Appendix 1 to Agenda item B2

“The Importance of Being Earnest”

A DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST PROJECT

for the Association of Inshore Fisheries & Conservations Authorities

Association of IFCA

by Your Clerk LLP

June 2026

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Spring 2026, AIFCA commissioned Your Clerk LLP to undertake this project, to strengthen the consistency, transparency and defensibility of how Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) in England manage declarations of interest, with consideration to the use of dispensations where Members' expertise is valuable, but conflicts must be properly managed.

This work is based on the recommendation of the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (DeFRA), from its conduct and operations report.

As public bodies operating within local government standards and wider statutory duties, IFCAs must be able to demonstrate robust governance arrangements that support lawful decision-making and maintain public confidence.

Your Clerk LLP commenced a structured consultation with those persons undertaking the role of "Clerk" for each IFCA, supported by a review of relevant legislative requirements and the standing orders and documentation used across the various authorities.

The consultation highlighted variations in role definitions, training provision, record-keeping practices and publication of Registers of Interests. This evidence informed practical guidance and a decision-making framework intended to be adopted consistently across IFCAs.

KEY FINDINGS (summary)

1. Inconsistent governance practice
2. Limited external transparency
3. Training is uneven
4. Role clarity gaps
5. Dispensations are used but not routinely
6. Risk to decision defensibility

RECOMMENDATIONS (summary)

1. Standardise the form used for making declarations
2. Standardise the form used to apply for dispensation
3. Use individual forms to maintain a summary register (for both interests and dispensations)
4. Standardise the format of the summary 'Register of Interests' for publication
5. Improve external scrutiny by publishing the summary register
6. Embed consistent reporting, recording and in-meeting practice
7. Implement structured training and induction for all Members and Clerks
8. Adopt clear decision-making frameworks (for both interests and dispensations)
9. Clarify the IFCA Clerk's role
10. Consider the use of technologies and the future of governance

EXPECTED BENEFITS

Implementing these recommendations will help the IFCAs to:

1. Demonstrate compliance with applicable standards.
2. Reduce the risk of challenge around regulatory decisions (including bye-law-making).
3. Strengthen public confidence through clearer, more transparent management of interests, while still enabling Members to contribute valuable sector expertise appropriately and lawfully.

ABOUT AIFCA & IFCAs

The AIFCA supports the work of the ten Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) in England, helping to ensure they operate effectively, lawfully, and transparently in their regulatory roles. IFCAs are committees, or joint committees, of local government established to manage and conserve England's inshore marine resources.

IFCAs comprise a mix of members, including general members appointed for their expertise in marine management, fisheries, and the coastal environment. Operating as public bodies, IFCAs are subject to Local Government Acts and related standards of conduct, including the requirement for members to declare any interests that might influence their decisions. These declarations are particularly important in relation to regulatory matters, such as the making or enforcement of local bye-laws.

IFCAs are local authority funded, with its primary duties set out within the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009). In summary, sections 153 and 154 require the IFCA to:

A. **Manage the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in its district. In doing so it must:**
   1. Seek to ensure that the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way.
   2. Seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation.
   3. Take any other steps which in the authority's opinion are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development.
   4. Seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district.

B. **Seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) in the district are furthered.**

IFCAs are required to perform duties in regard to a number of other regulations, including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

IFCA CONSTITUTION

Each IFCA should comprise a maximum twenty-one Members, as follows:

- **Nine Council Members** (appointed by each relevant council, numbers per council may vary)
- **Ten General members** (appointed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO); and, at least one employee of the MMO)
- **Two Additional Members** (one from the Environment Agency; the other from Natural England)

The remainder of the membership and this is made up of people from the local community who are familiar with the needs and opinions of their local marine and fishing community, and those with knowledge or expertise in marine environmental matters.

Members are appointed for between three-to-five years and can be appointed again for a second or third term; or, have their appointment extended, up to a maximum of ten-years. The MMO reserves the right to further extend an appointment by justification of exceptional circumstance or through re-engaging current or former Members through a fair and open recruitment process, where applications are considered alongside other applications. Members are appointed on merit to ensure a fair balance of sectoral representation.

IFCA MEETINGS

IFCAs meet quarterly and require a quorum of at least six Members; comprising at least one Council Member and at least one General Member. Persons who have specific experience and knowledge pertinent to discussions or decisions can be invited to join a meeting at the discretion of the Chair and may be invited to speak at meetings but will have no vote.

IFCA VISION

To lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.

ABOUT YOUR CLERK LLP

Founded in 2011, Your Clerk LLP provides independent, qualified and confidential Governance Professional services for schools and multi-academy trusts (MATs) across the UK. We began by "*filling-the-gap*" in local authority services; and, since March 2020, Your Clerk LLP has been operating a 100% virtual service, enabling us to support an increasing number of governing boards, all over the country.

School governance is evaluated during an OfSTED inspection under the "*Leadership & Management*" section of the framework. In England, for both local-authority-maintained schools and MATs, it is a statutory requirement that School Governors and Trustees must declare any business, financial, and/or personal interests that could influence their decision-making.

Within the education sector, these declarations must be recorded in a formal Register of Interests, which MUST be published on the School's (or Trust's) website. The expectation is that all School Governors and Trustees complete a declaration of interests form at the start of every academic year; and, again, whenever there is a change to an individual's circumstances.

Your Clerk LLP uses secure, robust online systems to provide a user-friendly and compliant experience for volunteers, including training and annual statutory processes, such as the completion of the annual declarations. As well as fulfilling the traditional "*Clerk*" role of arranging and attending governing body meetings, we also offer advice and guidance to help our clients achieve great governance. You can find out more at www.yourclerk.org.uk.

SARAH BROADFOOT – MANAGING DIRECTOR & FOUNDING MEMBER

Originally from the Northwest of England, Sarah graduated Bristol Business School with an honours degree in Business Administration; then, moved to London to begin her career as a Projects Executive for a trade federation, representing the UK electronics industry. At the end of 2001, she moved to Dorset, where she supported the Borough of Poole with the creation of a new social housing management company under the government's ALMO scheme.

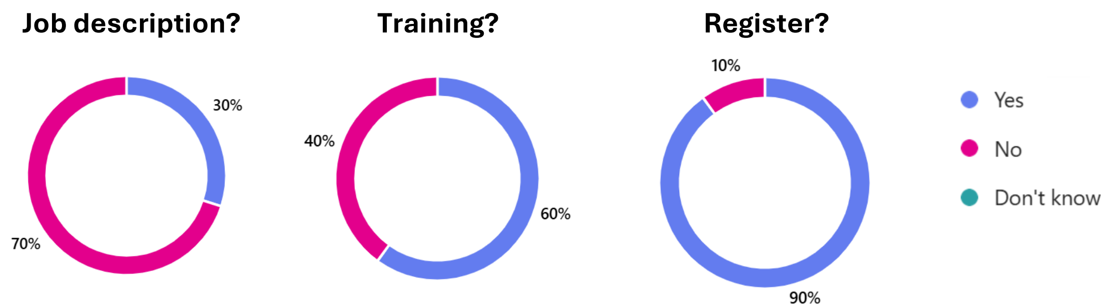
Poole Housing Partnership Ltd became a Top 100 Best Company, and her work was repeatedly cited as "*national best practice*". In 2009, Sarah expanded her skill sets into broadcast journalism, television and film, which as a freelancer, afforded her many interesting experiences, as well as opportunities for travel. She now lives in Purbeck with her partner and rescue dog; and enjoys cinema, good food and wine. You can find out more at www.sarahbroadfoot.me.uk.

