

Adopted by Hopton on Sea Parish Council on 10 July 2023. JMcN
Review dates:

Hopton-on-Sea Parish Council.

Members' Code of Conduct. Introduction to the Code.

This Code of Conduct (Code) is a key part of the Council's discharge of its statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its Members and co-opted Members. It is very much focused upon the principles of conduct in public life of **selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership** and it is the intention of the Council that the Code be used exclusively in that context and not for any other purpose. It sets an objective, non-political and high standard the purpose of which is to remind Members of the behaviour expected of them in public life and to set out clearly the key principles against which their conduct will be measured.

The Code also contains provisions for registration and declaration of interests the breach of which attracts potential criminal sanctions.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council has a Standards Sub-Committee (a Sub-Committee of the Audit, Risk and Standards Committee) to hear allegations of breaches of the Code and decide on sanctions against Members found to be in default.

Working closely with the Council's Monitoring Officer and Independent Person the Standards Sub-Committee will oversee a straightforward and robust regime dealing only with substantial ethics and standards issues and filtering out the inconsequential, trivial and vexatious. The Code will deal in broad common sense principles and neither it nor the supporting arrangements are intended to be overtechnical or over-procedural. To return to the wording of the statute the Code is the Council's public statement on the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct in public life.

Every Member and co-opted Member of Hopton-on-Sea Parish Council must sign an undertaking to observe the Code in the terms set out below.

The Code

All Members or co-opted members of Hopton on Sea Parish Council have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with Council staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with section 28(1) of the Localism Act 2011, when acting in the capacity of Member, Members are committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for Council citizens and maintain public confidence in the Council. This includes acting in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) which are as follows:

(a) **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.

(b) **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.

(c) **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.

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(d) 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.

(e) 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.

(f) 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.

(g) LEADERSHIP: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Members of Hopton-on-Sea Parish Council will, in particular, address the statutory principles of the Code by:

(a) Championing the needs of citizens - the whole community/parishioners in the village.

(b) Dealing with representations or enquiries from parishioners, members of the Council's communities and visitors fairly, appropriately, and impartially.

(c) Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of themselves or others connected to them, to deter them from pursuing Council work, the interests of Hopton-on-Sea nor the good governance of the Council in a proper manner.

(d) Exercising independent judgement and not compromising their position by placing themselves under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way they perform their duties as a Member/co-opted Member of the Council.

(e) Listening to the interests of all, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.

(f) Being accountable for their decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by parishioners.

(g) Contributing to making the Council's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible to enable parishioners to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding Members to account but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it.

(h) Behaving in accordance with all our legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within the Council's policies, protocols and procedures.

(i) Valuing colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between them that is essential to good local government.

(j) Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public Members engage with and those Members work alongside.

(k) Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within the Council.
