



## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

### **Introduction**

1. The Localism Act 2011 requires a relevant authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and co-opted members and to adopt a Code dealing with the conduct that is expected of them when they are acting in that capacity.
2. The legislation only applies to the City of London Corporation ("the Corporation") in its capacity as a local authority or police authority. The Corporation has, however, chosen to apply this Code to all of its functions.
3. The statutory provisions only apply to elected members and co-opted members with voting rights. However, this Code is applied to any member of the Corporation and any member of a committee or sub-committee of the Corporation (collectively referred to as a "Member").
4. This Code is largely based on the Model Councillor Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association, with some local differences.

### **Purpose of the Code of Conduct**

5. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a Member, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow Members, officers and the reputation of the Corporation. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all Members and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The Corporation encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of Member and the Corporation.

### **General principles of Member conduct**

6. Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles.
7. Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of Member.
8. 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; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Member.

9. 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; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with the Corporation's requirements and in the public interest.

### **Application of the Code of Conduct**

10. This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you make your declaration of office or attend your first meeting (as a co-opted member) and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a Member.

11. This Code of Conduct applies to you when:

- you are acting in your capacity as a Member and/or as a representative of the Corporation
- you are claiming to act as a Member and/or as a representative of the Corporation
- you are giving the impression that you are acting as a Member and/or as a representative of the Corporation
- you refer publicly to your role as a Member or use knowledge you could only obtain in your role as a Member.

12. The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

13. You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times.

14. You are encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or the Town Clerk on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

### **Standards of Member conduct**

15. This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a Member. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

16. Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

## **General Conduct**

### ***C1. Respect***

#### **As a Member:**

**C1.1 I treat other Members and members of the public with respect.**

**C1.2 I treat Corporation employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the Corporation with respect and respect the role they play.**

17. Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Member, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.
18. In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in Members.
19. In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the Corporation, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow Members, where action could then be taken under the Member Code of Conduct, and Corporation employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the Corporation's Member / Officer Charter.

### ***C2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination***

#### **As a Member:**

**C2.1 I do not bully any person.**

**C2.2 I do not harass any person.**

**C2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.**

20. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

21. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.
22. Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
23. The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on the Corporation. Members have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Corporation's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services. The Corporation has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism (see Appendix C).

### ***C3. Impartiality of officers of the Corporation***

#### **As a Member:**

**C3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Corporation.**

24. Officers work for the Corporation as a whole and must be politically neutral. They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

### ***C4. Confidentiality and access to information***

#### **As a Member:**

**C4.1 I do not disclose information:**

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless
  - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;
  - ii. I am 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; or
  - iv. the disclosure is:
    1. reasonable and in the public interest; and
    2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and
    3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

**C4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a Member for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.**

**C4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.**

25. Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the Corporation must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

### ***C5. Disrepute***

**As a Member:**

**C5.1 I do not bring my role or the Corporation into disrepute.**

26. As a Member, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other Members and/or the Corporation and may lower the public's confidence in your or the Corporation's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring the Corporation into disrepute.

27. You are able to hold the Corporation and fellow Members to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Corporation whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

### ***C6. Use of position***

**As a Member:**

**C6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**

**C6.2 Where taking decisions on behalf of a charity I act in the best interests of that charity and manage any conflicts of interest or loyalty.**

28. Your position as a Member of the Corporation provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

29. When acting on behalf of a charity for which the Corporation is the corporate trustee you are also required to comply with any conflicts of interest policy that has been adopted.

## ***C7. Use of Corporation resources and facilities***

**As a Member:**

**C7.1 I do not misuse Corporation resources.**

**C7.2 I will, when using the resources of the Corporation or authorising their use by others:**

- a. act in accordance with the Corporation's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Corporation or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

30. You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Corporation to assist you in carrying out your duties as a Member.

31. Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of Corporation buildings and rooms.

32. These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a Member more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the Corporation's own policies regarding their use.

## ***C8. Complying with the Code of Conduct***

**As a Member:**

**C8.1 [I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Corporation. / I familiarise myself with the Code of Conduct.]**

**C8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**

**C8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**

**C8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

33. It is extremely important for you as a Member to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the Corporation or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the Corporation's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with the Monitoring Officer or the Town Clerk.

## **Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Corporation**

### ***C9. Interests***

#### **As a Member:**

##### **C9.1 I register and declare my interests.**

34. You need to register your interests so that the public, Corporation employees and fellow Members know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should declare an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be declared by you or other Members when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of governance is maintained.
35. You should note that failure to register or declare a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to the Corporation's functions as a local authority or police authority may be a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.
36. Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and declaring interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or the Town Clerk.

### ***C10. Gifts and hospitality***

#### **As a Member:**

**C10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Corporation or from persons who may apply to the Corporation for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**

**C10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer (via the Town Clerk) any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least [£50 / £100] within 28 days of its receipt.**

**C10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer (via the Town Clerk) any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

37. In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Corporation, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a Member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register

gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Member, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a Member. If you are unsure, do contact the Monitoring Officer or the Town Clerk for guidance. Special arrangements apply to the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, as set out in guidance to be issued from time to time by the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The principles are:

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## Appendix B

### Registering interests

1. Within 28 days of this Code of Conduct being adopted by the Corporation or your election or appointment to office (where that is later) you must register with the Monitoring Officer (via the Town Clerk) the interests which fall within the categories set out in Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests). You must also register any interest which falls within Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests) as well as any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest which you consider should be included if you are to fulfil your duty to act in conformity with the Seven Principles of Public Life.
2. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer (via the Town Clerk).
3. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the Member, or a person connected with the Member, being subject to violence or intimidation.
4. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Declaring interests and participation

5. Where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that arises at a meeting you must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation. You must declare the interest if it has not already been entered onto the Corporation's register. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to declare the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.
6. Your participation in any item of business:
  - a. in which you have any other interest; or
  - b. that affects a donor from whom you have received any gift or hospitality;

that is registered, or ought to be registered as set out above, will need to be considered by you on a case by case basis. You will only be expected to exclude yourself from speaking or voting in exceptional circumstances, for example where there is a real danger of bias.

### Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

<b>Sponsorship</b>	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Corporation) made to the Member during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a Member, or towards his/her election expenses.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
<b>Contracts</b>	<p>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 Corporation —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
<b>Land and Property</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Corporation.</p> <p>'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.</p>
<b>Licences</b>	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Corporation for a month or longer
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	<p>Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the Corporation; and</p> <p>(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.</p>
<b>Securities</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Corporation; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p>

	<p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(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.</p>
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\* '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.

**Table 2: Other Registerable Interests**

<b>Any Body of a description set out below of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management:</b>	
Club or Society active in the City of London or which relates to any functions of the Corporation	
Fraternal or Sororal Society	
Livery Company, City Company without Livery, Guild or Company seeking Livery	
Political Party	
Professional Association	
Trade Association	
Trade Union	
Any other Body -	(a) exercising functions of a public nature;
	(b) directed to charitable purposes;
	(c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy; or
	(d) to which you are appointed or nominated by the Corporation
but excluding any position on a Committee or Court of the Corporation.	

## Appendix C

### IHRA Definition of Antisemitism

1. “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

### IHRA Working Examples

2. Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.
3. Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:
  - Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
  - Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
  - Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
  - Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
  - Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
  - Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
  - Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
  - Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
  - Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
  - Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
  - Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.
4. **Antisemitic acts are criminal** when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

5. **Criminal acts are antisemitic** when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.
6. **Antisemitic discrimination** is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.