

## **Section 1: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

This Code is based on the seven principles of public life, known as the “Nolan Principles” which are attached to this code.

This code also recommends to Members, in so far as is practicable, to act in accordance with the values and behaviours of the Council, as part of the #ONETEAM approach. These are also attached to this code.

### **1 APPLICATION**

1.1. This Code of Conduct applies to you whenever you are acting in your capacity as a member of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, including:

- (a) at formal meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees, its Cabinet and Cabinet Committees
- (b) when acting as a representative of the authority
- (c) in taking any decision as a Cabinet member or a Ward Councillor
- (d) in discharging your functions as a Ward Councillor
- (e) at briefing meetings with officers
- (f) at site visits and
- (g) when corresponding with the authority other than in a private capacity

### **2 GENERAL CONDUCT**

2.1. You must:

- (a) provide leadership to the authority and communities within its area, by personal example and
- (b) respect others, not bully any person and you must not do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the equality enactments
- (c) recognise that officers (other than political assistants) are employed by and serve the whole authority
- (d) respect the confidentiality of information which you receive as a member:
  - not disclosing confidential information to third parties unless required by law to do so or where there is a clear and over-riding public interest in doing so; and
  - not obstructing third parties’ legal rights of access to information
- (e) not conduct yourself in a manner which is likely to bring the authority into disrepute
- (f) use your position as a Member in the public interest and not for personal advantage
- (g) accord with the authority’s reasonable rules on the use of public resources for private and political purposes
- (h) exercise your own independent judgement, taking decisions for good and substantial reasons –

- attaching appropriate weight to all relevant considerations including, where appropriate, public opinion and the views of political groups
  - paying due regard to the advice of officers, and in particular to the advice of the statutory officers, namely the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer and
  - stating the reasons for your decisions where those reasons are not otherwise apparent
- (i) account for your actions, particularly by supporting the authority's scrutiny function
- (j) ensure that the authority acts within the law.

### **3 DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

#### **3.1. You must:-**

- (a) comply with the statutory requirements to register, disclose and withdraw from participating in respect of any matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined in the table in the Appendix to this code)
- (b) to notify the monitoring officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest or any other interest within 28 days of the adoption of this code
- (c) ensure that your register of interests is kept up to date and notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any change in respect of your disclosable pecuniary interests or other interests
- (d) make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent
- (e) "Meeting" means any meeting organised by or on behalf of the authority, including:-
- any meeting of the Council, or a Committee or Sub-Committee of Council
  - any meeting of the Cabinet and any Committee of the Cabinet
  - in taking a decision as a Ward Councillor or as a Member of the Cabinet
  - at any briefing by officers; and
  - at any site visit to do with business of the authority

### **4 OTHER INTERESTS**

- 4.1 In addition to the requirements of Paragraph 3, if you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a "non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest" in that item, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent

- 4.2 You have a “non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest” in an item of business of your authority where –
- (a) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority’s administrative area, or
  - (b) it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests listed in the Table in the Appendix to this Code, but in respect of a member of your family (other than a “relevant person”) or a person with whom you have a close association

and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

## **5 GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

- 5.1 You must, within twenty eight days of receipt, notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any gift, benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £50 which you have accepted as a Member from any person or body other than the authority.
- 5.2 The Monitoring Officer will place your notification on a public register of gifts and hospitality.
- 5.3 Examples of hospitality include the provision of food, drink and entertainment.
- 5.4 You should be exercising special caution when hospitality is offered by any person or body seeking to obtain a pecuniary, contractual or other advantage from the Council.
- 5.5 You should refuse offers of gifts, benefits or hospitality where the suggestion of improper influence is possible.

## **6 SOCIAL MEDIA PROTOCOLS**

- 6.1 You must have due regard to any council social media protocols that apply and are relevant to you.

## APPENDIX - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows –

Interest	Prescribed description
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 by M in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of M.
	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 which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority:-
	(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 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 M's knowledge):-
	(a) 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:-
	(a) that body (to M's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; 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 relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

## **For this purpose –**

“the Act” means the Localism Act 2011;

“body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest” means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner or a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director, or in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest;

“director” includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society;

“land” excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for the relevant person (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income;

“M” means a member of a relevant authority;

“Member” includes a co-opted member;

“relevant authority” means the authority of which M is a Member;

“relevant period” means the period of twelve months ending with the day on which M gives a notification for the purposes of section 30(1) or 31(7), as the case may be, of the Act;

“relevant person” means M or any other person referred to in section 30(3)(b) of the Act;

“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.

**THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES  
AND SECTION 28(1) OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011**

**SELFNESSNESS**

To serve only the public interest and never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person

**INTEGRITY**

Not to place themselves in situations where their integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour

**OBJECTIVITY**

Make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding Contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

To be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their Office.

**OPENNESS**

To be as open as possible about their actions and those of the Council and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

**HONESTY**

Not to place themselves in situations where their honesty may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should, on all occasions, avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

**LEADERSHIP**

Should promote and support these principles by leadership and by example and should always act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

# Behaviours

