



# Northumberland

## County Council

Your ref:

Our ref:

Enquiries to: Lesley Bennett

Email: Lesley.Bennett@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel direct: 01670 622613

Date: 4 July 2022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** to be held in **CONFERENCE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, MORPETH** on **THURSDAY, 14 JULY 2022** at **2.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Daljit Lally  
Chief Executive

To Standards Committee members as follows:-

J Jackson (Chair), S Bridgett, T Cessford, L Dunn, B Flux (Vice-Chair), L Grimshaw, J Reid, G Stewart, D Towns and R Wilczek

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.



Daljit Lally, Chief Executive  
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF  
T: 0345 600 6400  
[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)



## 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. **MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Members: 9 Councillors (4:3:1 Ind Gp, 1 LD)**

**3 Parish Council representatives** (Only one member of the Committee can be a member of the Cabinet).

**Independent Person – Mrs K. Milner**

**Quorum - 4**

**Chair: Mr J. Jackson**

**Vice Chair: B. Flux**

<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Independent Group</b>	<b>Liberal Democrats</b>	<b>Green Party</b>	<b>Ind Non-Grouped</b>
T. Cessford	L. Dunn	S. Bridgett	J. Reid		
B. Flux	L. Grimshaw				
G. Stewart	R. Wilczek				
D. Towns					

#### **Terms of Reference**

- (1) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors, town and parish councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives.
- (2) Assisting the councillors, town and parish councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
- (3) Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- (4) Monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- (5) Advising, training or arranging to train councillors, town and parish councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.

- (6) Granting dispensations to councillors, co-opted members, church and parent governor representatives from requirements relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.
- (7) Assessing and reviewing complaints about councillors and conducting determinations' hearings.
- (8) Granting exemptions for politically restricted posts.
- (9) Such other roles as may be given by the Council.

### **3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required where a matter arises at a meeting;

- a. Which directly relates to Disclosable Pecuniary Interest ('DPI') as set out in Appendix B, Table 1 of the Code of Conduct, to disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote and not to remain in room. Where members have a DPI or if the matter concerns an executive function and is being considered by a Cabinet Member with a DPI they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with the matter.
- b. Which directly relates to the financial interest or well being of a Other Registrable Interest as set out in Appendix B, Table 2 of the Code of Conduct to disclose the interest and only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain the room.
- c. Which directly relates to their financial interest or well-being (and is not DPI) or the financial well being of a relative or close associate, to declare the interest and members may only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak. Otherwise, the member must not take part in discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.
- d. Which affects the financial well-being of the member, a relative or close associate or a body included under the Other Registrable Interests column in Table 2, to disclose the interest and apply the test set out at paragraph 9 of Appendix B before deciding whether they may remain in the meeting.
- e. Where Members have or a Cabinet Member has an Other Registerable Interest or Non Registerable Interest in a matter being considered in exercise of their executive function, they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with it.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk. Members are referred to the Code of Conduct which contains the matters above in full. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter

- 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (Pages 1 - 6)

Minutes of the meeting of the 10 February 2022, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.
- 5. APPOINTMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES AND ADDITIONAL INDEPENDENT PERSONS TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE - NOTE OF CHANGE IN INTERVIEW PANEL** (Pages 7 - 10)

To request ratification of the appointment of Cllr Dunn to the interview panel with regard to the appointment of the three Parish Council representatives to the Standards Committee and the appointment of additional Independent Persons.
- 6. PRELIMINARY HEARING** (Pages 11 - 16)

The purpose of the report is to place before the Standards Committee a preliminary issue in relation to 3 Code of Conduct complaints. This issue is a matter for the Committee to determine.
- 7. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS - PROGRESS REPORT** (Pages 17 - 24)

To receive a report on the progress with complaints received by the authority under the new arrangements adopted by the authority for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011.
- 8. 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.
- 9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 13 October 2022 at 2.00 p.m. at County Hall, Morpeth.

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

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

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date of meeting:</b>	
<b>Meeting:</b>			
<b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>			
<b>Nature of Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Table 1 of Appendix B to the Code of Conduct, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest (as defined by Appendix B to Code of Conduct) (please give details):</b>			
<b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>		Yes - <input type="checkbox"/>	No - <input type="checkbox"/>

## Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.

Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

### Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

## **Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests**

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in **Table 1**) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
  
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
  - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
  - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
  - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied
  
9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well- being:
  - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
  - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.