

CODE OF CONDUCT OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Members' Code of Conduct is intended to promote high standards of behaviour amongst the elected and co-opted members of the council.

The Code is underpinned by the following principles of public life which should borne in mind when interpreting the meaning of the Code:-

- i. **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 benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- ii. **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.
- iii. **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.
- iv. **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.
- v. **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.
- vi. **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.
- vii. **Leadership** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. **Introduction and interpretation**

- 1.1. This Code applies to **you** as a member of South Cambridgeshire District Council ("SCDC")
- 1.2. The term "**the Authority**" used in this Code refers to South Cambridgeshire District Council.

- 1.3. **“Member”** means any person being an elected or co-opted member of the Authority and any independent person appointed by the Authority to assist with the discharge of the ethical standards functions.
- 1.4. It is **your** responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- 1.5. In this code –
- “Meeting”** means any meeting of
- a) The Authority;
 - b) The executive of the Authority;
 - c) Any of the Authority’s or its executive’s committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees;
 - d) Any of the Authority’s advisory groups and executive boards, working parties and panels.
- 1.6. In this Code “relevant authority” has the meaning given to it by section 27(6) of the Localism Act 2011.

2. Scope

- 2.1. You must comply with this Code whenever you act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting in your capacity as a Member of the Authority.
- 2.2. Where you act as a representative of the Authority:-
- (a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or
 - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

3. General obligations

- 3.1. **You must treat others with respect.**
- 3.2. You must not:-
- (a) do anything which may cause the Authority to breach the equality enactments;
 - (b) bully any person
 - (c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be:-
 - (i) a complainant;
 - (ii) a witness; or

(iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a Member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct;

(d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the Authority;

4. You must not:-

4.1. 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:-

(a) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;

(b) you are required by law to do so;

(c) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or

(d) the disclosure is:-

(i) reasonable and in the public interest; and

(ii) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or

4.2. prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

6. You must:-

6.1. not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on, or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and

6.2. when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority:-

(a) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;

(b) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and

6.3. have regard to any Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

7. When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by:-

- (a) your authority's chief finance officer; or
- (b) your authority's monitoring officer,

where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties. (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

**PART 2
INTERESTS**

8. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

8.1. You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if it is of a description specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State and either:

- (a) it is an interest of yours, or
- (b) it is an interest of:
 - (i) your spouse or civil partner;
 - (ii) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife, or
 - (iii) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners

and you are aware that that other person has the interest.

9. Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests

9.1. Subject to paragraph 11 below (sensitive interests), you must, within 28 days of:

- (a) this Code being adopted or applied by the Authority; or
- (b) your election or appointment (where that is later),

notify the Authority's Monitoring Officer in writing of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Personal Interests you have at that time.

9.2. Subject to paragraph 11 below (sensitive interests), you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new Disclosable Pecuniary Interest/Personal Interests or any change to any such interest, notify the Authority's Monitoring Officer in writing of that new pecuniary interest or change, pursuant to sub-paragraph 9.1 above.

10. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in matters considered at meetings or by a single member

10.1. If you attend a meeting and have and are aware that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered, or being considered, at that meeting, –

(a) if the interest is not entered in the Authority’s register of members’ interests, you must, subject to sub-paragraph 11.1 below, disclose to the meeting the fact that you have a Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interest in that matter. If you have not already done so, you must notify the Authority’s Monitoring Officer of the interest before the end of 28 days beginning with the date of the disclosure, and

(b) whether the interest is registered or not you must not – unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority Monitoring Officer – (i) participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; or (ii) participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting.

Single member action

10.2. If you are empowered to discharge functions of the Authority acting alone, and have and are aware that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter dealt with, or being dealt with, by you in the course of discharging that function, you must not take any steps, or any further steps, in relation to the matter (except for the purposes of enabling the matter to be dealt with otherwise than by you).

11. Sensitive interests

11.1. Where you consider (and the Authority’s Monitoring Officer agrees) that the nature of a Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interest is such that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to intimidation or violence, it is a “sensitive interest” for the purposes of the Code, and the details of the sensitive interest do not need to be disclosed to a meeting, although the fact that you have a sensitive interest must be disclosed, in accordance with paragraph 10.1 above.

12. Personal Interests

12.1. You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

(i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;

(ii) any body—

(aa) exercising functions of a public nature;

(bb) directed to charitable purposes; or

(cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union), of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;

(iii) any employment or business carried on by you;

(iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;

(v) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;

(vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);

(vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);

(viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50;

(ix) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;

(x) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;

(xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or

(b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision.

12.2. In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is—

(a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or

(b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;

(c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or

(d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

PART 3

RELATED DOCUMENTS

14. The procedures that apply in relation to any alleged breach of this Code are attached at Appendix 1.
15. The Authority's Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Planning and Licensing is attached at Appendix 2.
16. The Authority's Protocol on Member/Officer Relations is attached as Appendix 3
17. The procedures under which registration and declaration of interests are to be made are attached at Appendix 4.
18. The Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Policy:Guidance for Members is attached at Appendix 5.

DRAFT