

# Values and Ethics Sub Committee

23 November 2021



**Report of:** The Monitoring Officer – Director of Legal and Democratic Services

**Title:** Members Register of Interests

**Ward:** N/a

**Officer Presenting Report:** Democratic Services Manager

## Recommendation

That the Committee notes the Members Register of Interests report.

## The significant issues in the report are:

As set out in paragraphs 2 – 9 of the report.

## Policy

1. The Values & Ethics Sub-Committee supports the Authority's duty to promote and sustain high standards of conduct within the council. The key functions of the Sub Committee include oversight of the Member Code of Conduct and the legal duty for Members to register and disclose their interests.

## Context

2. The Member Code of Conduct places obligations relating to registering and disclosing interests on the Mayor and all Members of the Council. The Council maintains a register of interests for all members which is made up of disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs), non-DPIs and gifts and hospitality and which is published online.

### Disclosable pecuniary interests

3. All members have a legal duty to register and disclose their interests. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to fail to disclose and register DPIs. Non-DPIs and gifts and hospitality are also required to be disclosed under the Member Code of Conduct.
4. Disclosable pecuniary interests are as follows: Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation; Sponsorship; Contracts; Land; Licences; Corporate tenancies; and Securities.

### Prejudicial interests

5. A prejudicial interest is one where, despite not being a DPI, the well-being or financial position of the Member, members of their family, or people with whom the Member has a close association is likely to be affected by the business of the Council more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward or electoral division affected by the decision.

### Other interests

6. Other interests will generally be either
  - Outside bodies to which a member may be appointed by the council, for which a member would not receive remuneration; or
  - Any public body, charitable organisation, political party or trade union of which a Councillor may be a member and/or in a position of general control or management, but for which are unpaid.

### Sensitive interests

7. In some cases, Members may feel that one of their disclosable pecuniary interests is a sensitive interest. For reasons of security, this is often the case for a member's home address. Sensitive interests are disclosed to the Monitoring Officer who will retain a record of those interests. However sensitive interests are not published.

8. Following the May 2021 elections, all members registered their disclosable pecuniary interests and the registers were published at the end of September.
9. Members have an obligation to keep the register of interests up to date and any changes should be notified within 28 days. Members receive regular reminders from Democratic Services relating to their obligation to keep the registers of interests up to date and advice is available to all members as required relating to the registration and disclosure of interests.

**Other Options Considered**

10. Not applicable.

**Risk Assessment**

11. Not applicable.

**Legal and Resource Implications**

12. Not applicable.

**Financial / Land / Human Resources**

13. Not applicable.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**Background Papers: Localism Act 2011**