



Highley Parish Council –

Code of Conduct (2026 Update)

To be adopted at the Annual Council Meeting – 12 May 2026

1. Introduction

As a member or co-opted member of Highley Parish Council, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct in public life. You serve the whole community and must work constructively with fellow councillors, staff, residents, and partner organisations to secure positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

From the uploaded document:

“As a member or co-opted member of Highley Parish Council I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.”

This Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all members when acting in their official capacity.

2. The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

All councillors must act in a manner consistent with the following statutory principles:

Selflessness

Act solely in the public interest and never to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, or your friends.

Integrity

Do not place yourself under any obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence your work.

Objectivity

Make decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, including in appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards.

Accountability

You are accountable to the public for your decisions and must submit yourself to appropriate scrutiny.

Openness

Be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, providing reasons unless the wider public interest clearly requires confidentiality.

Honesty

Declare private interests relating to your public duties and resolve any conflicts in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

From the uploaded document:

“Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.”

3. General Conduct Expectations

When acting as a councillor, you must:

- **Champion the needs of residents**, including those who did not vote for you.

“Championing the needs of residents... and putting their interests first.”

- **Deal with enquiries and representations fairly and impartially.**
- **Exercise independent judgement**, free from improper influence.

“Not allowing other pressures... to deter me from pursuing constituents’ casework.”

- **Listen to all relevant information**, including professional advice, and make decisions on merit.
- **Be accountable** for your decisions and cooperate with scrutiny.

- **Promote openness and transparency** in decision-making, except where the law or public interest requires confidentiality.
- **Comply with all legal obligations**, including council policies, protocols and procedures.
- **Treat colleagues, staff, residents and partners with respect**, fostering a culture of mutual respect essential to good local government.

“Valuing my colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner...”

- **Provide leadership** by modelling these standards in all interactions.

4. Interests and Transparency

You must comply with statutory requirements relating to:

- **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)**
- **Other Registerable Interests**
- **Non-registerable interests where participation would conflict with the public interest**

You must:

- Register interests within 28 days of election or co-option.
- Keep your register up to date.
- Declare relevant interests at meetings.
- Withdraw from discussion and voting where required by law or the Council’s Code.

5. Gifts and Hospitality

Councillors must:

- Avoid accepting gifts or hospitality that could place them under improper influence.
- Declare any gift or hospitality over the value set by the Council (typically £25).
- Register such declarations within 28 days.

6. Use of Council Resources

You must:

- Use Council resources only for legitimate Council business.
- Not use Council facilities for political campaigning or private purposes.

- Follow all policies relating to IT, data protection, and information security.

7. Confidentiality and Access to Information

You must:

- Not disclose confidential information without lawful authority.
- Handle personal data in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Respect the Council's publication scheme and FOI obligations.

8. Behaviour Towards Staff

Councillors must:

- Treat staff with courtesy and respect.
- Not involve themselves in operational management.
- Not request staff to act outside their professional role or Council policy.
- Not victimise or pressure staff in relation to whistleblowing or complaints.

9. Decision-Making

When participating in Council decision-making, you must:

- Attend meetings prepared and informed.
- Consider all relevant information.
- Take account of professional advice.
- Avoid bias, pre-determination, and improper influence.
- Act in the public interest at all times.

10. Training and Development

Councillors are expected to participate in training relevant to:

- Code of Conduct
- Standards and ethics
- Data protection and FOI
- Planning (where applicable)
- Finance and audit
- Equality and diversity

11. Allegations of Misconduct

Complaints that a councillor has breached this Code will be handled in accordance with the procedures of Shropshire Council as the Principal Authority.

From the uploaded document:

“Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor... has breached the Council’s code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take.”

Sanctions may include:

- Formal censure
- Removal from committees or outside bodies
- Withdrawal of facilities
- Requirement to undertake training

Disqualification or suspension is **not** permitted under current legislation.

12. Adoption and Review

This Code of Conduct is adopted by Highley Parish Council on **12 May 2026** and will be reviewed annually at the Annual Council Meeting or sooner if required by legislative change.