

MEETING	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE	27 JANUARY 2014
SUBJECT	THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS
PURPOSE	TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS AND DECLARATIONS MADE DURING THE YEAR BY MEMBERS.
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1. One of the matters included in the Committee's Work Programme is to receive an annual report on the elected members' Register of Interests and the declarations made during the year. As this is the first report, it covers the period from May 2012 to December 2013.
2. The Members' Code of Conduct states that Councillors must disclose orally before any meeting in which they are present, the existence and nature of any personal interest they have in business being considered at the meeting. Furthermore, it states that a written notice must be provided including the details of the interest, the details of the business and signature.
3. In addition, the Code of Conduct also states that within 28 days of being elected, members must register their financial interests and personal interests by providing a written notice to the Monitoring Officer, and also states that there is a need to provide a notice of any change to those interests.
4. To assist members to adhere to the requirements of the Code of Conduct, the Council has provided two forms; one which is suitable for registering beforehand and the other for registering declarations made at meetings. The declarations made by both forms are included in the register of interests that is kept.
5. The register of interests is a public document and recent legislation, that is yet to come into force, states that it should be published on the Council's website. As the register is currently made up of a collection of forms, there is a need to consider in which format it should be published.

6. An audit of the register, in terms of the forms for registering beforehand and the forms for declaring in meetings, was undertaken and the results can be seen in the appendix. A further audit was undertaken on a sample of forms for declaring in meetings to see whether or not they corresponded with the declarations in the minutes and an audit was undertaken on a sample of the minutes of meetings to see whether or not declaration forms had been registered for the interests declared orally. The results can be seen in the appendix.
7. At the request of the Standards Committee, this report also includes a survey of the register of interests of community councils. A questionnaire was sent to all community councils. Of the 65 councils, a response was received from 29 and an analysis of the responses can be seen in the appendix.
8. Relatively recently, following a training session for community council clerks, copies of the registration of interests documents of the County Council were forwarded to them for their use. It should be noted in relation to community councils that they are not required under the Code of Conduct to keep the register of declarations made beforehand although it can be seen that a number choose to do so voluntarily.

RECOMMENDATION

9. The Committee is asked to:
 - (a) accept and note the contents of the report;
 - (b) make any suggestions regarding steps to take in relation to registering interests;
 - (c) make observations on the best format for publishing the register on the web.

APPENDIX.

GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S REGISTER OF INTERESTS.

Number of declaration of interests made in meetings between May 2012 and December 2013.	185
Number of interests which were prejudiced	37
Number of declarations claiming that a deispensaton has been granted by the Standards Committee. (Note - there has been no dispensations granted for any of these).	6
Sample and investigation	20
Number received which were completed correctly.	20

COMMUNITY COUNCILS REGISTER OF INTERESTS.

Number of council which replied to the questionnaire.	29
Number which keeps a register of interests.	24
Number which keeps a record of interests on commencement of term with the Council.	3.
Number which record interests during meetings.	25.