

Rt Hon. Elin Jones MS, Llywydd

By email

3 March 2025

**Registration and Declaration of Interest Inquiry**

Dear Llywydd,

The Standards of Conduct Committee ('the Committee') is currently undertaking an Inquiry into the Registration and Declaration of Interests. Following a public consultation and consideration of the ways in which other parliaments in the UK manage their respective registers, and how the Senedd compares to best practice elsewhere, the Committee is proposing a number of changes to the registration requirement for the Seventh Senedd.

The Committee would welcome your views on the proposals, which are listed below. In addition to yourself, the Committee agreed to consult with Members of the Senedd, the Chief Executive and Clerk and the Standards Commissioner on the proposals it is considering. The paragraph references listed are where the relevant supporting information can be found in the supporting paper.

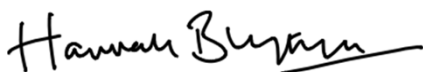
1. **Remuneration** - Merging categories 1, 2, 3 and 5 into one broad category to capture all forms of Members' remunerated employment, while retaining the current level of information required. (paragraphs 10-29)
2. Adding a provision to Standing Order 4 to enable the recording of time involved in a one-off registerable activity, by providing the time spent on that specific activity. (paragraphs 10- 30)
3. Revising Standing Orders and the guidance to require Members to register the amount of remuneration received for each registerable activity. (paragraphs 10-31)
4. **Gifts, hospitality etc**—Lowering the threshold for registering gifts and hospitality is too high, given it doesn't capture many common types of gifts and hospitality and is the highest of the UK parliaments. (paragraphs 32–43)
5. Changing the rules to bring the Senedd into line with other parliaments, by requiring Members to provide a value or estimated value for gifts received. (paragraphs 32-44)
6. **Overseas visits** - Changing the rules to bring the Senedd into line with other parliaments, by requiring Members to provide a value or estimated value for any overseas visits. (paragraphs 49-60)
7. Proposing that 'visits paid for wholly by an institution of the European Union or by a political group of the European Parliament' be removed from the list of exceptions for the registration of overseas visits, In light of the UK's departure from the European Union. (paragraphs 61-62)
8. **Land and property** - Changing the rules so that Members need to specify whether a property is being registered on account of its value, the income derived from it, or both. (paragraphs 63-76)

9. Specifying that Members should state if they are a registered landlord with Rent Smart Wales. (paragraphs 63-77)
10. **Shareholdings – Publishing** information regarding which category (absolute value or percentage of total) shareholdings fall under. (paragraphs 78-86)
11. **Membership/chairmanship of bodies in receipt of Senedd Commission or Welsh Government funds** - Amending the title of this category to better reflect what needs to be registered. (paragraphs 87-90)
12. **Employment of Family Members** - Removing the reference to employing members of a Member's own family. (paragraphs 91-99)
13. Either removing the requirement under Standing Order 3 to provide the name of the family member who is employed, or retaining that requirement but amend Standing Orders to allow for the name not to be published at the Member's request. (paragraphs 91-100)
14. **General – Publishing** the date on which an entry is registered or amended. (paragraphs 106-118)
15. Requiring Members to provide a date on which a change occurred, which will also be published. (paragraphs 106-119)
16. Introducing a new 'voluntary' category for the purpose of enabling Members to record any financial or other interests that they wish to put in the public domain, but which aren't captured by any of the compulsory categories under Standing Order 2. (paragraphs 120-127)
17. Changing the initial registration period in the Senedd to four weeks, for consistency with the requirement for updates during a Senedd. (paragraphs 128-130)
18. Fixing the thresholds in the Senedd's rules at the start of a Senedd, to provide greater certainty to Members of the thresholds that apply for the duration of a Senedd (paragraphs 131-133)

If agreed by the Committee, these changes will require a combination of changes to the Senedd's Standing Orders, the Guidance on the registration, declaration and recording of financial and other interests, the form prescribed by the Presiding Officer under Standing Orders 2.2, 3.6, 4.6 and 5.4, as well as new resolutions of the Senedd. The Committee will write to you and the Business Committee setting out its proposals for change once the inquiry is completed. The Committee will also soon be considering the rules on declaring interests, and will write to you again at that time.

The Committee would welcome any views you may have on the proposals above at this point, **and would appreciate any response by 28 March 2025. Please also feel free to discuss these matters with myself and other members of the Committee.** Officials will be holding drop-in sessions with Members during this period to give them the opportunity to raise any sensitive issues or queries in confidence.

Yours Sincerely,



Hannah Blythyn MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.