

Lawford Parish Council



MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Trust and confidence in public office-holders and institutions are important for the functioning of local authorities. This is particularly true in the case of elected office-holders. The Council has therefore adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of conduct in public life. It is each Councillor's responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- 1.2 The Code of Conduct applies to all elected Councillors, voting co-opted members and appointed members.

2. When does the Code of Conduct apply?

- 2.1 In this Code "meeting" means any meeting of
 - (a) Lawford Parish Council ("the Authority");
 - (b) The Full council.
 - (c) Any of the Authority's or its Executive's committees, sub committees joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees (including working parties); or
 - (d) Informal meetings with other Members and/or Officers relating to the discharge of the Authority's functions.
- 2.2 The Code of Conduct applies
 - (a) Whenever you conduct the business, or are present at a meeting, of the Authority; or
 - (b) Whenever you act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting in the role of Member to which you were elected or appointed; or
 - (c) Whenever you act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the Authority (including representation on outside bodies); or
 - (d) At all times and in any capacity, in respect of conduct identified in paragraphs 3.4(a) and 3.5; or
 - (e) In respect of any criminal offence for which you have been convicted during your term of office.

- 2.3 Where you are elected, appointed or nominated by the authority to serve on any other authority or body you must, when acting for that other authority or body, comply with the code of conduct of that other authority or body.
- 2.4 Where you are elected, appointed or nominated by the authority to serve on any other body which does not have a code relating to the conduct of its members, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with this code of conduct, unless it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

3. Rules of Conduct

- 3.1 As a Member of Lawford Parish Council you shall have regard to the Seven Principles of Public Life:

Selflessness Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

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.

Objectivity Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

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.

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.

Honesty Holders of public office should be truthful.

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.

These general principles are the underlying principles behind the rules of conduct set out below.

3.2 In fulfilling your **Duties and Responsibilities**

You must not:

- (a) Breach your duties and responsibilities with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion;
- (b) Disrespect others;
- (c) Bully or harass any person; or
- (d) Do anything which compromises, or which is likely to compromise, the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the Authority.

3.3 **Information**

You must not:

- (a) Disclose confidential information or information which should reasonably be regarded as being of a confidential nature, without the express consent of a person authorised to give such consent, or unless required by law to do so;
- (b) Prevent any person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

3.4 **Conduct**

You must:

- (a) Not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the Authority into disrepute;
- (b) Not make vexatious, malicious or frivolous complaints against other members or anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Authority.
- (c) Comply with any request of the Tendring District Council's Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer, in connection with an investigation conducted in accordance with their respective statutory powers.

3.5 **Use of your Position**

You must not:

- (a) In your official capacity or otherwise, use or attempt to use your position improperly to confer on or secure for yourself, or any other person, an advantage or create or avoid for yourself, or any other person, a disadvantage;
- (b) Use, or authorise others to use, the resources of the Authority-
 - (i) Imprudently;
 - (ii) In breach of the Authority's requirements;
 - (iii) Unlawfully;
 - (iv) Other than in a manner which is calculated to facilitate, or to be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or of the office to which you have been elected or appointed;

- (v) Improperly for political purposes; or
- (vi) Improperly for private purposes.

3.6 Decision Making

You must:

- (a) When participating in meetings or reaching decisions regarding the business of the Authority, do so on the basis of the merits of the circumstances involved and in the public interest having regard to any relevant advice provided by the Authority's officers.
- (b) Give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by the authority.

3.7 Compliance with the Law and the Authority's Rules and Policies

You must:

- (a) Observe the law and the Authority's rules governing the claiming of expenses and allowances in connection with your duties as a member;
- (b) Comply with the provisions of the Bribery Act 2010 or similar;
- (c) Comply with the Authority's Gifts and Hospitality Policy if one is in place;
- (d) Comply with any other policy (or part of policy) which sets out required conduct from Members.