

# THE SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

(This policy was reviewed by the full council at its AGM held on 15 May 2024, minute 20/24-25)

You are a member or co-opted member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council and hence you shall have regard to the following principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership. The principles were first established by the Nolan Committee and are detailed in the [LGA's supporting guidance](#) for members.

Accordingly, when acting in your capacity as a member or co-opted member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council -

1. **Selflessness:** You must act solely in the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend or close associate.
2. **Integrity:** You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to inappropriately influence you in the performance of your official duties. You should have regard to the guidance in the Town Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Policies and Procedures on Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality.

Failure to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may be a criminal offence and you should also declare any Prejudicial Interest that relates to your public duties and must take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest. You should register and declare your interests in a manner conforming with the procedures set out by the Town Council, including Standing Order 43.

3. **Objectivity:** When carrying out your public duties, you must make all choices, such as making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, on merit. You will find guidance in the Town Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Policies and Procedures.
4. **Accountability:** You are accountable for your decisions to the public and you must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office. You must not undermine public trust in the Council or its governance.
5. **Openness:** You must be as open as possible about your decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of the Town Council and should be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so or you have the consent of the person authorised to give it.

You will on occasions be privy to confidential, exempt and sensitive information, such as personal information about someone, or commercially sensitive information which, if disclosed, might harm the commercial interests of the Council or another person or organisation. You should have regard to the guidance in the Town Council's Standing Orders on how to deal with confidential business.

6. **Honesty:** You should be truthful.
7. **Leadership:** You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your public post, in particular as characterised by the requirements in this Code, by leadership and example.

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

You must show respect and consideration for others. You must afford colleagues, opponents and officers the same courtesy and consideration you show to others in your everyday life. You must not bully or harass any person. You must be mutually respectful even if you have personal or political differences.

You should have regard to the Town Council's Member Officers Relations Protocol, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Policies and Procedures regarding the conduct between officers and members and the conduct when serving on outside bodies.

Use of resources & facilities: You must when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the Council, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986 and guidance within the Town Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Policies and Procedures.

8. **Equalities:** You must carry out your duties and responsibilities with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity for all people. You must be careful not to act in a way which may amount to any prohibited forms of discrimination, or to do anything which hinders the Council's fulfilment of its positive duties under the Equality Act 2010.

You will not engage in conduct which might reasonably be seen to demonstrate hostility or prejudice based on age, disability, gender, reassignment or identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, which shall include but not be limited to incidents involving racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or otherwise racist language, sentiments, stereotypes or actions, sexual harassment, bullying or any form of intimidation towards another person on the basis of a protected characteristic.

Nb.

- A. You are directed to the supporting guidance issued by the Local Government Association which should help you comply with the Code. The LGA's guidance does not form part of the Code.
- B. If you need guidance on any matter under the Code, you should seek it from the Town Clerk or your own legal adviser – but it is entirely your responsibility to comply with the provisions of the code.

Councillor .....	Signed.....	Date.....
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