



NORTHCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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# MEMBERS' INTERESTS POLICY

FEBRUARY 2026

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# Northchurch Parish Council

## Members' Interests Policy

### 1. Introduction

Northchurch Parish Council is committed to maintaining high standards of conduct and transparency. This Members' Interests Policy sets out how councillors must declare and manage interests in accordance with:

- Localism Act 2011
- Relevant Regulations made under the Act
- The Parish Council's Code of Conduct
- Guidance issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

This policy supports openness, accountability, and public confidence in the decision-making of the Parish Council.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all elected and co-opted members of Northchurch Parish Council.

### 3. Register of Members' Interests

All councillors are required by law to complete and maintain a **Register of Members' Interests**.

Each councillor must:

- Complete a declaration of interests within **28 days** of election, co-option, or appointment
- Notify the Monitoring Officer of any change to their interests within **28 days** of the change

The Register of Members' Interests is maintained by the Borough Council's Monitoring Officer and is available for public inspection.

### 4. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests are defined in legislation and include interests relating to:

- Employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation
- Sponsorship
- Contracts
- Land and property
- Licences
- Corporate tenancies
- Securities

If a councillor has a DPI in any matter being considered at a meeting:

- The interest **must be declared** at the meeting
- The councillor **must not participate** in the discussion or vote
- The councillor **must withdraw** from the meeting room while the item is considered

Failure to comply with DPI requirements may constitute a criminal offence.

## **5. Other Registerable Interests**

In addition to DPIs, councillors must register and declare other interests as required by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct, including:

- Membership of other public bodies
- Membership of charities or voluntary organisations
- Interests that could reasonably be regarded as affecting a councillor's impartiality

Where such an interest exists, the councillor should declare it and act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any advice given by the Monitoring Officer.

## **6. Interests of Close Associates**

Where required by the Code of Conduct, councillors must also consider the interests of:

- Their spouse or civil partner
- A person with whom they are living as a spouse or civil partner

Such interests may need to be declared where relevant to matters under consideration.

## **7. Meetings and Declarations**

At the start of each Parish Council meeting, councillors will be asked to declare any interests relating to items on the agenda.

Declarations will be:

- Recorded in the minutes
- Managed in accordance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

## **8. Sensitive Interests**

Where a councillor believes that disclosure of an interest could lead to intimidation or risk of harm, they may apply to the Monitoring Officer for the interest to be treated as a **sensitive interest**, in accordance with legislation.

## **9. Advice and Guidance**

Councillors are encouraged to seek advice from:

- The Clerk to the Council
- The Borough Council's Monitoring Officer

Early advice can help avoid breaches of this policy or the Code of Conduct.

## **10. Breaches and Complaints**

Any allegation that a councillor has failed to comply with this policy or the Code of Conduct will be dealt with under the Borough Council's arrangements for handling standards complaints.

## **11. Review**

This policy will be reviewed at least every **four years** or sooner if there are changes to legislation or NALC guidance.

**Adopted by Northchurch Parish Council on: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Next review date: May 2030**