

## Manchester City Council

### Report for Resolution

**Report to:** Standards Committee – 2 November 2023

**Subject:** Update report on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for Elected Members

**Report of:** Strategic Head of Human Resources

---

#### Summary:

The purpose of this report is to give an update on the process for elected members to complete Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and the follow-up work that has been carried out by the Human Resources Organisational Development and Transformation (HROD&T) Compliance Team to ensure completion of the checks. This follows the decision made by full Council' in 2018 that a criminal record check should be carried out for all elected and co-opted members who undertake "saved" regulated activities in line with the Council's Corporate Parenting Responsibilities in safeguarding children, young people, and adults.

#### Recommendation:

To support the proposals set out in Section 5 of this report in order to make the process as straightforward as possible for elected members and assist with the completion of the outstanding checks.

---

#### Wards affected - All

---

**Financial considerations – Revenue:** The cost of a basic check is £18.  
The cost of an enhanced check is £38.

**Financial considerations – Capital:** None

---

#### Contact Officers:

Name: Leigh Page  
Position: Head of HR Operations  
Telephone: 0161 219 3494  
E-mail: leigh.page@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Heather Graham  
Position: Strategic Head of Human Resources  
Telephone: 0797 398 1523  
E-mail: heather.graham@manchester.gov.uk

---

**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

None.

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 It was agreed by the Council in 2018 that an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check with a check of the barred lists (where appropriate) is to be carried out for:

- all members of the Executive
- all members of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- all members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee or
- all members of the Health Scrutiny Committee

1.2 and all other members that are not included in the above, agree to complete a Basic DBS disclosure check.

1.3 The Compliance team in HROD&T monitor and process the DBS checks for members. 96 elected members require an Enhanced or Basic DBS check.

1.4 Newly elected members including members changing designations are contacted to complete a DBS check.

1.5 The Compliance team send follow-up/reminder emails periodically to prompt Councillors who have not completed a DBS check.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 A list of elected members who require a DBS is sent to the Compliance team from the Members Services Office. Members are contacted by email to notify them that a DBS check is required for their role. The DBS applications are completed online, therefore a link is sent by email to the respective Councillor. This includes instructions on how to complete the application, the identification documents required as part of the check, and a Frequently Asked Questions document providing information about the process.

2.2 Those elected members who have existing DBS clearance with Manchester City Council and are at the correct level of check are not required to complete a new one.

2.3 A new DBS check is required if a member changes role from one committee to another one that requires a different level of DBS check.

2.3 There are two steps required to fully complete the DBS application.

**Step 1:** Completing an online DBS application.

**Step 2:** Producing original identity documents and attending the HROD&T Office in person with the documentation.

## **3.0 Update**

- 3.1 Out of the 96 checks required, 49 of the checks require an Enhanced DBS check and 47 of the checks require a Basic DBS check.

See the statistics below following a review and contact with the 96 Councillors.

Completed checks or in progress - 89	
83	DBS checks completed (39) Enhanced DBS check (44) Basic DBS check
6	DBS check in progress with the DBS Service

Outstanding checks- 7	
5	Have not completed an online application or provided Id documents (2) Enhanced DBS check (3) Basic DBS check
2	Have completed the online DBS application but are yet to provide ID documents for checks to be progressed (1) Enhanced DBS check (1) Basic DBS check

#### 4.0 Actions taken

- 4.1 The Compliance Team maintain a database of the list of elected members DBS checks. A DBS application link is issued, and auto reminders are sent to applicants who have not completed the form on days 3, 5, 7 and 14 to prompt them to complete the application.
- 4.2 Since an updated list was provided from Members Service in June 2022 further emails have been sent to Councillors that have not completed a check or have outstanding id documents. After a review of each member's DBS status, the Councillors that had not completed a check were escalated to the City Solicitor in May 2023. An email was sent to Councillors with outstanding checks by the City Solicitor on 5 May 2023 which resulted in one check being completed.
- 4.3 Further details of the actions that have been undertaken since June 2022 to ensure the outstanding checks are completed can be found at Appendix A.

#### 5.0 Recommendations to support with the completion of outstanding checks

- 5.1 The following proposals are recommended to make the process as straightforward as possible for elected members and support with the completion of the outstanding checks: -
- Arrange for a further email from the City Solicitor to those members who have not completed the check;

- Arrange for a telephone call from the City Solicitor to those members who do not complete the check following the email;
- For those members who do not complete the check following the telephone call arrange one-to-one meetings with the City Solicitor;
- Digital Identity verification check - Send an Identity verification link to all applicants to save travel time to attend the HROD&T office to present original identity documents (this digital option was enabled in September 2023 for all DBS checks);
- Offer one to one online or face to face support from the HROD&T Compliance Team;
- Provide a drop-in clinic set up at an office near the scrutiny meeting location;
- Arrange a mutually convenient appointment to attend the HR Office on Level 3 Town Hall Extension;
- Contact all members via telephone to check that they have received the email regarding the DBS check.

## Appendix A

Timeline since last revised list was provided in June 2022

14/06/2022	List of elected members requiring a DBS received from Members Services
26/07/2022	Supporting information received from Members Services around level of DBS required for Councillor roles
12/08/2022	Clarification of DBS requirement for Councillors following query raised by the DBS regarding level of DBS check requested for Councillors
15/08/2022	Notification of DBS requirement sent to Councillors from original list received
16/08/2022	DBS links sent to Councillors
21/10/2022	Reminder emails sent out for all outstanding checks
28/11/2022	Reminder emails sent out for all outstanding checks
15/02/2023	Reminder emails sent out for all outstanding checks
22/03/2023	Reminder emails sent out for all outstanding checks
05/05/2023	City Solicitor emailed all Councillors with outstanding checks - this has resulted in one check being completed
15/05/2023	The Compliance Team received notification that 7 Councillors have stepped down (2 of whom had completed checks in place)
14/06/2023	DBS links were resent to 9 Councillors who had not completed the online DBS application
20/06/2023	Reminder emails sent out for all outstanding checks
22/06/2023	Received information on committee members requiring Enhanced checks, including 2 new Councillors
23/06/2023	DBS links sent to new Councillors whose type of check was known. Query raised with Members Services to provide list of new Councillors requiring a basic check.
26/06/2023	New links were sent to members whose level of check had changed from basic to enhanced
18/07/2023	DBS links sent to new Councillors requiring a basic check
29/08/2023	Reminders emails sent out for all outstanding checks
30/08/2023	Received email confirmation on which committees the new Councillors were on (DBS links had been sent out in July based on information obtained elsewhere)
27/09/2023	Reminder emails sent out for all outstanding checks
14/10/2023	Reminder emails sent out from Group Officer
23/10/2023	Telephone call to Councillors who have not submitted Id checks. Id verification link sent to 3 Councillors