

GREETHAM PARISH COUNCIL (GPC)

CODE OF CONDUCT

(Approved on 12th April 2023)

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Greetham Parish Council has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members and co-opted members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council.

Importantly members should be able to undertake their roles as a councilor without being intimidated, abused, bullied, or threatened, including the general public.

Any queries about the Code should be addressed to the Proper Officer, the Clerk.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Code, a 'co-opted member' is a person who was not elected but was appointed by the Council.

A co-opted member is a full member of the Council.

For the purpose of this Code, a 'meeting' is a meeting of the Council, (and any committees, sub-committees, that EPC may establish after April 2022).

MEMBER OBLIGATIONS

When acting or giving the Impression of acting for the Council;-

- To behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful,
- Not act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory,
- Not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person,
- To use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirements, and
- Not to disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS (REFER TO APPENDIX A)

1. Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or member's election or the co-opted member's appointment (where that is later), he/she shall register with the Monitoring Officer at Rutland County Council the interests which fall within the categories set out in Appendices A and B.
2. Upon the re-election of a member or the re-appointment of a co-opted member, he/she shall within 28 days re-register with the Monitoring Officer any interests in Appendices A and B.
3. A member shall register with the Monitoring Officer any change to interests or new interests in Appendices A and B within 28 days of becoming aware of it.
4. A member need only declare the existence but not the details of any interest which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead the member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix A the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He/she only has to declare what his/her interest is if it is not already entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it.

5. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix A which is a sensitive interest, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. If it is a sensitive interest which has not already been disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, the member shall disclose he/she has an interest but not the nature of it.
6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest in Appendix B, the members shall not vote on the matter. He/she may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.
7. A member only has to declare his/her interest in Appendix B if it is not already entered in his/her register of interests or he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it or if he/she speaks on the matter. If he/she holds an interest in Appendix B which is a sensitive interest not already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, he/she shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate (other than an interest in Appendix A), the member shall disclose the nature of the interest and not vote on the matter. He/she may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. If it is a 'sensitive interest' the member shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.

DISPENSATIONS

On a request to the Council's Proper Officer (The Clerk), a member may be granted a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if he/she has an interest in Appendices A and B if the Council believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part or it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation. The Clerk may consult with the Monitoring Officer if they are unable to reach a decision.

A Parish Council member;

- May request a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer for one meeting only.
- Must make the request in writing detailing what the interest is, why the dispensation is required and for what meeting.
- Must make a request 5 days prior to the meeting at which the dispensation is required.

The Parish Council member requesting a dispensation must complete a Dispensation Request Form via the Clerk, who will submit the form to the RCC Monitoring Officer to make the decision. See Appendix C - Dispensation Request Form

Planning Application

If a planning application comes before the Parish Council and it directly affects a member of the Parish Council, (for example, a planning application relating to a direct neighbour, family member or close friend) the Councillor should declare an interest at the beginning of the meeting, and at the appropriate juncture leaves the room.

Appendix A

Subject

Employment, Office, Trade, Profession or Vocation

Description

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 Council) made to the member during the 12 month period ending on the latest date referred to in paragraph 1 (Registration of Interests) above for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her 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 made between the member or the members *spouse and the Council- (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 Parish.
Licences	Any License (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate Tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the members knowledge)- (a) The landlord is the Council; and (b) The tenant is a body in which the member, spouse or has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where- (a) That body (to the members knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and (b) Either- (i) The total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25000 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 share of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

'Spouse' means Husband, Wife or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouse/civil partners (or a body in which such a person is a partner in a firm, a director of an incorporated body or holds the beneficial interest in securities)

*'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.

APPENDIX B

An interest which relates to or is likely to affect:

1. Any body of which the member is in a position of general control or management and to which he/she is appointed or nominated by the Council;
2. Any body –
 - 2.1 Exercising functions of a public nature;
 - 2.2 Directed to charitable purposes; or

- 2.3 One of whose principle purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which the member of the Council is a member or in a position of general control or management;
3. Any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office.

APPENDIX C

DISPENSATION REQUEST FORM

Please give full details of the following in support of your application for a dispensation. If you need any help completing this form please contact the parish clerk.

