



CARDINHAM PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS AND CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Version: 2026.1

Adopted by: Cardinham Parish Council

Minute Reference: [To be inserted]

Date of Adoption: [To be inserted]

Review Date: Following the next ordinary parish council election or within four years of adoption, whichever occurs sooner.

1. Introduction

Cardinham Parish Council is committed to maintaining the highest standards of conduct by its elected and co-opted members.

This Code of Conduct has been adopted pursuant to Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, with cognisance of Cornwall Council's Code of conduct and sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all Members when acting in their official capacity or where their conduct may reasonably be regarded as connected with their role as a councillor.

The purpose of this Code is to:

- support public confidence in local democracy;

- promote openness, accountability and integrity;
- provide clarity regarding expected standards of conduct;
- assist Members in carrying out their duties effectively and lawfully; and
- protect the reputation of the Council and local government.

The Council itself is responsible for maintaining, reviewing and updating this Code.

Where complaints are made alleging breaches of this Code, they will be considered in accordance with Cornwall Council's arrangements for dealing with standards complaints concerning parish councils, acting through the Monitoring Officer in their statutory role.

2. The Seven Principles of Public Life

Members are expected to uphold and promote the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles):

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation that might improperly influence their work.

Objectivity

Decisions should be made impartially, fairly and on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions.

Openness

Decisions should be taken openly and information should not be withheld unless there are lawful reasons for doing so.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles through their own behaviour and actively promote and support high standards.

Additional Principles

Members are also expected to observe the following principles:

Duty to Uphold the Law

Members must comply with all applicable laws and act in a manner that justifies public trust.

Personal Judgement

Members may take account of the views of others but must reach their own conclusions and exercise independent judgement.

Respect for Others

Members must promote equality and treat all persons with courtesy and respect.

Stewardship

Members must ensure that public resources are used prudently, efficiently and lawfully.

These principles underpin the interpretation and application of this Code.

3. Interpretation

In this Code:

Council means Cardinham Parish Council.

Member includes an elected councillor and any co-opted member.

Monitoring Officer means the Monitoring Officer of Cornwall Council or their authorised nominee.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest means an interest prescribed under the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 and set out in Part 5A of this Code.

Non-Registerable Interest means an interest described in Part 5B of this Code.

Sensitive Interest means an interest where disclosure could reasonably lead to violence, intimidation or harm to the Member or another person.

Meeting means any meeting of the Council, committee, sub-committee, working group or other formal body established by the Council.

Register means the Register of Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

Any reference in this Code to a paragraph, section or part refers to the relevant provision within this Code and not to page numbers.

PART 1 – APPLICATION OF THE CODE

1.1

This Code applies to every Member of Cardinham Parish Council.

1.2

This Code should be read alongside the Seven Principles of Public Life and the Council's adopted policies and procedures.

1.3

It is each Member's personal responsibility to comply with this Code.

1.4

You must comply with this Code whenever you:

- a) conduct the business of the Council;
- b) act, claim to act, or give the impression that you are acting as a representative of the Council;
- c) use information obtained through your position as a councillor; or
- d) engage in conduct which a reasonable person would regard as being connected with your role as a councillor.

1.5

Where you act as a representative of the Council on another body:

- a) if that body has its own Code of Conduct, you must comply with that Code when acting on behalf of that body; and
- b) where no separate Code exists, this Code shall continue to apply.

1.6

Where you are also a member of another authority or organisation, you must ensure that you comply with the applicable Code of Conduct for the role you are performing.

Advice may be sought from the Monitoring Officer or their authorised nominee.

1.7

Conduct occurring outside a Member's official duties may fall within the scope of this Code where:

- a) the Member identifies themselves as a councillor;
- b) the Member could reasonably be perceived as acting in their capacity as a councillor;
- c) the conduct relates directly to Council business, Council decisions, Council personnel or Council functions; or
- d) the conduct is of such a nature that it may reasonably undermine public confidence in the office of councillor or in the Council itself.

1.8

This Code applies equally to conduct undertaken through electronic communications, websites, blogs, messaging platforms and social media where the Member is acting, appears to be acting, or is identifiable as a councillor.

PART 2 – GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

2.1 Respect

You must treat all persons with courtesy and respect.