CONSULTATION

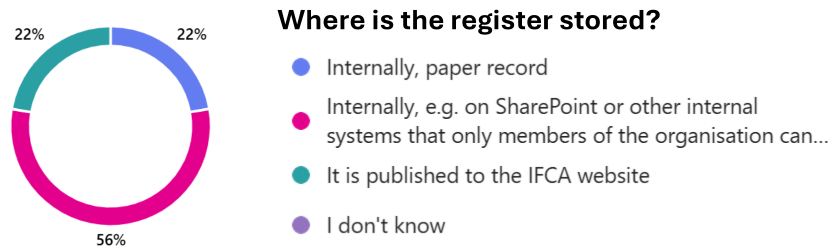
We engaged as many of the IFCAs as possible to participate in this project, meeting with representatives from 90% of the IFCAs. The meetings were highly informative, giving a "*real-world*" perspective of what it is like to serve as Clerk to the IFCA, and oversight of each IFCA's approach to managing Members' declarations of interest.

In addition to the meetings, we issued a questionnaire to all ten IFCAs, which received a 100% response rate. From this consultative research, we found a great deal of variation across the ten IFCAs with their arrangements for a Clerk, with only two respondents (20%) declaring their job role as "*Clerk*".

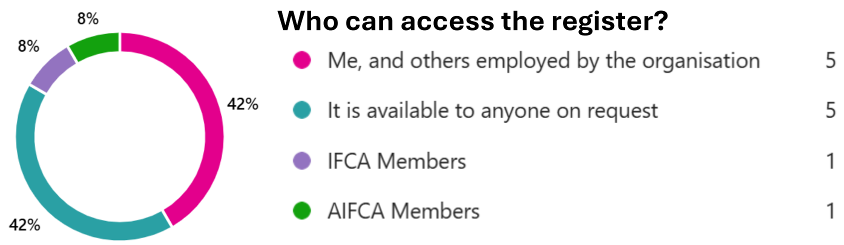
When we asked those who serve as Clerk to the IFCA, if they have a job description for "*IFCA Clerk*", 70% said, "*no*". When we asked if they had received any training about business and pecuniary interests, 60% said, "*yes*". 100% replied that their IFCA collects business and pecuniary interest declarations for its Members; however, not all of them maintain a register of these declarations, with one IFCA not having a register at all.



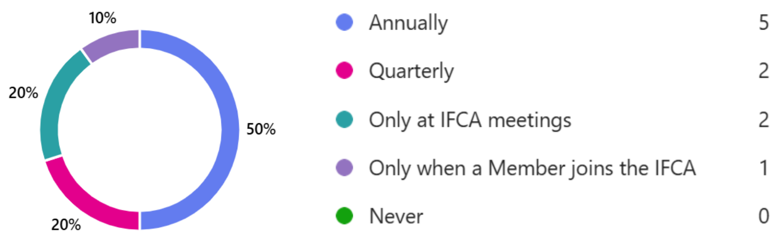
We asked those who serve as Clerk to the IFCA, where is the register of business and pecuniary interests declarations for your IFCA stored? The majority of IFCAs (56%) who maintain a register of interests, store it internally, e.g. on *SharePoint* or other internal systems that only members of the organisation can access. 22% are still using paper records, and only 22% publish the record to the IFCA's website, so it is available for external scrutiny.



When we asked about who can readily access the IFCA's register of interests, generally, the register is treated as an internal document and only shared on request.

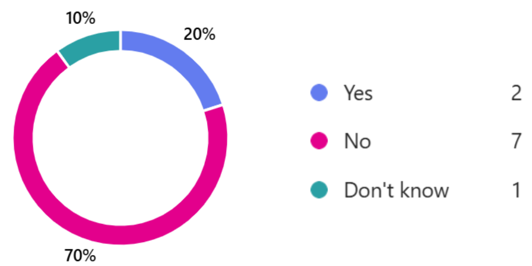


We asked how often IFCA Members are asked to update and review their business and pecuniary interests declarations, and responses varied, with only 50% having an annual process in place.



When polled, 100% of IFCAs confirmed having an item on each meeting agenda for interest declarations, and 100% think it is either "*important*" or "*very important*" for IFCA Members to declare any interests, with 90% feeling that it is "*very important*".

DISPENSATIONS



Just 20% of IFCAs reported having seen instances where Members needed to apply for **dispensation.** Here is what those two IFCAs said:

Eastern IFCA

"All written dispensations are done in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, for a maximum of four-years, and aligned with the General Member's term of appointment. Most are to enable the Member(s) to participate in discussions but, not to vote.

"One also allows an employee of a non-government organisation (NGO) to vote. For commercial fishermen, we work on a species basis i.e. if they fish for; or, have any financial interest in a species, they must have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) dispensation in order to participate in discussions. If they don't have such an interest, the Member is free to discuss and vote."

Devon & Severn IFCA

"*We have used a number of dispensations. The most recent related to a Member who is a Company Director, operating a mussel farm within the IFCA's district. An item on the meeting agenda was to discuss a proposal to remove mobile fishing gear vessels from the area of the farm.*

"Other farms in the IFCA's district suffered significant damage in previous years, costing c.£650,000, and were afforded similar protection previously. In-line with the IFCA's Standing Orders, the Clerk issued the Member with a dispensation to engage in the debate on the matter but, the Member was not granted voting rights for any motion put forward by other Members."

KNOWLEDGE TEST

In order to test the knowledge of those who serve as Clerk to the IFCA, around declarations of interest, we posed several questions, to which respondents could *"agree"* or *"disagree"* with; or, have *"no opinion"* on. 100% agreed that:

1. IFCA Members should declare their employer(s) and job title(s).
2. IFCA Members should declare if they are the owner, Director and/or shareholder of a company or organisation.
3. If an IFCA Member is unsure about whether or not to declare a business and pecuniary interests, they should do so anyway.
4. IFCA Members must make a declaration when they might profit or benefit financially from the IFCA's activities or contracts.
5. IFCA Members would benefit from training on business and pecuniary interests.

