

AGENDA



For a meeting of the
ENGAGEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
to be held on
THURSDAY, 24 MAY 2012
at
2.30 PM
In the
WITHAM ROOM, COUNCIL OFFICES, ST PETER'S HILL, GRANTHAM NG31 6PZ
Beverly Agass, Chief Executive

Group Members:	Councillor Bob Adams (Chairman), Councillor Ray Auger, Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing, Councillor Ibis Channell, Councillor Jock Kerr, Councillor Nick Robins and Councillor Rosemary H Woolley (Vice-Chairman)
Portfolio:	Governance and Communication (Councillor Paul Carpenter)
Support Officer:	Lucy Bonshor 01476 40 61 20 l.bonshor@southkesteven.gov.uk

Members of the Group are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed below.

1. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Group to be notified of any substitute members.

3. APOLOGIES

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare an interest in matters for consideration at the meeting.

5. ACTION NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 1ST FEBRUARY 2012

(Enclosure)

6. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

7. QUESTION WITHOUT DISCUSSION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL 3RD MAY 2012

The following question was referred to the Engagement PDG from Council on 3rd May 2012.

To: Councillor Linda Neal, Leader of the Council

From: Councillor Rob Shorrock

Can the leader provide a report on her activities as leader since the last full council meeting and publish this report to members on the SKDC website?

8. COMMUNITY DROP IN SESSIONS - UPDATE

Report RCC04 by the Head of Reputation, Communication and Consultation.

(Enclosure)

9. CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY

Presentation by the Head of People, Projects and Performance.

10. MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Report LDS069 by the Chairman of the Standards Committee.

(Enclosure)

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DECIDES IS URGENT

MEETING OF THE ENGAGEMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

WEDNESDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2012 10.30 AM



GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Bob Adams (Chairman)
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Ibis Channell

Councillor Jock Kerr
Councillor Nick Robins
Councillor Rosemary H Woolley (Vice-Chairman)

OFFICERS

Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Lucy Youles)
Elections and Democratic Services Team Leader (Julie Edwards)
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Woolley declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Review of Polling Districts and Places) as she was a parish clerk who submitted responses to the consultation.

56. ACTION NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH JANUARY 2012

The action notes from the meeting held on Friday 13 January 2012 were noted subject to the deletion of the final paragraph under minute number 50.

57. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillors briefly discussed the community engagement drop-in sessions that were held in January 2012. The level of attendance was similar to attendance at the old-style local forums. Members considered the most positive element of the sessions was giving more opportunity to members of the public to discuss issues than they had with local forums.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised PDG members that officers were looking at different ways the sessions could incorporate more

people. Brief discussions ensued on the size of the clusters that were used; different suggestions included holding one event in each Ward, reducing the size of clusters and running more sessions in rural areas. A further suggestion included using public events, like markets, where officers would be able to speak to a wider audience.

Some Councillors suggested the attendance rate was low because of confusion of the sessions' intent. Some features in local papers presented the forums as sessions for bodies like parish councils. A number of parish and town councils had also suggested they needed more notice to better advertise the sessions locally.

Recommendation:

At its meeting on 22 March 2012, the Engagement PDG receive an update report on the community engagement sessions held in January 2012.

58. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Elections and Democratic Services Team Leader introduced report number LDS053, which summarised a review of polling districts and polling places. Final proposals would be submitted to the annual meeting of the Council for its consideration and approval.

A number of updates and amendments to the circulated report were summarised:

- The mention of DDA on page 3 referred to the Disability Discrimination Act
- Confirmation had been received that, in the event of an election, the council would have exclusive use of Ropsley Village Hall as a polling station
- Pg 18 – no comments were received in relation to Deeping St. James Ward
- Pg 33 – there were no proposed changes for the parish of Carlton Scroop
- In addition to a polling station in Elsea Park Community Centre for residents of Bourne East Ward, a second polling station for Bourne West would be added to accommodate new developments in the town

Councillors were given the opportunity to put forward their comments:

- Pg 25 – The parish name for polling district DK1 should be amended to Careby, Aunby and Holywell
- Pg 19 – Stamford All Saints – two polling stations were sited at one end of the Ward (close to St. George's Ward). For residents' convenience, it was suggested that a second polling station be made available (Waverley Gardens/Chatsworth Road area)

- Pg 30 – residents from Barholm and Stowe have traditionally voted in Greatford. Some residents had queried whether the polling place could move to Uffington
- Pg 26 – Polling stations in Deeping St James were generally well-used, however clear signage was required

Following a question from Councillors, officers reported that schools who hosted a polling station were not required to close on election day; it was a decision taken by school governors.

Action Points:

That the Elections and Democratic Services Team Leader investigate the following proposals:

- ***Consider alternative polling station arrangements for St. Mary's Ward Stamford***
- ***Consider the most appropriate polling place for residents from Barholm and Stowe***

Recommendation

The PDG recommends report LDS053 to Council for approval incorporating (where appropriate) changes made based on Engagement PDG members' comments.

59. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 11:07am

REPORT TO ENGAGEMENT P.D.G.

