

# Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

## CODE OF CONDUCT

- 1.1 This code applies to you as a Member or co-opted Member of Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 1.2 You should read this Code together with the Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) which are set out in Appendix A below.
- 1.3 It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- 1.4 In this Code-

“meeting” means any meeting of:

- (a) the Authority; and
- (b) its committees and sub-committees.

‘Monitoring Officer’ means Monitoring Officer for Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

### Scope

- 2.1 This Code applies to you as a member of this Authority when you act in your role as Member or as a representative of the Authority in circumstances described in paragraph 2.2 (b) below.
- 2.2 Where you act as a representative of the Authority:
  - (a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority’s code of conduct; or
  - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with the authority’s code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

### General Obligations

- 3.1 You must treat others with respect.
- 3.2 You must not:
  - (a) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the equality enactments;

- (b) bully any person;
- (c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be:
  - (i) a complainant,
  - (ii) a witness, or
  - (iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings,

in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with the Authority's Code of Conduct.

- (d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the authority.

4. You must not:

- (a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where:
  - (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
  - (ii) you are required by law to do so;
  - (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
  - (iv) the disclosure is:
    - (aa) reasonable and in the public interest; and
    - (bb) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority;
- (b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or Authority into disrepute.

6. You:
  - (a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and
  - (b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of, or under the control of, the Authority;
    - (i) act in accordance with the authority's reasonable requirements;
    - (ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
  - (c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity.
7. You must:
  - (a) when reaching decisions on any matter have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by the Authority's officers and in particular by the Authority's Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer; and
  - (b) give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirement and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by the Authority.
8. You must not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.

## **Part 2**

### **Interests**

#### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests ("DPI")**

9. (1) You will have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest ("DPI") under this Code if:-
  - (a) such interest meets the definition prescribed by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests ) Regulations 2012 as amended from time to time and set out in Appendix 2 to this Code; and
  - (b) It is either an interest of yourself; or it is an interest of:-

- (i) Your spouse or civil partner; or
- (ii) A person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or
- (iii) A person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners;

and you are aware that the other person has the interest.

### **Registration of DPI's**

10. (1) You must within 28 days of becoming a Member of the Authority or being re-elected notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any DPI which you hold at the time notification is given.
- (2) You must within 28 days of becoming aware of any new DPI, or changes to existing DPIs notify the Monitoring Officer in writing.

### **Other Disclosable Interests**

11. (1) You will have a Disclosable interest in any matter if you are aware that you or a member of your family or person or organisation with whom you are associated have a:-
- (a) pecuniary interest in the matter under discussion which is not de minimus; or
  - (b) a close connection with the matter under discussion.
- (2) If you are a member of another local authority, or public body, or you have been appointed as the Council's representative on an outside body, you do not have a Disclosable Interest unless a member of the public knowing the circumstances would reasonably regard membership of the body concerned as being likely to prejudice your judgement of what is in the public interest.

### **Disclosure of Interests**

12 (1) DPIs: formal meetings

If you are present at a meeting of the Authority and you have a DPI then you must:

- (i) disclose the nature and existence of the interest; and
- (ii) leave the meeting (including the meeting room and public gallery) and take no part in the discussion; and
- (iii) if the interest has not already been recorded, notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days beginning with the date of the meeting.

(2) DPIs: Informal meetings

If you have a DPI you must not participate in informal meetings or briefings and site visits and must disclose the DPI in any correspondence with the Council.

(3) Other Disclosable Interests

If you are present at a meeting of the Authority and you have an Other Disclosable Interest then you must:

- (a) disclose the nature and existence of the interest; and
- (b) if the interest:

- (i) affects your pecuniary interests or relates to the determination of a planning or regulatory matter; and
- (ii) is one which a member of the public knowing the circumstances would reasonably regard as being likely to prejudice your judgement of what is in the public interest

then you must leave the meeting (including the meeting room and public gallery) and take no part in the discussion.

The only exception to paragraph 12(1) is that you may take part in the discussion and vote regarding a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest provided that you have been granted a dispensation by your authority in accordance with section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

(4) Dispensations

You may take part in the discussion of and vote on a matter in which you have been granted a dispensation.

**Sensitive Information**

13 (1) An interest will be a sensitive interest if the two following conditions apply:

- (a) that you have an interest (whether or not a DPI); and

- (b) the nature of the interest is such that you and the Monitoring Officer consider the disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to you or a person connected to you being subject to violence or intimidation.

- (2) Where it is decided that an interest is a “sensitive interest” it will be excluded from published versions of the register. The Monitoring Officer may state on the register that the member has an interest the details of which are excluded under this section.
- (3) Where the sensitive interest is a DPI the usual rules relating to disclosure will apply save that the member will only be required to disclose that they hold a DPI in the matter concerned.

## **Appendix A**

The Seven principles of Public Life

## APPENDIX A

### The Seven General Principles of Public Life

**Selflessness** – Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

**Honesty and Integrity** – Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly, and should, on all occasions, avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

**Objectivity** – Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

**Accountability** – Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

**Openness** – Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their Authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

**Leadership** – Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.