

# THE CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS' ON THE REVIEW OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

## Background

1. At the outset of its review, the Committee agreed that all Members should be given the opportunity to comment on any revisions to the standing orders and guidance arising from the review.
2. A consultation paper outlining the Committee's findings and recommendations was circulated to all Members at the end of the summer term. Members were given until 29<sup>th</sup> September to respond on the following substantive issues and more generally:
  - The requirement placed upon Members by number 1 of the general principles of the Annex to standing order 4 to state the value of their registered interests - paragraph 4 of this paper.
  - The provisions in respect of indirect interests - paragraph 12 of this paper and Section 2 of the Annex refer.

## Response

3. In response to the original note and a couple of reminders, one reply was received. The reply endorsed the Committee's proposal to remove the requirement to register/declare the value of the interests disclosed. It also invited the Committee to consider "whether advice should be given to Members that they should also keep a record of those invitations involving substantial expenditure which are declined by the Member".

## Conclusion and Next Steps

4. In the absence of any views to the contrary, the way is now clear for the Committee to seek to implement its recommendations. The action emanating from the recommendations is at Annex 1.
5. The Committee is invited to note and to agree that the Secretariat take forward the action detailed in the Annex.

## *Secretariat*

ACTION ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

**Registration of Interests**

- 1) To remove the requirement in part I of the Annex to Standing Order 4 to register/declare values of financial interests
- 2) To incorporate the supplementary guidance into the main guidance on registration and declaration of interests.

**Registration in Practice**

- 1) To strengthen the main guidance on registration and declaration of interests to incorporate the supplementary messages that the Committee has issued.

**Declaration of Interests**

No change

**Declaration of Interests in Practice**

1. To redraft the guidance to clarify precisely what is required, incorporating the additional material from the supplementary guidance issued by the Committee earlier in the year.

**Prohibition of Voting, The paid Advocacy Rule, Penalties for Non-compliance**

No change

**Private Members' Clubs**

No action

**Indirect Interests**

- 1) To undertake a fundamental review of the indirect interest requirement, with a view to reporting back to the Assembly with its proposals before the end of the calendar year. The review will involve full consultation with Members.

**The Neill Report**

N/A

### **Changes to Arrangements for Submission of Register Entries**

1) To incorporate the changes to standing order 4, to allow Members to submit register entries by post or via AMSS rather than (solely) in person, into the main guidance on registration and declaration of interests.

### **General - Guidance for Members**

1) To prepare a quick pocket-reference guide (double-sided, bilingual) for distribution to Members.