90% agreed and 10% had no opinion that IFCA Members should declare if they serve on any other board, e.g. charity, professional body, local authority. 70% agreed and 30% had no opinion about IFCA Members declaring the same interests for "*connected persons*" e.g. spouse, civil partner, children, or close relatives living in the same household.

80% agreed and 20% had no opinion that there should be a sanction(s) for IFCA Members who knowingly withhold a declaration of interest; or, provide false information. While 80% were confident with how their respective IFCA handles business and pecuniary interests, 10% disagreed and a further 10% had no opinion. Surprisingly, 20% agreed that IFCA Members with a business and/or pecuniary interest can vote on a matter that pertains to the interest(s) they have declared. 90% of respondents would welcome training on business and pecuniary interests but, 10% disagreed.

EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

We asked the IFCAs to provide an example(s) of a business and pecuniary interest(s) that was declared by an IFCA Member that has to be managed, to ensure there was no conflict of interest for a decision(s) to be taken, i.e. what was declared, what was the implication of it, and what was done. 50% replied as follows:

Southern IFCA

"Member had a pecuniary interest in five-year review of lease beds (the IFCA rents lease beds to this Member for aquaculture purposes). The previous Constitution didn't allow for the Member to be present during discussions on the matter; so, the Constitution was subsequently changed to allow for a Member to contribute to discussions that aid other Members in making an informed decision but, have no voting rights."

Sussex IFCA

"We have had instances when MMO appointees have had a direct business financial interest (i.e. pecuniary and prejudicial interest) in fishing activities for which fisheries management regulations (IFCA byelaws) are developed and introduced. For example, restrictions on netting activities within sensitive inshore locations, such as river mouths and natural harbours.

At the commencement of the meeting (under a specific agenda item) relevant Members declared they had an interest in the matter under consideration (a named agenda item report). Following guidance regarding declaration of interests, the individual was not allowed to vote on; or, to propose alternative report recommendations on the matter. The Member was allowed to participate in meeting discussions, given that all Members had been made aware of their declaration. Their appointment to the IFCA was made on the basis of their expertise on this aspect of inshore fishing."

Nothumberland IFCA

"Most recently, a commercial fisherman at the beginning of a meeting declared an interest in the management of a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) within the IFCA district he regularly uses. The membership was to consider how trawling within the site should be managed based on evidence provided by Officer's reports, taking into account statutory duties as well as conservation advice from Natural England.

"Ahead of the meeting, the Clerk discussed the agenda item with the Chair and agreed the fisher could remain in the meeting as his contribution to the debate was relevant; however, he was required to abstain from voting at the decision. The declaration was recorded in relation to the agenda item the fisher participated in the discussion and was advised he would not be eligible to vote on the decision.

"Another recent example was a discussion regarding honorarium payments for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair; this matter was discussed at a Finance Committee meeting. Only the Chair attended; so, the interest was declared at the beginning of the meeting and when the meeting reached that agenda item, the Chair removed herself from the meeting, enabling Members to discuss the matter. The Chair returned to the meeting when Members had agreed the position. This was recorded in the minutes of the meeting."

Devon & Severn IFCA

"*Out of sixteen General Members, there are three commercial potting fishermen on the Authority. Members considered whether to consult on a range of possible management measures that would affect the pecuniary interests of all three members, to different degrees. The Clerk determined that it was appropriate for all three Members to engage in the discussion and vote on the proposal that would go forward to formal consultation.*

"The three Members represented different sized vessels and businesses, reflecting the range of interests of the one-hundred and twenty other commercial potters that operated in the District. Following consultation, Members had to decide what, if any, management measures to introduce. At this meeting and stage of the process, the three Members were provided with dispensations to engage in the discussions but not to vote."

Kent & Essex IFCA

"We don't get many declarations of interest as we don't have many active fishermen on the Authority. The only ones active is for a Member who works for a shellfish company; and, another who owns an angling shop; both declare these at relevant meetings i.e. the budget item. Interests are declared through the register of interests form."

We asked all the IFCAs to provide an example(s) of where a business and pecuniary interest(s) went undeclared by an IFCA Member, and to explain any issues this caused, as well as any mitigating action. 20% replied, as follows:

Southern IFCA

"Pecuniary interests don't tend to happen. General Members, particularly fisherman, tend to over declare, which is likely due to lack of understanding about agenda item i.e. often, they don't read the agenda before the meeting. Regarding business interests, one example if when an IFCA byelaw was ratified by the government, a group of fisherman were extremely unhappy due to the byelaw restricting their fishing activity. The fisherman were aware of the original request from another government organisation for the IFCA to develop the byelaw, and felt that due to this bias, the relevant representative on the Committee shouldn't have been able to vote on the byelaw decision.

"When the Chief Officer came into post, around this time, she tracked back all of the relevant meetings over a five-year period, at Working Group and Committee level, and fortunately found that either a declaration had been made (with no detail, just that it was captured in the minutes for an agenda item); or, there was non-attendance by this organisation on days of decision-making, which in hindsight, was likely purposeful to protect that organisation and its employees.

"The Chief Officer introduced 'Organsiational Interests' into the Constitution shortly after to ensure that governance could not be called into question in the future. This also served to protect Members moving forward, to avoid any suggestion of abuse of process in byelaw making process.

"I am not sure how other Government Organisations who sit on our Joint Committees prepare their officers for their role on the IFCA Committee; so, training for 'organisational interests' would be just as important as the General Members understanding pecuniary interests."

Sussex IFCA

"The Clerk was aware that a Member did not declare a relevant interest in respect to decisions concerning the development of a byelaw. However, it did not cause an issue as there was unanimous support for the report recommendations voted upon; therefore, the vote was not influential. Subsequently, the individual Member was reminded of the guidance for declaring interests in a face-to-face conversation. The interest was in regard to management of potting activity within a marine protected area. The Clerk was present at the meeting, and considered, given the nature of the individual Member, that any intervention would disrupt the meeting unnecessarily."

Finally, we asked all IFCAs to tell us about anything else they feel is relevant to this project. Here is a summary of the feedback we received:

1. Advice and support from a governance professional (Clerk)
2. Job description and training for the IFCA Clerk
3. Separation of the Chief Officer's role and the Clerk's role
4. Induction training for new Members
5. Clearer guidance for new Members about declaring interests
6. Training and guidance for new, and existing, Members
7. Recruitment of fishing sector representatives
8. Fisherman hate paperwork! Accessible examples rather than a policy document
9. Central location for all declarations, including General Members and Elected Members
10. Clarity around voting rights for Members with a pecuniary interest

LEGISLATION

As part of our research, we consulted the following legislation:

- Local Government Act (2000)
- Localism Act (2011)
- Marine & Coastal Access Act (2009)
- Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations (2017)

Local Government Act 2000

This Act established a new "*ethical framework*" for local government in the UK, fundamentally changing how members' interests were handled before many of these provisions were later superseded by the Localism Act 2011. The key parts of the Act pertaining to declaration of interests are:

1. Mandatory Register of Interests (Section 81)

The Act placed a statutory duty on the monitoring officer of every local authority to establish and maintain a register of interests for its members and co-opted members.