REPORT OF: Sue Griffiths- Head of People Projects & Performance

REPORT NO: **RCC04**

DATE: 24th May 2012

TITLE:	Community Drop in sessions - update	
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	N/A	
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councillor Paul Carpenter – Governance and Communications Portfolio Holder	
CONTACT OFFICER:	Deborah Wyles Consultation and Engagement Officer d.wyles@southkesteven.gov.uk	
INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:	See paragraph 7	Full impact assessment Required: N/A
Equality and Diversity		
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Your Council and Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of poster • Copy of display board contents • Feedback on display contents • Record of those attending • Issues log from drop in sessions 	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The PDG is asked to note the revised approach to engaging with our communities. This is:

- To run a second round of community drop in sessions across locations in the district in the summer
- To change the venues and times of the sessions to coincide with market days/major events to maximise attendance

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

2.1 The community “drop in” sessions have been developed as an alternative means of engaging with the public and are seen both politically and strategically as a replacement to the local forums. The purpose of this report is to update Engagement PDG on the community drop in sessions that were held during the second and third of weeks of January 2012, and to evaluate their effectiveness.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Summary

3.1 The “drop in” sessions were held during the second and third weeks of January in Grantham, Stamford, Long Bennington, Bourne and Market Deeping. The report below outlines the background to the decision to replace the local forums with the drop in sessions, the details of the sessions that have been undertaken and an evaluation of their effectiveness.

Background

3.2 The consultation and communication team were asked to review the way in which the local forums operated back in 2010. The review involved:

- a. An audit of the local forums that had been held over the 3 years prior to the review date. This looked at the topics that were covered, the number of parishes that were signed up as

members, and attendance from other groups / representatives.

- b. Attendance at local forum meeting to observe the proceedings
- c. Two workshops, one with cabinet members and one with members of the local forums (attended by around 40 local forum members)

3.3 The evidence from these was reviewed and the overall impression was the forums were trying to be too many things for too many people, they were too formal and that the general public were being overlooked.

As a result of the review two work streams were identified. They were:

- a. Face to face engagement with the people who live in our area. It was thought that this would be achieved through attendance at various community events throughout the year where information about the different services provided by the council are communicated in an approachable and informal way.
- b. Improving the way in which we engage with our parish councils and the wider public. It was thought that this would be achieved through a parish council newsletter and holding a number of community "drop in" sessions.

Detail

3.4 The community "drop in" sessions have now been held. Five were staged throughout the district, 4 in the main towns and one in the north (Long Bennington) during the second and third weeks of January 2012.

3.5 Various steps were undertaken to ensure that the events were publicised – to members, parishes and the general public. These included:

- a. Designing a poster to promote the theme and dates of the drop in sessions. A copy is attached at appendix one.
- b. Writing to all town and parish councils on the 4th January 2012 and asking them to display a couple of posters on their local

notice boards. A couple of parish councils have subsequently indicated that they would have preferred to have had more time to put the posters up (and also would have liked to have been emailed) and this suggestion has been noted.

- c. Contacting 25 other public facilities, including our areas offices and arts centres, along with doctors' surgeries and libraries requesting that they display a poster.
- d. Releasing a press release the week prior to the first "drop in" sessions. This resulted in positive articles in the Grantham Journal, the Bourne Local and the Stamford Mercury on the 13th January (and positive coverage in both the 20th January and 27th January editions of the Stamford Mercury).
- e. Notifying all SKDC councillors through the Members News (on the 23rd December) and also by letter on the 4th January.
- f. Promotion of the sessions on the council's website from the first week in January

3.6 Each drop in session had the following characteristics:-

- a. They all had a head of service allocated to them – who was asked to act as the main point of contact for those requiring resolution of issues.
- b. All sessions ran from 4pm to 7pm
- c. The sessions were informal, with an 8 board display designed to communicate the council's new priorities, the projects it is planning to undertake and its spending plans for the 2012/13 financial year. A copy of the display is attached at appendix two.
- d. Those attending were asked to comment on the content of the display, whether they were in agreement with the projects that had been outlined and if they thought there were any other areas that the council should concentrate on. Comments were collected on feedback postcards and the results are included at appendix three. As part of this conversation they were also asked if they agreed with the council's proposal to freeze council tax – which was universally welcomed.
- e. To inform future sessions, those attending were asked how they found about the event, if they had any other questions,

what they thought of the display and if they had any suggestions for future topics. Feedback was positive, with suggestions for future topics including explaining the planning process and what is on offer for children/ teenagers.

- f. Members of staff from the consultation and communication section, together with local councillors and cabinet members, were on hand to answer any questions that people had. A record of the people that attended (and whether they were a district/parish councillor or a member of the public) has been attached at appendix four.
- g. Issues that could not be resolved immediately were recorded along with contact details, and have now either been dealt with or passed through to the appropriate and relevant service managers. A copy of the issues log is attached at appendix five.

