



Jeff Hughes
*Head of Democratic and Legal
Support Services*

MEETING : STANDARDS COMMITTEE
VENUE : ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2012
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

District Council Members:

Councillors A Burlton, M Carver, N Poulton and M Wood

Town Councils Representative:

Mrs E Woods

Parish Councils Representatives:

Mr J Jones
Mr C Marks

Independent Members:

Mr S Bouette
Mr D Farrell
Mr J Morpew
Mr T Vickers

CONTACT OFFICER: Jeff Hughes

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PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

1. A Member with a personal interest in any business of the Council who attends a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered must, with certain specified exemptions (see section 5 below), disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest prior to the commencement of it being considered or when the interest becomes apparent.
2. Members should decide whether or not they have a personal interest in any matter under discussion at a meeting. If a Member decides they have a personal interest then they must also consider whether that personal interest is also prejudicial.
3. A personal interest is either an interest, as prescribed, that you must register under relevant regulations or it is an interest that is not registrable but where the well-being or financial position of you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association, is likely to be affected by the business of the Council more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward(s) affected by the decision.
4. Members with personal interests, having declared the nature of that personal interest, can remain in the meeting, speak and vote on the matter unless the personal interest is also a prejudicial interest.
5. An exemption to declaring a personal interest applies when the interest arises solely from a Member's membership of or position of general control or management on:
 - any other body to which they have been appointed or nominated by the authority
 - any other body exercising functions of a public nature (e.g another local authority)

In these exceptional cases, provided a Member does not have a prejudicial interest, they only need to declare their interest if they speak. If a Member does not want to speak to the meeting, they may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.

6. A personal interest will also be a prejudicial interest in a matter if all of the following conditions are met:
 - the matter does not fall within one of the exempt categories of decisions
 - the matter affects your financial interests or relates to a licensing or regulatory matter
 - a member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

7. Exempt categories of decisions are:
 - setting council tax
 - any ceremonial honour given to Members
 - an allowance, payment or indemnity for Members
 - statutory sick pay
 - school meals or school transport and travelling expenses: if you are a parent or guardian of a child in full-time education or you are a parent governor, unless it relates particularly to the school your child attends
 - housing; if you hold a tenancy or lease with the Council, as long as the matter does not relate to your particular tenancy or lease.

8. If you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting, you must declare that interest and its nature as soon as the interest becomes apparent to you.

9. If you have declared a personal and prejudicial interest, you must leave the room, unless members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, by statutory right or otherwise. If that is the case, you can also attend the meeting for that purpose. However, you must immediately leave the room once you have finished or when the meeting decides that you have finished (if that is earlier). You cannot remain in the public gallery to observe proceedings.

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Chairman's Announcements

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Minutes (Pages 7 - 10)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 August 2011.

5. Localism Act 2011 (Pages 11 - 24)

Proposals by the Chairman of the Standards Committee for the New Standards Regime.

6. IT protocol for Members (Pages 25 - 34)

7. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To move that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of items 9 and 10 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 7C of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act (see subsequent pages for definitions of exempt information categories).

It is for the Committee to determine whether or not these items should be considered in public and the report made available for

public information. Until a decision is taken, please regard the report as confidential.

9. Complaint in respect of a Parish Councillor: Reference HORM/03/2011: Consideration (Pages 35 - 48)
10. Complaint in respect of a Parish Councillor: Reference HORM/03/2011: Hearing (Pages 49 - 68)
11. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.