

Members Register of Interests

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Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to revise the form for prescribed Information on Members Financial and Other Interests (Members Register of Interests).

Public Interest

All councils are required by law to establish and maintain a register of interests of members and other than Disclosable Pecuniary Interests can determine what is to be entered in that register. All members of South Somerset District Council and Town/Parish Councils within its area are required under their respective codes of conduct, to declare designated information and other interests. The aim of the declarations is to promote openness and good governance, so that the public can view what influences and interests might inform members' views and those which may affect the way in which they perform their public duties.

Recommendation

For Members to approve, or suggest amendments to the proposed revised SSDC Members Register of Interests form, the format of which is also used by a large number of the Town and Parish Councils (and which will be promoted to all) – as attached at Appendix A.

Background

Members will be aware that under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, members of every local authority are required to register Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and such other interests which are specified in the Code of Conduct.

Report

The current arrangements consist of a form which includes some explanation of the information required. The proposed revised form incorporates more specific explanatory notes into the form, and it is hoped this will make it easier to understand both by the member and any public who may subsequently view the register. It has been apparent from checking forms following the May 2015 elections that further explanation of the information required to be disclosed is needed particularly amongst our town and parish councils. The proposed revised form is attached as an Appendix to this report showing the changes which are being proposed to the current form.

Another provision of the Localism Act 2011, requires us to publish all the Town and Parish Councillor Register of Interest forms on our website, (as well as our District Councillors forms) which will open them to greater public scrutiny. The town and parish councils are also required to make a copy of the register relating to their council available for public inspection

in their parish and, should they have a website, are required to publish the registers on their website in addition.

Financial Implications

None that cannot be met from existing budget.

Corporate Priority Implications

None

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity Implications

Forms are available in large print or another language upon request.

Background Papers: *Members Registers of Interests Form*
The Localism Act 2011
The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)
Regulations 2012
