

## Town, Parish, Village, Community or Neighbourhood Councillor

### Job Description

#### Duties:

To attend meetings (having received a legal summons).

To sign a declaration acceptance of office (statutory form).

To complete a Register of Interest form within 28 days of taking office and update this within 28 days of any changes.

Abide by the council's Code of Conduct (i.e. standard of behaviour expected of those holding public office), part of which is observance of the Nolan Principles.

To always act impartially.

To act only at the instruction of the Council, from decisions arising from a council meeting. You will not take any unilateral action or make any decisions for the Council.

To have an open mind on an issue and only come to a view when all the facts have been received (predetermination).

#### The Role:

To be a conduit, ie, communicate, between the parishioners and the council.

#### Responsibilities:

##### Of an individual councillor:

- To understand that you are a member of a local authority that is governed by legislation and can only do as law permits.
- Understanding the role of a councillor, its remit, and limitations
- Understanding council processes – how it works, how change can and should be actioned.
- Understanding the legal process for convening and administration of meetings
- Understanding lawful decision making (i.e., how this happens to accord with legislation)
- Being aware of and understanding council policies (which are relevant to particular situations); example, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and committee terms of reference (not an exhaustive list)
- Being prepared for meetings
- Participating at meetings
- Voting at meetings
- Declaring any interests in business to be transacted at a meeting where necessary.
- Ensuring apologies are sent to the parish clerk for any meetings you are unable to attend and providing a reason for that absence if you want it to be considered by the council.
- Understand the Nolan principles and uphold high standards of behaviour expected of you, as a holder of public office.
- Respect your fellow councillors and council officers and if an issue arises, follow the correct methods for resolve and resolution.
- Respect the Chair. That person was appointed by majority vote of the Council.
- Not seek to profit in any way from the office of councillor, ie nothing for your own ends.
- Represent the community regardless of politics, age, gender or ward area.

- If you are a dual hatted councillor, ie also a councillor for the principal authority in the area, to recognise that the two councils are separate local authorities without jurisdiction or scrutiny for each other's corporate actions, and to treat and administer each councillor role separately.

### **Finance:**

You are a member of the council which is a corporate body responsible for the management and safeguarding of the public funds held by the council.

Correct financial management ensures the council has policies and procedures in place to protect the council from employee or councillor fraud.

### **Employment:**

You are a member of the council which is a corporate body responsible for the employment of all council employees; all the responsibilities and obligations associated with the employment of staff.

For example:

Recruitment

Contracts of Employment

Wages

Annual Leave

Grievance and disciplinary matters

Appraisals

Pensions

Registration for PAYE and all other HMRC related employment matters

Health and Safety at Work (including employee wellbeing)

You must uphold the council policy which does not allow bullying of the parish clerk.

The parish clerk works for the corporate body at as a whole and not for individual councillors. No councillor can ask the clerk to undertake any instruction.

The agenda and minutes are the clerks responsibility and only the clerk can decide what is placed on an agenda and the format and content of the minutes are down to the clerks discretion.

### **Data Protection:**

You are a member of the council, which is a corporate body responsible, as the data controller, for the lawful handling of personal data processed by the council.

### **Planning:**

You are a member of the council, which is a corporate body responsible for responding effectively, and with regard to planning legislation, planning policy (both national and local), and materials considerations, etc to the Local Planning Authority effectively on planning applications within the council area.

### **Trusteeship:**

If the council is a sole trustee, you will be responsible for governance of a charity together with your fellow councillors.

Occasionally, a trust deed will commit a local councillor to be an individual charity trustee.

A council can also be a custodian trustee of a charity and if this is the case, you, together with your fellow councillors, will be responsible for the responsibilities that this brings (few responsibilities).

**Other activities of the council:**

Together with your fellow councillors, i.e. as a corporate body, administer and manage the services and facilities that the council provides. The 'administration' and 'management' is wide ranging and will likely be for a wide range of functions such as provision of a cemetery, streetlighting, play equipment, transport, buildings for the community to hire, allotments, providing community transport, sports and recreation facilities, possibly economic development opportunities, village greens, common land and markets.