

HIGHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted at the PC Meeting of 24th June 2019. Reviewed May 2022.
Next review May 2023.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Application of the Code

This Code of Conduct applies to you whenever you are acting in your capacity as a member or co-opted member (referred to in this Code as “Councillors”) of the Highwood Council including

- 1.1 At formal meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub Committees, and other meetings at which business of the Council is discussed.
- 1.2 When acting as a representative of the Council.
- 1.3 In discharging your functions as a Councillor.
- 1.4 At briefing meetings with officers.
- 1.5 At site visits or other visits to do with the business of the Council.
- 1.6 When corresponding with the Council other than in a private capacity.

2. General Conduct

You must

- 2.1 Provide leadership to the Council and communities within its area, by personal example.
- 2.2 Respect others and not bully any person.
- 2.3 Recognise that officers (other than political assistants) are employed by and serve the whole Council.
- 2.4 Respect the confidentiality of information which you receive as a Councillor by
 - 2.4.1 Not disclosing confidential information to third parties unless required by law and only then after receiving confirmation from the Monitoring Officer to do so ; and
 - 2.4.2 Not obstructing third parties legal rights of access to information.
- 2.5 Not conduct yourself in a manner which is likely to bring the Council into disrepute

2.6 Use your position as a Councillor in the public interest and not for personal advantage.

2.7 Accord with the Council's reasonable rules on the use of public resources for private and political purposes.

2.8 Exercise your own independent judgement, taking decisions for good and substantial reasons by

2.8.1 Attaching appropriate weight to all relevant considerations including, where appropriate, public opinion and the views of political groups.

2.8.2 Paying due regard to the advice of officers, and in particular the Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Council.

2.8.3 Stating the reasons for your decisions where those reasons are not otherwise apparent.

2.9 In your decisions and actions apply the 7 Nolan principles of:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- leadership

and, as far as reasonably possible, assist the Council to act within the law.

3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

You must

3.1 Comply with the statutory requirements to register, disclose and withdraw from participating in respect of any matters in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest (see Annex 1), and specifically,

3.1.1 Ensure that your entries in the register of interests are kept up to date and notify the Monitoring Officer in writing, via the Council's Clerk, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change in respect of your disclosable pecuniary interests.

3.1.2 Make verbal declarations of the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting at which you are present where an item of business affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as that interest becomes apparent.

3.1.3 Withdraw from any meeting at which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest during the entire consideration of that item, unless a dispensation has been granted.

3.2 “Meeting” means any meeting organised by or on behalf of the Council and in particular in the circumstances as set out in paragraph 1 of this Code.

4. Other Interests

4.1 In addition to Paragraph 3, if you attend a meeting and there is an item of business to be considered in which you are aware you have a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non pecuniary interest, you must make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as that interest becomes apparent.

4.2 You have a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non pecuniary interest in an item of business of your Council where

4.2.1 A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Council’s administrative area;

4.2.2 Relates to an interest concerning either of the following

4.2.2.1 Any person or body who employs or has appointed you;

4.2.2.2 Any contract for goods, services or works made between Highwood Parish Council and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description that would create a disclosable pecuniary interest but only where it has been fully discharged within the last 12 months.

5. Gifts and Hospitality

5.1 You must within 28 days of receipt, notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any gift, benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £50, which you have accepted as a Councillor from any person or body other than the Council, including the name of the donor.

5.2 The Monitoring Officer will place your notification on a public register of gifts and hospitality.

5.3 The duty to notify the Monitoring Officer does not apply to a gift, benefit or hospitality that comes within any description approved by the Council for this purpose.