

# Great Bealings Parish Council

## Suffolk Local Code of Conduct for Members

In accordance with S 26 to 37 of the Localism Act 2011, on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 Great Bealings Parish Council (the Council ) resolved to adopt the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct, incorporating an amendment being the insertion of Paragraph 9, for the purposes of discharging its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within its area.

Until otherwise amended or replaced by a decision of the Council, the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct set out below shall hereafter apply to all elected members and any co-opted members entitled to vote on any decisions of the council or its committees, sub committees or joint committees when acting in their capacity as a member of the Council.

### Preamble

The Suffolk Local Code of Conduct shall be interpreted in accordance with the following 7 principles of public life identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life chaired by Lord Nolan:

**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.

**SUFFOLK LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT APPLICABLE TO ELECTED MEMBERS AND CO-  
OPTEES APPOINTED TO THE COUNTY BOROUGH DISTRICT  
AND PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS IN SUFFOLK**

1. You must treat others with respect.
2. You must not —
  - (1) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010
  - (2) bully any person;
  - (3) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be—
    - (a) a complainant,
    - (b) a witness, or
    - (c) 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; or
  - (4) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority.
3. You must not —
  - (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 reasonable, in the public interest, made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or
  - (2) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law
4. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.
5. You —
  - (1) must 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
  - (2) must, 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
  - (3) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.
6. (1) 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.
6. (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

## **7. Registration of interests**

- 7.1. You must register within 28 days of becoming a member of the Council (and to notify the relevant Monitoring Officer of any changes within 28 days) any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) you may have for publication in the Register of Members' Interests . (See Appendix A to this Code.)
- 7.2. You may not at any time discharge any function or participate in any Council business or discussions, or vote on any issues that relate to or concern any of your DPIs where you are aware that you have a relevant DPI. You may not remain in the chamber or meeting room or in the public gallery when any matter that relates to any of your DPI is under discussion or debate unless you have requested a dispensation from the Proper Officer (Clerk) and the Council or relevant Committee has agreed and minuted it in advance of the relevant meeting.
- 7.3. You must register within 28 days of becoming a member of the Council (and to notify the relevant Monitoring Officer of any changes within 28 days) any non statutory Local Non Pecuniary Interests (LNPIs) set out in Appendix A to this code but you may participate in any discussions or debates relating to or concerning any of your LNPIs after the date of registration.
- 7.4. You must declare any DPIs or LNPIs to a meeting where business is relevant to those interests, including those interests that are already registered with the relevant Monitoring Officer or where registration is pending.
- 7.5. You must register, within 28 days, any gifts and hospitality of £25 or more received by you in accordance with the instructions issued within your Council by the relevant Monitoring Officer.
- 7.6. The Council's Register of Interests will be available for inspection at the Council offices by prior arrangement during normal office hours, and will be published on the Council's website.

## **8. Sensitive Interests**

You may also apply to the relevant Monitoring officer for non publication of the full details of any of your DPIs or LNPIs where you reasonably believe that publication of the details of a particular DPI or LNPI could result in your being subjected to violence or intimidation. In considering such applications the relevant Monitoring Officer shall have regard to any representations made by you in determining whether he or she considers the relevant DPI or LNPI should be treated as a Sensitive Interest and excluded from the published version of the Register of Members' Interests.

## **9. Conflicts of Interest**

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of Councillors always to act in the interests of the community by whom they were appointed.
- 9.2 A Councillor must regard themselves as having a personal interest in any matter if a decision upon it might reasonably be regarded as affecting to a greater extent than other residents the well being or financial position of themselves, a partner, relative or friend or any business carried on by such persons.
- 9.3 A Councillor with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the Council at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the beginning of the meeting or failing that at the commencement of the consideration.
- 9.4 In addition to local property ownership (which must be registered upon appointment as a Councillor) planning applications may affect a Councillor's property either adversely or beneficially or that of a connected party (as defined in 9.2 above) in such a way as to give rise to a conflict of interest.
- 9.5 Comments directly relevant to a Planning Applications should all be directed to the Clerk by email or letter and not to other Councillors personally. The Clerk will make all such correspondence

available to Councillors ahead of the Council meeting where the matter is to be discussed. Any viewings of Planning Application sites should be arranged by the Clerk and involve all Councillors.

9.6 A Councillor should be careful not to compromise themselves by the possession of confidential information that might reasonably be considered to influence their opinions or actions such that they are no longer in a position to be impartial. Such knowledge could result in the need to abstain or declare a conflict of interest in a relevant situation. You must declare if you have been lobbied and your responses to it. Lobbying includes any attempt to influence your opinion or to promote or press a particular case or matter.

**Part 1**

**Description of categories of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

- 1 Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- 2 Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred in carrying out your duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 other than from a registered political party.
- 3 Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where -
  - (1) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council and
  - (2) either:
    - (a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
    - (b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant persons has beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
- 4 Any contract which is made between the relevant person, or a body in which they have a beneficial interest, and the Council-
  - (1) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
  - (2) which has not been fully discharged.
- 5 Any beneficial interest in any land in the Council's area.
- 6 Any tenancy where to your knowledge (a) the landlord is the Council and (b) the tenant is a body in which a relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- 7 Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the Council's area for a month or longer.

**Part 2**

**Description of categories of Local Non Pecuniary Interests**

- (1) 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 the Council;
- (2) Any body-
  - (a) exercising functions of a public nature;
  - (b) directed to charitable purposes; or
  - (c) 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;
- (3) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.