

Code of Conduct for Community Councillors

Key Principles of the Code of Conduct

The general principles upon which this code of conduct is based are:

Duty

You have a duty to uphold the law and act in accordance with the law and public trust placed in you. You have a duty to act in the interests of the Community Council and the communities served by it and a duty to be accessible to the people of the area for which you have been elected to serve and to represent their interests conscientiously.

Selflessness

You have a duty to take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.

Accountability and Stewardship

You are accountable for your decisions and actions in public. You have a duty to consider issues on their merits, taking account of the views of others, and you must ensure that the Community Council uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Openness

You have a responsibility to be as open as possible about your decisions and actions.

Integrity and Honesty

You have a duty to act honestly. You must declare any private interests and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public's interest.

Leadership

You have a duty to promote and support these principles by leadership and example and to maintain and strengthen the integrity of the Community Council

Respect

You must treat with due respect and courtesy all other Community Councillors and all Community Council employees and the role they play and people with whom you have dealings in respect of Community Council business.

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1. You must never canvass or seek gifts or hospitality which could give rise to a reasonable suspicion of influence on your part to show favour or disadvantage to any individual or organisation except: -
 - a. Isolated gifts of a trivial character including calendars and diaries
 - b. normal hospitality associated with Community Council duties
2. You must respect the Chair, your colleagues and any members of the public present during meetings.
3. You must comply with rulings from the Chair in the conduct of the business of the Community Council.
4. Confidentiality – proceedings and printed material are generally open to the general public. However, there may be times when you will be required to treat discussions, documents and other information in a confidential manner.
5. You may be appointed or nominated to a partner organisation by the Community Council or the Association of Shetland Community Councils as a member of another body or organisation. If so you will be bound by the rules of conduct of these organisations and must also continue to observe the rules of this Code in carrying out the duties of that body.

If you are appointed to represent the ASCC as a member of another body or organisation e.g. SIC Forums, it is your duty to promote the views of all Community Councils represented by the ASCC.

6. You must not seek preferential treatment for yourself, your family, friends, colleagues or employees because of your position as a Community Councillor.

7. Declaration of Interest

Community Councillors may have significant non-financial interests and it is important that relevant interests such as membership or holding office in clubs, societies and organisations are registered and described. In this context, non-financial interests are those, which members of the public might reasonably think could influence your actions, speeches or votes in the Council.

If you have a financial or non-financial interest you must judge whether your interest is sufficiently relevant to the particular proceedings to require a declaration. Your declaration should be made as soon as practicable after the commencement of the meeting by way of an oral statement.

8. Planning and Licence Applications

As a Community Councillor you will have to consider planning and licence applications. It is your duty to ensure that development decisions are properly taken and that parties involved are dealt with fairly.

If you have an interest, whether financial, non financial or personal, in the outcome of a decision on a planning or licence application, or a planning agreement you must disclose that interest and refrain from taking part in the decision.