



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All Wards

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Standards Committee

28th January 2004

**Standards Board for England -
Guidance regarding Declarations of Interest - Freemasons**

Report of the Service Director (Democratic Services)

1. Purpose of Report

To advise Members on the advice of the Standards Board for England in relation to Members declarations concerning membership of the Freemasons.

2. Report

In the past, the questions of whether or not Elected Members should declare their membership of the Freemasons has been guided by a ruling of the Ombudsman. In summary, that ruling was that Members should declare an interest where a matter under consideration related to someone in the same Masonic Lodge as the Elected Member.

Following clarification of information to the Standards Board for England by the Masonic movement, the Standards Board have issued the following guidance:

- Membership of charities or bodies directed to charitable purposes must be registered in the register of interests in accordance with paragraph 14(c) of the Code of Conduct. As advised by the United Grand Lodge, when Freemasons pay their annual subscription fee to their respective lodges, part of the fee goes automatically to the Freemasons Grand charity. Therefore, Freemasons must register members of their freemason lodge on the register of members interests and declare when appropriate their membership as a personal or prejudicial interest before or during council meetings.

Several Members of the City Council have already declared their membership of Freemasons using the Council's Voluntary Declarations part of the Register (which is additional to the statutory provisions). It is not known, however, whether any other Members belong to the Freemasons.

It is, therefore, recommended that the attention be drawn, by letter, to all Members of Council, including co-opted members, regarding the guidance now produced by the Standards Board for England.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- i) Note the guidance on Declarations of Interest by Freemasons produced by the Standards Board for England; and
- ii) Endorse that the attention be drawn, by letter, to all Members of Council, including co-opted members, regarding the guidance now produced by the Standards Board for England.

4. Financial and Legal Implications

No financial implications. Legal implications are contained within the report.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	NO	
Policy	NO	
Sustainable and Environmental	NO	
Crime and Disorder	NO	
Human Rights Act	NO	
Elderly/People on Low Income	NO	

5. Report Author

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