
AMBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

Declarations of Interest and Code of Conduct — 2026 Municipal Year

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1. Introduction and Purpose

This guidance has been prepared by the Monitoring Officer to assist all Members of Ambridge District Council in understanding and complying with their obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct for Members (2022), the Localism Act 2011, and associated regulations. It replaces the guidance issued for the 2025 municipal year.

All Members are required to familiarise themselves with this guidance at the start of each municipal year. If you are uncertain about any aspect of your obligations, you should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer before acting.

2. The Code of Conduct

2.1 General Principles

The Council's Code of Conduct is based upon the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life and requires Members, in carrying out their functions, to act with:

Selflessness — acting in the public interest, not for private gain

Integrity — not placing themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties

Objectivity — making choices based on merit

Accountability — submitting themselves to scrutiny and accepting criticism

Openness — being transparent about decisions and actions, giving reasons for decisions

Honesty — declaring any private interests relating to their public duties

Leadership — promoting and supporting these principles by leadership and example

2.2 Treating Others With Respect

Members must treat others — including officers, fellow Members, members of the public, and stakeholders — with respect, courtesy, and dignity at all times, whether in a formal Council meeting, at a community event, or in written or electronic communication including social media.

3. Registering Interests

3.1 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Within 28 days of election or co-option, and whenever a new interest arises, Members must register the following disclosable pecuniary interests on the Register of Members' Interests:

Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation — any employment or business you or your spouse/civil partner carry out for profit or gain

Sponsorship — any payment or provision of material benefit in respect of election or Council expenses

Contracts — any contract with the Council under which goods or services are provided for remuneration

Land — any beneficial interest in land in the Council's area

Licences — any licence to occupy land in the Council's area for one month or longer

Corporate tenancies — any tenancy of land owned by the Council

Securities — any beneficial interest in securities of a body with land or business interests in the Council's area where the total value exceeds £25,000 or more than 1% of the share capital

3.2 Other Registrable Interests

In addition to disclosable pecuniary interests, Members must also register the following:

Unpaid directorships

Membership of, or positions of general control or management in, any body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council

Membership of or positions of general control in charities, trade unions, or professional bodies with a connection to the Council's work

Membership of, or positions of general control in, any body exercising functions of a public nature

4. Declaring Interests at Meetings

4.1 When to Declare

At any meeting of the Council, its committees or sub-committees, or any other body exercising functions on behalf of the Council, you must declare:

Any disclosable pecuniary interest in any item of business before the meeting

Any other registrable interest in any item of business before the meeting, where you consider that interest could reasonably be regarded as affecting your judgment

Any non-registrable interest where you consider the interest is likely to influence your participation

4.2 How to Declare

Declarations should be made at the beginning of the meeting if known in advance, or at the point the relevant agenda item is reached. A declaration must:

Identify the interest clearly (e.g., "I declare a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 7 as I am employed by the contractor named in the report")

Be recorded in the minutes of the meeting

Result in the Member leaving the room and taking no part in the discussion or vote, unless the Member has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer

5. Social Media Guidance

Members are reminded that their conduct on social media is subject to the Code of Conduct. Posts made in a personal capacity may still bring the Council into disrepute if they are offensive, defamatory, or likely to lead the public to question a Member's impartiality. Members should not use social media to disclose information that is exempt from public disclosure or that relates to matters the subject of legal proceedings.

6. Gifts and Hospitality

Members must not accept gifts or hospitality with a value exceeding £50 unless they have been authorised to do so by the Monitoring Officer in advance. All gifts and hospitality offered (whether accepted or declined) with a value of £25 or more must be reported to the Monitoring Officer within 14 days. The Council maintains a register of all reported gifts and hospitality, which is publicly available.

7. Contact and Advice

For advice on any aspect of this guidance, please contact Andrew Osei, Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Manager, at monitoring.officer@ambridge.gov.uk or telephone 01234 567800.

Training on declarations of interest will be provided at the Member Induction Programme on 6 May 2026 and at refresher sessions throughout the year. Attendance is strongly encouraged.