

# NUNTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

## INTRODUCTION

This code applies to you as a member of Nunthorpe Parish Council when you act in your role as a member. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code. You are a representative of Nunthorpe Parish Council and the public will view you as such. Your actions impact on how the Council as a whole is viewed and can have both positive and negative impacts on the Council.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

### **(i) Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not use their office in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### **(ii) Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any obligation, financial or otherwise, to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **(iii) Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **(iv) Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **(v) Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **(vi) Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interest relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **(vii) Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

### **(viii) Respect for Others**

Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person. They should treat people with respect; regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

### **(ix) Duty to Uphold the Law**

Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

### **(x) Personal Judgement**

Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

## **INTERPRETATION**

In this Code:

“Meeting” means any meeting of:

- (a) the Parish Council;
- (b) any of the Parish Council’s committees, sub-committees, joint committees or area committees; whether or not the press and public are excluded from the meeting in question by virtue of a resolution of members.

“Member” includes both co-opted and elected members.

## **GENERAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **1. When acting in your role as a member of the Parish Council:**

1.1 You must treat others with respect.

1.2 You must conduct yourself in a manner that is not contrary to the authority’s duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of members.

1.3 You must not disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where:

- (i) You have the consent of the person authorised to give it;
- (ii) You are required by law to do so;
- (iii) The disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person;
- (iv) The disclosure is reasonable and in the public interest and you have consulted with a legal adviser prior to its release.

1.4 You must not prevent any other person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

### **2. When using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the Council:**

2.1 You must act in accordance with the Council’s reasonable requirements including the requirements of the Council’s applicable ITC policy and those related policies copies of which have been provided to you and which you are deemed to have read.

2.2 You must ensure that such resources are not improperly used for political purposes, including party political purposes.

## **INTERESTS**

3. As a public figure, your public role may at times overlap with your personal or professional life and interests. When performing your public role as a member you should act solely in terms of the public interest and should not act in a manner to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, your friends, your employer or in relation to your business interests.

4. You are required to register “pecuniary and other interests”. Failure to declare or register a pecuniary interest will be a criminal offence if this is done without a reasonable excuse. If you knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information about a pecuniary interest this will also be a criminal offence.

5. You are required to formally declare or register any gifts and hospitality; you should not accept any gifts in excess of £25. You should also have regard to the following considerations:

5.1 You should not accept any gift or hospitality which might interfere with, or be perceived as impacting on, Council business or services.

5.2 You should not accept significant personal gifts from any contractor or outside suppliers or agents thereof. You should only accept hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or to represent the Council in the community.

5.3 You should also be particularly sensitive to receiving gifts or hospitality which may relate to the timing of a decision which the Council may be taking which affects those from whom the gift or hospitality is received.

5.4 Legal advice should be obtained where necessary or desirable.

## **DISCLOSURE AND PARTICIPATION**

6. At a meeting where such issues arise, you must declare any personal interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest. In any event, you must declare any pecuniary interest (which is not already on the register) in accordance with the Act. It is advisable to remind people of any relevant interests which are on the register in reference to any ongoing discussion.

7. Certain types of decisions, including those relating to a permission, licence, consent or registration for yourself, your friends, your family members, your employer or your business interests, are so closely tied to your personal or professional life that your ability to make a decision in an impartial manner in your role as a member may be called into question and in turn raise issues about the validity of the decision of the Council. You should not become involved in making these decisions and you should not vote in relation to such matters.

8. You should not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of your role as a member for the advancement of yourself, your friends, your family members, your employer or your business interests.

## **PREDETERMINATION OR BIAS**

9. Where you have been involved in campaigning on an issue that does not affect your personal or professional life you should not be prohibited from participating in a decision in your role as a member. You should not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.