This includes fellow Members, employees, contractors, volunteers, representatives of partner organisations and members of the public.

You must promote a culture of mutual respect and professionalism in all Council business.

2.2 Equality

You must not unlawfully discriminate against any person.

You must have due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion and comply with the Equality Act 2010 in the exercise of your public duties.

2.3 Bullying and Harassment

You must not bully, harass, intimidate or victimise any person.

This requirement applies equally to conduct undertaken in person, in writing, electronically or through social media.

2.4 Intimidation

You must not intimidate, attempt to intimidate or encourage others to intimidate any person who:

- is involved in Council business;
- has made or may make a complaint;
- has provided evidence in connection with a complaint or investigation; or
- exercises a statutory or democratic function.

2.5 Maintaining High Standards of Conduct

You must not conduct yourself in a manner that is contrary to the Council's duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

This obligation applies not only when undertaking official Council business but also where your conduct outside Council duties is sufficiently connected with your role as a councillor that a reasonable member of the public would regard it as capable of affecting public confidence in the Council or bringing the office of councillor into disrepute.

Examples may include:

- behaviour whilst identifying yourself as a councillor;
- misuse of your position or status as a councillor;
- abusive or inappropriate conduct towards officers, councillors or members of the public;
- conduct connected with Council business undertaken through social media or electronic communications.

2.6 Gifts and Hospitality

You must not accept any gift, hospitality, favour or benefit which could reasonably be regarded by the public as likely to influence your judgement or compromise your impartiality.

You must declare all gifts or hospitality received from a single source having a cumulative value exceeding **£50** within any twelve-month period.

Such gifts or hospitality must be registered with the Monitoring Officer within **28 days** of receipt.

Note: Cardinham Parish Council may, by resolution, adopt a lower registration threshold (for example £25) should it consider this appropriate in the interests of transparency.

2.7 Impartiality of Officers

You must not do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality, professional independence or integrity of any employee or person acting on behalf of the Council.

2.8 Confidential Information

You must not disclose confidential information unless:

- a) you have lawful authority to do so;
- b) disclosure is required by law;
- c) disclosure is made for the purpose of obtaining professional advice and the recipient has agreed to maintain confidentiality; or
- d) disclosure is reasonable, made in good faith, in the public interest and consistent with the Council's adopted policies or advice provided by the Monitoring Officer.

2.9 Access to Information

You must not obstruct or seek to prevent any person from obtaining information to which they are lawfully entitled.

2.10 Bringing the Council into Disrepute

You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office as a councillor or Cardinham Parish Council into disrepute.

2.11 Misuse of Position

You must not improperly use your position as a Member to obtain, or seek to obtain, an advantage or disadvantage for yourself or any other person.

2.12 Use of Council Resources

When using or authorising the use of Council resources you must:

- ensure they are used only for proper Council purposes;
- comply with all Council policies;
- avoid party political use unless expressly permitted by law; and
- comply with all statutory requirements governing local authority publicity.

2.13 Authorisation of Expenditure and Resources

You must not authorise the use of Council resources except through properly constituted Council decisions or delegated authority.

2.14 Reasons for Decisions

Where required by law or Council procedure, you must provide clear reasons for decisions made.

2.15 Professional Advice

When making decisions you must have proper regard to advice given by the Proper Officer, Responsible Financial Officer, Monitoring Officer or other appropriately qualified adviser.

2.16 Standards Complaints and Compliance

You must co-operate fully with any assessment, investigation or determination undertaken under Cornwall Council's standards arrangements for parish councils.

Where a complaint is upheld, you must comply with any recommendations, actions or sanctions that are lawfully available under those arrangements and accepted or imposed in accordance with the Council's adopted standards procedures.

Nothing in this paragraph shall be interpreted as implying that the Council possesses powers of suspension, disqualification or any other sanction not provided by law.

2.17 Member Training

Members are required to undertake Code of Conduct training within six months of election or co-option and to attend periodic refresher training thereafter.

The Council expects Members to maintain an appropriate understanding of standards, governance and ethical conduct.

Training may be provided in person, virtually or by any other suitable method.

