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CONSTITUTION

CHAPTER 2

COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Adopted: 22 June 2026

Review date: June 2028

1. INTRODUCTION

By law, all councillors are required to follow their Council's Code of Conduct when acting in their capacity as a councillor.

This Code is adopted to fulfil the Council's obligations under section 27(2) of the Localism Act 2011 and is consistent with the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles).

This Code should be read alongside: (i) the Council's Complaints Procedure (including Persistent/Vexacious Complaints), and (ii) the Councillor–Officer Relations Protocol. A breach of those documents may also constitute a breach of this Code.

If you have doubt about whether any action may breach this Code, you should seek advice from the Parish Executive Officer. Responsibility for your actions remains with you.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a "Councillor" means a member or co-opted member of the Parish Council (as defined in the Localism Act 2011).

3. PURPOSE OF THE CODE

The purpose of this Code is to assist councillors in modelling expected behaviour, provide a personal check and balance, and set out conduct that could lead to action being taken. It protects councillors, the public, officers and the reputation of local government. The fundamental aim is to maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILLOR CONDUCT

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest

- I exercise reasonable care and diligence
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with the Council's requirements and in the public interest

5. APPLICATION OF THE CODE

This Code applies as soon as you sign your declaration of Acceptance of Office (or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member) and continues until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code applies when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor, including when you misuse your position or where your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public (with knowledge of all the facts) that you are acting as a councillor.

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including face-to-face, online/telephone meetings, written and verbal communications, non-verbal communications, and electronic/social media communications (including messaging apps) when acting as a councillor.

6. STANDARDS OF COUNCILLOR CONDUCT (OBLIGATIONS)

Respect

As a councillor:

- I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.
- I treat Council employees, employees/representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with respect and respect the role they play.
- I engage in robust but civil debate and avoid personal attacks, including online.

Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

As a councillor:

- I do not bully any person.
- I do not harass any person.
- I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.
- I support the Council in meeting its duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and other forms of harassment connected with Council activity, including by modelling appropriate behaviour and challenging unacceptable conduct where safe to do so.

- I do not victimise, disadvantage or retaliate against any person for raising a concern, complaint or protected disclosure, or for participating in an investigation.

Member–officer relationships (impartiality and boundaries)

As a councillor:

- I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Council.
- I do not place inappropriate pressure on staff or seek to exert undue influence, including through persistent or excessive contact or through informal channels when inappropriate.
- I respect the Council's Councillor–Officer Relations Protocol and recognise the professional and employment protections that apply to staff.

Confidentiality and access to information

- I do not disclose information given to me in confidence or acquired by me which I believe (or ought reasonably to be aware) is of a confidential nature, unless I am authorised/required by law or other permitted exceptions apply (including obtaining professional legal advice).
- I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself or others.
- I do not prevent anyone from getting information they are entitled to by law.

Disrepute

- I do not bring my role or the Council into disrepute.
- This includes behaviour (including online conduct) which a reasonable person would consider likely to damage public confidence in the Council or the office of councillor.

Use of position

- I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Use of Council resources and facilities

- I do not misuse Council resources.
- When using Council resources or authorising their use, I act in accordance with the Council's requirements and ensure resources are not used for political purposes unless the use is reasonably regarded as facilitating the discharge of Council functions.

Compliance and cooperation

- I undertake mandatory Code of Conduct induction and any refresher training required by the Council.
- I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.
- I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings.
- I comply with any sanction imposed following a finding that I have breached the Code.

Interests

- I register and disclose my interests in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's arrangements. Failure to comply with the law on disclosable pecuniary interests is a criminal offence.

Gifts and hospitality

- I do not accept gifts or hospitality which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence.
- I register with the Executive Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of receipt, and any significant gift or hospitality offered but refused.
- The presumption is that gifts and hospitality should not be accepted unless there is a clear and justifiable reason connected to official duties.

7. RAISING CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Concerns or complaints about councillor conduct may be raised in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure. Where a matter indicates a potential breach of this Code, it may be referred to the Monitoring Officer at the principal authority (Eastleigh Borough Council) in accordance with the standards framework. The Council may also consider informal resolutions, training or mediation where appropriate.

8. SANCTIONS

Where a breach is found, action may include (subject to the standards framework and the Council's governance arrangements): formal censure, removal from committees/appointments, withdrawal of facilities, requirements for training or mediation, and other actions permitted within the Council's arrangements. The Council will keep its approach under review in line with national developments.

APPENDIX A – THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

APPENDIX B – REGISTERING AND DISCLOSING INTERESTS

The detailed categories of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Registerable Interests should be maintained in the Council's published register and are retained from the previous version of this Code. If in doubt, councillors should seek advice from the Executive Officer and/or Monitoring Officer.

Recognised sources used

- Local Government Association (LGA) – Model Councillor Code of Conduct (2020) (WEB PDF):
- GOV.UK – Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England (consultation outcome updated 11 Nov 2025):
- GOV.UK / Legislation – Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 (in force 26 October 2024) (see also EHRC guidance as applicable).
- ACAS – Employment Rights Act 2025: timeline and what has already changed (updated 2026):
- Department for Business and Trade – New employment rights (campaign guidance, updated 2026):