following discussion, the Committee resolved to recommend that the Council adopts the Standard.
3. The purpose of the Standard it to establish what behaviour is acceptable between members and what is not acceptable. It is not intended to replace the Code of Conduct. Rather it is intended to sit alongside the Code of Conduct and fill the gap between behaviour which possibly in itself is not serious, but creates unpleasantness between Council members, and behaviour that is approaching the threshold and serious enough for the Ombudsman to hold an investigation.
4. Should the Council adopt "The Gwynedd Standard", the intention would then be for any transgression to be dealt with under the local procedure. The same procedure will be adopted as the one the Council has for solving complaints between members and officers.

5. Under that procedure there are three steps, namely the advice of the Monitoring Officer or her representative, an informal meeting between members to try and resolve the matter (and if there is no solution) then a hearing before the Standards Committee. The members (the complainant and the subject of the complaint) have the right to appear before the Committee to present their case. There would also be an invitation for them to present any documentation before hand to be distributed with the committee papers.
6. Following the hearing the Committee can come to one of three conclusions, namely:
  - (a) there is no basis to the allegation;
  - (b) that there is basis to the allegation but there is no need to act further;
  - (c) there is basis to the allegation and the member should be reprimanded.

#### **RECOMMENDATION.**

7. The Council is asked to accept the recommendation of the Standards Committee and to adopt "The Gwynedd Standard" together with the local procedure for resolving complaints.

## THE GWYNEDD STANDARD

This document explains the standard of conduct expected from Gwynedd Council's councillors in dealing with each other. It should be read in conjunction with the Members Code of Conduct and the Protocol Member-Officer Relations. It adds to those documents and not detract from them.

Gwynedd Council members are expected to :-

### Public behaviour:

- Show respect to each other
- Not to make personal abusive comments about each other.
- Not to publish anything insulting about each other.
- Not to make malicious allegations against each other.
- Not to publish or spread any false information about each other.
- Show respect to diversity and equality.

### Behaviour in committees:

- Behave with dignity in the Chamber.
- Show respect to the Chairman and obey his decisions.
- Not to use indecent language nor make racial remarks or remarks which prejudice any section of society.

### Confidentiality:

- Keep the confidentiality of exempt papers and any other documents which are not public.
- Not to release confidential information to the press or the public.
- Return confidential papers.
- Not to use confidential information for purposes other than intended.

### Local members

- Work with members of adjoining wards for the benefit of the locality.
- If dealing with any matter relating to another ward
  - Explain to anyone seeking assistance that he/she is not the local member
  - Inform the local member, unless it would lead to a breach of confidentiality