

**DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS**

***What Interests do I need to declare in a meeting?***

As a first step you need to declare any **personal interests** you have in a matter. You will then need to decide if you have a **prejudicial interest** in a matter.

***What is a personal interest?***

You have a personal interest in a matter if that matter affects the well-being or financial position of you, your relatives or your friends more than it would affect other people in the Council's area. A personal interest can affect you, your relatives or your friends positively or negatively. If you or they would stand to lose by the decision, you should also declare it.

You also have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests which you must register.

***What do I need to do if I have a personal interest in a matter?***

You must declare it when you get to the item headed "Declaration of Interest" on the agenda or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

***Can I stay in a meeting if I have a personal interest?***

You can still take part in the meeting and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a prejudicial interest.

***What is a prejudicial interest?***

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think is so significant that it is likely to affect your judgement of the public interest.

***What is not a prejudicial interest?***

The Code of Conduct sets out a small number of exceptions. Check with the Monitoring Officer if you are in any doubt.

***What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?***

If you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting, you must leave the room. You cannot take part in discussions on that matter or try to improperly influence anyone's decision on the matter.