

Hannah Blythyn MS

Chair, Standards of Conduct Committee

20 March 2025

Dear Chair,

### Registration and Declaration of Interest Inquiry

Thank you for your letter, received on 3 March, seeking my views on the Committee's proposals. As you know, I offered views on several of them at an earlier stage of the process.

**Remuneration** – I welcome the proposed simplification. At present Categories 1 and 5 include “*dependent child of the Member*” whereas Categories 2 and 3 include “*dependent child of the Member over the age of sixteen.*” I recommend that in the new remuneration provision, and all other references to dependent children in the revised SO 2, should use the definition of dependent child in paragraph 4(ii) of the Annex to SO 2 which would pick up the 17 – 19-year-olds in full-time education.

**Gifts, hospitality, etc** – I support the proposals to lower the threshold and to provide an estimated value.

**Overseas visits** – I welcome these eminently sensible proposals.

**Land and property** – I support these proposals.

**Shareholdings** - I welcome these proposals and the greater transparency they would bring.

**Membership etc** – when taken along with the proposed new voluntary category, these proposals should result in a reduction of the number of inept registrations under this category.

**Employment of family members** – removal of the provision regarding employment of a Member's own family is plainly necessary. It remains my view that there is no significant advantage in publishing the name of an employee from another Member's family. There would, I believe, be merit in requiring the Member to provide that information which would mean that it would be readily accessible to the Commissioner in the event of any investigation. If the

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We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

Committee agrees I recommend that the new provision makes clear that the information is to be available to the Commissioner without the need for a Notice to Produce under section 12 of the National Assembly for Wales Commissioner for Standards Measure 2009.

### **General**

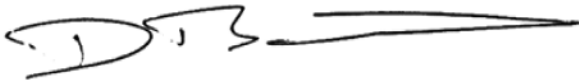
*Dates* – I welcome these proposals and am satisfied that if implemented they would not result in any significant extra work for the Commissioner.

*Voluntary category* – I welcome this manifestly sensible proposal.

*Initial registration period* – I welcome the proposed alignment of the initial registration period with the period permitted for updating the register.

*Thresholds* – I welcome this proposal not only because it would provide greater certainty for Members but would also be much clearer for members of the public.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Bain', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Douglas Bain CBE TD**

**Y Comisiynydd Safonau/Standards Commissioner**