Evaluation

- 3.7 To help us make a judgement on the effectiveness of the drop in sessions as a means of engaging with our communities, the following elements have been taken into consideration.
- a. The number of events - The decision was taken to divide the district into 5 areas following some work that was undertaken to establish travelling times and mileages for all centres of population, using AA route planning software. To encourage attendance, we tried to mitigate the impact of people having to travel significant distances as much as we were able to. We specifically chose to run one in a village location in the north of the district, along with the four main centres of population so as to minimise the amount of mileage / travelling time those living in all of our parishes would have to travel. As a result of this approach, the vast majority of parishes (75 out of 78) were less than 10 miles (or 20 minutes) from their nearest venue. Using population estimates supplied by planning policy this equated to around 98.3% of the estimated population. Whilst more events could have been held at more locations, it was thought prudent (given the costs of staffing and hiring

- venues) to go with 5, and to look at the effectiveness of these before committing to any more.
- b. The timing of the sessions - All sessions ran from 4pm till 7pm. This was a deliberate decision, based on previous experience of planning consultation "drop -ins" (which are always busy). We wanted to give people the opportunity to drop in earlier if they didn't work (and weren't keen on going out at night) or later on their way home from work, but perhaps before they had settled down for the evening. People tended to pop in either at the beginning of the session (from about 4 till 5) or from half past six onwards. As such the success of timing the sessions in this way was mixed.
 - c. The venues – most sessions were held at council venues (arts centres in Grantham and Stamford, the Corn Exchange in Bourne, the community centre in Deepings) with the exception of Long Bennington which was held at the village hall. Whilst there were advantages to this, it may be that expecting people to make a special trip to find out more could have worked against us. It might be worth looking at trying different venues (for example market stalls) for the next set of events planned for the summer to see if this helps.
 - d. The time of year – it was decided to run the drop in sessions at around the same time of year as the old local forums. This was determined predominantly by the desire to have some informal feedback on the council's proposal to freeze council tax prior to the preparation of the 2012/13 budget. This meant that the events were held during cold winter afternoons/early evenings which may also have adversely affected attendance. It could not however be avoided.
 - e. The subject matter – senior management wanted the emphasis of the "drop- in" sessions to be on communicating the council's new priorities, projects and spending plans. This was publicised on the posters that were distributed and in the press releases. Whilst people were interested in the content, most who attended were there to raise a specific issue, unrelated to the display. This is in sharp contrast to other events that have been run to promote more contentious single issues – such as

the Southern Quadrant or the Grantham Area Action Plan- where people had a strong opinion on the proposals.

- f. Publicising the events – any evaluation of the effectiveness would have to include a judgement on how well the events were publicised. The steps taken to promote these sessions have already been outlined in this report and include the design and distribution of a poster to all towns and parish councils in the district and other public places, a press release to all local media, contacting all councillors and promotion on the website. Additional signage was also put up to direct people through to the rooms where the “drop-ins” were taking place. A couple of parishes indicated that they would have preferred a little more time to put up the posters but apart from that it is thought that enough was done to promote the sessions.
- g. Attendance – A table of those that attended each session have been attached at appendix four. All sessions were attended by between 12 and 20 people. The percentage split between parish/town councillors, district councillors and others was as follows - 22%, 40% and 38% respectively. Whilst the turnout wasn't great it's an encouraging start. It is hoped by altering the timing and the venues of the “drop ins” attendance can be improved.
- h. The issues that were raised – Those members of the public that attended the drop in sessions tended to do so to raise a particular issue. These varied from service specific (requesting an extension in the hours the public toilets are open in Stamford on the day of a music festival) to more generic concepts such as a definition of sustainability/ non sustainability in planning policy terms. A full list of the issues raised and the actions that have been undertaken will be available at the meeting. It should perhaps be noted that more queries were received about planning than any other service area.
- i. Feedback on issues – All issues noted at each of the drop in sessions have now been logged and passed through to the relevant service manager/authority to action. This means that

individuals should get their issue resolved more quickly than they did when the local forums dealt with them.

- j. Overall effectiveness –There are many positives to the drop in sessions. People liked the informality of the sessions and were able to raise issues of concern easily. By preparing an issue log and passing through those issues that could not be answered there and then it is hoped that they will receive responses to their queries much quicker than when the forums were operating. People liked the fact that we went out to them to communicate what our plans were, and that they could attend any one of the five sessions.

3.8 To a certain extent the events were successful but the main drawback of the sessions was that attendance wasn't as high as it could have been. It is hoped that by altering both the timing and venues of the next set of sessions (to market stalls/public events), along with careful consideration of the issue that this can be improved.

3.9 Dates have now been set for the second tranche of drop in sessions. These have been chosen to coincide with market days in Bourne, Stamford and the Deepings and with the Olympic torch run through in Grantham and will take place during July.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The costs arising from the planning and facilitating of the drop in sessions are met from existing service budgetary provisions. Any variations to the number or frequency of the sessions will have a financial consequence that will need consideration.

6. RISK AND MITIGATION

7. ISSUES ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9. COMMENTS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Any financial implications arising from the preparation and facilitation of the drop-in sessions are met from existing resources. Should there be a proposal to change the number or frequency of the sessions then there will be a financial consequence which will require consideration.

10. COMMENTS OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The suggestion that specific events should be targeted for future sessions was made by several of those members of the public and councillors who attended these sessions.

11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICES

12. APPENDICES:

Appendix One - copy of the poster publicising the drop in sessions

Appendix Two – copy of the display on priorities, projects and spending plans

Appendix Three – copy of feedback results

Appendix Four – list of attendees



your council working for you

Want to find out about your local council's **priorities** and the projects it has planned?



