



AGENDA ITEM: 14

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

16th June 2008

CODE OF CONDUCT

**Report by Colin Everett,
Clerk to the Authority**

Purpose of Report

- 1.** To present to Members the new model code of conduct for members and co-opted members of the Authority issued by the Welsh Assembly Government on 21 April 2008 and to seek its adoption to replace the previously adopted code of conduct.

Background

- 2.** The Welsh Assembly Government has passed an Order (The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008 - SI 2008 No. 788), following consultation with County/County Borough, Fire and Rescue Authorities, National Park Authorities, Town and Community Councils and other bodies, to introduce a new model code of conduct for members and co-opted members of those authorities to replace the previous model code which was introduced in 2001. A circular letter was issued to all relevant authorities on 21 April by The Local Government Policy Division of the Welsh Assembly Government with the new model code.



Background *(continued)*

- 3.** All relevant authorities are required to pass a resolution to adopt the new model code before 20 September 2008, to ensure that copies of the code are made available for public inspection, to publish in one or more newspapers in circulation in the operational area of the authority that the code has been so adopted and to forward a copy of the code and the resolution to the office of the Public Services Ombudsman.

Information

- 4.** The new model code of conduct is attached.
- 5.** All members and co-opted members will be required to sign a declaration that will abide by the new code once it has been adopted by the authority. The new code also requires a new Register of Members' Interests to be maintained. Accordingly, within 28 days of the adoption of the code by the Authority, or within 28 days of the election or appointment of members subsequently, members must register their financial and other interests in the register which will be maintained by the Monitoring Officer. Additionally, members must register any new personal interests, or changes to previously registered interests, within 28 days of the interest occurring or changing by writing to the Monitoring Officer. The Code also requires any gifts, hospitality and material benefits or advantages received, over a threshold which the Authority itself is permitted to set, to be notified in writing to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of their receipt. It is recommended that the threshold for registration be set at £25. Once the new code is adopted members will not be able to operate as members of the Authority (e.g. in decision-making or representative capacities) until they have signed their declaration. The Clerk will present the new code at the meeting and invite questions to ensure that all members are conversant with the new code.



Recommendation

- 6.** That the Authority:
 - 6.1** adopts the new model code of conduct for members and co-opted members and all such members be required to sign a declaration that they will abide by the new code
 - 6.2** The threshold for the registration of any gifts, hospitality, material benefits or advantages received be set at £25.