

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Code of Conduct

Principles of the Code

As a member or co-opted member of Staffordshire County Council I have 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.

General Undertaking

When acting in my role of member of Staffordshire County Council my conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

- Championing the needs of residents - the whole community and in a special way your constituents, including those that did not vote for you, and put their interests first.
- Dealing with representations and enquiries from residents, members of the community and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially
- Not allow other pressures, including the financial interest of myself or others connected with me to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interest of Staffordshire County Council or the good governance of the authority in a proper manner
- 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 of the authority
- 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
- Being accountable for my decisions and co-operate when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents
- Contributing to making the 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 (Being aware of the potential for information passed through social networking media to be distributed much more widely than intended by the author)
- Behaving in accordance with all the authority's legal obligations, alongside any requirements within the authority's policies, protocols and procedures, including with regard to confidentiality and on the use of the authority's resources
- Valuing colleagues and staff and engage with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect that is essential to good local government
- Always treating people with respect, including those organisations and members of the public I engage with and those I work alongside

- Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interest of the community and other organisations as well as within the authority

Registration and Declaration of Interests

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in Staffordshire County Council this will be in accordance with procedures approved by full Council and administered by the Director of Law and Democracy.

Detailed provisions in relation to the registration and declaration of interests will be added once Regulations have been made by the Secretary of State defining the various categories of interest to be registered and disclosed."