

Croydon Council
For General Release

REPORT TO:	ETHICS COMMITTEE 8 February 2016
AGENDA ITEM NO:	7
SUBJECT:	UPDATE ON PROGRESS TO UPDATE MEMBERS ONLINE REGISTER OF INTERESTS
LEAD OFFICER:	ACTING DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & MONITORING OFFICER
CABINET MEMBER:	
WARDS:	ALL
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: The Council has determined that the Ethics Committee shall be responsible for receiving and considering reports on matters of probity and ethics and to consider and recommend revisions to the Code of Conduct.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT Implementation of the recommendations contained in this report shall be contained within existing budgets	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: N/A	

1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 Note the progress made in relation to updating Members online Register of Interests and consider any additional steps that might be appropriate to support updating of the Register.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides details of progress made to date in updating Members Register of Interests.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 Fundamental changes to the regulation of standards of conduct for elected and co-opted local government members were introduced in 2012 by the Localism Act 2011. These included a requirement for local government members to register pecuniary and other interests and the creation of a criminal offence of failing to register relevant interests.

- 3.2 The changes also introduced a duty to include the Members' registered interests on the Council's website.
- 3.3 The requirements place both an initial duty on Members to declare any interests as required by the Code of Conduct within 28 days of being elected and an ongoing duty on Members to declare any new interests or interests of which they become aware of, within 28 days of those interests coming to light/coming into existence.
- 3.4 Members do, throughout the year, update the Monitoring Officer when a new interest arises and the online register is updated periodically with the changes notified to the Monitoring Officer. Whilst it is not a statutory requirement that an annual review of Members interests takes place, it is considered good practice as an accurate record of Members Interests safeguards the reputation of the Council and supports openness and transparency in respect of the decisions that the Council and Members make affecting local residents. It also serves as a useful prompt to Members to consider the matters they have included in their register and ensure that these matters are still up to date. Some interests previously declared may have changed or may no longer be relevant.
- 3.5 After the local government elections in 2014, revisions were made to the template form which Members had completed on election. It was therefore considered appropriate to ask that all Members complete this revised template to ensure that all declarations were made and declared in the same manner and ensure transparency of the Register for any Member of the public viewing it.
- 3.6 All Members were therefore invited by the Monitoring Officer in June 2015 to fill out a new Register of Interests form and consider whether they required any dispensations in relation to those interests. Thus far, 40 Members have returned revised registers of interest which leaves 30 currently outstanding. It should be noted that those Member's whose updated forms returns are outstanding are nevertheless still in compliance with the statutory requirements.
- 3.7 Members are invited to consider what recommendations might be appropriate in relation to those Members who have thus far not completed their updated Register of Interests.

4. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal consequences arising from the contents of this report beyond those set out in the body of the report.
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CONTACT OFFICERS: Gabriel Macgregor, Acting Council Solicitor,
Director of Democratic and Legal Services
and Monitoring Officer (ext. 64036)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None