MAULDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Councillors' Code Of Conduct

Adopted: September 6, 2021
Next Review Date: Annually

1 Introduction

1.1 This Code Of Conduct ("the Code") has been adopted by Maulden Parish Council (MPC) as required by Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act").
1.2 MPC have a statutory duty under the Act to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of MPC ("Cllrs") and the Code sets out the standards that MPC expect Cllrs to observe.
1.3 The Code is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all the obligations that are placed on Cllrs. It is the responsibility of individual Cllrs to comply with the provisions of the Code as well as such other legal obligations as may apply to them from time to time.
1.4 The Code is consistent with the following principles (the "Nolan" principles of standards in public life):

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

2 Who does the Code apply to?

The Code applies to all Cllrs of MPC and to all co-opted non-Cllr members of any committee, sub-committee or joint committee, sub-committee, or working group of MPC.

3 When does the Code apply?

3.1 The Code applies whenever a person is acting in their official capacity as a Cllr of MPC or co-opted non-Cllr member in the conduct of MPC business or acting as a representative of MPC.

3.2 It applies in all communications, including:

- At face-to-face meetings.
- In online or telephone meetings.
- In written communication.
- In verbal communication.
- In non-verbal communication.
- In electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

4 What standards of conduct are Cllrs expected to observe?

Selflessness:
4.1 Cllrs must always act in the public interest.
4.2 Cllrs must never use their position as a Cllr of MPC improperly to secure for themselves or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.
4.3 Cllrs must not use MPC's resources improperly for personal or political purposes.

Integrity
4.4 Cllrs must not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of MPC.
4.5 Cllrs must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work.
4.6 Cllrs must 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.
4.7 Cllrs must not disclose information given to them in confidence or use knowledge gained solely as a result of their role as a councillor for the advancement of themselves, friends, family members, employer or business interests
4.8 Cllrs must not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on their part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

Objectivity
4.9 When making decisions on behalf of MPC, including awarding contracts or making appointments, Cllrs must do so impartially, fairly and on merit, based on available evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4.10 Cllrs must have regard to any relevant advice provided to them by the Clerk to MPC and (where a separate appointment is made) by the Responsible Financial Officer.

Accountability

4.12 Cllrs are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
4.13 Cllrs must act in accordance with their legal obligations, including the following Acts of Parliament that confer special obligations on elected councillors:

- Local Government Act 1972
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Bribery Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010
- Localism Act 2011

4.14 Cllrs must act in accordance with MPC's policies, procedures and reasonable requirements, including any protocols and codes of practice that may apply.

Openness

4.15 Cllrs must act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner.
4.16 Cllrs must give reasons for any decisions taken on behalf of MPC in accordance with any statutory requirements and MPC's Standing Orders.
4.17 Cllrs must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

Honesty

4.18 Cllrs must always be truthful.
4.19 Cllrs must declare any disclosable (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) interests or conflicts of interest that may arise in respect of their responsibilities as a Cllr of MPC.
4.20 Cllrs must at all times ensure that their claims for expenses, allowances, and their use of facilities and services provided by the MPC are strictly in accordance with the rules laid down on these matters.

Leadership

4.21 Cllrs must set an example by their behaviour and shall act in a way that enhances public trust and confidence in the integrity of MPC and their Cllrs.
4.22 Cllrs must always treat other councillors and members of the public fairly and with respect and courtesy.
4.23 Cllrs should value MPC's officers and work alongside them to achieve the MPC's objectives.
4.24 Cllrs must on no account behave in a manner that might constitute bullying.
4.25 Cllrs must actively promote and robustly support the principles and should challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

5.0 Register Of Interests

5.1 The Monitoring Officer of Central Bedfordshire Council maintains a Register Of Interests of Cllrs of MPC.
5.2 MPC have determined what interests Cllrs are required to enter in the Register Of Interests, including those disclosable pecuniary interests prescribed by regulations. These disclosable interests are listed here.
5.3 Cllrs must notify the Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests that should be recorded in MPC's Register Of Interests.
5.4 Within 28 days of becoming a councillor, all Cllrs must submit to the Monitoring Officer a list of their disclosable interests and must notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes as and when they arise.

6.0 Complying with the Code Of Conduct

6.1 Cllrs must undertake Code Of Conduct training provided by their local authority.
6.2 Cllrs must cooperate with any Code Of Conduct investigation and/or determination.
6.3 Cllrs must not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.
6.4 Cllrs must comply with any sanction imposed on them following a finding that they have breached the Code Of Conduct.

It is extremely important for MPC Councillors to demonstrate high standards, for them to have their actions open to scrutiny and for them not to undermine public trust in MPC or its governance.