

# BLAISDON PARISH COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

## 1. Introduction

Pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Blaisdon Parish Council ('the Council') has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members and co-opted members whenever they conduct the business of the council including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council.

This Code of Conduct is based on the following principles of behaviour by members:

Selflessness: you must take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. You must not do so in order to gain financial benefit for yourself, your family or friends;

Integrity: you must not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence you in the performance of your official duties;

Objectivity: in carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding of contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, you must make choices on merit;

Accountability: you are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public and must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office;

Openness: you must be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take and should give reasons for your decisions. Only when the wider public interest clearly demands it, should you restrict information;

Honesty: you have a duty to declare any personal interests relating to your public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest;

Leadership: you must promote and support these principles by leadership and example

## **2. Definitions**

- 2.1 For the purpose of this Code, a 'co-opted member' is a person who is not a member of the Council, but who is either a member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council, or a member of, and represents the Council on any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Council, and who is entitled to vote on any questions that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this Code, a 'meeting' is a meeting of the Council, any of its committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees.
- 2.3 For the purpose of this Code, and unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a member of the Council includes a co-opted member of the Council.
- 2.4 The interests listed in Appendix A are "Disclosable Pecuniary Interests", those listed in Appendix B are "Other Interests"

## **3. Members Obligations**

When a member of the Council acts, claims to act or gives the impression of acting as a representative of the Council, he/she has the following obligations:

- 3.1 To behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful
- 3.2 Not to act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory
- 3.3 Not seek to improperly confer an advantage on any person
- 3.4 To use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirement
- 3.5 Not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

#### **4. Registration of Interests**

- 4.1 Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or the member's election of the co-opted member's appointment (where that is later), he / she shall register all interests which fall within the categories set out in Appendices A and B.
- 4.2 Upon the re-election of a member or the re-appointment of a co-opted member, he / she shall within 28 days re-register any interests in Appendices A and B.
- 4.3 A member shall register any change to interests or new interests in Appendices A and B within 28 days of becoming aware of it.
- 4.4 A member need only declare on the public register of interests the existence – but not the details – of any interest which the Monitoring Officer agrees is a 'sensitive interest'. A sensitive interest is one which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead a member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation.

#### **5. Declarations of Interest**

- 5.1 If the interest is listed in Appendix A the member shall not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and shall withdraw from the meeting.
- 5.2 If the interest is listed in Appendix B, the member shall withdraw from the meeting unless he wishes to speak on the matter, in which case he may do so provided that:
  - 5.2.1 The public are also allowed to speak, and
  - 5.2.2 He declares his interestHe shall then withdraw from the meeting.
- 5.3 In every case where the interest is a sensitive one, it should be declared but not the nature of it.

- 5.4 Where the matter relates to a financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate he shall declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the meeting.  
If he wishes to speak on the matter then sub clauses 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 apply.

## **6. Dispensations**

On a written request made to the Council's proper officer, the Council may grant a member dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter if

- 6.1 he / she has an interest in Appendices A and B if the Council believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or
- 6.2 it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part or
- 6.3 it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.