

Rossendale Borough council
Protocol for Independent Members of the Standards Committee

1. This Protocol applies to you as an independent member of the Standards Committee. In addition, the Protocols for Members of the Standards Committee and Sub-Committee and Chair of the Standards Committee (where relevant) also apply to you.
2. You are expected to demonstrate a high degree of personal integrity and to have an appreciation of the ethical standards required of people holding public office.
3. You should not engage in any behaviour which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as compromising your position. For example, you should discuss invitations to events with the Monitoring Officer.
4. Whilst membership of a political party (including a branch of such a party) is not prohibited (but see paragraph 5 below), you may not:
 - (a) be an officer of the party or participate in the general management thereof;
 - (b) be a member of any committee or sub-committee of the party;
 - (c) stand for election to public office, either on behalf of a political party or as an independent;
 - (d) nominate, second or assent to the nomination of any candidate for election to public office;
 - (e) canvass on behalf of a political party or on behalf of a person who is, or who proposes to be, a candidate for election to public office; or
 - (f) be a member or an officer of the Council or of any other relevant authority (see paragraph 7 below).

For the avoidance of doubt, you will need to cease such activities or involvement when appointed to the Standards Committee.

5. In accordance with its Council's Equality Policy, the Council has a duty as a public authority under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination;
 - promote equality of opportunity; and
 - promote good relations between persons of different groups

and this precludes you from being a member of any political party whose constitution, aims, objectives or pronouncements are inconsistent with this duty.

6. Membership on the Council's Standards Committee does not preclude you from being an independent member of another relevant authority's standards committee.
7. A 'relevant authority' is defined in section 49(6) of the Local Government Act 2000. It includes all local authorities and other public bodies e.g. fire authorities and police authorities.

Breach of this Protocol could result in a complaint to the Standards Committee for investigation.

If in doubt seek advice from Linda Fisher, Monitoring Officer
Tel: 01706 252447 Email: lindafisher@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Protocol – Standards Committee Chair

Role Purpose

Under the direction of the Council and the Standards Committee:-

- To act as the spokesperson of the Standards Committee to the Council and the Town Council.
- To contribute fully as a member of the Standards Committee.

Key Responsibilities

- Ensure he/she is sufficiently and effectively briefed on the issues within the Committee's terms of reference.
- Ensure that members of the Committee adhere to the relevant Rules of Procedure and Codes of Conduct contained in the Council's Constitution.
- Ensure the effective and orderly operation of the Committee.
- Ensure that the Committee has proper regard to the advice of the Monitoring Officer and his/her deputy.
- Ensure meetings of the Committee are regulated in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and are conducted in an orderly structured manner enabling effective debate.
- Ensure that the Committee follows approved procedures, codes and protocols.
- As a member of the Standards Committee, to report back to the Council with regard to the work of the Standards Committee.
- Meet with the Monitoring Officer or his/her nominee to ensure the receipt of appropriate advice to inform effective functioning of the Committee.

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Protocol – Standards Committee and Sub-Committee Member

Main Role

- The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct.
- As a member of the Standards Committee, to advise the Council on the adoption or revision of its Code of Conduct.
- As a member of the Standards Committee/Sub-Committees, to monitor and advise the Council about the operation of its Code of Conduct in light of best practice, changes in the law and guidance from the Standards Board.
- As a member of the Standards Committee, to enable all members of the Council/Town Council to have access to training actively promoted in all aspects of the relevant Code of Conduct, and to ensure that members are aware of the standards expected of them under the Code.
- As a member of the Standards Committee/Sub-Committees, to have the respect of the whole authority, regardless of the governing political party by ensuring that you make judgments impartially.

Duties and Main Responsibilities

- To carry out the functions relating to standards of conduct of members under any relevant provision of or regulations made under the Local Government Act 2000.
- As a member of the Standards Committee, to advise the Council on the adoption of protocols relating to conduct of Members and their relationship with officers.
- As a member of the Standards Committee, to consider and determine appropriate action on either breaches or alleged breaches by members of the relevant Codes of Conduct and protocols, in accordance with the relevant adopted procedures.
- To undertake appropriate training in order to fulfil the role of a member of the Standards Committee.
- To maintain a working knowledge of any relevant provisions of or regulations made under the Local Government Acts in relation to Code of Conduct issues and any advice and guidance received from the Standards Board for England.
- To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies, services and activities.
- As a member of the Standards Committee or Sub-Committees to not become embroiled in alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct or the Council's protocols unless as part of the Standards Committee hearing procedures
- To retain confidentiality when involved in investigations.
- To exercise the above in relation to Whitworth Town Council members.

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Protocol for Town Councillors serving on the Standards Committee

1. This Protocol applies to you as a Town Councillor serving on the Standards Committee. In addition, the Protocol for Members of the Standards Committee also applies to you.
2. As a member of the Standards Committee, to have the respect of the Town Council by ensuring that you make judgments impartially.
3. As a member of the Standards Committee, to monitor and advise the Town Council about the operation of its Code of Conduct in light of best practice, changes in the law and guidance from the Standards Board and the Monitoring Officer.
4. As a member of the Standards Committee, to enable all members of the Town Council to have access to training actively promoted in all aspects of the relevant Code of Conduct, and to ensure that members are aware of the standards expected of them under the Code.

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