

The Standards Committee of 18 June 2002

Report title: **Registration of Interests**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update the Standards Committee on the present state of play regarding the registration of Members' Interests as required by Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Haringey's Member's Code of Conduct

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that The Standards Committee

- Note this report
- Endorse the action proposed in it

Report authorised by: **John Suddaby, Monitoring Officer**

Contact officer: J Suddaby – Deputy Borough Solicitor – Legal Services
Telephone: 020-8489 3974

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the Local Government Act 2000 and the Code of Conduct, elected members (including voting co-opted members) are required to register their interests within 28 days of their election to office and to inform the Monitoring Officer in writing of any changes to these interests within 28 days of becoming aware of this change. The Monitoring Officer is required to establish and maintain the register of interests and to provide it to be made accessible to members of the public

and to publicise this fact.

This report updates member of the Standards Committee of the progress made to date in complying with these requirements.

4. Access to information:

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Local Government Act 2002, Haringey's Members Code of Conduct..

5. Background

- 5.1 The Model Code of Conduct was adopted with minor amendment at the Council Meeting of 15 April 2002. Following their election on 2 May 2002 all Haringey Council Councillors were supplied with a questionnaire (Appendix A) relating to the registration of their interests as required by the adopted Code of Conduct. Members were asked to complete the questionnaire and return this to the Monitoring Officer by 30 May 2002.
- 5.2 Voting co-opted members were also sent a copy of the questionnaire and asked to complete it and return it.
- 5.3 On 11 June, the Monitoring wrote to members and co-opted members who had so far not returned their completed questionnaires enclosing a further copy and asking them to complete it. To date, the Monitoring Officer has not received completed questionnaires from the following members and co-opted members:
- Councillors: G.Bull, B. Haley, F. Knight, V. Manheim, B. Millar, J. Patel, E. Santry, T. Sulaiman.
- Co-opted Members: R. Celaire.
- 5.4 The Monitoring Officer proposes to write a further letter to the above members reminding them of their obligations under the Code of Conduct to register their interests. The Monitoring Office will also make it clear that he is ready to discuss with any member any particular difficulties they may be having with the completion of the questionnaire. Finally the Monitoring Officer will point out that a continued failure to supply him with details of their interests would without adequate excuse amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 5.5 The Monitoring Officer has supplied a briefing note to District Audit informing them of the steps taken in Haringey in implementing the Governments new ethical framework, including the registration of interests, and this note is reproduced for members of the Standards Committee and Appendix B.

Appendix A

DISCLOSURE & REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Haringey's Code of Conduct for members, adopted on April 15 2002 requires **members to register their financial and other interests in the maintained register within 28 days of the adoption of the Code of Conduct or of their election or appointment to office whichever is the later.**

Accordingly, please complete the attached questionnaire, which will provide the monitoring officer with your written notification of your financial and other interests. Please refer to Haringey's Code of Conduct in completing the questionnaire.

The *Local Government Act 2000 (LGA)*, requires the monitoring officer of the Council to establish and maintain a register of interests of members and co-opted members of the Council (section 81(1)) and this will be composed of information you give in answer to the questionnaire. The register has to be open to the public at an office of the Council at all reasonable hours and arrangements are in place to comply with this.

Please return your completed questionnaire, signed and dated to the Monitoring Officer at Level 8, Alexandra House, 10 Station Road, N22 7TR :

- In the case of Councillors elected on 2 May 2002 who were elected Members when the code was adopted on 15 April 2002, you must return your completed questionnaire by **Monday 13 May 2002.**
- In the case of Councillors who were elected on 2 May 2002 who were not elected Members when the Code was adopted on 15 April 2002, you must return your completed questionnaire by **Monday 30 May 2002.**

***** IMPORTANT:-** Please note, should there be any change to the interests specified by you in your completed questionnaire, you must give the monitoring officer written notification of that change, within 28 days of you first becoming aware of the change.

The questionnaire and above notification will also be e-mailed to all Members who will have an option to provide their responses electronically.



**REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS
QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name

Ward

A Financial Interests

Please provide full details of the following:-

1. Any employment or business currently being carried on by you.

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2. The name of the person who employs or has appointed you, the name of any firm in which you are a partner, and the name of any company for which you are a remunerated director.

