

BOARD MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

It is important that as Neighbourhood Board Members we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual Neighbourhood Board Member affects the reputation of Blacon Pride in Place and its Neighbourhood Board.

We want the role of Neighbourhood Board Member to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to put themselves forward to become Neighbourhood Board Members.

As Neighbourhood Board Members, we represent local residents, building stronger communities, create thriving places and empowering people to take control to deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area, taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

General principles of Neighbourhood Board Member conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, Neighbourhood Board Members and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles outlined in the Terms of Reference for Blacon Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of Neighbourhood Board Member:

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons equally, fairly and with respect
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Neighbourhood Board Member.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I do not accept gifts or offers of hospitality which could give a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to give favour
- I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person or group

- I exercise reasonable care and diligence
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with Blaenau Gwent Pride in Place requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

1. This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your acceptance of the office of Neighbourhood Board Member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a Neighbourhood Board Member.
2. This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a Neighbourhood Board Member, which may include if:
 - you misuse your position as a Neighbourhood Board Member
 - your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a Neighbourhood Board Member
3. The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:
 - at face-to-face meetings
 - in online or telephone meetings
 - in written communication
 - in oral communication
 - in non-verbal communication
 - in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments
4. You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and always show leadership when acting as a Neighbourhood Board Member.

Declaring interests

Whenever Board Members are in a meeting and a matter is being considered that relates to their personal, non-pecuniary interest then they must declare the interest to the meeting. Declaration of Interest forms will be available at each Board meeting or via the Chair.

Whenever Board members are in a meeting and have a disclosable pecuniary interest that is not already registered, they must disclose these.

Once a non-pecuniary interest has been declared, the Board Member can fully participate in the meeting provided that they are satisfied that they are able to approach the matter with an open mind.

However, if the Board Member declares a pecuniary interest, then they must not take any further active part in the debate/ decision, must not vote and may be asked to leave the room.

Predetermination

When making a decision, Board Members must consider the matter with an open mind and on the facts before the meeting at which the decision is to be taken.

Board Members should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their Board duties.

General requirements of the Code of Conduct

The Code requires that all members:

- Must not conduct themselves in a manner which is contrary to the Neighbourhoods Board's duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Board Members
- Must not disclose any information given to them in confidence, or prevent anyone from getting information to which they are entitled by law

Neighbourhood Board members are expected to adhere to the **Seven Principles of Public Life**, known as the Nolan Principles, as defined by the Committee for Standards in Public Life. They are:

- a. Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- b. Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- c. Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- d. Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- e. Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.
- f. Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- g. Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Board members are obliged to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests which could give rise to a conflict of interest at the start of each meeting.

Pecuniary Interests

Pecuniary interests include the following:

- Any employment or vocation carried out for profit or gain
- Any sponsorship or financial benefit in respect of expenses incurred in carrying out their duties as a Board Member
- Beneficial interests in land/ assets/ resources within the Pride in Place area of the relevant authority, and any licence to occupy land/ assets/ resources in the Pride in Place area
- Tenancies where the Council is the landlord and the tenant is a body in which the Board Member has a beneficial interest
- Beneficial interests in securities of bodies that have a place of business in the Pride in Place area and set limits (£25,000 or share capital of more than 1%) are exceeded