Then come along to one of our new drop in sessions

- Monday 16th January – Guildhall Arts Centre, Grantham
- Tuesday 17th January – Stamford Arts Centre, Stamford
- Thursday 19th January – Long Bennington Village Hall
- Monday 23rd January - Bourne Corn Exchange
- Tuesday 24th January – Deepings Community Centre

All sessions run from 4pm till 7pm

We look forward to seeing you there

South Kesteven District Council
STAMFORD • GRANTHAM • BOURNE • THE DEEPINGS



your council working for you

Priorities, projects and money

Making sure we have the right pieces in place is crucial.

We work hard every year to deliver value for money services to you.



The complete picture



your council working for you

Keep SK clean, green and healthy



- Healthy Life styles – tackle health inequalities and childhood and adult obesity (Fit Kids, Exercise Referral, Food4Life)
- Youth Sports Engagement – to combat antisocial behaviour and encourage participation in sport (Fair Play Football and summer activities)
- South Kesteven in Bloom – encourage residents to take part in floral competitions to develop community pride
- Green Flag Status for parks in South Kesteven – five-year improvement programme starting with Wyndham Park in Grantham before being rolled out across the district
- Recycling - continue to promote opportunities through community involvement and education



your council working for you

Promote leisure, arts and culture



- Destination South Kesteven – raise the profile of the district helping to make it a place where people want to live, work and visit
- Promote a cultural programme of arts and leisure activities and events to attract a wider audience
- Promote the district's heritage and tourism
- Encourage a diverse daytime and evening economy
- Special events to celebrate the Olympics



your council working for you

Grow the economy



- Promote Destination South Kesteven as a place to do business
- Improve Grantham town centre to attract investment
- Develop an apprenticeship scheme to meet local demands
- Encourage higher paid jobs through business development
- Capture and retain local talent
- Progress major projects including the Southern Quadrant and Station Approach in Grantham and Wherry's Lane in Bourne
- Secure broadband coverage across the district to improve overall access and attract new business



your council working for you

Support good housing for all



- Work with developers to increase the number of Lifetime Homes – properties which can be adapted to fit residents at all stages of their lives
- Work with the community to create a safer, cleaner and greener South Kesteven by ensuring a visible presence on the streets to help combat antisocial behaviour, the fear of crime and crime itself
- Bring old homes back to life by investing in run-down (void) properties and using local skill in the form of apprentices, local colleges and businesses
- Work with landlords to improve the quality of private rented housing



your council working for you

You said....

We asked you to choose where you would be prepared to see a reduction in service or an increase in charges. Your feedback has helped us put together our spending plans for the next year.

You said... we could



- Reduce green waste collections during the winter
- Introduce an annual green waste charge for residents who use this service
- Reduce the cost of CCTV monitoring
- Collect missed bins once a week rather than twice
- Reduce the number of issues of our council magazine from 6 to 4
- Reduce our overheads without affecting frontline services

You said...we shouldn't



- Reduce the money we spend on tackling anti-social behaviour
- Reduce highway verge litter picking/street cleaning schedules – in fact we have increased it!
- Reduce the opening hours of our toilets



your council working for you

What's Important to our residents

Times have changed and so have our residents' views on what matters most to them.

Back in 2008/09 the things that were most important in making somewhere a good place to live were:

- **Level of crime**
- **Health Services**
- **Clean Streets**
- **Education**
- **Affordable housing**

Two years on, in the middle of a global recession, local people have told us what they now want us to focus on. That's:

- **Creating jobs**
- **Improving shopping facilities**
- **Easing traffic congestion**
- **Car parking**
- **Activities for teenagers**





your council working for you

Money matters

Money matters to everyone and your local council is no different.

This section will tell you how we have done the sums to make the most of the money we get from various sources, including government grants, our council tax payers and fees and charges.

This becomes even more important during these challenging economic times.

We will need just under £14 million to deliver our priorities. For the second year running we are planning to freeze council tax, and would welcome your views on this.

In 2012/13:-

We expect to receive around £6 million from our council tax payers and around £8 million in government grants.

Since 2010/11, the amount of government grant we have received has decreased by over £2 million but we have continued to provide all our front line services by working really hard behind the scenes to reduce our overheads. We have also listened to

customers about what matters most to them and this feedback has helped us make some tough financial decisions.

We have saved:

- £366,000 by developing an innovative way of providing local leisure services through "Leisure in the Community"
- £78,000 by renegotiating our contracts
- £90,000 by sharing the costs of senior officer posts with neighbouring authorities
- £300,000 of staffing costs
- £22,000 by reducing the number of editions of the council magazine Sktoday from 6 to 4



Appendix three

Results from feedback postcards

Respondents were asked three questions to help us measure the quality and standard of information that we had provided. These were:

1. Was the information we provided.....
 - a. Helpful
 - b. Easy to understand
2. Are you in broad agreement with the projects?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. If no, are there any other areas you think we need to concentrate on?

12 postcards were completed.

100% thought the information we provided was both helpful and easy to understand.

All were in broad agreement with the projects, but one thought greater priority should be given towards managing traffic flow in Grantham. One wanted us to consider what can be done with various derelict sites in Bourne, including the Raymond Mays site and land at the bottom of Eastgate and another had reservations about the negative impact of the Bourne Community Access point.

