



# Houghton and Wyton

## Parish Council

### CONFFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

All staff, volunteers and councillors of Houghton and Wyton Parish Council (the PC) will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the PC on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the PC's decision-making process, to enable parishioners to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and councillors.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

1. A councillor who is also a user who must decide whether fees from users should be increased.
2. A councillor who is related to a member of staff and there is decision to be taken on staff pay and/or conditions.
3. A councillor who is also on the committee of another organisation that is competing for funding.
4. A councillor who has a financial interest (e.g. shares) in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the organisation.

#### Statement of Intent

Houghton & Wyton Parish Council is committed to ensuring that its decisions are, and seen to be, fair and free from personal bias or favouring any individual member. This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and staff, volunteers and the councillors should respect its spirit as well as its wording.

#### Registration of Interests

Within 28 days of the Parish Council Code of Conduct being adopted by the Council, or a councillor's election or co-option (if later), the councillor must register with the Monitoring Officer any disclosable pecuniary interests.

Councillors must ensure that their register of interests is kept up to date and notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any change in respect of any interests.

## **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Councillors should make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting at which they are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Where a councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether the interest is registered or not, the councillor must not (unless they have obtained a dispensation from the Council's Proper Officer):

- (i) Participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting.
- (ii) Remain in the meeting room whilst the matter is being debated or participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

## **Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests**

In addition to the requirements above, if a councillor is aware of any item of business in which they may have a “non-statutory disclosable interest” they must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business, or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

A “non-statutory disclosable interest” in an item of business is where:

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of the councillor, or a member of their family, or a person with whom they have a close association, to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Parish.

If a Councillor is unsure whether they should declare a Conflict of Interest they are advised to err on the side of caution and if necessary seek advice from the Council's Proper Officer.

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Updated: November 2017

Adopted by Parish Council at

PC meeting on 15 November 2017.