CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

Date Adopted	Minute Ref	Review Cycle
14/05/2025	AMPC 9	Annually

Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council ("the authority") has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and underpin public confidence in the authority and its members and co-opted members.

The Code has been adopted under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 and is based on the following core principles of public life - selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. It sets out general obligations about the standards of conduct expected of members and co-opted members of the authority, together with provisions about registering and declaring interests.

DEFINITIONS

In this Code

- "member" includes a co-opted member
- "co-opted member" is a person who is not a member of the authority but who is either a member of any of its committees or sub-committees or a member of and represents the authority on any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority, and who is entitled to vote at such meetings
- "meeting" means
    - any meeting of the authority or any of its committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees
    - any briefing by officers
    - any site visit to do with business of the authority
    - any meeting of the Cabinet or its committees
    - in taking a decision as a member of the Cabinet or as a ward member

GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

Whenever you are acting as a member of this authority you must act in accordance with the following obligations:

Selflessness

1 You must act solely in the public interest and must never use or attempt to use your position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, friends or close associates.

Integrity

2 You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties. You should exercise independent judgement. Although you may take account of the views of others (including a political group), you should reach your own conclusions on the issues before you and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Objectivity

3 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 should remain objective, listen to the interests of all parties appropriately and impartially and take all relevant information, including advice from the authority's officers, into consideration.

Accountability

4 You are accountable to the public for your decisions and you must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office, including by local residents.

Openness

5 (a) You must be as open and transparent as possible about your decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of your authority. You should be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions. You must not prevent anyone getting information that they are entitled to by law.

(b) Where the law or the wider public interest requires it, you must not disclose confidential information or information to which public access is restricted.

Honesty

6 (a) You must declare any private interests, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary, that relate to your public duties and must take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest, including registering and declaring interests as set out below.

(b) You must only use or authorise the use of the authority's resources in accordance with the authority's requirements. You must, when using or authorising the use by others of such resources, ensure that they are used for proper purposes only. Resources must not be 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

Respect for others

7 (a) You must treat others with respect. You should engage with colleagues and staff in a manner that underpins mutual respect, essential to good local government.

(b) You must not do anything which may cause your authority to breach any equality laws.

(c) You must not compromise or attempt to compromise the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the authority.

(d) You must not bully any person, including other councillors, officers of the authority or members of the public.

Leadership

8 You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving as member or co-opted member of the authority, by leadership and example, championing the interests of the community.

You should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in you.

REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

9 You must within 28 days of

(a) this Code being adopted by your authority; or

(b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later)

register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Appendix A (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) and Appendix B (Outside Body Interests).

10 You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest in Appendix A or B, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer of that new interest or change.

DECLARING OF INTERESTS AND PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

11 If you are present at a meeting and you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as set out in Appendix A -

(a) you must make a verbal declaration of that interest if an item of business affects or relates to that interest, at or before the item is considered or as soon as the interest becomes apparent;

(b) you must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;

(c) you must not vote on the matter;

(d) you must leave the room where the meeting is held during any discussion or vote; and

(e) if your interest is not already registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Outside Body Interests

12 Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix B -

(a) you must declare your interest if
  (i) you speak on the matter at the meeting; or
  (ii) your interest in not already on the register of interests; or

  (iii) you have not notified the Monitoring Officer of it;

(b) if the matter significantly affects the financial interests of the body in which you have an interest under Appendix B or relates to a licensing or regulatory matter concerning that body

  (i) you must declare your interest ;

  (ii) you must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting (subject to paragraph (iv) below) ;

  (iii) you must not vote on the matter; and

  (iv) you may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting;

(c) you do not need to declare your interest if paragraph 12(a) and/or 12(b) above do not apply.

(d) The requirement in paragraph 12(b) above shall not apply where the matter under consideration relates to the setting of the Council Tax, a precept or a special expense.

Family, Friend or Close Associate Interests

13 Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests listed in Appendix A, but in respect of a member of your family (other than your spouse/partner) or a friend or close associate of yours

(a) you must declare the interest;

(b) you must not vote on the matter;

(c) you may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting.

SENSITIVE INTERESTS

14 Where you consider that disclosure of the details of an interest could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to violence or intimidation and the Monitoring Officer agrees that it is a "sensitive interest", you need only declare the fact that you have an interest but not the details of that interest. Copies of the public register of interests may state you have an interest the details of which are withheld.

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

15 You must within 28 days of receipt notify the Monitoring Officer of any gift, benefit or hospitality with an estimated value of £25 or more which you have accepted as a member from any person or body other than the authority. The notification will be entered on a public register of gifts and hospitality.

APPENDIX A

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is an interest of you (i.e. the member) or of your partner (which means spouse or civil partner or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if you are civil partners) within the categories below*:

Interest	***Prescribed description***
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the authority) made or provided within the previous 12 months (up to and including the date of notification of the interest) in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (or a body in which you or they have a beneficial interest) and the authority (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the authority's area. For this purpose "land" excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for you, your spouse, civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse

	or civil partner (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the authority's area for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) – (a) the landlord is the authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which you, your spouse or civil partner or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where – (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the authority's area and (b) either – i. the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or ii. If the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class. For this purpose, "securities" means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

**The provisions in the Code in respect of the registration and declaring of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and the requirement to withdraw from participating in respect of any matter where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest apply to your interests and to those of your spouse or civil partner or a person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner where you are aware of their interest*.

APPENDIX B

OUTSIDE BODY INTERESTS

An interest which relates to or is likely to affect:

(i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority

(ii) any body

(a) exercising functions of a public nature;

(b) directed to charitable purposes; or

(c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management