

Council Meeting	
Meeting Date	23 June 2026
Report Title	Update on DBS Checks
EMT Lead	Larissa Reed, Chief Executive
Head of Service	Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources
Lead Officer	Jo Millard, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That Full Council notes the update from the Standards Committee that the majority of Councillors have now submitted DBS checks in line with the resolution from a previous Council meeting.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 To provide Full Council with an update on the submission of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks by Councillors, following agreement by Full Council at a previous meeting held in October 2024.

2 Background, Context and Proposals

- 2.1 At a previous Council meeting held in October 2024, Members resolved that all Councillors should undertake a DBS check, following debate and agreement at the previous Housing and Health, and Standards Committee.
- 2.2 Officers coordinated the request for DBS checks from Members and updated the Standards Committee with progress. The Standards Committee highlighted the importance of safeguarding responsibilities, particularly in light of the potential future reorganisation of local government and the anticipated responsibilities of any new authority in respect of children's and adult services.
- 2.3 The Standards Committee received a verbal update at its meeting on 24 March 2026 regarding progress with DBS checks at which Members were advised that:
 - Two Members had been unwell and therefore temporarily unable to provide DBS checks;
 - the majority of Members had already submitted evidence of completed DBS checks
 - one Member had undertaken a DBS check as part of their employment and was in the process of providing evidence;
 - several Members had requested and received assistance with the application process; and

- it was anticipated that outstanding submissions would be completed shortly.

As of early June 2026, a total of 43 DBS checks have been completed and received.

- 2.4 Members were advised that DBS checks would typically be undertaken at the start of a Member's term of office. It was also noted that whilst the disclosure of information on a DBS check would not automatically disqualify an individual from holding office as a Councillor, appropriate risk assessments and controls could be implemented where necessary.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Council is asked to note the update from the Standards Committee.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Whilst no consultation has taken place, debate has previously taken place at the Housing and Health Committee, Standards Committee and agreed by Council.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	This proposal contributes to the community 'enabling our residents to live, work and enjoy their time safely' priority and the running the council priority.
Financial, Resource and Property	The current cost of a Basic DBS check is £21.50. There are 47 councillors and should all wish to be refunded, this would cost the Council £1010.50 every four years. There will be additional costs if new councillors are elected following by-elections. There are also the costs of staff time connected with managing the process – including viewing certificates and recording the outcome. There is additional staff time required if there are any compliance issues or if a check does reveal an offence.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022 and the Localism Act 2011.

	The Kent and Medway Adult Safeguarding Policy introduced the People in Position of Trust (PIPOT) policy which is referenced within the Swale Safeguarding Policy. Other relevant legislation linked to this proposal are the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, and the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002.
Crime and Disorder	Compliance would see a reduction in risk of any criminal convictions arising from SBC elected members.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	There are no impacts on sustainability or climate change issues.
Health and Wellbeing	If there are no conflicts with compliance this should not have any impact on the health and wellbeing of any elected member
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	There is potential that the public may be at risk if a councillor has a serious conviction that the Council is not aware of. There may be a reputational risk to the Council if a councillor is found to have a criminal conviction.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The implementation of this requirement would see a reduction in risk to wider community of Swale for an individual who has undeclared convictions which may put those at risk within certain categories within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	The Council will maintain a record of Members who have produced their basic DBS checks to the Officer appointed by the Monitoring Officer. Only the completion date and if any convictions are produced will be recorded.
Local Government Reorganisation	The Local Government Reorganisation does not currently affect the initiative as governance arrangements will be reviewed once a new authority is established.

7 Appendices

7.1 None

8 Background Papers

Link to Standards Committee meeting: [Agenda for Standards Committee on Tuesday, 24 March 2026, 7.00 pm](#)

Link to Council meeting [Agenda for Council on Wednesday, 2 October 2024, 7.00 pm](#)

Link to Housing and Health Committee meeting: [Agenda for Housing and Health Committee - now called Housing, Health and Communities Committee \(14.05.25\) on Tuesday, 5 March 2024, 7.00 pm](#)