

Preston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Code of Conduct

Introduction

In accordance with section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Preston Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group ('the Steering Group') has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members whenever they conduct the business of the Steering Group and whenever they act on behalf of the Steering Group.

This Code of Conduct is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.

Member obligations

When a member of the Steering Group acts as a representative of the Steering Group, he/she has the following obligations:

1. He/she shall behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful.
2. He/she shall not act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory.
3. He/she shall not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
4. He/she shall use the resources of the Steering Group in accordance with its requirements.
5. He/she shall not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

Registration of interests

Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Steering Group, co-option to the Steering Group (where that is later), he/she shall register all interests which fall within the categories set out at the end of this document.

A member shall register any change to interests or new interests within 28 days of becoming aware of it.

A member need only declare the existence but not the details of any interest which the Steering Group agrees is a 'sensitive interest'. A sensitive interest is one which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead the member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation.

Declaration of interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest, the member shall withdraw from the meeting. He/she may speak on the matter before withdrawing only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

A member only has to declare his/her interest if it is not already entered in his/her register of interests or he or she has not notified the Steering Group of it or if he/she speaks on the matter

before withdrawing. If he/she holds an interest which is a sensitive interest not already disclosed to the Steering Group, he/she shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate, the member shall disclose the nature of the interest and withdraw from the meeting. He/she may speak on the matter before withdrawing only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. If it is a 'sensitive interest' the member shall declare the interest but not the nature of the interest.

Dispensations

On a written request made to the Steering Group, the Steering Group may grant a member a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if he/she has an interest if the Steering Group believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Preston Neighbourhood Plan's area to allow the member to take part or it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Interests

Pecuniary Interests

Any interest which relates to or is likely to affect:

1. any employment or business carried on by the member
2. any person or body who employs or has appointed the member
3. any person or body, other than the Steering Group, who has made a payment to the member in respect of any expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties
4. any person or body who has a place of business or land in the Preston Neighbourhood Plan's area, and in whom the member has a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower)
5. any contract for goods, services or works made between the Steering Group and the member or a firm in which he or she is a partner, a company of which he or she is a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in the above category
6. any land in the Preston Neighbourhood Plan's area in which the member has a beneficial interest