

Members' Code of Conduct

(as adopted by the Members of the Council at its meeting on 12th July 2012 and 13th April 2013)

Introduction

South Kesteven District Council (the Authority) has adopted this Code setting out the expected behaviours required of its Members or co-opted Members, acknowledging that they each have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), when acting in this capacity all Members must be committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this Authority.

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 outside individuals 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 material benefits for themselves, their family, their friends or other parties. 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 for their decisions and actions to the public 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 breaches of the Code by others where they see this occurring.^{04/13}

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in South Kesteven District Council this will be done as follows:

Interests

1. Registration of interests

You must, within 28 days of:-

- (a) this Code being adopted by or applied to the Authority; and/or
- (b) your election or appointment to office; and
- (c) becoming aware of any new interest or change to any interest registered under this paragraph 1

notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of your **disclosable pecuniary interests** which are registerable under the Localism Act 2011 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) Regulations 2012, for inclusion in the register of interests.

Any interests notified in writing to the Monitoring Officer will be included in the register of interests.

A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the Authority's website.

2. Disclosure of Interests

If you have an interest described in paragraph 1 above and if you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of an interest described at clause 2.1 below, and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the matter in which you have an interest is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration or when the interest becomes apparent.

2.1 Any interest in any business of your authority:

- where a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a **relevant person** to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests you have registered as a disclosable pecuniary interest; and
- 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 interest

You may not participate in any discussion of the matter or any vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

2.2 In paragraph 2.1, **a relevant person** is—

a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association, their employers or people they are in partnership with, companies of which they are directors or in which they hold a beneficial interest in any class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000. Or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that company.

3 Sensitive interests

- 3.1 Where you consider that disclosure or registration of the details of an interest could, for whatever reason, be sensitive and the Monitoring Officer agrees, if the interest is entered on the register, copies of the register that are made available for inspection and any published version of the register will exclude details of the sensitive interest, but may state that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld.

4. Attendance at meetings

- 4.1 Council Procedure Rule requires you to leave the room where the meeting is held while any discussion or voting takes place where you have an interest described in paragraphs 1 or 2.1 above.
- 4.2 Where you have an interest in any business of the Authority described in paragraph 2.1 above, you may attend a meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise and you leave the room where the meeting is held immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence.
- 4.3 Subject to you disclosing the interest at the meeting, you may attend a meeting and vote on a matter where you have an interest that relates to the functions of the Authority in respect of—
- (i) housing, where you are a tenant of the Authority, provided that those functions do not relate specifically to your tenancy;
 - (ii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
 - (iii) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
 - (iv) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
 - (v) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

5. Disclosure of Gifts and Hospitality

- 5.1 You must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing the name of any person or organization from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 which you have received in your capacity as a member of the Council. The notification must include the date of receipt of the offer and details of whether or not the gift was accepted.