

DISPENSATION PANEL OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March, 2018 (11.00am)

PRESENT: **Independent Members**

Mr Michael Wilson (Chair)
Mrs Dilys Shaw

Representing Town/Community Councils

Councillor Iorwerth Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE: Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer
Committee Officer (SC)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Roger Dobson (Llanbadrig Community Council & North
Anglesey Partnership)

APOLOGIES: None

1 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No declaration of interest was received.

2 **APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION**

An application for dispensation was made by Councillor Roger Dobson, a member of the Llanbadrig Community Council, who wishes to speak and vote at meetings on matters relating to Horizon Nuclear Power (HNP), including consultations and planning applications.

Councillor Dobson has requested that the Standard Committee considers granting a dispensation in relation to a prejudicial interest, on the grounds outlined in his application.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Dobson to the meeting, and gave him an opportunity to present his application.

Councillor Dobson reported that he sought a dispensation in the context of Llanbadrig Community Council. He stated that he is not advocating for or against the development, but is trying to ensure that any development which occurs is on the most favourable terms for those affected. He further stated that he declares an interest at the start of community council meetings, owing to the proximity of his property to the Wylfa Newydd development site.

It was noted, that in addition to his role as a community councillor, Councillor Dobson is a member of the North Anglesey Partnership, whose interests relate to

Wylfa Newydd. He has been nominated to lead on behalf of the Partnership, by virtue of his knowledge and expertise on two key policies ie the Neighbourhood Support Policy and the Workers' Management Strategy.

Councillor Dobson referred to the Neighbourhood Support Policy, which includes compensation options for approximately 60 properties in the Tregle area. Horizon is offering those owners the option of remaining in place, or selling their properties for the current market value to Horizon. However, the NAP is trying to negotiate with Horizon for better terms, similar to those offered to residents who live close to developments such as HS2. The counter proposal is that they will pay at least 25% more than the market value to all those properties within 1.5 kilometres of the site of the new power station. Councillor Dobson's home is one of those which will be affected directly by this Policy.

The Workers' Management Strategy will also affect Councillor Dobson's property, but to no greater extent than the majority of those who live in the Cemaes Ward, whom he represents. Councillor Dobson stated that Horizon has initiated a revision of the plans for Wylfa Newydd, which involves a smaller footprint for the power station, and a proposal to build a campus on site to accommodate 4,000 contractors. Llanbadrig Community Council and the NAP will oppose the proposal, and Councillor Dobson proposes to speak against the proposed campus and declare a personal interest at meetings.

It was noted that that Llanbadrig Community Council and the North Anglesey Partnership are currently engaging with Horizon in trying to agree a Statement of Common Ground for workers who will be employed on the site.

Councillor Dobson referred to the site preparation and clearance programme for Wylfa Newydd, which involves clearing 740 acres of land owned by Horizon. The programme will affect Councillor Dobson's home to a greater extent than the majority of residents within the Cemaes Ward, and is anticipated to have an adverse effect on his quality of life for 2 or 3 years, together with the occupants of the other 60 properties who live within close proximity to the site. It was noted that Llanbadrig Community Council and the NAP will object to the current site clearance plan. Councillor Dobson stated that he believed the public interest coincided with his personal interest as a home owner.

The Monitoring Officer reported that because Councillor Dobson is appointed to the North Anglesey Partnership, by virtue of being a community councillor for Llanbadrig, he may be granted a dispensation that covers his role as a community councillor when he is representing the community council on other bodies as well.

The Monitoring Officer also advised that matters relating to the Workers' Management Strategy and the revised campus proposals are unlikely to be prejudicial, but that the Neighbourhood Support Policy and the current plan (pre-application site clearance) are likely to be prejudicial and that the Standards Panel has the discretion to grant a dispensation to overreach the prejudicial interest and allow Councillor Dobson to participate. The possible statutory ground/s are set out in the enclosure to the Report.

Members of the Panel deliberated in private session. Following discussion, the Chair announced that the Standards Committee had **RESOLVED to grant a dispensation to Councillor Dobson in respect of those interests referred to in the Application, which permits the Councillor to:-**

- **speak at Committee meetings/Community Council meetings and answer any questions about the issue;**
- **remain in the room during any debate/vote on the issue;**
- **vote;**

The dispensation has been granted subject to the following grounds:-

- **The nature of the interest is such that participation would not damage public confidence in the decision;**
- **The Councillor's interest is common to a significant proportion of the general public;**
- **The Councillor's particular role or expertise would justify participation;**
- **The Standards Committee believes that Councillor Dobson's participation would be in the interests of the people in the community council's area, and the Committee notifies the Welsh Ministers within 7 days of the dispensation being granted.**

Action:

- **The Monitoring Officer to write to Councillor Dobson confirming that the Panel has granted a dispensation permitting him to speak and vote on all matters relating to Wylfa Newydd at Llanbadrig Community Council and NAP meetings. Councillor Dobson must declare a personal and prejudicial interest when attending the above meetings.**
- **The Monitoring Officer to write to the Clerk of the Llanbadrig Community Council and the Chair of the NAP confirming the above.**
- **The Monitoring Officer to notify the National Assembly for Wales in writing of Councillor Dobson's grant of dispensation within 7 days of the dispensation being granted.**

The meeting concluded at 11.45 am

**MR MICHAEL WILSON
CHAIR**