

REVIEW OF THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS' AND CO-OPTees' DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FORMS	
STANDARDS COMMITTEE 22 JANUARY 2014	CLASSIFICATION: OPEN
WARD(S) AFFECTED ALL WARDS	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR GIFTY EDILA, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, HR AND REGULATORY SERVICES	

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires all local authorities to adopt a Code of Conduct for its elected Members and voting co-optees.
- 1.2 The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 requires all Members to complete a declaration of interests form on their election to office, and for voting co-optees to complete a form on their appointment to office.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Standards Committee is asked to note the report.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1 The report is for noting and lessons learnt from this review would enable further work to be carried out to assist Members and Co-optees in completing the form.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES

4.1 This report sets out the details of the review undertaken of the Register of Members and Co-optees interests and does not contain any potential financial implications.

5. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, HR AND REGULATORY SERVICES

5.1 All Members and voting Co-optees are required under The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 to complete a declaration of interests form.

5.2 Under the Council's procedures, within the Code of Conduct all co-optees, whether with voting rights or not are also required to complete a form.

6. BACKGROUND

6.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 all Councils are required to promote high ethical standards in public office.

6.2 Members and co-optees have completed declaration of interests forms. Many Members regularly update their forms as their circumstances change.

6.3 The forms are also published on the Council's website.

6.4 In completing the forms, some Members have been particularly concerned about disclosing the following to the public:

- Home addresses going on the website
- Spouse or partner's details

6.5 Members have also been uncertain about the need to disclose membership of other bodies and contracts with the Council.

6.6 In the last year, the Government also issued guidance informing Members of the need to declare any trade union membership.

6.7 The Monitoring Officer agreed that Members can withhold their home addresses from the website. However addresses must appear on the signed copy of the form held on the register.

6.8 On reviewing the forms, all elected Members, the Mayor and co-optees have completed the form. Thirty two (32) out of fifty eight (58) elected Members and the Mayor had completed the form accurately. The

remaining twenty six (26), although their forms were largely accurate, the following omissions/additions were identified:

- Political party membership missing
- Giving spouse/partner's name and place of work when such details were not required

6.9 Although these issues are not substantial, all Members who need to amend their forms have been written to.

6.10 Following the May 2014 local and Mayoral elections, further training and written guidance will be given to Members and Co-optees on the Code of Conduct.

Gifty Edila
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Appendices

Declaration of Interests Form

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