



Briefing paper: Changes to publication of Councillors' home addresses

Background

A change in legislation means that local authorities, including parish and town councils must no longer automatically publish councillors' home addresses on their public Register of Interests (ROI).

The change came into effect on 29 June 2026 and applies to elected and co-opted members. A councillor's home address will now only be published if they specifically ask for it to be made public. This is achieved through the insertion of Section 32A into the Localism Act 2011.

Why has this changed?

This has been introduced to improve the safety of councillors and their families.

Previously, a home address could only be removed from the public register if it met the criteria for a "sensitive interest". The new legislation changes this approach so that the removal of a home address is now the default position.

The aim is to maintain transparency around councillors' interests while reducing the risk of personal information being unnecessarily available.

What information is still available?

Councillors are still required to declare relevant interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other interests required under the Code of Conduct.

Where a home address is withheld, the ROI should make clear that the interest has been declared, such as "Home address withheld under Section 32A of the Localism Act 2011".

The full address continues to be held securely by the relevant authority for legal and governance purposes.

What does this mean for Thurston Parish councillors?

The change applies to any public version of the ROI, whether published on the Parish Council website or District Council's.

Where the ROI is published by the District Council, it is the responsibility of the District to ensure that councillors' home addresses are withheld from public view, in line with the new legislation.

The Clerk has confirmed with the District Council that councillors' addresses are in the process of being removed as per the new legislation and this is expected to be completed in time for the Full Council Meeting.

Actions required

- Members to review ROIs published publicly
- Ensure future updates to the ROI follow the new legislation
- Liaise with District Council where necessary to ensure published ROIs are updated if necessary
- Ensure councillors understand the change, and that home addresses are no longer automatically shared

Summary

This Government change does not reduce transparency or remove the requirement for councillors to declare their interests and maintains public access to information about relevant accountability.

It provides a greater level of protection for councillors, their partners and families, by ensuring their home address is not routinely placed in the public domain.

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