Appendix four

A record of who attended and if they were a parish/town councillor, a district councillor or a member of the public is shown in the table below.

	Grantham	Stamford	Long Bennington	Bourne	The Deepings	Total no	%
Parish/town	3	5	2	3	5	18	22.2
District	7	3	6	9	7	32	39.5
Public	7	12	4	5	3	31	38.3
Total	17	20	12	17	15	81	100

REPORT TO ENGAGEMENT P.D.G.

REPORT OF: CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – Mr. Chris Holtom CBE

REPORT NO: LDS069

DATE: 24th May 2012

TITLE:	MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS	
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Not applicable	
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councillor Paul Carpenter Governance and Communications Portfolio Holder	
CONTACT OFFICER:	Lucy Youles – Head of Legal and Democratic Services. l.youles@southkesteven.gov.uk Tel:01476 406105	
INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:	Carried out and Referred to in paragraph (7) below	Full impact assessment Required: N/A
Equality and Diversity		
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Your Council and Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Localism Act 2012 The Constitution	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended:-

- 1.1 the Engagement Policy Development Group consider the provisions for a draft Members' Code of Conduct and arrangements for dealing with complaints about Members as recommended by the Standards Committee and detailed in the Report to Standards Committee – LDS 068 attached as an Appendix to this report ; and
- 1.2 It makes recommendations to the Chairman of the Standards Committee for further provision if required to propose to Council for adoption.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to set out draft proposals for a members' code of conduct and arrangements for dealing with complaints about members which are to be considered by the Standards Committee at its meeting on the 18th May 2012. Members are asked to consider the proposals to assist the recommendation to Council for adoption.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Members have previously received reports relating to the changes proposed by the Localism Act 2012. It is proposed that the current provision relating to the statutory Members' Code of Conduct and arrangements for dealing with complaints are revoked and replaced with local provision. South Kesteven District Council has been working with all the other councils in Lincolnshire to produce a consistent approach. The draft proposals to be made to the Standards Committee are detailed in the Report to Standards Committee - LDS068 attached to this report as the Appendix. This report will be considered by the Standards Committee at its meeting on the 18th May 2012. At the time of writing this report, that meeting has not yet taken place.

Members will receive a verbal report on the deliberations at Standards Committee.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Standards Committee could make recommendations direct to the Council for adoption. The Engagement PDG had previously agreed to assist the Standards Committee with its consideration of a new code and arrangements.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

New proposals for Standards arrangements are required in accordance with the Localism Act. A consideration of any proposal will be that arrangements can be serviced within the current budget framework.

6. RISK AND MITIGATION

There is a risk that arrangements will not be settled in readiness for statutory deadlines. Regulations have not yet been made and proposals may not cover all matters to be determined by subsequent regulations. These risks have been mitigated by the work already done in compliance with the legislation as enacted.

7. ISSUES ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial analysis of the equality impact has highlighted that proposed draft codes do not adequately cover provision for respect for all and equality issues.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications relating to the proposals.

9. COMMENTS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

The proposals recommend change from current arrangements which should have no impact on the current budget provision made.

10. COMMENTS OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The Monitoring Officer has been involved with and advised the Standards Committee working group throughout its consideration of proposals. The Standards Committee make these proposals in anticipation of making a report to Council as soon as practically possible.

11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICES

None applicable

12. APPENDICES:

Report to Standards Committee – 18th May 2012 – LDS068

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF: HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

REPORT NO: LDS 068

DATE: 18th May 2012

TITLE:	MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS	
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	STATUTORY REQUIREMENT	
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councillor Paul Carpenter – Engagement and Corporate Services	
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mrs. Lucy Youles - Head of Legal and Democratic Services (01476 406105; e-mail: l.youles@southkesteven.gov.uk)	
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:	Carried out and Referred to in paragraph (7) below:	Full impact assessment Required: n/a
Equality and Diversity		
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Your Council and Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Members' Code of Conduct 2007 Localism Act 2011	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Standards Committee consider the proposals and options contained in this report to refer to the Engagement PDG for consideration to determine and refer to Council for decision:

- 1.1 The adoption of a draft Members' Code of Conduct for recommendation to Council.

- 1.2 That the Council adopt arrangements to deal with complaints made about District Councillors and consider arrangements for dealing with complaints about parish and town councils
- 1.3 That, when the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) Regulations are published, the monitoring officer, after consultation with the Chair of Standards Committee add to that draft Code provisions which are considered to be appropriate for the registration and disclosure of interests as determined by the Regulations.
- 1.3 That the monitoring officer be appointed as the Proper Officer to receive complaints of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct;
- 1.4. That the monitoring officer be given delegated authority, after consultation with the Independent Person, to determine whether a complaint merits formal investigation and to arrange such investigation.
- 1.5 That the monitoring officer be instructed to seek resolution of complaints without formal investigation wherever practicable, and that the monitoring officer be given discretion to refer decisions on investigation to the relevant committee or panel of members where it is inappropriate for the monitoring officer to take the decision;
- 1.5. Where the investigation finds no evidence of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, the monitoring officer is instructed to close the matter, providing a copy of the report and findings of the investigation to the complainant and to the member concerned, and to the Independent Person.
- 1.6. Where the investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, the monitoring officer in consultation with the Independent Person is authorised to seek local resolution in appropriate cases with a summary report for information to Council. Where such local resolution is not appropriate or not possible, the monitoring officer is to report the investigation findings to a committee/panel of the members for local hearing;
- 1.7. That Council delegate to the committee/panel such of its powers as can be delegated to take decisions in respect of a member who is found on hearing to have failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, such actions to include –
 - Reporting its findings to Council [*or to the Parish Council*] for information;
 - Recommending to the member's Group Leader (or in the case of un-grouped members, recommend to Council or to Committees) that he/she be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council;
 - Recommending to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the Cabinet, or removed from particular Portfolio responsibilities;