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3. The name of any person, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties (a "relevant authority" includes a local authority, the GLA, a police authority, and a fire authority).

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4. The name of any corporate body which has a place of business or land in the area of the London Borough of Haringey and in which you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body (nominal value = value as indicated on the share certificates).

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5. A description of any contract for goods, services or works made between you and Haringey Council or between the Council and a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a corporate body as specified in question 4 above.

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6. The address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land in which you have a beneficial interest and which is in the area of Haringey (a beneficial interest would include a freehold or leasehold interest, whether it be a joint or a sole interest).

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7. The address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land where Haringey is the landlord and the tenant is a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a corporate body as specified in question 4 above.

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8. The address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land in Haringey's area in which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer.

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B Other Interests

Please provide details of any membership of or position of general control or management of the following:-

1. Any body to which you have been appointed or nominated by Haringey Council as its representative.

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2. Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature.

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3. Any company, industrial and provident society, charity, or body directed to charitable purposes.

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4. Any body whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy.

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5. Any trade union or professional association.

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Signed

Thank you for your co-operation.

Appendix B

For the Attention of Debbie Hanson

Debbie,

Here is an update for your information on actions taken in Haringey regarding the implementation of the new ethical framework ("NEF") and Model Code of Conduct.

Adoption of Code

As you probably know this was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 15 April 2002 with one small addition - requiring a Member to notify the Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after making a complaint to the Standards Board about the conduct of another Member. You should have a copy of the Haringey version of the Code. If you don't please let me know.

All elected Members agreed to abide by the Code as part of their declaration of acceptance of office on 2 May 2002.

The availability of the Code of Conduct for inspection by members of the public was advertised in the Hornsey Journal on 9 May 2002 and arrangements were made for a similar advertisement to be placed in the June edition of the Haringey People. Unfortunately this did not appear in that edition and will be placed in the July edition.

Standards Committee

Following advertisements in the local press for Independent Members, appointment interviews were held in the latter part of last year ending January 2002. Interviews were conducted by an appointments panel drawn from the existing Members on the Standards Committee. Four appointments were made and ratified at the Council Meeting of 18 February 2002. The four independent members are: Mr Ronnie Celaire, Ms Irene Francis, Mr Roger Lovegrove and Mr Nicholas Weber.

Two meetings were held of the newly constituted Standards Committee in March 2002. The first meeting received a briefing on the new ethical framework and Model Code of Conduct and that the second meeting held on 25 March 2002 received reports on i) proposals for the training of Members in the Code and NEF, ii) the adoption of the Code with any local amendments by the Council and iii) to confirm the terms of reference for the Committee, a protocol for the Monitoring Officer and a set of procedures for the hearing of complaints of breaches of the code against Members (both for breaches of the old Local Government Code and any breaches of the new Model Code that are passed down to the Standards Committee by an Ethical Standards Officer).

I attach an agenda for the first meeting of the Standards Committee under the new administration which will take place on 18 June.

Training on the Code and NEF

Four briefing sessions have been delivered for Members by the Monitoring Officer covering the main constituents of the Code and NEF since March 2002. The last session was held on 28 May 2002, and was attended by over 20 Councillors most of them newly elected Members.

A briefing on on the Code and NEF was also given to Senior Officers of the Council by the Monitoring Officer on 12 March 2002.

A second stage training is to take place which will report on recent developments including the Government's consultative document entitled "Conduct of Councillors Local Investigation and Determination of Misconduct Allegations" and will also include group working through of scenarios relating to potential breaches of the Code and personal and prejudicial interests. This is planned to take place on 10 July 2002 with the possibility of a repeat session depending on attendance.

Standards Board Conference

The Monitoring Officer and an Independent Member attended this conference which was held in Birmingham on 20 May 2002 and a report on it will be discussed at the next Standards Committee meeting.

Complaints against Members

Two formal complaints against Members are outstanding. These complaints were made before the adoption of the new Model code and are allegations of breaches of the old Local Government Code of Conduct. A report on the progress made in relation to these complaints will be given to the forthcoming meeting of the Standards Committee.

I am attaching a copy of the agenda for the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if there is any further information you require.

Regards

John