

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Standards and Ethics Committee – 11 June 2026

Report Title

Standards and Ethics Committee – Review of Parish and Town Council Members Register of Interests

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

N/A

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

A report setting out the findings of a review of Parish and Town Council members Registers of Interests.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee notes the content of the report and makes recommendations for improvement of the system of publication of Parish and Town Council members Register of Interests
2. That any recommendations made in accordance with Recommendation 1, be communicated to relevant Parish and Town Council clerks.

List of Appendices Included

N/A

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Standards and Ethics Committee - Review of Parish and Town Council Members Register of Interests

1. Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the Standards and Ethics Committee Work Plan, a review has been undertaken of Parish and Town Councillor Register of interests. This report presents the findings of the Councillor-level review of Registers of Interests across Rotherham Parish and Town Councils. The purpose of the review was to assess both compliance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and transparency at Councillor level.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The review considered Parish and Town council websites and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) records. A representative sample of Parish and Town councils were examined at Councillor level to identify gaps in publication and accessibility.
- 2.2 The exercise found that Registers of Interests are held centrally by RMBC for all Councils reviewed and therefore compliance across Parishes and Town Council's as a whole is considered high. However, transparency varies significantly between Councils and in some cases, Councillors are listed without clear links to their Register of Interests.
- 2.3 Frequently occurring issues presented, such as Registers existing but not being consistently linked to individual Councillors and some Parish and Town Council websites rely entirely on RMBC for publication and often information appears fragmented or difficult to access.
- 2.4 Improvements which could be made include all Parish and Town councils should provide direct links from each Councillor to their Register of Interests and a consistent borough-wide format being implemented for publishing registers, although this may be dependent on the website provider for the Parish and Town councils. If this is not possible Parish and Town Councils should be encouraged to ensure that their Registers are easy to locate, clearly labelled and accessible to the public.
- 2.5 As such the review concludes that Parish and Town Council Councilor's Registers of Interests are in place across the borough. However, inconsistencies in publication and accessibility reduce transparency.
- 2.6 Further members of the Committee should be aware that from 29 June 2026, section 65 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 ('2026 Act') removes the requirement for a local government member's home address to be published in council registers of interest. The newly added section 32A of the Localism Act 2011 requires that councils do not publish

details of a member's home address in public registers of interest unless an individual member explicitly requests it.

- 2.7 To aid transparency, public registers of interest will still state that an interest exists but that the address is withheld under the new section 32A. The exact address details will still need to be declared, remain available internally to councils, and will continue to prevent conflicts of interest. Parish and Town Council clerks have been informed about this change.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Options for improving the system and transparency of the publication of Parish and Town Council Register of Interest forms are set out above.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 N/A

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

N/A

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The officer time in dealing with these complaints is met within existing Legal Services resources.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The Council and the Standards and Ethics Committee have a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. Pursuant to the Localism Act 2011, s29-32 Parish and Town Council's members interests must maintained and published.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

None

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

None

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

None

11. Implications for Partners

None

12. Risks and Mitigation

None

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Bal Nahal, Head of Legal Services

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