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Date: **24 November 2021**
Our ref: **General Purposes Committee/Agenda**
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GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2021

A meeting of the General Purposes Committee will be held at **3.00 pm on Thursday, 2 December 2021** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Membership:

Councillor Ashbee (Chair); Councillors: Albon, R Bayford, Dexter, Everitt, Ovenden, Rev. S Piper, Rawf, D Saunders, M Saunders, Wing and Wright

A G E N D A

Item
No

Subject

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Pages 3 - 4)
To receive any declarations of interest. Members are advised to consider the advice contained within the Declaration of Interest advice attached to this Agenda. If a Member declares an interest, they should complete the [Declaration of Interest Form](#)
3. **PROGRESS UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATUTORY RECOMMENDATIONS**
Report to follow.
4. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS** (Pages 5 - 8)
5. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (Pages 9 - 12)
To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 05 October 2021, copy attached.

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Do I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and if so what action should I take?

Your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) are those interests that are, or should be, listed on your Register of Interest Form.

If you are at a meeting and the subject relating to one of your DPIs is to be discussed, in so far as you are aware of the DPI, you **must** declare the existence **and** explain the nature of the DPI during the declarations of interest agenda item, at the commencement of the item under discussion, or when the interest has become apparent

Once you have declared that you have a DPI (unless you have been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee or the Monitoring Officer, for which you will have applied to the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting) you **must**:-

1. Not speak or vote on the matter;
2. Withdraw from the meeting room during the consideration of the matter;
3. Not seek to improperly influence the decision on the matter.

Do I have a significant interest and if so what action should I take?

A significant interest is an interest (other than a DPI or an interest in an Authority Function) which:

1. Affects the financial position of yourself and/or an associated person; or
Relates to the determination of your application for any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration made by, or on your behalf of, you and/or an associated person;
2. And which, in either case, a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interest.

An associated person is defined as:

- A family member or any other person with whom you have a close association, including your spouse, civil partner, or somebody with whom you are living as a husband or wife, or as if you are civil partners; or
- Any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors; or
- Any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000;
- Any body of which you are in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the Authority; or
- any body in respect of which you are in a position of general control or management and which:
 - exercises functions of a public nature; or
 - is directed to charitable purposes; or
 - has as its principal purpose or one of its principal purposes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

An Authority Function is defined as: -

- Housing - where you are a tenant of the Council provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease; or
- Any allowance, payment or indemnity given to members of the Council;
- Any ceremonial honour given to members of the Council
- Setting the Council Tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992



If you are at a meeting and you think that you have a significant interest then you **must** declare the existence **and** nature of the significant interest at the commencement of the matter, or when the interest has become apparent, or the declarations of interest agenda item.

Once you have declared that you have a significant interest (unless you have been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee or the Monitoring Officer, for which you will have applied to the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting) you **must:-**

1. Not speak or vote (unless the public have speaking rights, or you are present to make representations, answer questions or to give evidence relating to the business being discussed in which case you can speak only)
2. Withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the matter or immediately after speaking.
3. Not seek to improperly influence the decision.

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

Councillors must declare at meetings any gift, benefit or hospitality with an estimated value (or cumulative value if a series of gifts etc.) of £25 or more. You **must**, at the commencement of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, disclose the existence and nature of the gift, benefit or hospitality, the identity of the donor and how the business under consideration relates to that person or body. However you can stay in the meeting unless it constitutes a significant interest, in which case it should be declared as outlined above.

What if I am unsure?

If you are in any doubt, Members are strongly advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or the Committee Services Manager well in advance of the meeting.

If you need to declare an interest then please complete the declaration of [interest form](#).

Exclusion of Press and Public

General Purposes Committee	02 December 2021
Report Author	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Ashbee, Leader of the Council
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Executive Summary:

To consider whether to exclude the press and public for the consideration of agenda item 5.

Recommendation(s):

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for agenda item 5 as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Legal

As per Part 1 of Schedule 12A and Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Corporate

Thanet District Council will endeavour to keep the number of exempt reports it produces to a minimum in order to promote transparency.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

There are no specific equity and equality considerations that need to be addressed in this report.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- *Communities*

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Whilst the starting point for all public meetings of the Council is to admit the public and press, they may be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted that confidential or exempt information would be disclosed. Under such circumstances, confidential or exempt information may be excluded from the public agenda. The public and press must be excluded from meetings if confidential information will be considered and disclosed, and such material must be excluded from the public agenda.

2.0 Meaning of confidential information

- 2.1 Confidential information means information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order.

3.0 Exempt Information - discretion to exclude the public

- 3.1 Subject to Article 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (right to a fair trial) the public may be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that "exempt" information would be disclosed.

4.0 Exempt Information

- 4.1 The full rules are set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12A and Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 (as Amended) and is as shown below:

Paragraph 1

Information relating to an individual.

Paragraph 2

Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Paragraph 4

Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the Authority. Information is exempt if and so long as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interests in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the interests.

Paragraph 5

Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

5.0 Reason Why Agenda Item 5 is considered to be “exempt”

- 5.1 The report author has classified Agenda Item 5 as disclosing exempt information under Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

6.0 Justification/Public Interest Test

- 6.1 Agenda item 5 is restricted as the information contained within it is exempt under paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 to Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). This relates to a staffing matter. There is an expectation that in the interests of those involved and the council that these matters are not raised in public.
- 6.2 It is therefore considered that the public interest is served by the non-disclosure of the information contained within the report at agenda item 5.

7.0 Not Excluding the Press and Public

- 7.1 There will be occasions when the meeting may decline to exclude the press and public from the meeting. If that occurs it does not simply mean that those members of the press and public who are present are allowed to stay for the discussion of the item(s). Declining to exclude the press and public would also mean that the press and public are allowed access to the actual report contained within the confidential part of the agenda (what Democratic Services refer to as the “pink pages”).
- 7.2 Members may wish to note that if a committee member is of the view that it is possible that the recommendation in this report may not be approved at the meeting, they should let Democratic Services know (as soon as they have read the agenda papers before the meeting); in order that spare copies are made available ready to be distributed, if necessary, at the meeting.

7.3 If the referred item is not exempted, Democratic Services would also make arrangements for the report to be retrospectively published on the Council's website.

8.0 Decision Making Process

8.1 If the press and public are to be excluded for the agenda item; this Sub Committee must exercise its power to agree to the recommendation.

Contact Officer: Charles Hungwe (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

Reporting to: Nicholas Hughes, Committee Services Manager

Annex List

None

Background Papers

None

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Estelle Culligan, Director of Law & Democracy and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Legal: Chris Blundell, Director of Finance

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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