

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL
STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

15 September 2023

Registration of Officers' Interests

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the review of the process for the registration of officers' interests.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At a previous meeting of the Committee, Members requested an update report be brought to the Committee regarding the process for the registration of officers' interests.

3.0 REGISTRATION OF OFFICERS' INTERESTS

Current registration process

- 3.1 A report regarding the current, paper based, registration process for officers' interests was previously taken to the NYCC Standards Committee on 8 March 2023 - [Agenda for Standards and Governance Committee on Wednesday, 8th March, 2023, 10.00 am | North Yorkshire Council](#).
- 3.2 Following the Vesting Day of North Yorkshire Council, as a continuing authority form of local government reorganisation, the current process continues and is now under review, with electronic options under consideration.

Review of registration process

- 3.3 An officer working group, with representatives from Democratic Services, HR, Communications and IT, is reviewing the process for the registration of officers' interests. Work on the automation of the currently paper-based system for the collation and review of employee interests is progressing and phase 1 should be in place by the early October 2023 and phase 2 by December 2023.
- 3.4 In summary, the approach is:
- The initial focus is upon budget managers (600) in phase 1, with the aim in the longer term to extend to all staff in phase 2. This then enables this new approach to registration and monitoring of officer interests to be tested with those officers who are in a position where they are most likely to be in a position where a conflict could arise, as budget managers, before rolling out to all staff
 - Not all 8 councils operated the same scheme of registration of officer interests and so a phased approach enables a period of alignment of practice
 - The previous scheme was limited to staff at grade K or above but recently that there have been a small number of conflicts of interests arising with staff at grades below grade K

- Relevant staff complete the Register in MyView upon joining the Council and then check it as part of the annual appraisal process, with their line manager.
- All staff are expected to keep their Register up to date
- The Register is private, not published and only reviewed by the line manager and other senior officers as appropriate
- The form and guidance will go on the Council intranet (copies are appended to this report)
- Communications are being developed for budget managers and line managers
- Engagement is taking place with the unions but there are not anticipated to be any issues arising as this is not a new initiative but a refresh of an existing requirement upon staff
- The declaration of interests may be reviewed by key officers of the Council, by the Council's auditors and by the Ombudsman should there be any concerns regarding a conflict of interest. HR proceedings may also follow in the case of a conflict of interest.

3.5 Members will be kept informed of developments.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this report.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no significant environmental implications arising from this report.

7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Background Papers:

None

County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

6 September 2023