

Report of the Head of Legal Services

10. Staff Register of Interests

Purpose of report

1. To put forward a revised draft policy regarding the registration of staff interests for consideration by the Committee.
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Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approves the Register of Staff Interests Policy.

Introduction and Background

2. Under s.117 Local Government Act 1972 officers are required to give notice of any direct or indirect interest in a contract or proposed contract with the Fire Authority. Failure to give notice of such financial interests may be a criminal offence. The Employee Code of Conduct also requires staff to register such interests and the Authority's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy requires senior staff to declare any related party transactions on an annual basis.
3. In addition to the requirement for staff to give notice of interests, the Authority holds a staff register of offers of gifts and hospitality. As part of the regular review of the Authority's governance framework, the current policy with regards to staff interests and the protocols on offers of gifts and/or hospitality have been reviewed and refreshed.

New Policy – Staff Interests

4. The existing requirements and procedures have been brought together in one policy document to provide a more easily accessible guidance document for staff, which is attached at Appendix 1. The new policy incorporates consultation feedback from staff representative bodies and the Senior Management Board (SMB)
5. In addition to the requirement for all staff to give notice of interests, senior members of staff should expect to provide a higher degree of transparency about their personal circumstances in order to ensure public and Member confidence in their impartiality when advising or making decisions on behalf of

the Authority. To provide this level of assurance, the new draft policy includes an additional requirement for officers at SMB level to complete a register of interests on an annual basis, similar in nature to the register that members of the Fire Authority complete.

6. The types of interests that need to be registered by SMB are those which could potentially give rise to concerns of impartiality in the decision making and the working practices of the Authority. However, unlike the registers completed by Authority members, it is proposed that officers' registers will not be published but will be held by the Monitoring Officer and open to inspection by senior officers, Members and Auditors.

Conclusion/Summary

7. The existing requirements for staff registration of interests and offers of gifts and/or hospitality have been reviewed and brought together into one document. It is proposed to have an additional requirement for officers at SMB level to complete a register of interests similar in nature to that completed by Members.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Legal - s.117 Local Government Act 1972 officers are required to give notice of any direct or indirect interest in a contract or proposed contract with the Fire Authority
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Proposals link in with the Employee Code of Conduct and the Authority's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	The proposals assist in controlling reputational risk to the Authority by reducing the potential for a conflict of interest.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation has been carried out with representative bodies. Consultation has also been carried out with Senior Management Board Members on whom the requirement to complete an annual register will impact.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An equalities impact assessment form has not been completed as consultation has been carried out with representative bodies and also with the Senior Management Board on whom the requirement to complete an annual register will impact.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Staff Register of Interests Policy

Contact Officer

Nigel Snape, Head of Legal Services
(01905 368242)
Email: nsnape@hwfire.org.uk