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THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Pocket Guide
May 2007

Confidence in local democracy



the
Standards Board
for England



The Code of Conduct: Pocket Guide

This is a quick reminder of the main points of the Members' Code of Conduct and is not intended to be legal advice. The full Code of Conduct and a guide to it - entitled *The Code of Conduct: Guide for members* - are available from the Standards Board for England's website.

Do...

- Follow the Code of Conduct when you are representing your authority.
- Be aware of what personal and prejudicial interests are – refer to the Standards Board guide if you are unsure.
- Keep your register of interests up-to-date.
- Treat others with respect.
- Register gifts and hospitality, received in your role as a member, worth more than £25.
- Visit www.standardsboard.gov.uk for more information.

Don't...

- Bring your authority or office into disrepute.
- Use the authority's resources for party political purposes.
- Compromise the impartiality of people who work for your authority.
- Discriminate against people on the grounds of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.
- Bully, intimidate or attempt to intimidate others.
- Use your position improperly for personal gain or to advantage your friends or close associates.
- Attend meetings or be involved in decision-making where you have a prejudicial interest – except when speaking when the general public are also allowed to do so.
- Disclose confidential information, other than in exceptional circumstances – refer to the Code of Conduct and our guide if you are unsure.
- Prevent anyone getting information they are entitled to.

Personal and prejudicial interests

You have a **personal interest** if the issue being discussed in the meeting affects the well-being or finances of you, your family or your close associates more than most other people who live in your area, such as your ward. Personal interests are also things that relate to an interest you must register.

Prejudicial interests are personal interests that affect you, your family, or your close associates in the following ways:

- their finances, or regulatory functions such as licensing or planning which affect them
- and which a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of the facts would believe likely to harm or impair your ability to judge the public interest

If you have a personal interest you must normally declare it in the meeting.

Personal and prejudicial interests continued

If the personal interest arises because of your membership of another public body, you only need to declare it if you intend to speak.

If you have both a personal and prejudicial interest you must not debate or vote on a regulatory or financial matter, but you do have the same right to speak as a member of the public.

There are exemptions to both types of interests and when they must be declared. Your monitoring officer will advise you.

