

## Councillors Chronicles No.7 – Register of Interest

With two new councillors on board, Laura and Andrew, it's great to have a full complement of councillors once again after several years of being under-strength. However, as it happens, we will be seeking a new councillor in the New Year as Annie will be stepping down. We're sorry to see Annie go, she's done a great job, but it does create an opportunity for a new person to join the parish council, and play a part in creating a friendly and helpful community, bringing people together and supporting each other when needed.



One of the first duties of a new councillor is to complete a Register of Interests form. Dorset Council decided some time ago to replace the paper forms with a digital on-line service with the benefits of “giving greater flexibility to elected members and ease of use and far less hassle for Clerks”. The new system was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> October and councillors have until 31<sup>st</sup> October to submit their registers.

The Register of Interests is a safeguard to ensure councillors are transparent in declaring their pecuniary interests, which could potentially give rise to a conflict when a particular issue comes before the Parish Council, eg. a planning application or awarding a contract. The key categories are employment, contracts and land (including your home) but covers a range of other categories. It also applies to a spouse/civil partner with whom you live.

Every councillor must make a declaration and it must be kept up to date and accessible for all the time a councillor is in office. The Councillors Register of Interests will be available to the public to view on the Dorset Council website <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/>.