- Public Access: Authorities were required to ensure the register was available for public inspection at their offices.
- Publicity: Councils had to publish a notice in local newspapers stating that the register was available for viewing.

2. Incorporation into the Code of Conduct (Sections 50 & 51)

Unlike previous legislation, the 2000 Act integrated the registration and declaration of interests directly into a statutory Code of Conduct.

- Model Code: The Secretary of State was empowered to issue a "*model code*" containing mandatory provisions regarding interests that all local authorities had to adopt.
- Personal and Prejudicial Interests: The framework introduced these categories, requiring members to disclose "*personal interests*" at meetings and, in more serious "*prejudicial*" cases, to withdraw from the room and not vote.

3. Standards Committees (Sections 53 & 54)

The Act made it mandatory for principal authorities to establish a Standards Committee.

- These committees were tasked with promoting high standards of conduct and advising members on how to follow the Code of Conduct, including rules on declaring interests.
- Standards Committees were given the powers to grant dispensations to Members, allowing them to participate in meetings where they would otherwise be barred due to a declared interest(s). Please also refer to the Section on Dispensations (page 17).

4. Enforcement and Investigation (Sections 57–66)

The Act created a centralised enforcement body, the *Standards Board for England*, to oversee the system.

- Ethical Standards Officers (ESOs) investigated written allegations if a Member had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, e.g. failing to declare a relevant interest.
- Less serious cases could be referred back to a local authority's Monitoring Officer for investigation and determination by the Standards Committee.

5. Decriminalisation (a historical distinction)

The Act abolished the criminal offence for failing to register or declare pecuniary interests that had existed under the Local Government Act 1972. Non-compliance became a matter of professional misconduct rather than a crime, a position that was later reversed by the Localism Act 2011, which reintroduced criminal penalties for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Localism Act 2011

This Act fundamentally reformed the standards of conduct for local government in the UK by abolishing the central Standards Board and introducing a decentralised system for declaring interests. The key provisions regarding the declaration of interests are found in Part 1, Chapter 7 of the Act, as follows:

1. Mandatory Register of Interests (Section 29)
Each local authority must maintain a register of interests for its members and co-opted members. The register must be available for public inspection and published on the authority's website.

2. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (Sections 30 & 31)
The Act introduced a specific category called Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs). Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of these interests within 28-days of taking office.

- DPIs include interests held by the Member, their spouse, or civil partner (if they live together).
- Defined by the *Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012*, categories include:
  1. **Employment:** Any job, trade, or vocation carried on for profit.
  2. **Sponsorship:** Payments toward election expenses or duties.
  3. **Contracts:** Current contracts between the Member; the council; or, the Authority.
  4. **Land/Property:** Any beneficial interest in land within the council and/or Authority's operating area (including their home address), i.e. District.
  5. **Securities:** Shareholdings in a body with a place of business in the District exceeding £25,000 or a 1% share of the total capital.

3. Restrictions on Participation (Section 31)
If a member has a DPI in a matter being considered at a meeting:

- They must disclose the interest at the meeting.
- They are strictly prohibited from participating in any discussion or voting on the matter.
- The council's standing orders may also require them to leave the room entirely during the discussion.

4. Sensitive Interests (Section 32)
If disclosing an interest could lead to the member or a connected person being subjected to violence or intimidation, they can apply for it to be treated as a "*sensitive interest*". In such cases, the details are excluded from the public register, although the Member must still disclose that an interest exists at meetings.

5. Criminal Offences (Section 34)
Crucially, the Act made certain failures a criminal offence. This includes:

- Failing to register a DPI within 28-days of taking office.
- Participating in or voting on a matter where a DPI exists.
- Knowingly or recklessly providing false or misleading information.
- If convicted, A Member may face a fine and disqualification from office for up to five-years.

6. Dispensations (Section 33)
Authorities may grant written dispensations allowing members with a DPI to participate or vote for up to four years in limited circumstances, such as if the council's business would otherwise be impeded or if it is in the interests of local residents. Please also refer to the Section on Dispensations (page 17).

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)

These regulations do not contain a general code of conduct or declaration of interest regime for officials, similar to the Localism Act 2011. Instead, it focuses on procedural obligations for "*competent authorities*", to ensure that decisions are impartial and based strictly on scientific evidence rather than private or conflicting interests.

1. Duties of Competent Authorities (Regulation 7)
A competent authority is defined broadly to include any minister, government department, public body, or person holding public office. Under the Regulations, these authorities have a legal duty to exercise their functions to comply with the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives. This implies that decisions must be made according to the statutory conservation objectives rather than the personal interests of those making the decision.

2. Impartiality in Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
When a competent authority conducts an Appropriate Assessment (Regulation 63), it must:

- Consult *Natural England* and have regard to its representations.
- Have scientific objectivity, i.e. the assessment must be based on "*the best scientific knowledge in the field*". This creates a legal standard that can be challenged in court if a decision appears to have been influenced by bias or external interests rather than ecological data.

3. Overriding Public Interest (Regulation 64)
In rare cases, where a project may harm a protected site, it can only proceed for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI).

- The interest must be "*public"* and *"overriding*" (e.g. human health, public safety, or primary environmental benefits).
- The appropriate authority must be transparent and publish its opinion on whether IROPI exists, ensuring it allows for public scrutiny of the interests being prioritised.

4. False Statements and Licenses (Regulation 59)
While not a declaration of interest in a political sense, there is a specific offence regarding the provision of information, because it is a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement or representation for the purpose of obtaining a wildlife license. This ensures that applicants, who may have a financial interest in the outcome, provide truthful data to the licensing body.

Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

This Act includes specific provisions for declaring interests, primarily to ensure the transparency and impartiality of the bodies it created, i.e. the MMO and/or the IFCA. The key parts of the Act pertaining to declarations of interest are:

1. Marine Management Organisation (Schedule 1)
As an independent body, the MMO must manage conflicts of interest among its leadership to maintain public trust.

- Under Schedule 1, Paragraph 3, before appointing a Member, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that the person has no financial or other interest likely to prejudice their functions as a Board Member.
- Appointed members have a continuous duty to disclose any such interests that arise during their term.
- The Secretary of State may remove a Member from office if they are satisfied the Member has an interest that is prejudicial to their duties.

2. Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (Section 151)

This Act replaced *Sea Fisheries Committees* with IFCAs. Because IFCA Members often include active fishers and stakeholders, the Act requires clear governance of their interests.

- Under Section 151, the MMO appoints members to these authorities who have "*local knowledge or expertise*" in fisheries or marine conservation.
- While the Act expects Members to have commercial or recreational interests in the sea, they are subject to the Standing Orders of their IFCA, which must include rules for declaring these interests during meetings and voting.

