



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Chief Executives
Principal Local Authorities in England
Greater London Authority
Fire and Rescue Authorities in England
The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
The Broads Authority
National Park Authorities in England
Council of the Isles of Scilly

20 September 2013

Dear Chief Executive,

**OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY ON PERSONAL INTERESTS:
A GUIDE FOR COUNCILLORS**

I enclose a copy of the revised plain English guide for councillors on openness and transparency on personal interests, and a copy of a revised illustrative text for a code of conduct for members and co-opted members of local authorities, both of which the Department has today published on its website.

The guide gives straightforward information about how councillors should be open and transparent about their personal interests. It has been revised with new guidance making it clear that councillors should treat Trade Union membership as a personal, non-pecuniary interest. The illustrative code has been revised to reflect the same guidance.

Where a councillor is sponsored by a Trade Union, this constitutes a disclosable pecuniary interest and as such must be registered and declared. The guide now makes it clear that membership of a Trade Union constitutes a personal interest which should be registered and declared. The Government believes that this new guidance will give local people the confidence that their councillors are putting residents' interests before their own and before those of any particular group. I should be grateful if you would please draw the guide and this correspondence to the attention of your monitoring officer.

Yours sincerely

Paul Rowsell

Paul Rowsell
Deputy Director - Democracy
Department for Communities and Local Government
3/J1, Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU
Tel 0303 44 44166

Email paul.rowsell@communities.gsi.gov.uk