

# Great Hale Parish Council

## Councillor Code of Conduct

*This Code was last reviewed and updated at the Parish Council Meeting on 9 April 2018*

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Great Hale Parish Council ('the Council') has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members and co-opted members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council.
- 1.2. This Code of Conduct is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

### 2. Definitions

- 2.1. For the purposes of this Code, a 'co-opted member' is a person who is not a member of the Council but who is either a member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council, or a member of, and represents the Council on any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Council, and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee.
- 2.2. For the purposes of this Code, a 'meeting' is a meeting of the Council, any of its committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees.
- 2.3. For the purposes of this Code, and unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a member of the Council includes a co-opted member of the Council.

### 3. Member obligations

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. He/she shall behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful.
- 3.3. He/she shall not act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidation.
- 3.4. He/she shall not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- 3.5. He/she shall use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirements.
- 3.6. He/she shall not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

#### **4. *Registration of interests***

- 4.1. Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or the member's election or the co-opted member's appointment (where that is later), he/she shall register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Appendices A and B.
- 4.2. Upon the re-election of a member or the re-appointment of a co-opted member, he/she shall within 28 days re-register with the Monitoring Officer any interests in Appendices A and B.
- 4.3. A member shall register with the Monitoring Officer any change to interests or new interests in Appendices A and B within 28 days of becoming aware of it.
- 4.4. A member need only declare the existence but not the details of any interest which the Monitoring Officer agrees is a 'sensitive interest'. 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.

#### **5. *Declaration of interests at meetings***

- 5.1. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix A the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He/she only has to declare what his/her interest is if it is not already entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it.
- 5.2. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix A which is a sensitive interest, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. If it is a sensitive interest which has not already been disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, the member shall disclose he/she has an interest but not the nature of it.
- 5.3. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix B, the member shall not vote on the matter. He/she may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.
- 5.4. A member only has to declare his/her interest in Appendix B if it is not already entered in his/her register of interests or he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it or if he/she speaks on the matter. If he/she holds an interest in Appendix B which is a sensitive interest not already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, he/she shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.
- 5.5. 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 shall disclose the nature of the interest and not vote on the matter. He/she may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. If it is a 'sensitive interest' the member shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.

#### **6. *Dispensations***

- 6.1. On a written request made to the Council's proper officer, the Council may grant a member a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if he/she has an interest in Appendices A and B if the Council believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part or it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

## 7. Decision-making & Predetermination

- 7.1. A member must not place him/herself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
- 7.2. When making a decision, a member must consider the matter with an open mind and on the facts before the meeting at which the decision is to be made, listening to the advice of relevant parties, including advice from officers, and taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.

### Appendix A – Disclosable Pecuniary Interests prescribed by The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Disclosable pecuniary interests include not only your interests but also the interests of your spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife or a person with whom you are living as if they were a civil partner, so far as you are aware of the interests of that person.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Prescribed description</i>
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	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 relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred in carrying out duties as a Councillor, or towards the 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(1).
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— 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 relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to Councillor's knowledge) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— that body (to Councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and

either—

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 relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

## **Appendix B – Local Choice Disclosable Interests**

The Council has resolved to require a member to disclose an interest which relates to or is likely to affect:

- a. 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;
- b. any body:
  - I. exercising functions of a public nature;
  - II. directed to charitable purposes; or
  - III. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)
  - IV. of which the member of the Council is a member or in a position of general control or management;
- c. any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office.