

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

CODE OF MEMBERS' CONDUCT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. DEFINITIONS	3
2. INTRODUCTION	3
3. PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT	4
4. APPLICATION OF THE CODE	4
5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF MEMBER CONDUCT	5
6. MEMBER CONDUCT - SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS.....	6
1. Respect	6
2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination	7
3. Impartiality of officers of the Authority	8
4. Confidentiality and access to information	8
5. Disrepute	9
6. Proper use of position	9
7. Use of local authority resources and facilities	10
8. Complying with the Code of Conduct.....	10
9. Registration and Disclosure of Interests (Protecting your Reputation and that of the Authority).....	11
10. Gifts and hospitality.....	12
 APPENDIX A – THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC.....	 13
1. Selflessness.....	13
2. Integrity	13
3. Objectivity	13
4. Accountability.....	13
5. Openness.....	13
6. Honesty.....	13
7. Leadership	13

- APPENDIX B - INTERESTS 14
 - 1. Definitions 14
 - 2. Registration of Interests..... 15
 - 3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests..... 16
 - 4. Personal Interests 17
 - 5. Non-Registerable Interests..... 18
 - 6. Declaration of Interests at Meetings 18
 - 7. “Sensitive” Interests..... 18

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1. For the purposes of this Code of Conduct:

“Authority” means the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority; and

“Constituent authority” means Devon County Council, Somerset County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council.

“Member” includes:

- (a). any person appointed by a constituent authority to serve on the Authority;
- (b). a Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) appointed by the Authority; and
- (c). a “co-opted member”, that is someone who is appointed by the Authority to serve on one of its bodies (e.g. Local Pensions Board)

“Monitoring Officer” is that person duly appointed by the Authority to discharge those functions specified in Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act and who will have responsibility for providing or procuring appropriate legal advice and assistance to the Authority and its Officers to ensure compliance with all legal, statutory and judicial processes.

“Service” means the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Members of the Authority work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of Members and entrusts them to represent the local area served by the Authority; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. Members have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations. Members should be able to undertake their role without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

2.2. This Code is based on the Model Councillor Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association (LGA) in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance.

2.3. This Code has been designed to protect the democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public’s trust in local government. The remainder of this Code is drafted as if being read by a Member of the Authority (i.e. where “you/your” refers to the Member of the Authority).

- 2.4. Finally, this Code will be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose and complies both with legislative requirements and any best practice guidance (e.g. LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct) in place at the time.

3. PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- 3.1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide you with a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you if you fail to act in accordance with the Code. It is also to protect you, the public, officers of both the Authority and the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (“the Service”) and the reputation of the Authority.
- 3.2. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of you and specific obligations placed upon you in relation to standards of conduct.
- 3.3. Wherever practicable, endeavours will be made to use support, training and/or mediation prior to formal action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code remains, though, to create and maintain public confidence both in your role and that of the Authority.

4. APPLICATION OF THE CODE

- 4.1. This Code applies to you as soon as you are appointed by/to the Authority and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a Member.
- 4.2. This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a Member. This includes when:
- (a) you are engaged in the business of the Authority ; and/or
 - (b) your actions would give the impression to a reasonable person, with knowledge of all the facts, that you are acting as a Member or as a representative of the Authority.
- 4.3. Where you act as a representative of this Authority:
- (a) on another authority which has a Code of Conduct, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply also with that other authority’s Code of Conduct except in so far as this may result in a conflict; or
 - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with this Code of Conduct except in so far as this may conflict with any lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

In the event of a potential conflict, advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer of this Authority.

- 4.4. Paragraphs 4.2, 4.3 and 4.5 apply to all forms of communication and interaction, including:
- face-to-face meetings;
 - online or telephone meetings;
 - written communication;
 - verbal communication;
 - non-verbal communication; and
 - electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.
- 4.5. You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a Member.
- 4.6. The Authority's Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of this Code and you are encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate it.
- 4.7. In relation to your membership of other local authorities, you must ensure that you comply with the Code of Conduct in place for the authority concerned when acting in your capacity as member of that authority. Please note that your conduct may be subject to more than one Code of Conduct depending on the circumstances. Advice on this can be sought from the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services.

