



AGENDA ITEM: 5

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

10 MARCH 2009

REGISTERS OF INTERESTS

RICHARD G LONG,

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide Members with details of entries made in the Members' Register of Interests and the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

BACKGROUND

2. The Council's Code of Conduct requires Councillors and Co-opted Members to register their financial and other interests. The Monitoring Officer is required to establish and maintain a register of those interests. Councillors and Co-opted Members must make their declarations in writing to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the adoption of the code of conduct by the Council or their election or appointment. They must also submit written notification of any changes to those entries within 28 days of the changes taking place.
3. The register of interests provides a record of the interests and activities which may influence a Member's view, and which might affect the way in which they carry out their public duties.
4. In agreeing topics for its work programme for the year the committee resolved to review the entries registered by Members. Members register their interests in three ways:
 - (i) By completing an annual declaration of financial and personal interests, example form attached at Appendix (A). Middlesbrough Council's form has been adapted to include additional information that is also required as part of the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts, relating to disclosure of any material transactions between the Council and Related Parties.
 - (ii) By making declarations at meetings where they have interest in a matter to be considered at that meeting. Declarations made in such circumstances

are recorded in the minutes of those meetings and are entered in the Register of Disclosures and General Notices. Over 100 declarations have been registered during the current municipal year.

- (iii) By declaring and registering when receiving either gifts or hospitality with a value of £25 or more, example form attached at Appendix (B). The declaration should include details of the gift or hospitality, its approximate value and details of the person or body who provided it. Although not a requirement, Members also occasionally register gifts or hospitality of lesser value.

Declarations are entered in a Register of Gifts and Hospitality. Details of entries received for the current municipal year are attached at Appendix C. A fact sheet issued by the Standards Board for England, attached at Appendix D, provides brief guidance.

- 5. Responsibility for ensuring that these interests are declared and for submitting updates to their entries rests with the Member.
- 6. The Registers, which may be inspected by the public during normal office opening hours, will be available at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7. That the Committee notes the report and the declarations made.
- 8. That the Committee considers whether details of Members financial/personal interests and details of gifts and hospitality offered or accepted by Members should be placed on the Council's website.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No additional background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

AUTHOR

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