Your name	
The council business/matter for which you require a dispensation (refer to agenda item number if appropriate)	
Details of your interest in that council business/matter	
Date of meeting or time period (up to 4 years) for which dispensation is sought	
Dispensation requested to participate, or participate further, in any discussion of that council business/matter by that body	Yes / No
Dispensation requested to participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on that council business/matter by that body	Yes / No
REASON(S) FOR DISPENSATION 33 a) without the dispensation the number of persons unable to participate in the transaction of council business/matter would be so great as to impede the transaction of the council business/matter	
33b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups would be affected so as to alter the likely outcome of any vote	
33c) the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area	
33e) that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation Reason :	

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

DECISION :

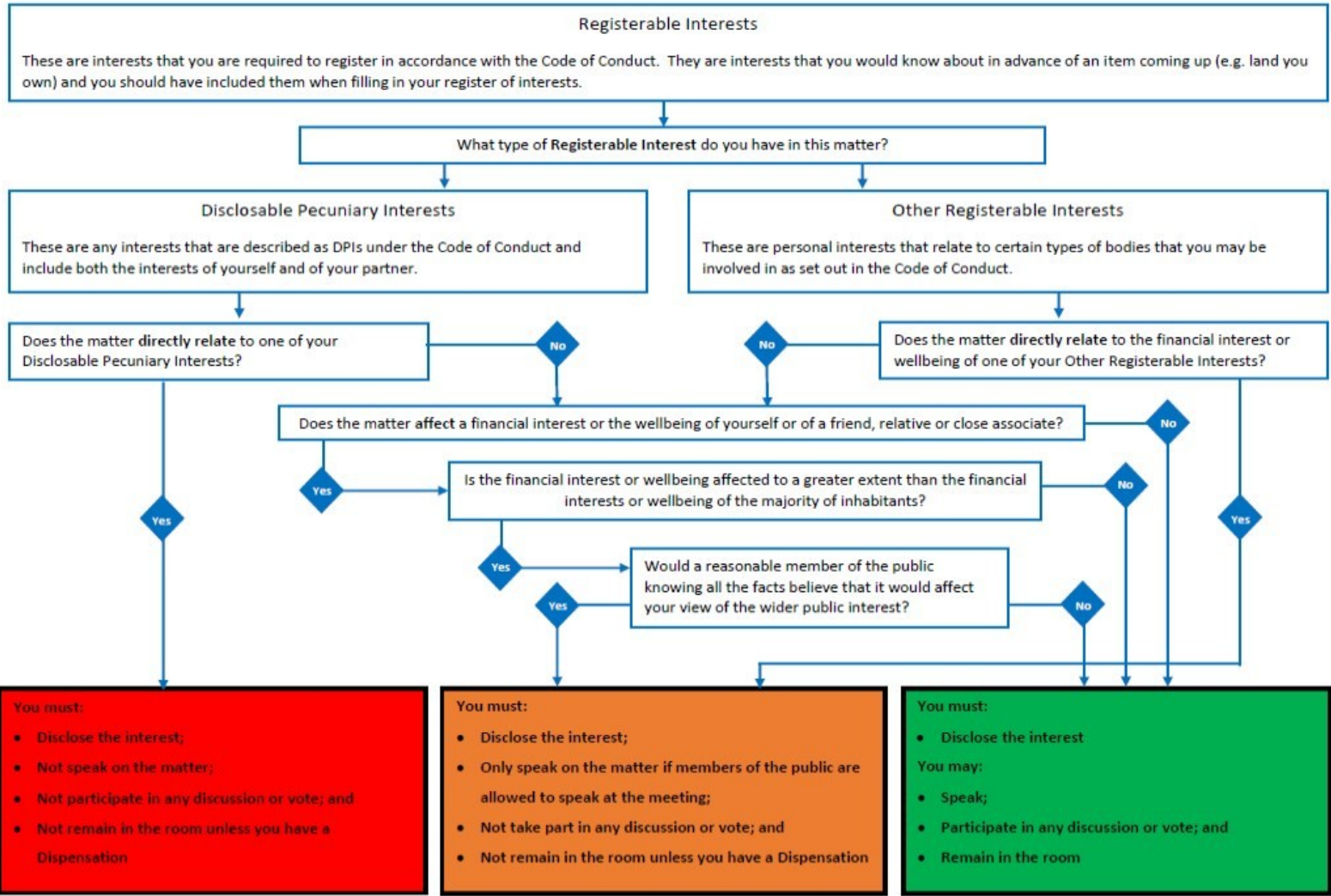
Dispensation Given : YES / NO

LENGTH OF DISPENSATION :

Date:.....

Minute Number:

Signed.....



Non-Registerable Interests

These are interests that you are not required to register but may become relevant when a particular item arises. These are usually interests that relate to other people you are connected with (e.g. friends, relatives or close associates) but can include your own interests where you would not have been expected to register them.