3. Coastal Access Objections (Section 296 & Schedule 19)

When *Natural England* proposes a new coastal access route, certain persons with a relevant interest in the land can object.

- Under Section 296, anyone making a formal objection to a coastal access report must state their interest in the land (e.g. owner, tenant, or occupier).
- Inspectors or "*appointed persons*" hearing these objections must be impartial. Their appointment can be challenged; or; terminated, if a conflict of interest is identified that could bias the outcome of the access dispute.

4. Marine Licensing and Planning (Parts 3 and 4)

While Parts 3 and 4 do not explicitly list "*declaration*" steps for the public, they impose transparency obligations on the decision-makers:

- Under Section 101, the licensing authority must maintain a public register of marine licenses. This allows the public to scrutinise who has been granted rights to use the marine environment and identify potential conflicts of interest in those decisions.
- The Act mandates consultation with statutory bodies (e.g. *Natural England*) and the public, ensuring that competing interests are declared and balanced openly before a marine plan or license is approved.

Under the Act, IFCA Members are required to act objectively in the public interest, rather than as an advocate for their own businesses. While the Act explicitly populates committees with experts from the fishing community, their ability to vote on matters affecting their own livelihoods should be strictly controlled by DPIs and the Standing Orders.

1. General Prohibition on Voting

Usually, Members with a pecuniary interest are prohibited from participating in any decision that directly or indirectly affects their income, e.g. employment, a trade, or a profession carried out for profit.

- Members with such interests may often still speak in-meeting, to provide specialist knowledge or representations (as would a member of the public) but, the Member must then withdraw before the formal debate and vote.
- Before any discussion, members must declare the nature of their interest. Failure to do so can lead to termination of their appointment by the MMO.

2. Use of Dispensations

Because IFCAs rely on the expertise of active fishers, many use dispensations under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to allow participation that would otherwise be barred. A dispensation may allow a member to discuss a matter but still not vote, or it may allow both. Please also refer to the Section on Dispensations (page 17).

3. Exclusions from the Rules

Certain standard authority functions are generally exempt from these restrictions, including:

- **Annual Budget:** All Members are entitled to vote on the setting of the Authority's annual budget, even if they have other pecuniary interests.
- **Administrative Decisions:** Routine procedural votes that do not have a direct financial impact on a Member's specific business operations do not usually require abstention and withdrawal.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

A business or pecuniary interest is any interest that could result in personal financial gain or benefit from decisions made by the Authority. This includes situations where you, or someone you are closely connected to (such as a family member), could profit or benefit financially from the IFCA's activities or contracts.

Examples of business or pecuniary interests:

- Owning or working for a company that supplies goods or services.
- Being a partner, director, or shareholder in such a company.
- Having a close relative or partner who owns or works for a business that deals with the IFCA.
- Receiving payments for services provided to the IFCA (other than as a member of staff).

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Having a business or pecuniary interest can affect, or be seen to affect, your ability to make impartial decisions in the best interests of the Authority. That's why all Members must declare these interests and ensure they are recorded in the register of interests. **If you're ever unsure whether something counts as a business or pecuniary interest, it's best to declare it.**

Conflicts of interest arise when you have any interests that may affect, or be seen to affect, your ability to take decisions that are impartial and in the best interests of your IFCA. These may arise from personal relationships, business or financial activities, or involvement in the governance of another organisations. Each Member must declare:

1. Any relevant business, or pecuniary, interests
2. Governance roles in other organisations and/or charities
3. Interests that arise from close personal relations
4. Directorships, partnerships and employment with businesses

POTENTIAL INTERESTS DURING MEETINGS

In addition to declaring interests for inclusion on the register of interests, you have an obligation to declare any potential conflicts of interest during meetings. Before every meeting, there should be an opportunity for every Member to disclose to the Clerk, the Chair or Chief Officer any interests they have that are related to items on the agenda.

If a Member declares an interest for a specific agenda item at a meeting, they should withdraw from the meeting for the relevant item(s) of business and not vote on the matter(s). If there is any doubt as to whether Member should withdraw, the matter can be decided by a majority of those present and eligible to vote, with guidance from the Clerk.

As a minimum, a **Conflicts of Interest Policy** should:

1. Define conflicts of interest
2. Explain that Members have a responsibility to declare conflicts of interest
3. Explain what your governing document(s) says about conflicts of interest
4. Define all interests that Members should declare, including business and personal interests and those of their spouse, partner, family and close relatives
5. Define Member benefits and highlight the requirement to get legal authority before carrying out any transaction involving a benefit
6. Include guidance on the procedures to follow when a Member has a conflict of interest
7. Set out how and by whom the policy will be monitored and enforced
8. Be widely communicated and understood within your Authority
9. Be part of a wider policy framework (e.g. a Members' Handbook and Code of Conduct)

WHAT ARE THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES?

Established in 1995 by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, following concerns about misconduct in government, the Seven Principles of Public Life apply to all public office-holders, including Members of Parliament (MPs), civil servants, and those delivering public services. They are crucial for ensuring high standards of conduct and fostering trust. The Nolan Principles influence and feature in Codes of Conduct across various public organisations.

1. **Selflessness**: Acting solely in the public interest.
2. **Integrity**: Avoiding improper obligations.
3. **Objectivity**: Making impartial, evidence-based decisions.
4. **Accountability**: Submitting to necessary scrutiny.
5. **Openness**: Being transparent in actions and decisions.
6. **Honesty**: Being truthful.
7. **Leadership**: Modelling and promoting these values.

DISPENSATIONS

Because IFCAs rely on the expertise of active fishers, dispensations may be used under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to allow participation that would otherwise be barred. Under the Act, in limited circumstances, the Authority may grant a written dispensation, valid for up to four-years, allowing a Member with a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) to participate in meeting discussions, and/or to vote on a matter.

Effectively serving as an exception to the usual rules, when applied for and agreed, a dispensation allows a named individual to have a temporary right to partially participate in a meeting, either with or without voting rights, i.e. the dispensation may grant a Member the ability to remain the meeting for discussion and to give information but, they won't be able to vote.

Usually, when taking decisions and attending an IFCA meeting, a Member should apply for dispensation if their declaration of interest would prevent the Authority from functioning. For example:

1. too many Members at the meeting have a declared an interest, and all of them would have to abstain from the vote, making the Authority non-quorum; thus, legally unable to proceed; or,
2. the Member has specific knowledge that is vital to the discussion (although they may still be barred from voting); or,
3. to maintain political balance.

Members who are also local authority Councillors may also apply for dispensation is the matter for decision at the Authority's meeting impacts local residents.

Where an IFCA elects to offer dispensations to Members, it should request the completion and submission of a Dispensation Request Form to the IFCA Clerk as soon as the interest becomes apparent; or, at least 28-days prior to the scheduled meeting date where the dispensation would apply. The Clerk determines if a dispensation qualifies for a recommendation to the Authority for it be granted or not, and should be satisfied that it meets the criteria, with consultation to the IFCA's Register of Interests. Please also refer to Appendix 2.

