

By: Roberta MacCrone – Independent Chairman
Peter Sass - Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership

To: Standards Committee – 20 November 2009

Subject: Members' Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality

Summary: To agree the most appropriate method of reviewing the Members' Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality submissions.

Unrestricted

Background

1. At its meeting in November 2008, the Standards Committee agreed that there should be a standing item each year to review the Register of Members' Interests, Gifts and Hospitality, starting in the new Council term.

2. Following the County Council elections in June, all Members completed their Register of Interests, which are published on KCC's website. Written guidance to Members on the nature of their interests is provided by the Monitoring Officer and additional advice is provided on request. In addition, the training provided by the Deputy Monitoring Officer on the Code of Conduct and ethical standards reinforces to Members the importance of (a) keeping their registered interests up to date (i.e. within 28 days of any change) and (b) always declaring the existence of personal and prejudicial interests at meetings where there is a relevant item on the agenda. It is considered that the overall process works well, although a recent request under the Freedom of Information Act in respect of one Member's register of interests resulted in the Member altering her register entry. Members are also encouraged to properly register any gifts or hospitality they may receive in accordance with the Code of Conduct. All such declarations are also published on KCC's website.

3. Following consultation with the Chairman, it is suggested that one or more of the independent Members on the Committee is given the task of reviewing all Members' registered interests and reporting back any key issues to the Committee.

Recommendation:

4. The Committee is invited to appoint one or more of the independent Members to carry out the review of Members' Registers of Interests, in consultation with the Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership and to report any significant issues to the Committee.

Peter Sass – Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership

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