ITEM 12

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Chief Officer (Governance)
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)

CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

All Town and Community Clerks

Sent via e mail

Your Ref/Eich Cyf	
Our Ref/Ein Cyf	GO/TC
Date/Dyddiad	3rd September 2019
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All Town and Community Clerks

Visits to Town and Community Councils

This is my seventh update regarding the visits by the Independent Members of the Standards Committee to Town/Community Council meetings to observe practice and gain an understanding of how local council business is conducted.

The findings from further visits undertaken were reported to the Committee on the 2nd September and I am writing with feedback to all Town/Community Councils to give assurance on good practice and procedures.

The findings from three further visits, undertaken in June and July 2019 were received by the Committee. As with previous reported visits, the four Independent Members agreed that these had been positive experiences and again praised the level of commitment and contributions by those in attendance.

As we've discussed previously, the setting and administrative arrangements for meetings can have a large impact on whether the meeting proceeds in a smooth and orderly fashion. Members have seen good examples where the formality of proceedings helped generate a conducive atmosphere to calm and considered debate without stifling input.

Conversely, they have also found that less structured meetings can be both confusing for members of the public and can contribute to unruly behaviour. An important part of that structure which will help Councillors to comply with the Code of Conduct, is to have an agenda item early in the running order for Members to declare an interest. Such an item not only prompts Members to consider whether they need to declare an interest but also reminds them to do so. It is routinely included as an item after apologies and minutes in most Councils.

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh. We will respond to correspondence received in Welsh without delay.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg. Ymatebwn yn ddi-oed i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

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Again, the Members have encountered some difficulties in finding the precise location of meetings. Clearly, this could make it difficult for members of the public to attend as well. Please consider putting clear directions on your websites and/or the use of signage at the venue.

As before, the Committee hopes that this feedback is useful and wishes to acknowledge the dedication and good work undertaken by Town/Community Councillors in their voluntary roles.

Yours sincerely

Gareth Owens
Chief Officer Governance