

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

1. Application

The Code of Conduct applies to you whenever you are acting in your capacity as a Member (to include co-opted Members and the Elected Mayor) of Leicester City Council, including:

- a. At formal meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees, its Executive and Executive Committees
- b. When acting as a representative of the Authority
- c. In taking any decisions as a Member of the Executive or as a Ward Councillor
- d. In discharging your functions as a Ward Councillor
- e. At briefings meetings with officers
- f. At site visits
- g. When corresponding with the Authority other than in a private capacity
- h. At any other time when you conduct the business of your Authority

* The Code therefore applies when performing your duties in meetings, or when acting alone, and it applies whether you are acting inside or outside of the City boundary

2. Principles

The Principles underpinning this Code of Conduct are that you will act with:

- a. Selflessness
- b. Integrity
- c. Objectivity
- d. Accountability
- e. Openness
- f. Honesty
- g. Leadership
- h. Respect for others
- i. A commitment to uphold the law

3. General conduct

You must, therefore:

- a. Respect others and not bully or intimidate any person
- b. Respect the confidentiality of information which you receive as a Member. In addition you must (i) not disclose confidential information to third parties other than in accordance with the law and (ii) not act to prevent a third party gaining access to information to which they are entitled in law
- c. Exercise your own independent judgement, paying due regard to any advice provided to you by the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer, and giving reasons for your decisions as required by the law and the reasonable requirements of the Authority
- d. Uphold the law at all times
- e. Uphold and promote the Authority's discharge of its Equality obligations, in particular to (i) eliminate discrimination (ii) promote equality of opportunity (iii) foster good relations
- f. Uphold and promote these principles by leadership and by example, and act in a way that secures and preserves public confidence
- g. Comply with the requirements regarding registration, declaration and participation in the Authority's business where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or "Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)"
- h. When using the Authority's resources, do so in accordance with the Authority's requirements, and not use such resources improperly
- i. Not conduct yourself in a manner which is likely to bring the Authority into disrepute
- j. Not use your position as a Member to improperly confer (or attempt to confer) upon yourself or any other person an advantage or disadvantage, but act only to further the public interest
- k. Not do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality of those who work for (or work on behalf of) the Authority

(The above list is not exhaustive, and any conduct which breaches the principles set out in section 2 can constitute a breach of this Code)

4. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (see Table 1 enclosed)

In addition to conducting yourself in accordance with the principles set out in section 2 you must:

- a. Declare any and all DPIs on your Register of Interests.
- b. Ensure that your Register of Interests is kept fully up to date, and notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any change in respect of your DPIs
- c. Make a verbal declaration (at the beginning, or as soon as you become aware of your interest) of the existence and nature of any DPI “in a matter” to be considered (unless it is already declared on your Register, in which case you must simply comply with point d. below).
- d. Comply with the statutory requirements to withdraw from participating in respect of any matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), by either leaving the room (where the business is being conducted at a “meeting”) or by ceasing further participation in the item (where acting alone outside of a meeting)
 - The requirements cover not only DPI’s of Members but a DPI of any other “relevant person”, defined as spouse/civil partner, or someone with whom the Member is living as though they were a spouse or civil partner
 - Separate provisions within the law provide for the circumstances in which a Member may seek a “dispensation”, or may ask that the interest be treated as “sensitive”

5. Other Disclosable Interests (ODIs) (pecuniary or non-pecuniary)

Aside from the statutorily defined DPIs, you may have another type of interest in a matter being discussed. These will be of category A. or B. below and you will either:

- disclose that interest (regular ODI), or
- disclose and withdraw from the meeting (prejudicial ODI).

A. Regular ODI

You will have an “Other Disclosable Interest” in an item of business of the Authority where:

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 (see below), to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Ward or electoral area

- You may need to register such “Other Disclosable Interest” into the Register of Interests operated by the Monitoring Officer
- If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have an “ODI” in that item, you should make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of that item of business, or as soon as the interest becomes apparent

B. Prejudicial ODI

In addition to the above:

Where your ODI is of a nature where a member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think your “other disclosable interest” is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest you should disclose and withdraw from participating in respect of that matter

- “close association” is not defined in law but would reasonably include someone with whom you are in regular or irregular contact over a period of time, who is more than an acquaintance, and is someone whom a reasonable member of the public might think you were prepared to favour or disadvantage when discussing a matter that affects them.
- Note that when a Member is acting as a decision-maker (but not in Scrutiny there is a relationship between “bias/predetermination” and “interests”. Sometimes they will be synonymous [e.g. sitting on Planning Committee for a development that could, if approved, lower the value of your home will (i) certainly constitute a prejudicial ODI; (ii) possibly constitute a DPI; (iii) likely amount to “apparent bias” in common law].

However you might be predetermined over a matter in a way which does not translate into a registerable or a declarable “interest” (e.g. you are a member of Licensing Committee and have an ethical objection to the consumption of alcohol and a closed mind to the granting of any/all Liquor Licensing applications. Whilst this (i) will not constitute a DPI; (ii) may not constitute an ODI; it will (iii) constitute bias in law and breach the Nolan principles of objectivity, openness and upholding the law. You could therefore breach the Code of Conduct even though you strictly had no “interest” to declare/register.

6. Gifts and Hospitality

- a. You must, within 28 days of receipt, notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any gift, benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £25 which you have accepted as a member from any person or body other than the authority
- b. The Monitoring Officer will place your notification on a public register of gifts and hospitality
- c. This duty to notify the Monitoring Officer does not apply where the gift, benefit or hospitality comes within any description approved by the authority for this purpose

7. Other

Breaches of this Code will be dealt with under the “Standards Arrangements” as approved by Council on 13.11.14

By virtue of section 28(4) Localism Act 2011 a decision is not invalidated just because something that occurred in the process of making the decision involved a failure to comply with this Code (though this does not mean that the decision cannot be impugned on other legal grounds e.g. judicial review)

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City Barrister & Head of Standards
October 2014

Table 1**Categories of DPIs**

Subject	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(1).
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.