

EAST FARNDON PARISH COUNCIL – EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

East Farndon Parish Council's Employee Code of Conduct sets out the obligations and professional standards of conduct required of all employees.

The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct and service from all employees. In performing their duties, employees must act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity. The Parish Council recognises the actions and behaviour of its employees can impact on the local environment and communities we serve. Employees are expected to have regard for the impact of their personal behaviour on the Parish Council, colleagues, the environment and our community; recognising the duty of all public sector employees to carry out public functions reasonably, efficiently and according to the law.

This code covers some of the most important issues relating to personal conduct, and gives a framework of standards and behaviour guidelines, but it not intended to be exhaustive.

Equality and Respect

Employees should comply with relevant legislation - namely the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000. All individuals and organisations have a right to be treated with fairness and equity and for their personal information to be managed appropriately at all times.

All employees should respect their colleagues. The Parish Council will not allow any kind of discriminatory behaviour, harassment or victimisation, in accordance with our Dignity at Work - Bullying and Harassment Policy. Further, employees should conform with our Equal Opportunities Policy in all aspects of their work.

Political Neutrality

Employees serve the whole of the Parish Council and work with all Councillors from all political groups. Employees may be required to advise them in ways that do not compromise political neutrality and must not:

- Use their position for political gain either as an individual or for any political group
- Allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work

Disclosure of Information

The Parish Council encourages a culture of openness and transparency. The law requires that certain information must be made available to Councillors, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. Certain information may be confidential or sensitive and therefore not appropriate to be made public. Employees should:

- Be aware of what information the Parish Council is open about and what it is not open about and follow the appropriate procedures when disclosing information
- Not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

All employees are under a duty to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Use of Parish Council Property, Public Funds & Resources

Employees must ensure all public funds are used in a responsible and lawful manner in accordance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations. They should strive to ensure value for money and avoid any legal challenge to the Parish Council.

Fraud, Corruption and Financial Interests

The Parish Council needs to ensure all our funding is spent wisely. It is essential that our community has confidence that the Parish Council maintains the highest standards of conduct in financial matters and seek to maintain high standards of probity and ethical

behaviour. Stringent procedural and audit arrangements are in place and employees are expected to ensure that decision making is open and fair. Employees should award orders or contracts made on merit and fair competition tender processes - not give preferential treatment to friends or relatives.

We discourage employees from accepting gifts from external or internal partners. Employees should declare any financial or non-financial interests they consider could conflict with the Parish Council's interests in writing to the Staffing Committee.

Conflict of Interest

Employees should avoid any personal, financial or other interests that might hinder their capability or willingness to perform their job duties. They should declare any alternative employment and duties (paid or voluntary) that could impact on their role with the Parish Council, in writing to the Staffing Committee. Employees are not permitted to use any Parish Council material or information for personal gain when undertaking work (either paid or voluntary) outside of their job.

Collaboration and Communication

Employees should be friendly and collaborative. They should avoid the use of swearing or inappropriate language that has the potential to offend others.

Relationships with Other Members of Staff or Councillors

Mutual respect and professional relationships should be maintained between employees and Councillors/other colleagues at all times to ensure good Parish Council provision.

Employees should declare any close personal relationships with colleagues or Councillors in order that the Parish Council can take any appropriate action, e.g. avoid any supervisory relationships with each other.

Misuse of Drugs and Alcohol

It is not allowed to carry out official duties when under the influence of alcohol or non-medically prescribed drugs.

Conduct Outside Work

The Parish Council does not seek to dictate how employees conduct themselves in their personal lives outside work. However unlawful, anti-social or other conduct by employees which may jeopardise the Parish Council's reputation or position may be dealt with through the Disciplinary and Grievance Arrangements. This includes conduct that has the potential to cause offence to other colleagues or members of the public.

Breaches of the Code

All employees should read and follow the Parish Council policies. The Parish Council may take action under its Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for employees who repeatedly or intentionally fail to follow the Code of Conduct. The Parish Council may take legal action in cases of corruption, theft or other unlawful behaviour.