

Funtington Parish Council

Code of Conduct

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1. Introduction

This Code applies to you as a member of Funtington Parish Council (the Council) when you act in your role as a member. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

As a member you are a representative of the Council and the public will view you as such. Therefore, your actions impact on how the Council as a whole is viewed and your actions can have both positive and negative impacts on the Council.

2. Purpose of the Code

The Code aims to define the standards expected of Parish Councillors (Councillors) in order to ensure that the:

- organisation is effective, open and accountable;
- highest standards of integrity and stewardship are achieved; and
- working relationships with any staff and advisers is productive and supportive.

3. Code of conduct

Councillors must:

- be over age 18;
- not be an un-discharged bankrupt;
- not be under a disqualification order under the Company Directors' Disqualification Act 1986;
- undertake to fulfill my responsibilities and duties as a Councillor in good faith and in accordance with the law and within the Council's objects, mission and values; and
- not have any financial or other interests in conflict with those of the Council (either in person or through family or friends or business connections) except those that I have formally notified in a conflict of interest statement.

3.1 Selflessness

Councillors have a general duty to act with probity and prudence in the best interest of the Council as a whole. They should not act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family, their friends, or any organisation from which they come.

3.2 Integrity

Councillors should conduct themselves in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the Council or its staff. More specifically they:

- should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their role;
- must avoid actual impropriety and any appearance of improper behaviour; and
- should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgment, and any gift or hospitality received in any connection to the Council over the value of £50 should be declared.

3.3 Objectivity

In carrying out their role, including making appointments, awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, or transacting other business, Councillors should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit. In arriving at decisions in areas where they do not have expertise themselves, appropriate professional advice should be considered.

3.4 Accountability

Councillors:

- have a duty to comply with constitutional and legal requirements and to adhere to best practice in such a way as to preserve confidence in the Council; and
- are accountable to all stakeholders for their decisions, effectiveness, and the performance of the Council.

3.5 Openness

Councillors should ensure that confidential information and material, including material about individuals, is handled in accordance with due care so that it remains confidential. In addition they should be as open as possible about their decisions and the actions that they take. As far as possible, they should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider interest clearly demands.

3.6 Honesty

Councillors have a duty to avoid any conflict of interest so far as is reasonably practicable. In particular they must make known any interest in any matter under discussion which:

- creates either a real danger of bias (that is, the interest affects him/her, or a member of his/her family, or friends, or organisation, more than the generality affected by the decision); or
- which might reasonably cause others to think it could influence the decision

He/she should declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the room and not participate in discussion and decision making, unless the remaining Councillors agree otherwise.

3.7 Leadership

Councillors must:

- promote and support the principles of leadership by example;
- strive to attend all meetings regularly, ensuring they prepare for and contribute appropriately and effectively, and avoid dominating the contributions of others;
- bring a fair and open minded view to all discussions, maintaining a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treating different views with respect, and ensuring that all decisions are made in the Council's best interests;
- respect the authority of the Chair;
- having given delegated authority to any of their number or to any staff, be careful - individually and collectively - not to undermine it by word or action; accept and respect the difference in roles between the Councillors and others, ensuring that all work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the Council, and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship;
- abide by any equal opportunities, diversity, health and safety, bullying and harassment and any other adopted policies;
- when speaking or writing as a Councillor, ensure comments reflect current Council policy even when they might be at variance with personal views; and
- when speaking privately, strive to uphold the reputation of the Council and those who work in it.

4. Breaches of the Code

In cases where there is a concern that a Councillor has breached this Code, the matter will be reviewed by the Chair and another Councillor, or two Councillors appointed by the Chair, who will make a recommendation. (If a concern has been raised about the Chair, the review will be undertaken by the vice-chair and another Councillor).

The Councillors will decide whether to discuss the recommendation in closed session. Any sanctions will be determined, up to and including requiring any necessary resignation. The decision will be final

5. Councillor’s Declaration

All Councillors will sign a 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

I *[insert name of Councillor]* having been accepted to the office of Funtington Parish Council

HEREBY DECLARE that I take office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfill the duties of it to the best of my judgment and ability.

I undertake to observe the code as to the conduct which is expected of members of Funtington Parish Council.

Signed *[Councillor's signature]*

Date

Signed *[Proper officer of the Funtington Parish Council - normally the Clerk]*