

CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

This Code applies to you as a Member of this Authority when you act in your role as a Member and it is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

You are a representative of this Authority and the public will view you as such therefore your actions impact on how the Authority as a whole is viewed and your actions can have both positive and negative impacts on the Authority.

All Members must comply with the principles listed below:

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

INTEGRITY

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Interpretation

In this Code:-

“Meeting” means any meeting of:

- (a) the Authority;
- (b) any committee, panel, forum or working group of the Authority;

whether or not the press and public are excluded from the meeting in question by virtue of a resolution of Members;

“Member” includes a co-opted Member and an appointed Member.

General Obligations

1. When acting in your role as a Member of the Authority:

1.1 You must treat others with respect;

1.2 You must not conduct yourself in a manner which is contrary to the Authority’s duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of Members;

1.3 You must not disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where –

- (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
- (ii) you are required by law to do so;
- (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
- (iv) the disclosure is –

- (a) reasonable and in the public interest; and
- (b) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Authority; and

(c) You have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

- 1.4 You must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
2. When using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the Authority:
 - 2.1 You must act in accordance with the Authority's reasonable requirements including the requirements of the Authority's published policies;
 - 2.2 You must make sure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
 - 2.3 You must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

Interests

3. As a public figure, your public role may, at times, overlap with your personal and/or professional life and interests. However, when performing your public role as a Member, you must act solely in terms of the public interest and you must not act in a manner to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, your friends, your employer or in relation to your business interests.
4. You are required to register "pecuniary and other interests" (these will be laid out in Regulations subject to these not being sensitive). Failure to declare or register a pecuniary interest will be a criminal offence if this is done without a reasonable excuse. If you knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information about a pecuniary interest this will also be a criminal offence.
5. There will be no requirement for you to declare or register any gifts and hospitality; (subject to any future Regulations) however you must not accept any gifts in excess of £50.00 (fifty pounds).

Disclosure and participation

6. At a meeting where such issues arise, you must declare any personal and/or professional interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
7. Certain types of decisions, including those relating to a permission, licence, consent or registration for yourself, your friends, your family members, your employer or your business interests, are so closely tied to your personal and/or professional life that your ability to make a decision in an impartial manner in your role as a Member may be called into question and in turn raise issues about the validity of the decision of the Authority. You must not

become involved in these decisions any more than a member of the public in the same personal and/or professional position as yourself is able to be and you must not vote in relation to such matters.

8. You must not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of your role as a Member for the advancement of yourself, your friends, your family members, your employer or your business interests.

Pre-determination or bias

9. Where you have been involved in campaigning in your political role on an issue which does not impact on your personal and/or professional life you should not be prohibited from participating in a decision in your political role as a Member. However you must not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
10. When making a decision, consider the matter with an open mind and on the facts before the meeting at which the decision is to be taken.