

## Register of Members' Interests and Code of Conduct Training 2008

### Report of the Clerk

For further information about this report please contact Roger Woliter, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383200 or Matthew Cumberbatch, Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383255.

### 1 Purpose of Report

This report provides details of the position regarding the completion of the Register of Members' Interests form and advises the Committee of the uptake for the forthcoming Code of Conduct Training provided by Telford & Wrekin Council.

### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the contents of the report;
- b) Advise what action they require Officers to take, if any, to ensure that the Register of Members' Interests for all Members is up-to-date;
- c) Advise what action they require Officers to take, if any, with regard to Member attendance at the Code of Conduct training; and
- d) To determine if they require Officers to obtain details of any Code of Conduct training provided to Fire and Rescue Authority Members by other authorities.

### 3 Background

Under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Fire and Rescue Authority in August 2007, all Members are required to register their financial interests with the Fire Authority. Members are also required to provide written notification of any changes to those interests within 28 days of becoming aware of the changes.

## **4 Register of Members' Interests Forms**

On 28 July 2008, a letter was sent to all Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority and Independent Members of the Standards Committee, together with a copy of their current Register of Interests form and a form to sign to confirm that there are no amendments to their current Register of Interests. To date 18 responses have been received out of a possible 21.

Members are not required to complete a fresh Register of Interests annually and the onus is upon them to provide written notification of any changes (as outlined in Section 3 above). Officers do, however, prompt all Members annually in an attempt to ensure that the Register of Interests is kept up-to-date.

Officers have not as yet taken any action to chase up the 3 outstanding forms and the Standards Committee is asked to advise what action, if any, they require Officers to take with regard to this issue.

## **5 Code of Conduct Training**

Training on the Code of Conduct has been arranged by Telford & Wrekin Council for Wednesday 12 November 2008. The training will be provided via two identical training seminars on the afternoon and evening of this date.

Details of the training were circulated to all members of the Fire and Rescue Authority and Independent Members of its Standards Committee via post on 22 August 2008. Details have also been circulated to the Fire Authority's Senior Management Team and other relevant officers.

At the time of writing this report, 15 members out of a possible 21 had responded to the letter. Of these responses, 3 indicated that they were not able to attend either of the training sessions on 12 November 2008. Therefore current attendance is anticipated to be as follows:

- 9 Fire and Rescue Authority Members
- 3 Independent Members
- 3 Fire and Rescue Authority Officers

Officers have not as yet taken any action to chase up the 6 Members that have not replied and the Standards Committee is asked to advise what action, if any, they require Officers to take with regards to this issue. The Committee is also asked to advise if they wish Officers to obtain details of Code of Conduct training that Members may have received via any other authorities that they sit on.

## **6 Financial Implications**

Telford & Wrekin Council will not be charge for Fire Authority members and officers to attend the Code of Conduct training on 12 November 2008 therefore there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **7 Legal Comment**

The Members Code of Conduct (as adopted by this Authority) makes it a requirement that every Fire Authority member maintains an up to date register of interest form. Sending an annual reminder to Fire Authority members to check the information in their register of interest forms will help to ensure that the register of members' interests is kept up to date.

Code of Conduct training for Fire Authority members is not compulsory. However, it is recommended that all Fire Authority members attend some Code of Conduct training every year particularly given the ongoing changes to the Code.

## **8 Equality Impact Assessment**

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

## **9 Appendices**

There are no appendices attached to this report.

## **10 Background Papers**

**Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority**  
Code of Conduct  
Register of Members' Interests Form

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*