

<b>(SC/02/17)</b>	
<b>Report title:</b> Essex County Council – Guidance on Declaration of Interests	
<b>Report to:</b> Essex CC and Essex FA Joint Standards Committee	
<b>Report author:</b> Paul Turner – ECC Monitoring Officer	
<b>Date:</b> 25 January 2017	<b>For:</b> Decision
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<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To ask the Committee to consider draft guidance on declarations of interest to be sent to all members of the County Council.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee make any comments they have about the draft guidance and endorse it being issued by the monitoring officer.

## **3. Guidance on Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1 Councillors can sometimes be unsure about when and how they declare interests at meetings. This can be because the national rules have changed a number of times and because different councils have different rules about declaring interests.
- 3.2 Failure to declare an interest can be a breach of the code of conduct. If there is a failure to declare a 'disclosable pecuniary interest', the member concerned could be commit a criminal offence, although any prosecution could only be brought by the Crown Prosecution Service following a report from the Police.
- 3.3 Although Members are repeatedly advised that they are responsible for declaring interests, we do try and assist with declarations of interest and anticipate issues which may arise. At full council we try to encourage people to think about interests in advance and seek advice at an early stage. However, it is felt that some members may find written guidance useful. Guidance is only likely to be helpful if it is clear and straightforward.
- 3.4 Draft guidance is appended to this report. The guidance is divided into sections:
- Explanation of the types of interest and when they have to be declared.
  - Explanation of common circumstances where member are not required to declare interests.
  - Good practice guidance on how to declare interests.
  - Frequently Asked Questions.

3.5 It is intended that the guidance will be reviewed by the monitoring officer and reissued as and when required. The Committee are asked to review the document and suggest any changes or improvements that they would like to see.

**4. List of background papers**

None