- Instructing the monitoring officer to *[or recommend that the Parish Council]* arrange training for the member;
- Removing *[or recommend to the Parish Council that the member be removed]* from all outside appointments to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority *[or by the Parish Council]*;
- Withdrawing *[or recommend to the Parish Council that it withdraws]* facilities provided to the member by the Council, such as a computer, website and/or email and Internet access; or
- Excluding *[or recommend that the Parish Council exclude]* the member from the Council's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings.

1.8 The monitoring officer is instructed to recommend to Council a Standing Order which equates to the current code of conduct requirement that a member must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole of consideration of any item of business in which he/she has a DPI, except where he is permitted to remain as a result of the grant of a dispensation.

1.9 The Committee delegates to the Monitoring Officer authority, in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee, to make recommendations to Council in accordance with this report, the provisions of Localism Act, any regulations made in accordance with the Localism Act and recommendations from the Engagement Policy Development Group

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to update Members on the provision of a new code and arrangements for dealing with complaints and any breach of the code. Members are asked to consider the attached draft codes and proposed arrangements and confirm the preferred options to progress the introduction of a new code and arrangements for dealing with the code.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Background

Members are required by the Localism Act to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. To do so we are required to adopt a new code of conduct and introduce arrangements for dealing with

complaints. Following the report in February, further consideration is required in respect of:

3.1 The Code

- Discussions have taken place with all Lincolnshire Councils to determine a joint approach on code adoption. Use of a similar code throughout the Lincolnshire authorities would simplify use of the code.
- Draft codes have been received from the LGA, DCLG and LCC. The drafts are all similar and are attached for your attention. Another option could be for the Council to adopt a code similar to the current code
 1. Draft 1 is the LGA code
 2. Draft 2 is the DCLG illustrative code
 3. Draft 3 is the LCC code
- None of the draft codes can adequately deal with the issue of “interests”. Regulations have not yet been introduced and there is uncertainty around the definition of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests. There is no requirement for members to leave a meeting if they declare a pecuniary interest. There is a requirement that they do not take part in the discussion. Members may consider it appropriate to introduce a standing order requiring members to leave the room when they declare a disclosable pecuniary interest.
- Lincolnshire County Council intends to adopt the LCC code. Lincoln City has confirmed it intends to adopt a code similar to the existing code and South Holland has confirmed its preference for the LGA code. There is unlikely to be much consistency throughout Lincolnshire.
- The Lincolnshire Association of Local Authorities has confirmed that its National association intends to develop a separate code for parish councils. They do not consider the LGA or other drafts to be fit for purpose for parish councils. Parish councils would still have the option of adopting the district code if they so wished. The District Council must determine whether or not it is putting in place arrangements to deal with Parish Council complaints. It may be possible to delegate that function to the parish councils to put in place their own arrangements. Again, there is no regulation and it is not known if regulation is intended. Most councils we have spoken to are intending to put arrangements in place to deal with parish council complaints. Parish Councils are not obliged by law to make arrangements for dealing with complaints received.

3.2 The Independent Person

- We must appoint an independent person who cannot be the current independent appointed members. It is anticipated that there will be transitional provisions which may allow use of current independent members. The appointed independent person cannot attend the committee as a member of the council but could be invited to assist.

This is not yet certain. Consideration must be given to commencing the process for appointment of the independent person to enable an appointment to be made at the Council meeting on the 12th July.

3.3 Arrangements for dealing with Complaints.

- Arrangements for dealing with complaints about breach of a code must be put in place. It is understood the existing arrangements will no longer be required from the 1st July 2012. This is not a statutory deadline. Our existing provision will now be in place until our council meeting on the 12th July 2012, when it is proposed a new code is adopted and arrangements for dealing with complaints agreed. There are various options available:
 - Retain existing arrangements with a Standards Committee, assessment and review sub- committee.
 - Retain a Standards Committee which will need to be politically balanced (unless the Council vote unanimously against the requirement for political balance) with simplified process. A member of the Cabinet could be a member of this committee. There is no requirement for any committee to have parish representatives. This arrangement could involve delegation to officers to receive and deal with complaints in the first instance with reference to the independent person. Refer to committee those that cannot be resolved in the first instance for determination as to whether or not to investigate and report.
 - Delegate the arrangements for dealing with complaints to another committee already established.
 - Delegate the whole arrangement to officers with no referral to committee.

Emphasis should be on local resolution rather than formal investigation and identifying and resolving underlying issues.