SPECIFIC FINANCIAL CATEGORIES THAT MUST BE REGISTERED

Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, there are seven specific financial categories that Members must register for themselves **and** their partners. These categories, covering interests held by the Member or their partner, are defined in the regulations as:

1. **Employment, Office, Trade, Profession, or Vocation:** Any activity carried on for profit or gain, including employment, business partnerships, and directorships.
2. **Sponsorship:** Payments or financial benefits received within the 12-month period for expenses or duties, excluding those from the Authority.
3. **Contracts:** Any contract for goods, services, or works made between the Authority and the Member, their partner, or a body in which they have a beneficial interest, that is not fully discharged.
4. **Land:** Any beneficial interest in land or property within the Authority's area, including home ownership or tenancies.
5. **Licenses:** Any license (alone or jointly) to occupy land in the area for 28-days or longer.
6. **Corporate Tenancies:** Any tenancy where the council or Authority is the landlord and the tenant is a body in which the Member (or their partner) has a beneficial interest.
7. **Securities:** Beneficial interests in shares or bonds of a body with a place of business or land in the District, if the total value exceeds £25,000 or 1% of the share capital.

RECOMMEMDATIONS

Under paragraph (29) of the Localism Act 2011, Southern IFCA are required to establish and maintain a Register of Members and Co-opted Members Interests, which is available for inspection and published on the Authority's website. This excludes any interests which fall under the definition of "*Sensitive Information*", which would be discounted under the Data Protection Act, including personal data and legally privileged information.

It is important to reiterate to Members the potentially criminal consequences of non-compliance, so that all Members return their declaration forms within 28-days of receipt, each and every year. Because your operating year is April-March, **we suggest issuing the declaration form to <u>all</u> Members on the first day of April each year, with a request for its completion within 28-days.**

Under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, there are specific financial categories that councillors and Members must register for themselves and their partners:

1. Employment, Office, Trade, Profession, or Vocation
2. Sponsorship
3. Contracts
4. Land
5. Licenses
6. Corporate Tenancies
7. Securities

These categories, covering interests held by the Member and/or their partner, should be clearly outlined in the guidance provided for the completion of declaration forms, as well as the formatting of the form itself and the published Register of Interests that summarises the information provided by Members.

Throughout our research, we found some inconsistences across the IFCAs with how interests are recorded, collated and shared in the public domain:

1. **Inconsistent governance practice:** while all responding IFCAs collect interests declarations, approaches to maintaining a formal register, the level of detail captured, and how information is collated vary significantly. **We suggest having a standard format for the data capture form and the Register of Interests, which can be used by all IFCAs**
2. **Limited external transparency:** where registers exist, they are commonly treated as internal documents (e.g. stored on *SharePoint*) and only shared on request; comparatively few publish a register for external scrutiny. **The question we posed to all the IFCAs was, "*if the document is only available internally, to a limited number of people, how does one know about a Member's interests?*". In order to correctly do the job, the Clerk and the Chair must have access to this data. Plus, not having a register equates to non-compliance with the Authority's governing legislation.**
3. **Training is uneven:** training on business/pecuniary interests and related decision-making is not universal, despite strong support for it among respondents. **We suggest having an annual training plan that includes induction for Clerks and new Members, and utilising online resources that enables training to be accessible "on-demand", as well as scheduling live group sessions throughout the year.**
4. **Role clarity gaps:** the "*Clerk*" function is not consistently defined across the IFCAs; many do not have a dedicated job description, which can leave governance controls dependent on individual capacity and experience. **We suggest consulting current postholders, with a view to providing a standardised, consistent job description for the IFCA Clerk that is**

accurate no matter which IFCA they represent. Please see Appendix 3 for an example draft document.

5. **Dispensations are used but not routine:** some IFCAs report dispensations being required, commonly to allow participation in discussion but not for voting; practice and thresholds differ across authorities. The Eastern IFCA grants a dispensation based on the species targeted by the fisher. This ensures the Member can vote on general matters but, is only precluded from voting on regulations specifically affecting their own targeted species; or, financial gain. **Where an IFCA feels it necessary to utilise dispensations, we suggest following the process already being used by the Eastern IFCA, with consideration to the guidance Section on page 17.**
6. **Risk to decision defensibility:** a minority view that Members with declared interests can vote on matters affecting those interests indicates an ongoing need for clearer, consistent guidance and training. **We suggest providing clear guidance to Members, via training resources and annual repetition, to ensure all IFCAs operate a consistent approach to declarations of interest, and to solidify Members' understanding of its importance. These message should also be reinforced by consistent resources and training opportunities for IFCA Clerks, Chairs and Chief Officers.**

As a result of our research, we recommend the following:

1. **Standardise the Register of Interests** using a consistent set of fields and definitions (including connected persons where applicable) to support comparability and completeness.
2. **Use the individual forms to maintain the summary Register of Interests**, update every April and whenever changes occur, to reduce ambiguity and improve usability. The annual process can be better supported by the use of online systems for form completion and collation. Each IFCA should maintain a publicly available register of Members' interests to ensure transparency.
3. **Improve external scrutiny** by publishing the summary Register of Interests on IFCA websites (with appropriate handling of sensitive information) so it is accessible to the public.
4. **Embed consistent meeting practice** to ensure every IFCA meeting agenda includes a standing item for declarations of interest linked to the agenda, with clear minute-taking requirements and explicit handling i.e. withdrawal, abstention and/or dispensation conditions.
5. **Implement structured training and onboarding** for all Members (and relevant officers), supported by practical examples and plain-language materials that reduce unnecessary complexity.
6. **Adopt a clear decision-making framework** for identifying, categorising and managing conflicts (including when dispensations may be appropriate), so Chairs and Clerks can apply a consistent, defensible approach. Please see Appendices 1 and 2 for our drafts.
7. **Clarify the Clerk role** through an agreed role description to reduce organisational risk and support continuity. See Appendix 3 for our draft.

TRAINING IS FUNDAMENTAL

A key recommendation from this project is training. Training for Members and for Clerks. Within the education sector, the role of Clerk has been elevated over the past decade, to acknowledge the legal advisory function within its remit. For example, usually, the Chair of the meeting would have the final say on whether a Member's declared interest is significant enough to bar them from a vote, and ideally, would have support from a Governance Professional (Clerk) to help the to make an assessment.

Hence, training for the Clerk, to ensure they are equipped with the correct legislative and administrative knowledge to support Members, and the Chair, both in and out of meetings, is imperative. As well as devising a training plan for Members, it is equally important to have one for the IFCA Clerk, who should serve as a non-partisan "*Guardian of Governance*" for your organisation.

IFCA Members are required to act objectively in the public interest, rather than as an advocate for their own businesses. Therefore, it is imperative that Members adhere to the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life, and this should universally feature in all AIFCA training.

