

All Members of the Council

GO

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Gareth Owens

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Dear Councillor

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On the 29 October 2013 Full Council will consider whether to approve the terms of the draft Single Status Agreement. You will need to carefully consider whether to declare an interest under the code of conduct in that item.

### **Whether to declare a personal interest**

If any employee of the council who is covered by Single Status falls into one or more of the following categories then you should declare a personal interest:

1. Anyone with whom you live; or
2. Anyone with whom you have a close personal association. This includes:
  - close friends;
  - colleagues with whom you have particularly strong connections;
  - business associates; and
  - close relatives;
  - somebody with whom you have been in dispute

This does not include casual acquaintances, distant relatives or people you simply come into contact with through your role as a Councillor or your work in the community.

### **Whether to declare a prejudicial interest**

If you have a personal interest then you will need to consider whether it is also prejudicial. I would advise you to declare a prejudicial interest in the following circumstances:

- a.) if the employee is **very close** to you (e.g. someone with whom you live, a very close friend or a close relative etc) **irrespective** of whether you know the potential impact on that person's earnings; or
- b.) if the employee is **close** to you (e.g. a more distant relative or friend) and you are aware that there will be a **small impact** on the person's earnings; and

c.) if you are aware that there will be a **large impact** on the person's earnings **irrespective** of their closeness to you.

Whether someone is close to you and the level of impact upon them must be judged objectively i.e. it is what a reasonable person would think in the circumstances.

Peter Evans and I will be happy to advise on what level of interest you should declare.

Please note there will be 2 rounds of briefing sessions for councillors on Single Status. The second round of briefings will be more detailed and will include the impact on specific work groups. This could potentially reveal information that would require you to declare a prejudicial interest.

So that we do not accidentally debar you from attending the briefings or taking part in the council meeting please see below under the heading "What you need to do".

### **Seeking a dispensation**

Should you have a prejudicial interest then you may wish to seek a dispensation. There is a Standards Committee meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> October at which such an application could be considered. If you wish to seek a dispensation please see below under the heading "What you need to do"

### **What you need to do**

If you do not know anyone affected by single status, or if you do not know an employee who falls into categories 1 or 2 above, then you do not need to do anything.

If you know an employee who falls into categories 1 or 2 above then it would be helpful if you could let me have the information below. This will enable me to give you any advice you might want on what interest to declare and how to seek a dispensation. This will also enable me to judge what information can be given out at the briefings without accidentally preventing you from taking part at the County Council meeting.

Please let me, and in my absence Peter Evans, know by the 25th September 2013:

- whether you know anyone affected by single status; and
- their role within the council; and
- the level of interest that you propose to declare; and
- whether you wish to seek a dispensation, in which case I will send you the relevant form

Yours sincerely



Gareth Owens  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services