**Challock Parish Council Councillor Code of Conduct**

**Statement**

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country’s

system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all

adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an

individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to

be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and

circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver

local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local

area, taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and

collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and

demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being

intimidated, abused, bullied, or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and

safeguard the public’s trust in local government.

**Definitions**

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted

member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in

the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but

who

a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;

b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint subcommittee

of the authority; and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be

decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” is Challock Parish Council

**Purpose of the Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, 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 councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government.

It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific

obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA 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 councillor and local

government.

**General principles of councillor conduct**

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services,

should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles.

**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

and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the

principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Building on these principles, the following statements have been developed specifically for

the role of councillor.

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

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; and

• I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local

authority’s requirements and in the public interest

**Application of the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of

the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to

apply to you until you cease to be a councillor. This Code of Conduct applies to you when

you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

• you misuse your position as a councillor

• 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:

• 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.

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

when acting as a councillor. Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the

implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your

Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish

councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the

Monitoring Officer.

**Standards of councillor conduct**

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required

of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be

made against you, which may result in action being taken.

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

followed.

**General Conduct**

**1. Respect:**

**I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.**

**I treat local authority employees, representatives of partner organisations and**

**those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they**

**play.**

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 councillor, 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.

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 councillors. 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 local authority, the relevant social

media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then

be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where

concerns should be raised in line with the local authority’s councillor- officer protocol.

**2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination:**

**I do not bully any person.**

**I do not harass any person.**

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

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. 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.

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.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central

role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance

and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality

across public services.

**3. Impartiality of officers of the council:**

**I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who**

**works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.**

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they

are political assistants). 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.

**4. Confidentiality and access to information:**

**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: reasonable and in the public interest; and made in good faith and in

compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and I have

consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

v. I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor

for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my

business interests.

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

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 local authority must be treated in

a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information

relating to ongoing negotiations.

**5. Disrepute:**

**I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.**

As a Councillor, 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

councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public’s confidence in your or your

local authority’s ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is

considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to

constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by

the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

**6. Use of position:**

**I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or**

**disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**

Your position as a member of the local authority 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.

**7. Use of local authority resources and facilities:**

**I do not misuse council resources.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in

carrying out your duties as a councillor. These are given to you to help you carry out your

role as a councillor 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 local authority’s own policies regarding their use.

**8. Complying with the Code of Conduct:**

**I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.**

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

**I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be**

**involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**

**I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have**

**breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to

have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local

authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local

authority’s processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring

Officer.

**Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority**

**9. Interests:**

**I register and disclose my interests.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and

maintain a register of interests of members of the authority. You need to register your

interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors 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 disclose 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

disclosed by you or other councillors 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 local governance is maintained. You should note that failure to

register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal

offence under the Localism Act 2011. **Appendix A sets** out the detailed provisions on

registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your

Monitoring Officer.

**10.Gifts and hospitality:**

**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 local authority or from persons who may apply to the**

**local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**

**I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated**

**value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**

**I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I**

**have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, 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 councillor. 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 councillor, 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 councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring

Officer for guidance.

**Appendix A Registering interests**

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you

must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out

in **Table 1** (**Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**) which are as described in “The Relevant

Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012”. You should also register

details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2**

(**Other Registerable Interests**).

“**Disclosable Pecuniary Interest”** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you

are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband

or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. 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.

2. A ‘sensitive interest’ is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a

person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.

3. 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.

**Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest**

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable

Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in

any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been

granted a dispensation. If it is a ‘sensitive interest’, you do not have to disclose the nature of

the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited

circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a

disclosable pecuniary interest.

5. [Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being

considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must

notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in

the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it]

**Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests**

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to the financial interest or

wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must

disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also

allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote

on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a

dispensation. If it is a ‘sensitive interest’, you do not have to disclose the nature of the

interest.

**Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests**

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or

well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial

interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You

may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the

meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must

not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a ‘sensitive

interest’, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***affects*** –

1. your own financial interest or well-being;

2. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or

3. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests

as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether

you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should

be applied

9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above*)* ***affects*** the financial interest or wellbeing:

a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;

b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a ‘sensitive interest’, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10.[Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it]

**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 vacation.** | Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit  or gain. |
| **Sponsorships** | Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12- month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. 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 councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor 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 and Property** | Any beneficial interest in land 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 councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income. |
| **Licenses** | Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer |
| **Corporate Tenancies** | Any tenancy where (to the councillor’s knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor 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 in securities\* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor’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 councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have 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.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You must register as an Other Registerable Interest :

a) any unpaid directorships

b ) anybody of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or

management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority

c) any body

(i) exercising functions of a public nature

(ii) directed to charitable purposes or

(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy

(including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of

general control or management

Based on the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of

Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as

part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high

standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole

and/or with local amendments.

Adopted – 12th June 2025

Minute reference – agenda item 9