VIRTUAL GOVERNANCE

While virtual governance has become a standard and established practice across the UK education sector, the Local Government Act 1972 remains as a legal barrier to IFCAs for holding remote meetings in England. Because the IFCAs were established by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, they are treated as local government committees; so, the Local Government Act 1972 governs how the Authorities must meet.

Currently, IFCA meetings must take place in person to be lawful because a meeting that is "*open to the public*" requires physical access, giving the public the right to attend. However, change may be afoot. In June 2025, the UK government consulted on primary legislation to permanently give English local authorities the flexibility to allow remote attendance and proxy voting. The consultation received almost six-thousand responses, with 86% in support of remote attendance.

This desire to embrace virtual governance was highlighted in several conservations with the IFCA representatives, particularly for those covering vast areas and wishing to improve meeting attendance and quorum rates, as well as recruitment and retention of voluntary Members.

We believe that there are many benefits to utilising virtual governance, including:

- increased security and compliance;
- more efficient and effective use of volunteers' time;
- clearer audit trails and reduced risk of human error;
- reduced carbon footprint and environmental impact; and,
- attracting new volunteers and retaining existing ones, wherever they are in the world.

We are proud to have pioneered virtual governance practices; so, when the time comes, and you wish to know more about operating a virtual governance model, Your Clerk LLP would be happy to assist AIFCA with further information, guidance and advice.

WHAT *CAN* BE DONE ONLINE?

While the legal restrictions mean that meetings cannot currently be held virtually, there is nothing to prevent the IFCAs using other online tools to help streamline processes, to become more effective and efficient.

1. **Training** to include user-friendly video guides, as well as documentation.
2. **Completion and collation of forms** the advent of online form completion and e-signing systems has enabled greater efficiencies with process that can often be seen as mundane and time-consuming, e.g. *Microsoft Forms, Dropbox Sign*.
3. **Summary 'Register of Interests'** publishing this to the IFCA website is a "*quick-win*" to achieve greater compliance.
4. **Online portal** to store and share key documents with Members securely and consistently, e.g. Code of Conduct, Members' Handbook, Expenses Claim Form, Dispensation Request Form, policies, minutes, agenda, etc. to help them in their voluntary role.


7-Steps to Great Governance:
Our Recommendations
1. Standardise Formats
Forms and registers
2. Summary Register
Interests & dispensations
3. Consistent Reporting
Recording & in-meeting practice
4. Member Training
Induction & development
5. Decision Frameworks
Clear decision-making
6. Clerk's Role
Clarify role & training
7. Future Technologies
The future of governance!
Building Better Governance

CONCLUSION

earnest

/ˈəːnɪst/
adjective
describes someone very honest, sincere and serious, who show deep conviction in their intentions.

The IFCA Code of Conduct provides the rules that Members must adhere to, but earnestness provides the spirit with which they should operate, as a collective, decision-making Authority. An earnest Member does not seek to technically avoid a declaration; they act with integrity.

It is important that Members avoid the appearance of bias, questioning, **what would a "*fair-minded and informed observer*" conclude from how a Member conducts themselves on behalf of the IFCA?** Being earnest means putting yourself in the shoes of that observer; recognising that even if *you* believe you can remain objective, the *appearance* of a conflict is enough to damage the Authority's reputation.

While making a declaration of interest; or, applying for dispensation, is the formal mechanism, being earnest is the character trait that ensures the mechanism is used effectively to protect the integrity of the Authority.

When applying for a dispensation, Members must explain why it is in the public interest for them to speak despite a conflict. An earnest application to join the Authority should be transparent about any conflict(s) while clearly demonstrating how their participation benefits the District it serves.

As shown in the decision-making framework, the test for a non-registerable interest is whether a member of the public, knowing the facts, would *reasonably* think a Member's judgement is impaired. Without earnestness, a Member might downplay a friendship or a past business link. In being earnest, a Member is honest about the strength of that connection, even if it's not a legal requirement to declare it, to avoid any perception of bias.

In the context of serving in public office in England, being earnest is the fundamental principle that makes a declaration of interest meaningful rather than just a "*box-ticking*" exercise. In being earnest, IFCA Members should declare an interest because they genuinely want to ensure the public's trust is maintained.

APPENDIX 1 DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK (FLOWCHART) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Phase 1: Identification (The "Objective Test")

Q1. Do you; a close family member; or, a close associate have a connection to the matter and/or party being discussed?

YES
Go to **Q2**

NO
No action required

Q2. Could a reasonable member of the public, knowing the facts, perceive that this connection might influence your judgment or objectivity?

YES
You have a conflict of interest.
Go to **Phase 2**

NO
Declare for transparency only.
You may likely participate after making a *"transparency statement"*

Phase 2: Categorisation & Assessment

Q3. Does the matter affect your financial position; or, that of a person connected to you?

NO
Go to **Q4**

YES
You have a financial or pecuniary interest.
Formal declaration is mandatory.
You MUST NOT participate in the decision.

Q4. Does it relate to a personal relationship; a voluntary role; or; an outside loyalty interest?

NO
Go to **Q5**

YES
Declare the nature of the interest to the Clerk. Go to **Phase 3**.

Q5. Are you a Councillor; a Trustee or Governor for any other public body; or charity; a member of a political party or trade union; and/or, do you hold any unpaid Directorships?

NO
Go to **Q5**

YES
Declare the nature of the interest to the Clerk. Go to **Phase 3**.

When in doubt, declare it!

Phase 3: Action & Management

This management plan is designed to help determine the participation level of an individual who has declared an interest, based on the severity of it.

Full Participation	**Partial Participation**	**Abstention**
Member interest is deemed low-risk and minor. **May vote.**	Member may stay for discussion and to give information. **May NOT vote.**	Member MUST leave the room entirely for that agenda item. **May NOT vote.**

DECLARE EARLY

Members should disclose the existence and nature of the interest as soon as it is identified, ideally before the meetings and certainly before any procurement begins and/or action is taken. Transparency is the primary tool for protecting both your professional integrity and the Authority's reputation.

KEEP A RECORD

Members should complete and submit to the Clerk a Declarations Form every year, and each time there is an update to it. The Clerk should ensure that all declarations are recorded on the published Register of Interests, as well as in the minutes of the meeting, if that is where the matter was raised.

Why?

Mitigation

You should declare any interests in order to protect the ethical standards and governance of the Authority, to ensure its decisions are made transparently, without bias; and, based on merit, rather than personal gain for any Member.

When?

Be Proactive

You should declare any interests:

- within 28-days of your appointment and again **every April**
- at the start of meetings
- as soon as your circumstances change

What?

Be Specific

You should declare any interests:

- by describing the nature of it
- by describing your relationship to it
- e.g. my brother owns a shellfish business

How?