5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF MEMBER CONDUCT

- 5.1. Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, Authority Members and officers of the Authority and Service; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles. These are reproduced at Appendix A to this Code.
- 5.2. Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for your role.
- 5.3. In accordance with the public trust placed in you, on all occasions you:
- **must** act with integrity and honesty;
 - **must** act lawfully;
 - **must** treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
 - **must** lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in your role.
- 5.4. In undertaking your role, you:
- **must** exercise your responsibilities impartially, in the interests of the area served by the Authority;

- **must** not seek to confer, improperly, an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person;
- **must** avoid conflicts of interest;
- **must** exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- **must** ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with the Authority's requirements and in the public interest.

6. **MEMBER CONDUCT - SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS**

- 6.1. Set out below are ten, specific, obligations placed on you. These are the ***minimum*** standards of conduct required of you as a Member. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.
- 6.2. Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

1. ***Respect***

As a Member, you:

(a) ***must treat all individuals with respect, both as an individual and in relation to any role they may discharge. For the avoidance of doubt, this extends to (not exclusively):***

- ***other Members;***
- ***Authority officers;***
- ***Service employees;***
- ***employees and representatives of partner organisations;***
- ***anyone volunteering for the Authority and/or Service;***
- ***members of the public; and***
- ***journalists and other media representatives;***

(b) ***must not make trivial or malicious allegations against any individual.***

Guidance

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Member, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in Members.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidating or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the Authority, the relevant social media provider or the police.

This also applies to fellow Members, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the Authority's Member/Officer protocol.

2. *Bullying, harassment and discrimination*

As a Member, you must promote equalities and must not:

- (a) bully any person;***
- (b) harass any person;***
- (c) discriminate unlawfully against any person.***

Guidance

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Members have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. ***Impartiality of officers of the Authority***

As a Member you must not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Authority.

Guidance

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality.

You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. ***Confidentiality and access to information***

As a Member, you must not:

(a) disclose information:

- (i) given to you in confidence by anyone; or***
- (ii) acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature or should not be further disclosed,***

unless:

- (i) you have received the consent of a person authorised to give it; or***
- (ii) you are required by law to do so; or***
- (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal or accountancy advice and provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or***
- (iv) the disclosure is:***
 - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and***
 - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Authority; and***
 - 3. you have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.***

(NOTE: for the avoidance of doubt, the above paragraphs include both “confidential” and “exempt” information as defined in the Local Government Act 1972)

- (b) improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of your role as a Member for the advancement of yourself, your friends, your family members, your employer or your business interests.***

(c) prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Guidance

The Authority must work openly and transparently, and its proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the Authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a Member, you must not bring your role or the Authority into disrepute.

Guidance

As a Member, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of the community served by the Authority and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other Members and/or the Authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or the Authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring the Authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the Authority and fellow Members to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Authority whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Proper use of position

As a Member, you:

- (a) must make decisions based solely on the merits of the case and in the public interest;**
- (b) must have reasonable regard to any relevant advice provided to you by a statutory officer of the Authority (Chief Fire Officer; Monitoring Officer; and Chief Financial Officer) or other officer so acting on their behalf;**
- (c) must have regard to statutory or other requirements relating to local authority publicity (e.g. the Local Authority Code of Publicity); and**
- (d) must not use, or attempt to use, your position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of yourself or anyone else.**

Guidance

Your position as a Member of the Authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a Member, you:

(a) must, when using the resources of the Authority:

- (i) act in accordance with the Authority's requirements; and**
- (ii) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or of the office to which I have been appointed; and**

(b) must not misuse Authority resources.

Guidance

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a Member.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones and/or computers
- transport
- access to and use of Authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a Member more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the Authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Member, you:

(a) must undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Authority;

(b) must cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination;

- (c) ***must comply with any sanction imposed on you following a finding that you have breached the Code of Conduct; and***
- (d) ***must not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved in any Code of Conduct investigation or proceedings against you. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes complainants, witnesses and anyone involved in the administration of the investigation or proceedings.***

Guidance

It is extremely important that, as a Member, you demonstrate high standards, have your actions open to scrutiny and that you not to undermine public trust in the Authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the Authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

9. Registration and Disclosure of Interests (Protecting your Reputation and that of the Authority)

As a Member, you must register and disclose your interests in accordance with the requirements as set out in Appendix B to this Code.

