

STANDARDS DISPENSATION SUB-COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS DISPENSATION SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2012 AT COMMITTEE ROOM III - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Mr Philip Gill, Cllr Howard Marshall and Mr Keith Wallace

Nina Wilton – Deputy Monitoring Officer

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

2. Consideration of a dispensation request - Cllr David Grover of Steeple Langford Parish Council

The Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report and explained that this was a review of an application which had been considered and refused by the Dispensation Sub-Committee at its meeting on 13 May 2011. Cllr Grover's circumstances had now changed as he was no longer a trustee of the Steeple Langford Allotments and had therefore requested that his application for a dispensation be reconsidered.

Councillor Grover is a member of Steeple Langford Parish Council, an allotment holder and also lives next door to the allotment site.

There are seven councillors on Steeple Langford Parish Council. Two councillors are trustees of the allotment trust, and another two (Councillor Grover and Councillor Watson) have a personal and prejudicial interest in the allotments by virtue of being an allotment holder and living next to the site of the allotments.

This means that four of the seven members of Steeple Langford Parish Council have a personal and prejudicial interest in the Steeple Langford Allotments, representing 57% of the total membership of the parish council. The parish council is inquorate when considering matters relating to the allotments.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer explained the law and guidance relevant to this request and advised that in her opinion Councillor Grover did have a personal and prejudicial interest in matters relating to the financial position of the allotments arising from his position as an allotment holder and the fact that he lived next door to the allotment site.

She reminded the Sub-Committee that, in reaching a decision, they must have regard to guidance from Standards for England.

The Sub-Committee discussed the nature of Councillor Grover's prejudicial interest and concluded that there had been no substantial change in his situation since the last request.

Resolved:

The sub-committee did not consider that the circumstances had changed significantly therefore decided not to grant a dispensation as it was not in the public interest to do so.

3. Consideration of a dispensation request - Cllr Dawn Watson of Steeple Langford Parish Council

The Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report and explained that Councillor Watson is an allotment holder of allotments in the area of the parish council. She also lives in close proximity of the Allotments Gardens. She therefore has a personal and prejudicial interest in council agenda matters relating to the allotments.

The Steeple Langford Allotments are managed by a charitable trust. Two of the Steeple Langford Council members are trustees of the allotment trust and have personal and prejudicial interests arising from their position as trustees.

Councillor Watson and one other councillor (Councillor Grover) have a personal and prejudicial interest in the allotments by virtue of being an allotment holder and living next to the site of the allotments.

This means that four of the seven members of Steeple Langford Parish Council have a personal and prejudicial interest in the Steeple Langford allotments, representing 57% of the total membership of the parish council. The parish council is inquorate when considering matters relating to the Steeple Langford allotments.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer explained the law and guidance relevant to this request and advised that in her opinion Councillor Watson did have a personal and prejudicial interest in matters relating to the financial position of the

allotments arising from her position as an allotment holder and the fact that she lived next door to the allotment site.

She reminded the Sub-Committee that, in reaching a decision, they must have regard to guidance from Standards for England.

The Sub-Committee discussed the nature of Councillor Watson's prejudicial interest and concluded that it was so substantial that the granting of a dispensation would be likely to prejudice the public confidence in the conduct of Steeple Langford Parish Council's business.

Resolved:

Not to grant a dispensation as the sub-committee did not consider that it was in the public interest to do so.

(Duration of meeting: 2.00 – 2.30pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Pam Denton, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718371, e-mail pam.denton@wiltshire.gov.uk

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