Use the Form

You should declare any interests:

- by using the form provided
- at the start of meetings
- to the Clerk or the Chief Officer

APPENDIX 2 DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK (FLOWCHART) DISPENSATIONS

Use this flowchart to assess if you are eligible to apply for dispensation.

Q1. Do you have at least one Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (PDI) from the **seven financial categories*** that Members must register for themselves **and** their partners?

- **YES** Go to **Q2**
- **NO** No action required

Q2. Does your declaration of interest impact on a decision to be taken at the next Authority meeting?

- **YES** Go to **Q3**
- **NO** No action required

Q3. Would your non-participation in the next meeting prevent the Authority from functioning, e.g. would not be quorate; or, do you have specific knowledge that is vital to the discussion?

- **NO** Go to **Q4**
- **YES** You are eligible

Q4. Are you a local authority Councillor?

- **NO** No action required
- **YES** Go to **Q5**

Q5. Does the agenda item and/or decision to be taken at the next Authority meeting impact local residents?

- **YES** You are eligible
- **NO** Return to **Q3**

*THE SEVEN FINANCIAL CATEGORIES

1. Employment, Office, Trade, Profession, or Vocation
2. Sponsorship
3. Contracts
4. Land
5. Licenses
6. Corporate Tenancies
7. Securities

If you are eligible to apply for dispensation you should submit the **Dispensation Application Form** to the IFCA Clerk as soon as the interest becomes apparent; or, **at least 28-days** prior to the scheduled meeting date where the dispensation would apply. The Clerk will determine if a dispensation qualifies for recommendation to be granted or not, and should be satisfied that it meets the criteria, with consultation to the IFCA's Register of Interests.

The Clerk will notify you if your dispensation is granted, and the duration for which it applies, i.e. for one meeting; or for any other period up to a maximum of four-years. The Clerk or Chair will declare the agreed dispensation(s) at the start of the IFCA meeting.

APPENDIX 3
DRAFT ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR IFCA CLERK

Knowledge and understanding

1. Know the features of effective governance, and the Authority's governance structure and core functions
2. Understand their role as set out in legislation and the Authority's articles of association
3. Understand key national education policies and the local education context in which the Authority is operating
4. Know the Authority's duties under legislation and statutory guidance
5. Understand the importance of the Authority adhering to and promoting its internal procedures
6. Understand the Authority's governance structure, including legal structure and constitution and scheme of delegation
7. Understand the principles of records management and have working knowledge of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act
8. Understand the Authority's accountability to and relationship with other bodies (e.g. Defra, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Natural England, the Environment Agency)
9. Know the Authority's code of conduct and strategic priorities
10. Understand the Authority's culture, values and ethos
11. Know which information about performance and financial management will be used by the Authority to hold leaders to account
12. Know the requirements of local legislation and company law
13. Know the Authority's funding agreement(s) and articles of association
14. Know the Standing Orders

Administration

1. Check that meetings are quorate, and if not, provide appropriate advice on how to proceed
2. Establish and maintain efficient procedures for meetings, sharing documents in a timely manner
3. Promote the use of project management tools (including risk registers) to support the Chair
4. Make sure that Authority papers are clear and accurate, and that minutes capture discussion points and actions
5. Challenge the Authority if meetings are not conducted in a proper or orderly manner
6. Support the Chair in identifying priorities and upcoming issues when planning meetings
7. Evaluate administrative procedures to ensure effectiveness, and adapting these where necessary
8. Prepare thoroughly for meetings and ensure that outstanding action points are acted on
9. Maintain or help maintain accurate registers (e.g. register of interests)
10. Make sure any corporate seals are kept safe
11. Establish and administer procedures for filling vacancies on the Authority
12. Keep a record of Members' attendance
13. Understand the principles of confidentiality and apply this to their own work and that of the Authority
14. Have an eye for detail and excellent proofreading skills
15. Use technology effectively to streamline the Authority's processes
16. Communicate information clearly, logically and impartially by using a range of presentation methods as appropriate
17. Have a systematic approach to managing documentation and other records that meets legal requirements for records management

18. Have excellent time management skills
19. Remain calm and maintain a high standard of work under pressure

Advice and guidance

1. Provide appropriate information for the Authority and check the credibility of sources
2. Update the Authority on changes to legal or statutory requirements
3. Access third-party guidance on behalf of the Authority where necessary
4. Inform the Authority about training and development opportunities
5. Provide clear, logical and impartial advice to the Authority
6. Clearly explain difficult concepts, including information on the Authority's legal duties
7. Understand the principles of conflicts of interest, and be able to advise the Authority on managing and avoiding these
8. Understand how and when to escalate concerns where there is non-compliance or suspected misconduct
9. Speak out where the Authority; or, individual Members, is overstepping its strategic role or is not following the code of conduct

People and relationships

1. Build effective professional relationships with the Authority, external contacts and others
2. Use appropriate influencing skills to gain the Authority's confidence
3. Establish effective channels of communication with the Authority, the local authorities within the IFCA's district(s) and any external contacts and partners
4. Contribute to discussions about the design of governance committees and structures
5. Advise the Authority when Members' terms of office are due to end, and assess the effect this will have on the Authority's constitution, skills mix and compliance
6. Establish and facilitate transparent procedures to fill vacancies
7. Help the Authority to create a culture in which challenge is welcomed
8. Support the Authority when carrying out self-evaluation exercises
9. Remain committed to improving your own performance and that of others involved in governance, taking advantage of opportunities to attend training and development

REFERENCES, SOURCES & CREDITS

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5. hubulu.com Ltd
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9. IFCA Constitution
10. IFCA Declarations Forms from Cornwall IFCA; Devon-Severn IFCA; Eastern IFCA; Isles of Scilly IFCA; Kent & Essex IFCA; Northeastern IFCA; Northumberland IFCA; Northwestern IFCA; Southern IFCA; and, Sussex IFCA.
11. IFCA Dispensation Request Form
12. IFCA Induction Pack
13. IFCA Marine Species Guide
14. IFCA Members' Handbook
15. IFCA Organisational & Staffing Handbook
16. IFCA Proxy Voting Guidance
17. IFCA Scheme of Delegation
18. IFCA Standing Orders
19. IFCA Statutory Instrument
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21. Local Government Act (2000)
22. Local Government Act 1972
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25. Oscar Wilde
26. Oxford English Dictionary
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Throughout March and April 2026, we also undertook online meetings with representatives of Cornwall IFCA (Mark Walker and Simon Mansell); Devon-Severn IFCA (Mat Mander); Eastern IFCA (Julian 'Greg' Gregory); Kent & Essex IFCA (Kay Goldsmith); Northeastern IFCA (Stephen Hunt and David McCandless); Northumberland IFCA (Mark Southerton); Northwestern IFCA (Catherine Silverwood); Southern IFCA (Pia Bateman); and, Sussex IFCA (Tim Dapling). Thank you to everyone who gave their time and expertise.

Association of IFCA