



# Northumberland County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Lesley Bennett

Email:

Tel direct: 01670 622613

Date: 1 February 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** to be held in **MEETING SPACE, BLOCK 1, FLOOR 2, COUNTY HALL** on **THURSDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2022** at **2.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally  
Chief Executive

**To Standards Committee members as follows:-**

**J Jackson (Chair), B Flux (Vice-Chair), S Bridgett, L Dunn, T Cessford, L Grimshaw, C Seymour, G Stewart, D Towns and A Wallace.**

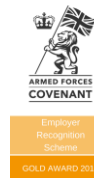
**Mrs K Milner – Independent Person**

Any member of the press or public may view the proceedings of this meeting live on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/NorthumberlandTV>. Members of the press and public may tweet, blog etc during the live broadcast as they would be able to during a regular Committee meeting.

***Members are referred to the risk assessment, previously circulated, for meetings held in County Hall. Masks should be worn when moving round but can be removed when seated, social distancing should be maintained, hand sanitiser regularly used and members requested to self-test twice a week at home, in line with government guidelines.***



**Daljit Lally, Chief Executive**  
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## AGENDA

### PART I

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 4 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature (as defined under paragraph 17 of the Code of Conduct) they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact the Monitoring Officer at [monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk). Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this Agenda letter.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

(Pages 1  
- 4)

Minutes of the meeting of the 14 October 2021, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

**4. APPOINTMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

(Pages 5  
- 8)

To inform Members of the progress made with regard to the appointment of the three Parish Council representatives to the Standards Committee.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

(Pages 9  
- 36)

To consider the proposed process for the appointment under the Localism Act of two further Independent Persons as delegated to the Standards Committee by Council.

**6. MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**

(Pages  
37 - 62)

To update Members with regard to the new Model Code of Conduct prepared by the Local Government Association and to present to the Standards Committee a new draft Code for its consideration.

**7. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS - PROGRESS REPORT**

(Pages  
63 - 68)

To receive a report on the progress with complaints received by the authority under the arrangements adopted by the authority for dealing with

standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011.

**8. INVESTIGATION INTO A CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT -  
COUNCILLOR JOHN RIDDLE**

To inform Members of the conclusions within a report of the Investigating Officer into a Members Code of Conduct complaint and the subsequent disposal of that complaint.

**9. INVESTIGATION INTO A CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT -  
COUNCILLOR RICHARD WEARMOUTH**

To inform Members of the conclusions within a report of the Investigating Officer into a Members Code of Conduct complaint and the subsequent disposal of that complaint.

**10. CODE OF CONDUCT HEARING PROCEDURE**

(Pages  
69 - 80)

To inform Members of the procedure to be followed to assist in hearing forthcoming hearings into Member Code of Conduct investigations.

**11. FUTURE PLAN OF WORK**

To discuss a future plan of work.

**12. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 17 February 2022 at 2.00 p.m. at County Hall, Morpeth.

**14. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Standards Committee is invited to consider passing the following resolution:

- (a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act, and
- (b) That the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure for the following reasons:-

**Agenda Item**

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Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A

Information relating to any individual.

Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Disclosure of this information would prejudice the interests of individuals at little benefit to the general public.

**15. INVESTIGATION REPORT AND APPENDICIES - COUNCILLOR JOHN RIDDLE AND COUNCILLOR RICHARD WEARMOUTH**

To receive the investigation report relating to the investigation into alleged breaches of the Members Code of Conduct by Councillor John Riddle and Councillor Richard Wearmouth

**IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:**

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussion or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Name (please print):</b>   |
| <b>Meeting:</b>   |
| <b>Date:</b>  |
| <b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>   |
| <b>Nature of Registerable Personal Interest i.e either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Annex 2 to Code of Conduct or other interest (as defined by Annex 3 to Code of Conduct) (please give details):</b> |
| <b>Nature of Non-registerable Personal Interest (please give details):</b>  |
| <b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>  |

**1. Registerable Personal Interests** – You may have a Registerable Personal Interest if the issue being discussed in the meeting:

a) relates to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined by Annex 1 to the Code of Conduct); or

b) any other interest (as defined by Annex 2 to the Code of Conduct)

The following interests are Disclosable Pecuniary Interests if they are an interest of either you or your spouse or civil partner:

(1) Employment, Office, Companies, Profession or vocation; (2) Sponsorship; (3) Contracts with the Council; (4) Land in the County; (5) Licences in the County; (6) Corporate Tenancies with the Council; or (7) Securities - interests in Companies trading with the Council.

The following are other Registerable Personal Interests:

(1) any body of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Council; (2) any body which (i) exercises functions of a public nature or (ii) has charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member (or in a position of general control or management); or (3) any person from whom you have received within the previous three years a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of more than £50 which is attributable to your position as an elected or co-opted member of the Council.

**2. Non-registerable personal interests** - You may have a non-registerable personal interest when you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are, or ought reasonably to be, aware that a decision in relation to an item of business which is to be transacted might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well being or financial position, or the well being or financial position of a person described below to a greater extent than most inhabitants of the area affected by the decision.

The persons referred to above are: (a) a member of your family; (b) any person with whom you have a close association; or (c) in relation to persons described in (a) and (b), their employer, any firm in which they are a partner, or company of which they are a director or shareholder.

### **3. Non-participation in Council Business**

When you attend a meeting of the Council or Cabinet, or one of their committees or sub-committees, and you are aware that the criteria set out below are satisfied in relation to any matter to be considered, or being considered at that meeting, you must : (a) Declare that fact to the meeting; (b) Not participate (or further participate) in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; (c) Not participate in any vote (or further vote) taken on the matter at the meeting; and (d) Leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.

The criteria for the purposes of the above paragraph are that: (a) You have a registerable or non-registerable personal interest in the matter which is such that a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would reasonably think it so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest; **and either** (b) the matter will affect the financial position of yourself or one of the persons or bodies referred to above or in any of your register entries; **or** (c) the matter concerns a request for any permission, licence, consent or registration sought by yourself or any of the persons referred to above or in any of your register entries.

**This guidance is not a complete statement of the rules on declaration of interests which are contained in the Members' Code of Conduct. If in any doubt, please consult the Monitoring Officer or relevant Democratic Services Officer before the meeting.**