

Audit Committee – 24th November 2011

6. Register of Staff Interests – Audit Action Plan – Progress Report

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Purpose of the Report

This report has been requested by the Audit Committee to advise members of the progress against the actions to be taken following the internal audit of this area, which reported in February 2011.

Recommendation

That members note the progress made against the actions as set out in the attached appendix (pages 15-16) and that the new procedure will be rolled out before the 31st December 2011.

Introduction

The South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) undertook an audit of the adequacy of controls and procedures in place for Register of Interests for Staff across the Council and were only able to offer Partial Assurance.

Audit Action Plan

As members will recall the audit review made 3 recommendations. These were:- (i) the recording of interests needed to be consistent and there was a need for periodic reminders for staff to register any interests (ii) the corporate induction programme and manager's checklist should include specific coverage of the staff code of conduct and (iii) a system for recording interests needed to be introduced. These recommendations have been translated into the actions described in the plan attached to this report. Members are aware that one of the agreed actions has already been implemented. In relation to the other two actions the target date is 31st December 2011. Attached to this report (pages 17-23) are (i) the letters to staff relating to declaration of interests that will be sent (a) initially and (b) as the annual reminder. In addition and also attached to this report is the proposed Form CC1 that staff will have to complete when they have "something to declare" and the Form CC2, which is the declaration that all staff will have to complete irrespective of whether they have also had to complete Form CC1. These Forms and letters meet the other recommendations. Work has commenced on the form of database that is to be used by service managers in order to record the information from the data capture forms from their staff. This will be at a service level as there isn't a resource corporately that is available to undertake this task. As was mentioned previously managers will be required to send their year end records to the Monitoring Officer for checking both as to content and consistency. This end of the process will be managed by the Monitoring Officer to ensure compliance.

Financial Implications

Any that there are can be met from existing resources.

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Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications resulting from the subject matter of this report as the statutory requirements relating to this area contained in the Local Government Act 2000 are already being complied with.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

There are no specific environmental implications arising from the subject matter of this report.

Equalities and Diversity Impact

There are no specific equality or diversity implications arising from the subject matter of this report as all staff are subject to the requirements set out in the code of conduct.

Background Papers: *Internal Audit Report 11th February 2011*
 Agenda & Minutes - Audit Committee 22nd September 2011
