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**MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the code of conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that is expected of you and that could lead to action being taken against you.

**General obligations**

Whenever you are acting on behalf of the Council you must act in accordance with the following obligations:

Selflessness:

* you must act solely in the public interest.

Integrity:

* You should exercise independent judgement.

Objectivity:

* When carrying out public duties you must make all choices on merit.

Accountability:

* You are accountable to the public for your decision and you must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office, including local residents.

Openness:

* You must be as open and transparent as possible about your decisions and actions. Where the law or wider public requires it, you must not disclose confidential information or information to which public access is restricted.

Honesty:

* You must declare any private interests that relate to your public duties.

You must only use or authorise the use of the authority’s resources in accordance with the authority’s requirements.

Impartiality:

* You do not compromise, or attempt to compromise the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of the local authority

Confidentiality:

* You do not disclose information:
  + Given to you in confidence by anyone
  + Acquired by you, which you believe or ought reasonably be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:
    - You have received the consent of a person authorised to give it
    - You are required to do so by law
    - The disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person, or
    - The disclosure is:
      * Reasonable in the public interest; and
      * Made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and
      * You have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release
* You do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of your role as a member for the advancement of yourself, your friends, your family members, your employer or your business interests
* You do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitle to by law

Respect for others:

* You must treat others with respect
* You must not do anything which may cause your authority to breach any equality laws.
* You must not compromise the impartiality of anyone who works for , or on behalf of the authority
* You must not bully any person, including other councillors, officers of the authority or members of the public.

Leadership:

* You must promote and support high standards of conduct, by leadership and example, championing the interests of the community.
* You should uphold the law and act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in you.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination:

* You do not bully any person
* You do not harass any person
* You promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person

**Application**

The code of conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of office or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues until you cease to be a member.

This code applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a member which may include when:

* You misuse your position as a member;
* Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a member

This code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

* At face-to-face meetings
* At online or telephone meetings
* In written communication
* In verbal communication
* In non-verbal communication
* In electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments

You are expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a member.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct and you are encouraged to seek advice on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and Parish members are encouraged to seek advice from their clerk who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

**Registration of interests**

You must register with the monitoring officer the interests which are in either Appendix A (Disclosable Pecuniary interests) or Appendix B (other Disclosable interests).

You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any change, notify the monitoring officer.

**Declaring interests and participation in meetings**

If you are present at a meeting and have a Disclosable Pecuniary interest as set out in Appendix A -

* You must make a verbal declaration of that interest
* You must not participate in any discussion
* You must not vote on the matter
* You must leave the room
* If you interest is not already registered you must notify the monitoring officer within 28 days.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix B –

you must declare your interest if:

* you speak on the matter; or
* your interest is not already on the register of interests; or
* you have not notified the monitoring officer of it.

if the matter significantly affects the financial interests of the body in which you have an interest or relates to licensing or regulatory matters:

* you must declare your interest
* you must not vote
* you may speak if members of the public are allowed

**Gifts and Hospitality**

If the value is over £50 you must notify the monitoring officer within 28 days of receipt and it will be entered on a public register.

Adopted on 6th May 2017

Reviewed October 2018

Amended April 2022