Code of Conduct

Introduction

Pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Keynsham Town 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.

Definitions

For the purposes 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, sub-committee or working party of the Council, or a member of, and represents the Council on any joint committee or joint subcommittee of the Council, or a member of an NDP Topic group, and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee, sub-committee, working party or topic group.

For the purposes of this Code, a 'meeting' is a meeting of the Council, any of its committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, working parties or steering groups

For the purposes of this Code, and unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a member of the Council includes a co-opted member of the Council.

This Code of Conduct is based on the Nolan principles of public life

The Seven Principles of Public Life:

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.

Member 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.

1. He/she shall behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful.

2. He/she shall not act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory.

3. He/she shall not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

4. He/she shall use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirements.

5. He/she shall not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

6. He/she shall observe the Members and Officers Protocol and other such policies and protocols as shall, from time to time, be approved by the Town Council

Registration of interests

6. Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or the member's election or the co-opted member's appointment (where that is later), he/she shall register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Appendices A and B.

7. Upon the re-election of a member or the re-appointment of a co-opted member, he/she shall within 28 days re-register with the Monitoring Officer any interests in Appendices A and B.

8. A member shall register with the Monitoring Officer any change to interests or new interests in Appendices A and B within 28 days of becoming aware of it.

9. A member need only declare 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 the member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation.

Declaration of interests at meetings

10. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix A the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He/she only has to declare what his/her interest is if it is not already entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it.

11. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix A which is a sensitive interest, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. If it is a sensitive interest which has not already been disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, the member shall disclose he/she has an interest but not the nature of it.

12. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix B, the member shall not vote on the matter. He/she may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

13. A member only has to declare his/her interest in Appendix B if it is not already entered in his/her register of interests or he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it or if he/she speaks on the matter. If he/she holds an interest in Appendix B which is a sensitive interest not already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, he/she shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.

14. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate (other than an interest of a person in Appendix A), the member shall disclose the nature of the interest and not vote on the matter. He/she may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. If it is a 'sensitive interest' the member shall declare the interest but not the Dispensations

Dispensations

15. On a written request made to the Council's proper officer, the Council may grant a member a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if 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 it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part or it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Appendix A Pecuniary Interests

Interests described in the table below.

Subject	***Description***
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made to the member during the 12 month period ending on the latest date referred to in paragraph 6 above for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her 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.
Contracts	Any contract made between the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the Council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land held by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partner which is within the area of the Council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) held by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the Council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest held by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of theshares of any one class in which the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

*'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

***'**securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society**.**

Appendix B Non-Pecuniary Interests

Any non-pecuniary interest which could lead to a conflict of interest must be declared in the Register of Interests.

The following are declarable non-pecuniary interests but this is not an exhaustive list:-

• any body of which the Councillor is a member or in a position of general control or management and to which the Councillor is appointed or nominated by the Council
• any body exercising functions of a public nature of which the Councillor is a member or in a position of general control or management
• any body directed to charitable purposes of which the Councillor is a member or in a position of general management
• any body of whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which the Councillor is a member or in a position of general control or management
• any body of which a Councillor is a member or in a position of general control or management which has received grant aid either in cash or in kind from the local authority concerned in the proceeding twelve month period.
• any body providing any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of ~~£50~~ £25 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office.