

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Standards Committee**

**17<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**1. REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Report of the Monitoring Officer.

**RECOMMENDED**

THAT Members note the contents of this report and make any relevant recommendations to the Monitoring Officer after consideration of the Register of Members' Interests and declaration of interests made by members.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to outline the statutory provisions relating to the Register of Members Interests and to consider the practice adopted within the Authority.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Register of Members' Interests is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and is available in Governance Services for inspection by members of the public at all reasonable hours.

Details to be included in the Members Register of Interests includes the following categories:-

- Membership or position of control or management in:-
  - any bodies to which Members are appointed or nominated by the authority;
  - membership of any bodies exercising functions of a public nature, or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party or trade union;
- details of a Member's job or business;
- name of a Member's employer.

- name of any person who has made a payment to a Member in respect of election or expenses incurred in carrying out a Member's duty.
- name of any person, company or other body which has a place of business or land in the authority's area and in which a Member has a shareholding of more than £25,000.00 or has a stake of more than 1/100<sup>th</sup> of the share capital of the company;
- any contracts between the authority and the Member, the Member's firm including any lease, licence from the authority and any contracts for goods, services or works;
- gifts and hospitality over the value of £25.00;
- any land and property in the authority's area in which the Member has a beneficial interest.

3.2 Standards for England have provided the following advice.

"the statutory requirement is for the Register to be made available to the public at the Authority's office at all reasonable hours. The Register is a document which can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises and lets others think about whether or not a Member may have a conflict of interest. To this end the Register contributes to public confidence and local democracy and as such Standards for England would encourage wider access, say via an authority's website. However, the decision is one for the authority involved in consultation with its Members and having regard to data protection rules for keeping such information up to date."

6.3 The authority's website provides details of a members' interests against the name of each individual Member on the authority's CMIS system.

6.4 The Register is periodically reviewed by the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer and annual reminders are submitted to Members to update the Register. The Standards Committee should note that the authority's present arrangements comply with good practice as the Register is available for public inspection and individual members' interests are also available on the authority's CMIS system.

#### **4. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The statutory requirements relating to the Register of Members Interests are set out in Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 5.2 The Members' Code of Conduct provides that Members should within 28 days of election or appointment to office and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new registerable personal interest or change to any personal interest register such interest in the authority's Register of Members Interests.
- 5.3 The Members' Code of Conduct also provides that a Member need not include on the Register information relating to any of their personal interests if they consider that it is sensitive information and the Monitoring Officer agrees. Under the Code "sensitive information" means information whose availability for inspection by the public creates, or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or a person who lives with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

**N SHARMA  
MONITORING OFFICER**