Guidance

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members of the Authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, fellow Members and employees of the Authority and/or the Service know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable.

You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other Members when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of Authority governance is maintained.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

You should also note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest (as set out in Section 3 of Appendix B) is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a Member, you:

- (a) ***must register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt;***
- (b) ***must register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that you have been offered but have refused to accept; and***
- (c) ***must not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Authority or from persons who may apply to the Authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.***

Guidance

To protect your position and the reputation of the Authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a Member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality.

However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered.

You do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor.

If you are unsure, please contact the Authority's Monitoring Officer for guidance.

APPENDIX A – THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC

1. *Selflessness*

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. *Integrity*

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. *Objectivity*

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. *Accountability*

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. *Openness*

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. *Honesty*

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. *Leadership*

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

APPENDIX B - INTERESTS

1. Definitions

- 1.1. Unless otherwise specifically stated, the following terms used in this Appendix will have the meanings given.

TERM	MEANING
<i>“beneficial interest”</i>	means the right to receive a financial benefit.
<i>“body in which...the relevant person has a beneficial interest”</i>	means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner <u>or</u> a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director <u>or</u> in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
<i>“close association”</i>	means an affiliation, more than just a passing casual acquaintance, which a reasonable person, aware of all the facts, would consider so significant as to prejudice your ability to act in the public interest.
<i>“director”</i>	means a director as defined by the Companies Act 2006 (or any subsequent amending legislation) <u>and includes</u> a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.
<i>“disclosable pecuniary interest”, “personal interest” and “non-registerable interest”</i>	has the meaning as set out in this Appendix.
<i>“family”</i>	means any relative, whether by blood or by marriage, with whom you have a close association.
<i>“land”</i>	<u>excludes</u> any easement, servitude, interest, or right over land which does not carry with it a right for either you or a relevant person to occupy the land or to receive income
<i>“meeting”</i>	means any meeting of any meeting of the full Authority or any of its Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Parties etc. as may from time to time be established

TERM	MEANING
<i>“Member”</i>	means any Councillor appointed to serve on the Authority by one of its constituent authorities (Devon and Somerset County Councils; Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council); a Police & Crime Commissioner appointed by the Authority; and any person co-opted to membership of the Authority.
<i>“non-registerable interest”</i>	has the meaning as set out in this Appendix.
<i>“personal Interest”</i>	has the meaning as set out in this Appendix.
<i>“relevant authority”</i>	means the authority of which you are a member
<i>“relevant person”</i>	means <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you; or • your spouse or civil partner; or • a person with whom you are living as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners and you are aware that that other person has an interest
<i>“relevant period”</i>	means a period of 12 months ending with the date on which you notified the Monitoring Office of an interest
<i>“securities”</i>	means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society

2. **Registration of Interests**

2.1 You **must**, within 28 days of:

- (a). this Code being adopted by, or applied to, the Authority; **or**
- (b). your taking office as a Member of the Authority, whichever is the later, and annually thereafter, provide written notification to the Authority’s Monitoring Officer of:

- (i). any **disclosable pecuniary interest** (as defined by Regulations – see Section 3 below) that either you or a relevant person has; **and**
 - (ii). any **personal interest** as may be specified from time to time by the Authority – see Section 4 below;
- 2.2 Details of any interests so registered will, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed that they are “sensitive” (see Section 7 below), be recorded in the Authority’s Register of Members’ Interests and made available for public inspection including on the Authority’s website at:

<https://fireauthority.dsfire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1?siteCategoryld=10>

- 2.3 You must also, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new disclosable pecuniary or registerable personal interest, or change to any such interest already registered, provide written notification to the Authority’s Monitoring Officer of that new interest (or change in interest already registered, as the case may be).

