

Item no

Report to: **Standards Committee**
Date: **13 February 2007**
Report of: **Monitoring Officer**
Subject: **Request for Dispensation from Haswell Parish Council**
Ward: **Haswell**

1 **Purpose of the Report**

To consider a request for dispensation from the obligation to declare prejudicial interest at Haswell Parish Council when considering business which affects the Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnership and the Haswell Community Association.

2 **Consultation**

I attach a copy of a letter from Mike Preston, Clerk to Haswell Parish Council dated 12 November 2006 which he submitted after discussion with me relating to the need for dispensation.

3 **Background**

From time to time Haswell Parish Council considers items of business affecting the Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnership and the Haswell Community Association. Four of the nine members of Haswell Parish Council are also involved in the management of those two organisations. The quorum to conduct business is three but in the event of illness or unavailability of those members with no involvement in the Partnership or Association then the declaration of interest could well lead the Council unable to progress its business due to the lack of the quorum.

It is not considered likely that any of the four Councillors, Councillor Cook, Councillor Kell and Councillors Mr and Mrs Liversidge are likely to receive any personal gain from decisions which affect the Regeneration Partnership or the Community Association.

Relevant Authorities Standards Committee (Dispensations) Regulations 2002 permit the Standards Committee to grant dispensation in those circumstances if they consider that the transaction on the Councils business would be impeded as a result of the Code of Conduct and if all the circumstances of the case they consider it appropriate to grant dispensation. It is quite likely that when the code is amended the proposed new category of public service interest may render this kind of request unnecessary. In the meantime though it is important that the Council are unable to conduct their business without unnecessary delay under the present regime.

4 **Implications**

Policy

None.

Financial

None.

Legal

None.

Risk

The Parish Clerk and I are satisfied that granting dispensation to permit the Parish Council members to participate in decisions or matters involving Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnerships and Haswell Community Association is thoroughly justified.

Communications

None.

Corporate Implications

None.

Equality and Diversity

None.

Procurement

None.

Electronic Service Delivery

None.

5 **Recommendation**

The Standards Committee is recommended to grant dispensation for the four named members to participate in debate and decisions concerning Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnership and the Haswell Community Association.

Background Papers

Letter application dated 12 November 2006 from the Parish Clerk at Haswell Parish Council