

# ORWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## Code of Conduct Policy

For Members and Co-opted Members of Orwell Parish Council

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### Introduction

1. Orwell Parish Council ('The Authority') has adopted the following code of dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the Authority ('Members') when they are acting in that capacity as required by section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act').
2. The Council has a statutory duty under the Act to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and the Code sets out the standards that the Council expects Members to observe.
3. The Code is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all the obligations that are placed on Members. It is the responsibility of individual Members to comply with the provisions of the Code as well as such other legal obligation as may apply to them from time to time. Failure to do so may result in a sanction being applied by the Council. Failure to take appropriate action in respect of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may result in a criminal conviction and a fine of up to £5,000 and / or disqualification from office for a period of up to five years.
4. The Code is intended to be consistent with the seven principles as attached to this Code and applies whenever a person is acting in his/her capacity as a Member of the Council or co-opted member in the conduct of the Council's business or acting as a representative of the Council.
5. When acting in your capacity as a Member:
  - a) You must act solely in the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend, a close associate, an employer or a business carried on by you.
  - b) You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may influence you in the performance of your official duties.
  - c) You must not disclose any information given to you as a Member in breach of any confidence.

- d) You must not bring your office or your Authority into disrepute.
- e) You must treat others with respect and promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of age, sex (including gender reassignment or sexual orientation), disability, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.
- f) You must be as open as possible about your decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of your Authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions.
- g) You must declare any private interests, both disclosable pecuniary interests and any other registrable interests, that relate to your public duties and must take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest, including registering and declaring interests in a manner which conforms with the procedures set out below.
- h) You must ensure, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority, that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes.
- i) You must promote and support high standards of conduct.

### **Registering and declaring disclosable pecuniary and other registrable interests**

1. You must, within twenty-eight days of taking office as a member or co-opted member, notify your authority's Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State, where the pecuniary interest is yours, your spouse's or civil partner's, or is the pecuniary interest of somebody with whom you are living with as a husband or wife, or as if you were civil partners.
2. In addition, you must, within twenty-eight days of taking office as a member or co-opted member, notify your authority's Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest which your authority has decided should be included in the register.
3. In an interest has not been entered onto the authority's register, then the member must disclose the interest to any meeting of the authority at which they are present, where they have a disclosable interest in any matter being considered and where the matter is not a 'sensitive interest' as described by the Localism Act 2011.
4. Following any disclosure of an interest not on the authority's register or the subject of pending notification, you must notify the monitoring officer of the interest within twenty-eight days of becoming aware of that interest.
5. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State. Additionally, you must observe the restrictions your authority places on your involvement in matters where you have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest as defined by your authority.

## Seven General Principles of Conduct

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
4. **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decision and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
5. **Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about 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.
6. **Honesty:** : olders 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.
7. **Leadership**To promote and support these principles by leadership and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

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Supersedes: Orwell Parish Council Code of Conduct Policy 2019

Signed:

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Date:

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