2.18 Social Media and Electronic Communications

This Code applies equally to communications made through:

- social media platforms;
- websites and blogs;
- online forums;
- email;
- messaging applications; and
- any other electronic communication.

Members must ensure that online conduct maintains the same standards of respect, integrity, objectivity and professionalism expected during Council meetings and other official activities.

Where a Member identifies themselves, or is readily identifiable, as a councillor, online conduct may fall within the scope of this Code even where undertaken outside formal Council meetings.

PART 3 – REGISTERING AND DECLARING INTERESTS

3.1 General

The provisions of this Part are subject to Part 4 of this Code relating to Sensitive Interests.

Members are personally responsible for ensuring that their Register of Interests remains accurate and up to date.

3.2 Registration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Within **28 days** of becoming a Member of Cardinham Parish Council, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of all **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)** required by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Trade union membership is not required to be registered under this Code, unless required by future legislation.

3.3 Re-election or Re-appointment

Where you are re-elected or re-appointed, you need only notify changes to interests that have not already been registered.

3.4 Non-Registerable Interests

Non-Registerable Interests are not required to be entered on the Register of Interests but must be declared where required by this Code.

3.5 Declaration of Interests at Meetings

Where you are present at a meeting and become aware that you have:

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest; or
- a Non-Registerable Interest

in any matter under consideration, you must declare the existence and nature of that interest before the matter is discussed.

Unless a lawful dispensation has been granted, you must:

- a) not participate, or participate further, in discussion of the matter;
- b) not vote on the matter; and
- c) withdraw from the meeting for the duration of consideration of the item where required by law or by the Council's Standing Orders.

3.5A Participation Before Withdrawal

Where a Member has a **Non-Registerable Interest** arising solely from membership of, or involvement with, a charitable, voluntary, community or similar organisation whose purposes are for the benefit of the community or part of the community, the Member may request permission

from the Chair to address the meeting before withdrawing.

The Chair may permit such participation where satisfied that:

- the contribution will assist Members in understanding the matter;
- the Member confines their comments to factual information or relevant experience;
- the Member does not seek to influence the decision after addressing the meeting; and
- participation is limited to the period reasonably necessary to provide that information.

Following any permitted address, the Member must immediately withdraw from the meeting before debate and voting commence unless a lawful dispensation applies.

The Chair's decision shall be recorded in the minutes.

3.6 Notification Following a Meeting

Where a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest declared at a meeting has not previously been registered, you must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within **28 days**.

3.7 Individual Decision Making

Where you are authorised to exercise a Council function individually and become aware that you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or a Non-Registerable Interest in the matter, you must:

- cease dealing with the matter immediately;
- arrange for the matter to be dealt with by another authorised person where appropriate; and
- notify the Monitoring Officer where registration of the interest is required.

3.8 Changes to Registered Interests

You must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within **28 days** of becoming aware of any new Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or any change to an existing registered interest.

3.9 Written Notifications

All notifications required under this Part, other than declarations made orally during meetings, must be made in writing.

3.10 Notification to the Proper Officer

Where a Member registers or updates a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, the Member should also notify the Proper Officer of Cardinham Parish Council to ensure that the Council's published Register of Interests remains current.

PART 4 – SENSITIVE INTERESTS

4.1 Sensitive Interests

Where the Monitoring Officer considers that disclosure of the details of an interest could reasonably lead to violence, intimidation or harm to a Member or another person, the interest may be treated as a **Sensitive Interest**.

In such circumstances the details of the interest shall not appear in the published Register of Interests.

4.2 Declaration at Meetings

Where a Sensitive Interest exists, the Member need only declare that they have an interest requiring declaration.

The detailed nature of the interest need not be disclosed publicly.

4.3 Requests for Advice

Members who are uncertain whether an interest should be declared are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer before the meeting wherever reasonably practicable.

Seeking advice does not remove the Member's personal responsibility for complying with this Code.

Standards Complaints

Alleged breaches of this Code shall be considered under **Cornwall Council's Standards Arrangements for Parish Councils**, administered by the Monitoring Officer under the Localism Act 2011.

The Monitoring Officer may undertake an initial assessment, informal resolution, investigation or other action in accordance with those published arrangements.

