

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**
DATE: **MONDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2014**
REPORT BY: **MONITORING OFFICER**
SUBJECT: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update the Committee on the results of an audit into declaration of interests.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Section 81 (1) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraph 15 of Flintshire's Members' Code of Conduct require Members to register certain categories of personal interest and to notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes to these registerable interests. The registerable interests are those listed in paragraph 10 (2) (a) of the Members' Code of Conduct. The register of such interests is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and available for public inspection.

2.02 Paragraph 11 of the Members' Code of Conduct requires a Member to disclose any personal interests arising from paragraph 10 (2) (a), (b) and (c) where it relates to business being considered at a meeting. Paragraph 11 (4) requires the Member to complete a written notification of any such disclosures unless that interest has been previously disclosed since the last date on which the Member was elected. Where no such written notice is provided the Member is deemed as not having declared a personal interest. It is therefore the Member's responsibility to ensure that where they wish to disclose a personal interest the required notification has been completed.

2.03 The first audit was reported to the Standards Committee in November 2013 where it was agreed that an audit be undertaken annually during August to ensure that standards are maintained or improved.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The responsibility for ensuring that notification is given whenever required rests with the individual Member concerned. Nevertheless, in order to assist Members there has been put in place a more rigorous chasing up of the paperwork by the officers over the past year.

3.02 Committee Services have prepared a spreadsheet recording for each Member interests registered and those notified following a meeting. Where at a meeting a Member declares an interest that is not included on this they will be given a notification form and asked to complete it. Where the Member does not complete it at the time the Committee Officer will chase and failing a response the Democracy & Governance Manager will chase. If there is still no response the Monitoring Officer will contact the Member concerned. These arrangements do not alter the provision in the Members' Code that a failure to provide written notice, where it is required, means that the interest is deemed not to have been declared.

3.03 The results of this year's audit shows that 99% of interests were properly notified to the Monitoring Officer. The one failure was in respect of a person who is no longer a member of the Council and so it cannot be corrected.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee note the results of the audit.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.00 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The workload involved in the audit has been accommodated within existing resources.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None as a result of this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None as a result of this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – results of the exercise undertaken

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

As referred to in the report.

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