



FRAMPTON COTTERELL PARISH COUNCIL

Employee Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Frampton Cotterell Parish Council's Code of Conduct sets out the obligations and professional standards of conduct required of all employees.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 The 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 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.
- 1.4 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.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees of Frampton Cotterell Parish Council, temporary staff, apprentices and casual workers.

3. Equality & Respect

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 All employees should respect their colleagues. The Council will not allow any kind of discriminatory behaviour, harassment or victimisation; see the **Grievance including Bullying and Harassment Policy**. Employees should conform with our **Equal and Diversity Policy** in all aspects of their work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations.

4. Political Neutrality

4.1 Employees serve the whole of the 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.

5. Disclosure of Information

5.1 The 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 council is open about and what it is not open about and follow the appropriate procedures when disclosing information.
- Adhere to a duty of confidentiality to the council and must act as required in accordance with paragraph 5.1 above to maintain confidentiality.
- 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.

5.2 All employees are under a duty to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI). See **Communications & Data Protection Policy**.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 The Council places a high priority in providing a safe working environment; all employees must conform with the **Council's Health and Safety Policies** and procedures in the performance of their duties and report any health and safety concerns to management.

7. Use of Council Property, Public Funds & Resources

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

7.2 All employees should treat council property & resources with respect and care. Employees:

- Should not misuse company equipment/resources or use them frivolously; i.e. private telephone calls, use of IT equipment, internet & social media; in reference to the **Communications, Data Protection and IT policies**.
- Should not abuse benefits; i.e. time off or sick pay. In reference to the **Managing Ill Health Policy**.
- Should protect facilities and other material property (e.g. Parish Council vehicles) from damage and vandalism, whenever possible.

8. Professionalism

All employees must show integrity and professionalism in the workplace:

- 8.1 **Personal appearance** - Employees must wear Frampton Cotterell Parish Council uniform when required in their job role. They must maintain a professional standard of dress in the workplace at all times.
- 8.2 **Fraud and Corruption and Financial Interests** - The Council needs to ensure all our funding is spent wisely. It is essential that our community has confidence that the 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. Staff are expected to operate under the **Nolan principle guidance**.
- 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 council's interests in writing to the Clerk or the Staffing Committee in the case of the Clerk.
- 8.3 **Job duties and authority** - All employees should fulfil their job duties with integrity and respect toward members of the public, customers and the community. The Clerk & Deputy Clerk/RFO must not abuse their authority; they must act as role models and delegate duties to their team taking into account skills and workloads. Team members should follow all reasonable instructions from the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and complete their duties with skills and in a timely manner- in reference to our **Supervision, Appraisal and Training Policy**.
- 8.4 **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 Council, in writing to the Clerk of Staffing Working Group/Committee. Employees are not permitted to use any council material or information for personal gain when undertaking work (either paid or voluntary) outside of their job.
- 8.5 **Collaboration and Communication** - Employees should be friendly and collaborative. They should try not to disrupt the workplace or present obstacles to their colleagues work. All employees must be open for communication with their colleagues, the Clerk or Councillors. They should avoid the use of swearing or inappropriate language that has the potential to offend others.
- 8.6 **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 Council can take appropriate action i.e. avoid any Supervisory relationships with each other. The Council has a specific **Members Code of Conduct** that Members should adhere to.

8.7 **Performance, Misuse of Drugs and Alcohol, Gambling** - The Council expects individuals to follow all reasonable rules and instructions given by those supervising or managing their activities or work areas. It is a performance offence to be on Council premises and carrying out official duties when under the influence of alcohol or non- medically prescribed drugs. Gambling activities must not be conducted on Council premises. Discretion may be used in relation to small raffles for charitable purposes, national lottery syndicates and occasional sweepstakes. See the **Managing Employee Performance procedure and Managing Ill Health Policy**.

8.8 **Recruitment and Employment** - Employees involved in the recruitment selection process must ensure appointments are made on the basis of merit. Employees should not be involved in recruitment, appraisal, managing performance or pay adjustments where they are related to an applicant/employee, or have a close personal relationship with them. See the **Recruitment and Selection Guide**.

Employees must notify the Clerk and/or Staffing Committee of any statutory illegality that may affect their ability to carry out the duties of their post, e.g. drivers who lose their driving licence.

8.9 **Court/Tribunal Proceedings** – All employees must adhere to the **Time off Work and Leave policy** in regard to attending court/tribunal proceedings that are unconnected to their role. If an employee issues proceedings against the council in any capacity any preparation must be done in their own time. They must not use council property/equipment to prepare their case and any time off to attend proceedings/hearings must be within their own time – annual leave or unpaid leave.

8.10 **The media** – if an employee is directly approached by a member of the media they should not attempt to answer questions themselves but should refer the journalist to the Clerk or in their absence, the Deputy Clerk/RFO or the Staffing Working Group/Committee (reference to the **Communications and Data Protection Policy**)

8.11 **Conduct Outside Work** - The 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 Council's reputation or position will be dealt with through the **Managing Employee Performance Policy**. This includes conduct that has the potential to cause offence to other colleagues or members of the public.

9. Breaches of the Code

9.1 All employees should read and follow the council policies. The Council may take action under the **Managing Employee Performance Procedure** for employees who repeatedly or intentionally fail to follow the Code of Conduct. The Council may take legal action in cases of corruption, theft or other unlawful behaviour.

9.2 If employees suspect any wrong doings in respect of the Code of Conduct or other Council Policies, they can report via the **Whistleblowing procedure**.