- There are no statutory sanctions for breach of the code. Effectively, the only common law sanctions available will be censure, report to group leader, withdraw facilities, bar from office and put on single point of contact and/or report to council. Proposed sanctions will have to be agreed. It cannot be recommended that officers are responsible for imposing sanctions. It may not be practical for sanctions to be imposed by full council. The creation of a committee or use of a panel of members may be the only option. The Act repeals the requirements for separate Assessment, Review and hearings Sub-Committees, and enables the Council to establish its own process, which can include delegation of decisions on complaints. Indeed, as the statutory provisions no longer give the Standards Committee or monitoring officer special powers to deal with complaints, it is necessary for Council to delegate appropriate powers to a committee/panel and to the monitoring officer.
- Decision whether to investigate a complaint

In practice, the Standards for England guidance on initial assessment of complaints provided a reasonably robust basis for filtering out trivial and tit-for-tat complaints. It may be appropriate to delegate to the monitoring officer the initial decision on whether a complaint requires investigation, subject to consultation with the Independent Person and the ability to refer particular complaints to the a committee/panel where it would be inappropriate for the monitoring officer to take a decision on it. An example would be where the monitoring officer has previously advised the member on the matter or the complaint is particularly sensitive. These arrangements would also offer the opportunity for the monitoring officer to seek to resolve a complaint informally, before taking a decision on whether the complaint merits formal investigation.

- “No Breach of Code” finding on investigation

Where a formal investigation finds no evidence of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, the current requirement is that this is reported to the Standards Committee and the Committee take the decision to take no further action. In practice, it would be reasonable to delegate this decision to the monitoring officer, but with the power to refer a matter to a committee if appropriate. It would be sensible if copies of all investigation reports were provided to the Independent Person to enable them to get an overview of current issues and pressures, and that the monitoring officer provide a summary report of each such investigation to a committee or panel for information.

- “Breach of Code” finding on investigation

Where a formal investigation finds evidence of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, there may yet be an opportunity for local resolution, avoiding the necessity of a local hearing. Sometimes the investigation report can cause a member to recognise that his/her conduct was at least capable of giving offence, or identify other appropriate remedial action, and the complainant may be satisfied by recognition of fault and an apology or other remedial action. However, it is suggested that at this stage it would only be appropriate for the monitoring officer to agree a local resolution after consultation with the Independent Person.

In all other cases, where the formal investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, it would be necessary for a committee/panel to hold a hearing at which the member against whom the complaint has been made can respond to the investigation report, and the committee/panel can determine whether the member did fail to comply with the Code of Conduct and what action, if any, is appropriate as a result.

- Action in response to a Hearing finding of failure to comply with Code

The Act does not give the Council or its Standards Committee any powers to impose sanctions such as suspension or requirements for training or an apology on members. So, where a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct is found, the range of actions which the authority

can take in respect of the member is limited and must be directed to securing the continuing ability of the authority to continue to discharge its functions effectively, rather than “punishing” the member concerned. In practice, this might include those sanctions listed at recommendation 1.7 above

There is a particular difficulty in respect of Parish Councils, as the Localism Act gives the Standards Committee no power to do any more in respect of a member of a Parish Council than make a recommendation to the Parish Council on action to be taken in respect of the member. Parish Councils will be under no obligation to accept any such recommendation. The only way round this would be to constitute the committee/panel hearing an investigation and Hearings Panels as a Joint Committee and Joint Sub-Committees with the Parish Councils, and seek the delegation of powers from Parish Council to the Hearings Panels, so that the Hearings Panels can effectively take decisions on action on behalf of the particular Parish Council.

3.4 Appeals

There is no requirement to put in place any appeals mechanism against such decisions. The decision would be open to judicial review by the High Court if it was patently unreasonable, or if it were taken improperly, or if it sought to impose a sanction which the authority had no power to impose.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The wide statutory provision in the Localism Act permits all the options detailed above for consideration.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The resource implications of any new regime are unknown. The cost of implementation must be a relevant consideration to ensure any new regime can be provided within budget.

6. RISK AND MITIGATION (INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND DATA QUALITY)

The provisions detailed above are proposed to mitigate the risk of challenge in respect of adequate provision as required by the Localism Act 2011 to ensure the Council promotes and maintains high standards of conduct.

7. ISSUES ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Not applicable

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and order implications arising from this report.

9. COMMENTS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

10. COMMENTS OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Both the monitoring officer and the deputy monitoring officer have worked closely with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee to ensure complaints received have been processed in accordance with regulatory requirements. The Standards Committee have worked hard to ensure that all complaints are dealt with fairly and effectively. The Committee is best placed to develop options and make recommendations for future ways of working.

11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

None applicable

12. APPENDICES:

Draft LGA Code

Draft DCLG Illustrative Code

Draft LCC Code

Template Code of Conduct

As a member or co-opted member of *[X authority]* I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this authority.

SELFLESSNESS: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

INTEGRITY: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in *[X authority]* this will be done as follows: *[to be completed by individual authorities]*

As a Member of [*X authority*], my conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

- Championing the needs of residents – the whole community and in a special way my constituents, including those who did not vote for me - and putting their interests first.
- Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the [*county*][*borough*][*Authority's area*] or the good governance of the authority in a proper manner.
- Exercising independent judgement and not compromising my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as a member/co-opted member of this authority.
- Listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.
- Being accountable for my decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- Contributing to making this authority's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible to enable residents to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding me and other members to account but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it
- Behaving in accordance with all our legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within this authority's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Authority's resources.
- Valuing my colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside.
- Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this authority.