Where a complaint is upheld, any recommendations or sanctions shall be limited to those lawfully available under the Localism Act 2011 and the adopted standards arrangements.

Members of the public wishing to submit a complaint should do so using Cornwall Council's published standards complaints procedure.

Interpretation of this Part

Nothing within this Part affects the statutory requirements contained within the Localism Act 2011 or the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Where any conflict arises between this Code and legislation, the legislation shall prevail.

PART 5A – DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

The following interests are prescribed by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 and must be registered with the Monitoring Officer.

For the purposes of this Part, references to "your spouse or civil partner" include a person with whom you are living as husband and wife or as if you were civil partners.

Employment, Office, Trade, Profession or Vocation

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

Sponsorship

Any payment or other financial benefit received within the previous twelve months in connection with carrying out duties as a Member, including election expenses, other than payments made by Cardinham Parish Council.

Contracts

Any contract between yourself (or a relevant person) and Cardinham Parish Council:

- under which goods or services are provided or works are undertaken; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Land

Any beneficial interest in land situated within the administrative area of Cardinham Parish Council.

This includes:

- freehold ownership;
- leasehold interests;
- licences to occupy land;
- agricultural tenancies; and
- other legal interests in land.

Licences

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land for one month or longer.

Corporate Tenancies

Any tenancy where:

- the landlord is Cardinham Parish Council; and
- the tenant is a body in which you or a relevant person has a beneficial interest.

Securities

Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:

- the body has a place of business or owns land within the Council's area; and
- either:
 - the total nominal value exceeds £25,000; or
 - the holding represents more than 1% of the issued share capital.

PART 5B – NON-REGISTERRABLE INTERESTS

A Non-Registerable Interest arises where a matter under consideration relates to:

- the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate; or
- any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management,

and where a reasonable member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would consider the interest sufficiently significant that it might prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

Where such an interest arises, you should declare it in accordance with Part 3 of this Code.

DISPENSATIONS

A Member who would otherwise be prohibited from participating in Council business because of an interest may apply in writing to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation under the Localism Act 2011.

Any dispensation granted shall specify:

- the interest concerned;
- the matters to which it applies;
- the period for which it has effect; and
- any conditions attached to the dispensation.

BREACHES OF THIS CODE

Where an allegation is made that a Member has breached this Code:

1. The complaint shall be dealt with under Cornwall Council's published Standards Arrangements for Parish Councils.
2. The Monitoring Officer may seek informal resolution where appropriate.
3. Where necessary, an investigation may be undertaken.
4. Following consideration of the findings, any action shall be limited to those recommendations or sanctions lawfully available under the Localism Act 2011 and the adopted standards arrangements.

Nothing in this Code shall be interpreted as conferring powers of suspension, disqualification or removal from office where such powers do not exist in legislation.

ADVICE

Members who are uncertain about any aspect of this Code are encouraged to seek advice before acting.

Advice may be obtained from:

- the Proper Officer;
- the Monitoring Officer of Cornwall Council; or
- other appropriately qualified professional advisers where necessary.

Seeking advice demonstrates good governance and helps maintain high standards of conduct.

REVIEW OF THIS CODE

This Code shall be reviewed:

- following each ordinary election of Cardinham Parish Council; or
- every four years,

whichever occurs sooner.

The Council may review the Code at any time where:

- legislation changes;
- national guidance is revised;
- best practice develops; or
- experience indicates that amendments are desirable.

The Council remains responsible for maintaining and adopting this Code.

ADOPTION

This Code of Conduct was adopted by Cardinham Parish Council at its meeting held on:

Date: 18th August 2026

Minute Reference: 142/26

Signed:

Chair

Cllr P Claridge

Proper Officer / Parish Clerk

Sue Warburton

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Date	Approved By	Minute Reference	Review Due
Version 2026.1	August 2026	Cardinham Parish Council	To be inserted	Following the next ordinary election or within four years

IMPLEMENTATION

Following adoption:

- all Members shall receive a copy of this Code;
- newly elected or co-opted Members should be provided with a copy upon taking office;
- Members are encouraged to undertake Code of Conduct training as soon as reasonably practicable after election or co-option;
- the current version shall be published on the Council's website; and
- the Proper Officer shall maintain a record of the current adopted version.