

CODE OF CONDUCT

Part 1

As a member or co-opted member of Southwark Council I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

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

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.

The act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in Southwark Council this is outlined in Part 2 of this document.

Members are required to register these interests within 28 days of their election and keep the register up to date by notifying any changes within 28 days to the monitoring officer.

As a member of Southwark Council, my conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

1. Championing the needs of residents – the whole community and in a special way my constituents, including those who did not vote for me - and putting their interests first.

2. Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
3. Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the Southwark Council or the good governance of the authority in a proper manner.
4. Exercising independent judgement and not compromising my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as a member/co-opted member of this authority.
5. 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.
6. Being accountable for my decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
7. Contributing to making this authority'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 and other members to account but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it
8. Behaving in accordance with all our legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within this authority's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the authority's resources.
9. Valuing my 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.
10. Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside.
11. Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this authority.
12. Assist in any investigation concerning possible breach of this code.

Part 2

Interests

This part explains the requirements of the act and of the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests. These are enforced by criminal sanction and not by the standards committee.

Notification of disclosable pecuniary interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or co-opted member, the member must notify the monitoring officer of any 'disclosable pecuniary interests'.

What is a 'disclosable pecuniary interest' is detailed in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

A 'disclosable pecuniary interest' is an interest of the member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom the member is living as husband or wife, or a person with whom the member is living as if they are civil partners).

Register of interests

Any interests notified to the monitoring officer will be included in the register of interests. A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the council's website.