

Code of Conduct

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

As a member or co-opted member of the Shirebrook Town Council I have a statutory responsibility to have regard to the following principles when representing the community and working constructively with staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

THE SEVEN STATUTORY PRINCIPLES

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting or appearing to act in my capacity as a councillor I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in the Council.

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.

GENERAL CONDUCT

As a Member of the Council, I will ensure my conduct is in accordance with the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

- Dealing with people fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- Acting in accordance with the Council's ICT policies, ensuring that ICT resources are not used improperly and having regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.
- Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the Council or the good governance of the Authority in a proper manner.
- Complying with the requirements of the Council's Protocol on Gifts and Hospitality by registering with the Monitoring Officer any item of hospitality that I receive.
- Exercising independent judgement and not compromising my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as a member or co-opted member of my Authority.
- Listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.
- Being accountable for my decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- Contributing to making the Council's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible. I will do this by allowing residents to access information they are entitled to by law, helping them to understand the reasoning behind the decisions taken and enabling them to be informed when holding me and other members to account.
- Restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it.
- Behaving in accordance with the Council's legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within its policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Authority's resources.
- Valuing my colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside.
- Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community, with other organisations, as well as within this Authority.

I ALSO AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING RULES:

Where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (under the Localism Act 2011 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) Regulations 2012) in any business of the Authority you must disclose the interest to the meeting. In addition you must leave the room where the meeting is held while any discussion or voting takes place

IN ADDITION THE FOLLOWING NON STATUTORY INTERESTS (OTHER INTERESTS) WILL APPLY:

Non Statutory Interests (other interests)

You must, within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council; or within 28 days of your election or appointment to office (where that is later), notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of the details of your other interests, where they fall within the following descriptions, for inclusion in the register of interests.

You have an interest in any business of your authority where either it relates to or is likely to affect:

- (a) 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; or,
- (b) any body:
 - (1) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (2) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (3) 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;

You also have an interest in any business of your authority:

- (i) where a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your financial position or the 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; or
- (ii) it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests you have registered as an interest.

(A relevant person is a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or 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; 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 any body of a type described in paragraphs (a) or (b)(1)(2)(3) above).

You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest or change to any interest notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of that new interest or change.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Where you have an interest in any business of your authority, and where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the interest, and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent, where it is not on your register of interests.

Where you have an interest but sensitive information (as defined below) relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have an other interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

(Sensitive interests: Where you consider that disclosure of the details of an interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation, and the Monitoring Officer agrees, if the interest is entered on the register, copies of the register that are made available for inspection and any published version of the register will exclude details of the interest, but may state that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld)

NON PARTICIPATION IN CASE OF SIGNIFICANT OTHER INTEREST:

Where you have an interest in any business of your authority you also have a significant other interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest and where that business:

- affects your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraphs (a) or (b)(1)(2)(3) (i) or (ii) above.

Where you have a significant other interest in any business of the Council you may not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting and you may not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting. If the interest is not registered, you must disclose the interest to the meeting. In addition you must leave the room where the meeting is held while any discussion or voting takes place (subject to the following paragraph).

Where you have a significant other interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise and you leave the room where the meeting is held immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence.

Subject to you disclosing the interest at the meeting, you may attend a meeting and vote on a matter where you have an interest that relates to the functions of your authority in respect of:

- (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
- (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
- (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
- (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
- (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
- (vi) setting Council Tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.