

Wetton Parish Council: Code of Conduct

Introduction

In accordance with section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Wetton Parish Council ('the Council') has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council.

This Code of Conduct is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

The Code of Conduct applies to all members of the Parish Council - elected or co-opted; and to all meetings of the Council. It will also apply to any sub-committees of the Parish Council (including sub-committee members who are not members of the Parish Council).

Member obligations

When a member of the Council acts, claims to act or gives the impression of acting as a representative of the Council, he/she has the following obligations:-

- (i) To behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful.
- (ii) Not to act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory.
- (iii) Not to seek improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- (iv) To use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirements.
- (v) Not to disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

Registration of interests

Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, all members must register with the Monitoring Officer at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council any interests in the categories set out in Appendices A and B to this Code of Conduct.

Thereafter, all members must register (or re-register) with the Monitoring Officer any such interests within 28 days of their election (or re-election) or co-option to the Council.

All members must register with the Monitoring Officer any change to the registered interests (including new interests) within 28 days of becoming aware of it.

Declaration of interests at meetings

Appendix A interests: Where a matter arises at a meeting relating to a member's interest, that member must not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter.

Appendix B interests: Where a matter arises at a meeting relating to a member's interest, that member must not vote on the matter; but may speak on the matter provided that members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting

Appendix A and B interests need only be declared if they are not already entered in that member's register of interests or if the Monitoring Officer has not been notified of them.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate (other than an interest in Appendix A), the member must disclose the nature of the interest and must not vote on the matter; but may speak on the matter provided that members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

Sensitive interests

A sensitive interest is one which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead the member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation; and of which the Monitoring Officer has been notified and has agreed to be a sensitive issue.

On the register of interests, a member need only declare the existence but not the details of that interest.

If a matter arises at a meeting in relation to a sensitive interest which has not been already been disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, a member must declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.

Dispensations

Following a written request made to the Parish Clerk, the Council may grant a member a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if that member has an Appendix A or Appendix B interest if:

- (i) the Council believes that the number of members otherwise unable to take part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or
- (ii) it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part; or
- (iii) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Appendix A

Interests described in the table below.

Subject	Description
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 the Council) made to the member during the 12 month period ending on the latest date referred to in paragraph 6 above for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her 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 made between the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the Council —
	(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
	(b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge)—
	(a) the landlord is the Council; and
	(b) the tenant is a body that the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—
	(a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and
	(b) either—
	(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
	(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 member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

*'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

*'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.

Appendix B

An interest which relates to or is likely to affect:

- (i) any body of which the member is in a position of general control or management and to which he/she is appointed or nominated by the Council;
- (ii) any body—
 - (a) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (b) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)of which the member of the Council is a member or in a position of general control or management;
- (iii) any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office.