

STANDARDS FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (VOLUNTEERS) UNDERTAKING COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

This document sets out the standards the Council expects members of the public, to comply with when they are undertaking voluntary activities on behalf of the Council. Activities undertaken in a voluntary capacity include, for example, acting as a member of an Education Appeal Panel.

The standards themselves are not legally enforceable, but it is hoped that volunteers will be willing to comply with them. Some voluntary activities do have legal implications - for example the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act control the use of personal information.

1. Courtesy

1.1 Volunteers should:

- (a) promote equality and not discriminate against any person;
- (b) treat others fairly and with respect regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- (c) facilitate and encourage wide discussion where appropriate; and
- (d) represent the views of the wider community

2. Use of information

2.1. Volunteers should not:

- (a) disclose private or confidential information given to them in the course of their duties;
- (b) use information against any person; or
- (c) use information to gain any personal advantage.

2.2 Volunteers should:

- (a) make sure that family and friends/colleagues do not see private and confidential information; and
- (b) return all private and confidential information to the relevant Council officer at the end of a meeting or, if the volunteer is unable to attend a meeting/event, no later than three working days after the meeting.

3. Interests

3.1 Volunteers should make known to the relevant Council officer any interest they have in the matters being discussed during Council activities which could reasonably be regarded as prejudicial. These interests may include:

- (i) financial interests (direct or indirect, for example as an existing or former employee of a company), and/or;
 - (ii) any relationship or friendship that a volunteer may have to any person or organisation that is the subject of discussion at the Council activity.
- 3.2 An interest could be regarded as 'prejudicial' if a reasonable observer would conclude there was a real possibility the volunteer could be predisposed to a particular outcome in the matter under consideration in the light of his/her interest. In cases of doubt the Council's Monitoring Officer should be consulted for guidance.
- 3.3 Where there is a conflict of interest, the volunteer must leave the meeting whilst the matter is being discussed.
4. General Behaviour
- 4.1 At all times, appropriate standards of behaviour should be displayed.
- 4.2 In particular, volunteers should not:
- (a) be rude or cause offence;
 - (b) use inappropriate language (e.g. swearing, discriminatory comments);
 - (c) be under the influence of alcohol or other substances when involved with Council activities; or
 - (d) use their status to promote any organisation.
5. Volunteers engaged in any area of work may be required to undergo a check by the Criminal Records Bureau in relation to past convictions or other check if required by law or good practice. **The Council will cover the costs of any CRB checks.**
6. Volunteers will be provided with and required to have regard to the Council's equalities policies and any other policy impacting on their role as appears appropriate to the Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services.
7. The Council may terminate a volunteer's engagement if the standards set out in this agreement are not adhered to.