

Newington Parish Council

Code of Conduct

As a Member or co-opted Member of Newington Parish Council (NPC) Councillors have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff; colleagues and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

1. Behavioural Principles

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity Councillors are committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for residents and maintain public confidence in this Parish Council.

The process of managing the conduct of Councillors in Meetings is detailed in Newington Parish Council's *Standing Orders*.

Newington Parish Council also provides a *Complaints Policy*.

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

INTEGRITY: Holders of public office 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 official duties.

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.

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.

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.

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

LEADERSHIP: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

2. Registering and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in Newington Parish Council this will be done as follows:

Councillors must, within 28 days of taking office as a Member or co-opted Member, notify the Parish Council's Clerk of any disclosable pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State, where the pecuniary interest is the Councillors, their spouse's or civil partner's, or is the pecuniary interest of somebody with whom the Councillor is living with as a husband or wife, or as if they were civil partners.

See Appendix A & B for explanations and details. (Source: MAY 2018. L09-12 NALC'S TEMPLATE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARISH COUNCILS)

Further provision for the treatment of Dispensations is included in Newington Parish Council's Standing Orders.

3. The Ethical Code

As a Member of NPC a Councillors conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the Code of Conduct by:

- Championing the needs of residents – the whole community, putting their interests first.
- Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of Councillors or others connected to them, to deter the Councillor from pursuing the interests of the community or the good governance of the Parish Council in a proper manner.
- Exercising independent judgement and not compromising the Councillors position by placing themselves under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way Councillors perform their duties as a Member/co-opted Member of this Parish Council.
- Listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.
- Being accountable for decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- Contributing to making this Parish Council's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible to enable residents to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding me NPC Councillors to account but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it
- Behaving in accordance with all NPC's legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within this Parish Council's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Parish Council's resources.
- Valuing colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public which the Councillor engages with and those they work alongside.
- Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this Parish Council.

4. Equal Opportunities

Newington Parish Council respects and adheres to the Equality Act 2010. The principles of which apply to the behaviours of all Councillors and staff. Indiscrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics will not be tolerated.

The Parish Council insists that everyone is treated with respect regardless of the following personal circumstances:

• age	• disability
• gender reassignment	• marriage and civil partnership
• pregnancy and maternity	• race
• religion or belief	• sex
• sexual orientation	•

Appendix A

Interests described

Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation: Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners.

Sponsorship: Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made to the member during the preceding 12 month period. 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 made between the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the Council —
(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 held by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partner which is within the area of the Council.

'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.

Licences: Any licence (alone or jointly with others) held by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer.

Corporate tenancies: Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge)—

(a) the landlord is the Council; and

(b) the tenant is a body that the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.

Securities: Any beneficial interest held by the member or by his/her spouse or civil partner or by the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners in securities* of a body where—

(a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; 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 member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* '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.

Appendix B

An interest which relates to or is likely to affect:

(i) any body of which the member is in a position of general control or management and to which he/she is appointed or nominated by the Council;

(ii) any body—

(a) exercising functions of a public nature;

(b) directed to charitable purposes; or

(c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which the member of the Council is a member or in a position of general control or management;

(iii) any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office.