

## Member Code of Conduct 2021 Warwickshire County Council

This Code applies to all elected and co-opted members of the Warwickshire County Council. The term 'councillor' in this Code means both elected and co-opted members. This Code of Conduct applies when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor

### As a Councillor:

1. I will represent the interests of the whole community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.
2. I will behave in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for all our residents and maintain public confidence in the Council, any other body to which I am appointed by the Council and the office of councillor:
  - a. **SELFLESSNESS:** I will act solely in terms of the public interest. I will not act in such a way as to gain financial or other material benefits for myself, my family, or my friends.
  - b. **INTEGRITY:** I will not place myself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence me in the performance of my official duties.
  - c. **OBJECTIVITY:** I will make choices on merit, in carrying out public business, including when making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits
  - d. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** I will be accountable for my decisions and actions to the public and to the Council and must submit myself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to my office.
  - e. **OPENNESS:** I will be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions I take. I will give reasons for my decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest or the law clearly demands.
  - f. **HONESTY:** I will be truthful and I will declare any private interests relating to my public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.

**g. LEADERSHIP:** I will promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

**3. As a Councillor** I will act in accordance with the principles in paragraph 2 and in particular, I will

- a. Champion the needs of the whole community and all my constituents, including those who did not vote for me and put the public interest first.
- b. Deal with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- c. Not bully, harass or unlawfully discriminate against anyone or seek to compromise the impartiality of officers of the Council
- d. Not allow other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the Council or the good governance of the Council in a proper manner.
- e. Exercise independent judgement and not compromise my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as a councillor. This includes not accepting gifts or hospitality which could give rise to a perception of influence over the way I perform my duties.
- f. Take account of all relevant information, including advice from statutory and other professional officers. I will remain objective and make decisions on merit.
- g. Be accountable for my decisions and cooperate when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- h. Contribute to ensuring that decision-making processes are as open and transparent as possible to make sure the community understands the reasoning behind decisions and are informed when holding me and other councillors to account.
- i. Behave in accordance with all my legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within the Council's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Council's resources.

- j. Not disclose confidential information (be that confidential by virtue of legislation or otherwise) without express authority and/ or unless the law requires it.
- k. Not prevent people gaining access to information to which they are lawfully entitled.
- l. Value my colleagues and staff and engage with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- m. Always treat people with respect, including the organisations and the public I engage with, fellow members and those I work alongside.
- n. Undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority, cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.
- o. Not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with any investigation or proceedings.
- p. Provide leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this Council.

**4.** I will register and disclose those interests that I am required by law to declare. I will complete and submit a signed declaration of my interests to the Monitoring Officer. I will keep the register updated and acknowledge that its contents are open to the public to inspect.

**5.** I will register any gifts and hospitality I am offered (even if declined) with an estimated value of £50 or more within 28 days of receipt with the Monitoring Officer.