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## **Members' Code of Conduct**

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Peterborough City Council

The Members’ Code of Conduct is intended to promote high standards of behaviour amongst the elected and co-opted members of the council.

The Code is underpinned by the following principles of public life, which should be borne in mind, when interpreting the meaning of the Code:

- i. **Selflessness**  
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- ii. **Integrity**  
Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- iii. **Objectivity**  
Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- iv. **Accountability**  
Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- v. **Openness**  
Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- vi. **Honesty**  
Holders of public office should be truthful.
- vii. **Leadership**  
Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## **PART 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

You are a member or co-opted member of Peterborough City Council and hence you shall have regard to the following principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Accordingly, when acting in your capacity as a member or co-opted member -

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 or close associate.

You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.

When carrying out your public duties you must make all choices, such as making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, on merit.

You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public and you must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office.

You must be as open as possible about your decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of your authority and should give reasons for those decisions and actions and restrict information only where the wider public interest clearly demands.

You must declare any private interests, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary, 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 conforming with the procedures set out in the box below.

You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your public post, in particular as characterised by the above requirements, by leadership and example.

### **Registering and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests**

You must, within 28 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.

In addition, you must, within 28 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.

If 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'.<sup>1</sup>

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 28 days beginning with the date of disclosure.

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 non-statutory pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest as defined by your authority.

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<sup>1</sup> A 'sensitive interest' is described in the Localism Act 2011 as a member or co-opted member of an authority having an interest, and the nature of the interest being such that the member or co-opted member, and the authority's monitoring officer, consider that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to the member or co-opted member, or a person connected with the member or co-opted member, being subject to violence or intimidation.

**PART 2  
INTERESTS**

**1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

1.1. The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Prescribed description</b>
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from PCC) for any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.  This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract with PCC:  (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and  (b) which has not been fully discharged.  This includes a contract between PCC and any body in which you, or a person specified in paragraph 8.2(b) below, has a beneficial interest
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within PCC’s area
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the PCC’s area for a month or longer.
Corporate Tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge):  (a) the landlord is PCC; and  (b) the tenant is a body in which you, or a person listed in paragraph 8.2(b) below, has a beneficial interest

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<p>Securities</p>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <p>(a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in PCC’s area; and</p> <p>(b) either:</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the person in paragraph 8.2 (below) has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>
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For this purpose –

“body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest” means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner or a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director, or in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest;

“director” includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society;

“land” excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for the relevant person (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income;

“M” means a member of a relevant authority;

“member” includes a co-opted member;

“relevant authority” means the authority of which M is a member;

“relevant period” means the period of 12 months ending with the day on which M gives a notification for the purposes of section 30(1) or 31(7), as the case may be, of the Act;

“relevant person” means M or any other person referred to in section 30(3)(b) of the Act;

- i) M’s spouse or civil partner,
- ii) A person with whom M is living as husband and wife, or
- iii) A person with whom M is living as if they were civil partners.

“securities” means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

1.2. You must declare an interest if:

- (a) it is your interest, or
- (b) it is an interest of:
  - (i) your spouse or civil partner;
  - (ii) a person with whom you are living husband and wife, or
  - (iii) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners

and you are aware that that other person has the interest.

## 2. Other Disclosable Interests

2.1. You should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, or your friends. You must declare and resolve any interests and relationships as set out below, seeking the advice of the Monitoring Officer as necessary on what needs to be declared.

2.2. You have a “non-statutory disclosable interest” in an item of business of your authority where:

- i) 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 or body with whom you have a close association; or
- ii) It relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests listed in 1.1 but is in respect of a member of your family (other than your spouse or common law partner) ; or
- iii) It relates to an outside body or organisation to which you have been appointed by the council

2.3. If you attend a meeting and are aware that you have a non-statutory disclosable interest in any matter to be considered, or being considered, at that meeting:

- (a) If the interest is not entered in your register of members’ interests you must disclose to the meeting the fact that you have a non-statutory disclosable interest in that matter; and

- (b) If 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 interests, you must not:
  - i) participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; or
  - ii) remain in the meeting room whilst the matter is being debated or participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting

apart from making representations, giving evidence or answering questions prior to the commencement of the debate on that matter.

- 2.4. You must declare the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £100.

### **3. Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Interests**

- 3.1. Subject to paragraph 5 below (sensitive interests), you must, within 28 days of:

- (a) this Code being adopted or applied by PCC; or
- (b) your election or appointment (where that is later)

notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests you have at that time.

- 3.2. Subject to paragraph 5 below (sensitive interests) you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new disclosable pecuniary or other interest or any change to any such interest, notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of that new pecuniary interest or change.

### **4. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in Matters Considered at Meetings or by a Single Member**

- 4.1. If you attend a meeting and are aware that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at that meeting:

- (a) if the interest is not entered in the register of members' interests you must disclose to the meeting the fact that you have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest in that matter
- (b) if you have not already done so, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest before the end of 28 days beginning with the date of the disclosure, and
- (c) whether the interest is registered or not you must not, unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer, participate, in any



discussion of the matter at the meeting and should leave the room until the consideration of the item has completed

- (d) whether the interest is registered or not you must not, unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Constitution and Ethics Committee, participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting and should leave the room until the consideration of the item has completed.

#### 4.2. Single Member Action

If you are empowered to discharge functions acting alone, and are aware that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest in any matter being dealt with, you must not take any steps, or any further steps, in relation to the matter (except for the purposes of enabling the matter to be dealt with otherwise than by you).

If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered in the Register and is not subject to a Pending Notification, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest before the end of 28 days, beginning with the date of when you became aware of the matter

### 5. Sensitive Interests

- 5.1. Where you consider (and the Monitoring Officer agrees) that the nature of a disclosable pecuniary or other interest is such that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to intimidation or violence, it is a “sensitive interest” for the purposes of the Code and the details of the sensitive interest do not need to be disclosed to a meeting, although the fact that you have a sensitive interest must be disclosed.

## PART 3 RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following documents also provide guidance on the standards of conduct expected of members and can assist in the interpretation of this Code of Conduct. These documents can be found in the Council’s Constitution.

1. The Constitution & Ethics Committee Rules of Procedure set out the arrangements for dealing with an alleged breach of this Code
2. PCC’s Planning Code of Conduct deals specifically with the Code of Conduct within the remit of the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee
3. PCC’s Social Media Code for members sets out appropriate behaviour when using social media and acting, or appearing to act, in your capacity as a councillor
4. PCC’s Member/Officer Protocol sets out how members and officers should work together

5. PCC's Gifts and Hospitality Policy which sets out the procedures under which registration and declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality are to be made.