

# EAST COWES TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

For members of the East Cowes Town Council

## 1. Introduction and interpretation

- a. This Code applies to you as a member of the East Cowes Town Council.
- b. You should read this Code together with the seven general principles prescribed by the Localism Act 2011 as follows:

**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.

**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.

- c. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

- d. In this Code—

"meeting" means any meeting of—

- (a) East Cowes Town Council
- (b) any of the East Cowes Town Council's committees, sub-committees, joint committees, or community working parties.

"member" includes a co-opted member and an appointed member.

In relation to a parish or town council, references to an authority's monitoring officer shall be read as references to the monitoring officer of the Isle of Wight Council under section 55(12) of the Local Government Act 2000.

## 2. Scope

- a. Subject to sub-paragraphs b. to e., you must comply with this Code whenever you—
  - i. conduct the business of the East Cowes Town Council (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
  - ii. act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the East Cowes Town Council,and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.
- b. Subject to sub-paragraphs (c) and (d), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.
- c. In addition to having effect in relation to conduct in your official capacity, paragraphs 3(b) (iii), 5 and 6(a) also have effect, at any other time, where that conduct constitutes a criminal offence for which you have been convicted.
- d. Conduct to which this Code applies (whether that is conduct in your official capacity or conduct mentioned in sub-paragraph (c)) includes a criminal offence for which you are convicted (including an offence you committed before the date you took office, but for which you are convicted after that date).
- e. Where you act as a representative of the East Cowes Town Council—
  - i. on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or
  - ii. on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with the East Cowes Town Council's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

## 3. General obligations

- a. You must treat others with respect.
- b. You must not—
  - i. do anything which may cause the East Cowes Town Council to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006);
  - ii. bully any person;
  - iii. intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be—
    1. a complainant,
    2. a witness, or
    3. involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with their Council's code of conduct; or

- iv. do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the East Cowes Town Council.

4. You must not—

- a. disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where—
  - i. you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
  - ii. you are required by law to do so;
  - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional 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 authority; or
- b. prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the East Cowes Town Council into disrepute.

6. You—

- a. must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and
- b. must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the East Cowes Town Council —
  - i. act in accordance with the East Cowes Town Council's reasonable requirements;
  - ii. ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
- c. must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

7. When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by— the Clerk of the East Cowes Town Council

8. You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by the East Cowes Town Council).

9. Register of Interests - you must update your register of interests within 28 days of any event that requires a change.

10. Declaration of a Pecuniary Interest

If you have a pecuniary interest in a matter being considered by the East Cowes Town Council then you must take no part in its consideration and if it is being considered at a meeting of the East Cowes Town Council you must leave the room for that item, other than to participate as a member of the public to express your views where public speaking is allowed under the Council's normal procedures. In such cases once you have participated as a member of the public you must leave the room during the remainder of the debate.

11. Register of Gifts and Hospitality

You must register with the Clerk any gift or hospitality exceeding a value of £50 that you have been offered (whether accepted or not) as part of your role as a member of the East Cowes Town Council).