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11 April 2012

To all Local Authority Leaders

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to let you know that my Department is today making available an illustrative text for a code of conduct for members and co-opted members of local authorities. This text provides local authorities with an example of what a local authority's code of conduct for the new standards arrangements might look like.

We have made provision in the Localism Act 2011 for the abolition of the Standards Board regime, and the Standards Board itself was abolished on 31 March. The Act also makes provision for new standards arrangements including the involvement of an independent person in allegations of misconduct, a new criminal offence for failing to declare or register interests, and the requirement for local authorities to adopt a code of conduct that is consistent with the seven 'Nolan' principles of standards in public life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, as well as making provision for the registration and disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

The model code of conduct was a key part of the Standards Board regime, a top-down, centrally imposed regime that became a vehicle for vexatious complaints. Moving to new arrangements means that local authorities will be free to discard the model code and adopt their own, Nolan compliant, code. In order to give local authorities an idea of what a Nolan compliant model code featuring provisions about pecuniary and not pecuniary interests might look like, I am attaching an example. As you will see, it is very different to the model code that formed part of the Standards Board regime, while clearly requiring that members act in a manner that promotes and maintains high standards of conduct.

Together, these measures will ensure high standards in public life, prevent corruption, and put a stop to petty, vexatious complaints that consume local authority resources and damage the reputation of local government.

We have produced this example of a local code to provide certainty to local authorities who wish to adopt a lighter touch code compared to the centralist, top-down model code, and to help local authorities (especially parish councils) who might otherwise consider they need to commit valuable resource to creating a code to ensure compliance with the Localism Act. I hope you find the example code of conduct helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Neill", written in a cursive style.

BOB NEILL MP

Illustrative text for code dealing with the conduct expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when acting in that capacity

You are a member or co-opted member of the [name] council and hence you shall have regard to the following principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Accordingly, when acting in your capacity as a member or co-opted member -

You must act solely in the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend or close associate.

You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.

When carrying out your public duties you must make all choices, such as making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, on merit.

You are accountable for your decisions to the public and you must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office.

You must be as open as possible about your decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of your authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions.

You must declare any private interests, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary, that relate to your public duties and must take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest, including registering and declaring interests in a manner conforming with the procedures set out in the box below.

You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your public post, in particular as characterised by the above requirements, by leadership and example.

Registering and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

You must, within 28 days of taking office as a member or co-opted member, notify your authority's monitoring officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State, where the pecuniary interest is yours, your spouse's or civil partner's, or is the pecuniary interest of somebody with whom you are living with as a husband or wife, or as if you were civil partners.

In addition, you must, within 28 days of taking office as a member or co-opted member, notify your authority's monitoring officer of any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest which your authority has decided should be included in the register.

If an interest has not been entered onto the authority's register, then the member must disclose the interest to any meeting of the authority at which they are present, where they have a disclosable interest in any matter being considered and where the matter is not a 'sensitive interest'.¹

Following any disclosure of an interest not on the authority's register or the subject of pending notification, you must notify the monitoring officer of the interest within 28 days beginning with the date of disclosure.

Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State. Additionally, you must observe the restrictions your authority places on your involvement in matters where you have a pecuniary or non pecuniary interest as defined by your authority.

¹ A 'sensitive interest' is described in the Localism Act 2011 as a member or co-opted member of an authority having an interest, and the nature of the interest being such that the member or co-opted member, and the authority's monitoring officer, consider that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to the member or co-opted member, or a person connected with the member or co-opted member, being subject to violence or intimidation.

Lincs Principal Authorities' draft Template Code of Conduct

.....Council have adopted this Code setting out the expected behaviours required of its members or co-opted members, acknowledging that they each have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity all Councillors must be committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this authority.

SELFLESSNESS: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

INTEGRITY: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in [*X authority*] this will be done as follows:

On taking up office a member or co-opted member must, within 28 days of becoming such, notify the Monitoring Officer of any 'disclosable pecuniary interests', as prescribed by the Secretary of State.

On re-election or re-appointments, a member or co-opted member must, within 28 days, notify the Monitoring Officer of any 'disclosable pecuniary interests not already included in his or her register of interests.

If a member or co-opted member is aware that they have a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' in a matter they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter at a meeting.

If a member or co-opted member is aware of a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' in a matter under consideration at a meeting but such interest is not already on the Council's register of interests or in the process of entry onto the register having been notified to the Monitoring Officer, the member or co-opted member must disclose the 'disclosable pecuniary interest' to the meeting and register it within 28 days of the meeting at which it is first disclosed.

[The Council has adopted Council Procedure Rules requiring:

- a member or co-opted member with a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' to withdraw from the meeting while any discussion or vote on any matter relating to it takes place, taking no part in the debate or vote – EXCEPT that a member or co-opted member with a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' may take part in any public speaking scheme at that meeting but must leave the room immediately after having so participated.
- ? anybody proposing to do anything about declaration/withdrawal for any non-pecuniary interests...???