(SEE ALSO PARAGRAPHS 6.3 AND 7.4 BELOW)

3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 3.1. Disclosable pecuniary interests, as currently defined by The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1464), are:
- (1) any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain by you or by a relevant person;
 - (2) any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred in carrying out your duties as a Member, or towards your expenses, including any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992;
 - (3) any contract made between the Authority and you or a relevant person (or body in which you or the relevant person has a beneficial interest):
 - (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - (b) which has not been fully discharged;
 - (4) any beneficial interest in land held by you or by a relevant person where the land is within the administrative area of the Authority;
 - (5) any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the administrative area of the Authority for a month or longer;
 - (6) any tenancy where (to your knowledge):
 - (a) the landlord is the Authority; and
 - (b) the tenant is a body in which you or a relevant person has a beneficial interest;

- (7) any beneficial interest that you or a relevant person has in securities of a body where:
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the administrative area of the Authority and
 - (b) either:
 - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

4. Personal Interests

4.1. You are also required to register the following personal interests:

- (1) Your membership of a trades union;
- (2) your membership of any body to which you have been appointed by the Authority;
- (3) your membership of any other body exercising functions of a public nature (e.g. County or District Council; Parish Council etc.);
- (4) your membership of any body directed to charitable purposes;
- (5) your membership of any other body influencing public opinion (e.g. political party);
- (6) your directorship or membership (within the meanings of the Companies Act 2006) of any company, where such directorship or membership **does not** constitute a disclosable pecuniary interest;
- (7) any contract made between the Authority and you or a relevant person (or body in which you or the relevant person has a beneficial interest):
 - (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - (b) which has not been fully discharged;

where neither you nor the relevant person has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

4.2. Your participation in discharging the following functions of the Authority does not constitute a personal interest requiring either registration or disclosure at meetings:

- (1) the setting of any Authority allowance, payment or indemnity to Members; and
- (2) the setting of the Authority budget and associated Council Tax precept.

5. Non-Registerable Interests

- 5.1 You have a non-registerable interest where a decision in relation to a matter being determined, or to be determined:
- (1) might reasonably be regarded as affecting the financial position or well-being of either yourself; or a member of your family; or any person with which you have a close association; or any body or group of which you are a member, more that it might affect the majority of council tax payers or inhabitants of the area served by the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority; **and where**
 - (2) the interest is such that a reasonable person with knowledge of all the relevant facts would consider your interest to be so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.
- 5.2 Business relating to the following functions will not give rise to a non-registerable interest:
- (1) setting of the council tax; and
 - (2) any allowance, payment or indemnity give to Members.

6. Declaration of Interests at Meetings

- 6.1. If you are present at a meeting and you are aware that you have either a disclosable pecuniary interest, personal interest or non-registerable interest **in any matter being considered or to be considered at the meeting then**, unless you have a current and relevant dispensation in relation to the matter, you must:
- (1) **disclose** at that meeting, by no later than commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, the time at which the interest becomes apparent to you, the existence of and – for anything other than a “sensitive” interest (see Section 7 below) – the nature of that interest; **and then**
 - (2) withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item in which you have the relevant interest.
- 6.2. Where a dispensation has been granted to you either by the Authority or its Monitoring Officer in relation to any relevant interest, then you must act in accordance with any terms and conditions associated with that dispensation.
- 6.3. Where you declare at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest that you have not previously included in your Register of Interests then you must, within 28 days of the date of the meeting at which the declaration was made, ensure that your Register is updated to include details of the interest so declared.

7. “Sensitive” Interests

- 7.1. You must notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of any interests which you consider are “sensitive” - namely, details which, should they be made available for inspection by the public, would be likely to create a serious risk that any person may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

- 7.2. Where the Authority’s Monitoring Officer agrees that any information relating to your interests is “sensitive” then the details of such interests will not be included in any published version of the register.
- 7.3. Similarly, the requirement to disclose interests at meetings shall, in relation to “sensitive” interests, be limited to declaring the existence of such interests and the detail of the “sensitive” interests need not be disclosed.
- 7.4. You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded is no longer “sensitive”, notify the Authority’s Monitoring Officer asking that the information be included in the Authority’s Register of Members’ Interests.