

Lakenheath Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board Code of Conduct for Board Members

Introduction

This code of conduct for board members (the code) sets out the expected behaviours required of Lakenheath Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board members in developing and implementing the Pride in Place Plan, to achieve the ambitions of the Pride in Place Programme and Lakenheath community.

This code provides guidance to members of the board on the standards of conduct required in carrying out their duties as a board member; and in their relationships with the accountable body and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in the management of government funds.

The code applies to all members of the board. All board members are required, on accepting or continuing office, to declare that they will adhere to the code. The code also applies to all officers of the accountable body involved in delivery of the Pride in Place Programme and as advisers, whether or not they are voting representatives on the board. The code represents the standard against which the conduct of all involved in the board will be judged.

The requirement is always that when representing the board all those involved should:

- treat people with respect
- make sure they act in a way that promotes equalities and does not unlawfully discriminate against others
- not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person whether they are involved in the Pride in Place Programme or not
- not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for or on behalf of the board.

Principles of public life

In accordance with MHCLG guidance, when acting in a board member capacity, members must be committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the Seven Principles of Public Life to achieve the best outcome for our residents and maintain public confidence in the actions of the board.

The principles are:

1. **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain

financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Board members should never do anything they could not justify to the public, fellow board members or the accountable body. members' conduct, and what the public believes about their conduct, may detrimentally affect the reputation of the board.

Conflict of interests

Within 28 days of becoming a board member they must register with the appropriate body, using the form provided, any interest, financial or other significant interest, which could give rise to a conflict.

A conflict of interest will arise where a board member, a close associate, immediate family member, business, organisation or employer of the board member has an interest in a matter which is the same as, connected to or may be affected by the matter under discussion.

Conflicts of interest may arise in the following circumstances:

1. Where a board member has a direct or indirect financial interest in a company.
2. Where a board member has a non-financial or personal interest in a company, organisation or person.
3. Where a board member has a senior position in a private, or public, company, organisation or other.
4. Any of the above circumstances applying to a board member's family members.

Board members should ensure that their register is kept up to date and must inform the appropriate body as soon as any changes arise.

At the beginning of a board meeting or the meeting of any sub-group of the board, or during the relevant meeting if the discussion changes direction, board members must verbally declare any interest in any matter to be considered at that meeting and this declaration should be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

A direct financial interest may occur when the decision taken by the board will, or potentially will, benefit financially the board member, a close associate, immediate family member, business, organisation or employer of the board member with whom they hold a financial interest.

In unclear situations the accountable body shall decide whether an interest constitutes a conflict of interest - this decision and the reasoning should be documented in the minutes of the meeting.

The following provisions shall apply in the event of a conflict of interest:

- Board members must leave the room (or be placed on hold in case of a virtual meeting) at the beginning of the item with which they have a conflict and may not rejoin the discussion until the item is finished.
- Board members will not be counted in the quorum in relation to the item.
- Board members will not be entitled to vote on the matter.

If several members of the board have an interest in the same matter preventing the board from being quorate, the Chair, in discussion with the accountable body, could issue a dispensation.

Accountable body officers

The role of the council officer is to give advice to board members, and to the board as a whole on matters relating to governance, operational matters and the development and delivery of the projects. They are to carry out work under the direction and control of the council as the accountable body.

Board members, and officers of the accountable body, are there to serve the interests of the Pride in Place Programme but their responsibilities are distinct. While board members have the vote and council officers do not, the code applies to both.

Gifts and hospitality

Board members should treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality over the value of £25 that is made if the person or organisation making the offer may be doing, or seeking to do, business with the board, or may be interested in future investment opportunities, or support another kind of decision.

Board members are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in the board. However, it would be wise to register any gift or hospitality received (or offered), in connection with their official duties as a Board member and the source of that gift or hospitality (or offer) with the accountable body.

Complaints procedures

Where any person has reason to believe that the conduct of a board member has fallen short of the standards set out above, encapsulated, a complaint may be made in writing to the Chair in the first instance, or if it relates to the Chair, the accountable body.

The complaint should set out as follows:

- The nature of the complaint.
- Details of how the board member was acting in an official board capacity.
- Details of which of the seven principles has been breached and why.
- If relating to a conflict of interest, details of how the conflict has occurred and impact of that conflict.

The accountable body will review the complaint with the Chair of the board and determine if the board member was acting in an official capacity and if the complaint was proven, whether a principle would have been breached. If the complaint is about the Chair, it will remain a matter for the accountable body.

In the event that a board member's conduct falls short of that expected and a breach of the code has taken place, the Chair, or if it relates to the Chair, the accountable body, may remove that Board member from the board. This may only occur when:

- the board member has been given at least 14 days clear days' notice in writing of the meeting of the board of the intention to remove them from the board together with the reasons why, and
- the board member has been given a reasonable opportunity to make representations to the board meeting in person and/or in writing
- the other board members must consider any representations made by the board member
- a vote will be taken and the Chair shall inform the relevant board member of their decision following such consideration
- there shall be no right of appeal from a decision to terminate the membership of a board member.

Whistleblowing

The board is committed to the highest possible standards of propriety and accountability in the conduct of its activities. Concerns over any potential wrongdoing within the board activities should be reported to the Chair in the first instance, or if it relates to the Chair the accountable body.

Adoption

These terms of reference were adopted by the Lakenheath Pride of Place Neighbourhood Board on:

Date: 15 May 2026

Chair: _____

Date: _____

Section 151 Officer: _____