

NOTIFICATION OF REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

Summary: The Constitution provides that any request for a dispensation to participate and/or vote falls to be heard and considered by the Standards Committee, but provides little additional detail. A template form and guidance note is proposed to provide for a clear process which captures the details of the request and provides information on how it will be considered.

Options considered:

- (1) Adopt a template form and guidance note, which may be added to the Member section of the NNDC website
- (2) No action – this still allows for consideration of dispensations, but with no procedure or form set out.

Conclusions: That there is currently no procedure for Members, other than a requirement to set out their request for a dispensation in writing. To address this, a template form is proposed, which would capture all the information needed by a Standards Committee to determine a request. Such form to be accompanied by a guidance document and added to our website.

Recommendations: **That a template dispensation request form, and a guidance document, be adopted.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To enable a clear process for the consideration of dispensations

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

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Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected - All
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1. Introduction

1.1 The Constitution references the Standards Committee as the appropriate committee to hear and determine applications for dispensations by Councillors of North Norfolk District Council under Section 33(2) Localism Act 2011. Very little further information is available there as to how to make the application, and what information needs to be provided. As Members need

to act with care when participating or voting at meetings, with reference to interests, a procedure to assist with these considerations may be helpful to Members and allow the authority to keep a clear audit trail of requests and decisions.

2. Proposed Procedure

2.1 **Appendix A** provides a short tabular form for a Member to complete who wishes to apply for a dispensation. This form provides the detail that the Committee will need to determine the request. **Appendix B** provides information to assist Members making a request, or who sit on the Standards Committee, on how a request will be determined and communicated.

2.2 Such documents could be accessible in the Member section of the Council's website.

3. Corporate Plan Objectives

3.1 Customer Focus

Ensuring that the Council's democratic process runs as transparently and as effectively as possible, building on the corporate plan objective of focussing on the customer and putting them at the heart of what we do

4. Financial and Resource Implications

There are no specific costs associated with the proposals set out in this report.

5. Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications, but the provision of a clear process is likely to assist Members in complying with their legal obligations and appropriate determination of requests.

6. Equality and Diversity

The considerations and recommendations have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act.

7. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

The Localism Act 2011 places legal obligations upon elected members with regard to disclosing of interests. A process may enhance these obligations and accordingly may be relevant to the prevention of crime and disorder in the District.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

That the Standards Committee considers adding a form and guidance note to assist members in applying and considering requests for dispensations:

(i) That a template dispensation request form, and a guidance document, be adopted.

