

Iminster Town Council Employee Code of Conduct



**Approved By Council 4 December 2012, Reviewed by Council 11 October 2016
and 26 November 2019**

This Code of Conduct is applicable to all employees of Iminster Town Council.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct sets out, in general terms, the standards that are expected of Iminster Town Council employees; it is complemented by legislation and other Town Council policies such as financial regulations, sickness reporting and health and safety.
- 1.2 Iminster Town Council employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to Members and fellow officers with impartiality.
- 1.3 An Iminster Town Council employee must perform their duties with honesty, integrity, impartiality and must at all times act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.
- 1.4 An Iminster Town Council employee is accountable to the Council for his / her actions
- 1.5 Iminster Town Council employees are expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Town Clerk any deficiency in the provision of service.

2 Openness and Disclosure of Information

- 2.1 Iminster Town Council believes that open administration is best and it will be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that it takes. The Council welcomes opportunities to share information with the community that it serves.
- 2.2 The law requires that certain types of information must be available to Members auditors, government departments, service users and the public. Iminster Town Council employees will not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
- 2.3 Iminster Town Council employees should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they knowingly pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.
- 2.4 Information concerning an Officer's or Member's private affairs shall not be supplied to any person except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by law.
- 2.5 Iminster Town Council employees will not knowingly disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone, or information which they believe to be of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, unless required by the law to do so.
- 2.6 No Iminster Town Council employee may take part in any broadcast (sound or vision) or publish an article or otherwise disclose information to the media which relates to the Council without first obtaining the permission of the Town Clerk.

3 Political Neutrality

- 3.1 Ilminster Town Council employees serve the Council as whole and must ensure that the individual rights of Members are respected.
- 3.2 Where Ilminster Town Council employees are required to provide advice to Members (either individuals or groups) the advice must be given in such a way that the political neutrality of the advice giver is not compromised.
- 3.3 Ilminster Town Council employees must follow every lawful expressed policy of the Council and must not allow their personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

4 Relationships and Respect For Others

- 4.1 Ilminster Town Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all local people and communities, irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, disability, religious belief, sexual orientation, age, or any other protected characteristic or relevant factor.
- 4.2 An Ilminster Town Council employee must treat others with respect and not knowingly discriminate unlawfully against any person.
- 4.3 All Ilminster Town Council employees should ensure that policies relating to equality and diversity issues as agreed by the Council are complied with, in addition to the requirement of the law. All members of the community Members and Officers of the Council have a right to be treated with fairness and equity.
- 4.4 Ilminster Town Council employees should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to individuals and any groups.
- 4.5 Mutual respect between Officers and Members is essential. Close personal familiarity between Ilminster Town Council employees with individual Members or other Officers can damage other working relationships and be embarrassing to other employees and Councillors and should therefore be avoided.
- 4.6 All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors or potential contractors should be made known to the Town Clerk. Orders and contracts should be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives during the tendering process.
- 4.7 Ilminster Town Council employees who engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors should declare that relationship to the Town Clerk.

5. Appointment and other Employment Matters

- 5.1 Ilminster Town Council employees involved in making staffing appointments should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. It would be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment which was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship with them either within or outside of the workplace.

5.2 Similarly to 5.1 above, employees should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments of any employee who is a relative or partner.

NB In this context

- “relative” means a spouse, partner, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step son, step daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons.
- “partner” means a member of a couple who live together

6. Outside Commitments

6.1 Whilst the Council would prefer that its employees are exclusively employed by the Council, it does realise that such an exclusive contract may not be possible. The Council does however, reserve the right to require that any other employment that is undertaken by its employees does not conflict with either the role or the standards required by the Town Council.

6.2 An Ilminster Town Council employee must not have any secondary employment without first obtaining the permission of the Town Clerk.

7. Personal Interests (including gifts and hospitality)

7.1 An Ilminster Town Council employee will not use their position improperly to confer advantage or disadvantage on any person.

7.2 Ilminster Town Council employees should inform the Town Clerk of any non-financial interests that they consider could bring about a conflict with the Council’s interests.

7.3 Ilminster Town Council employees must inform the Town Clerk of any financial interests which could conflict with the Council’s interests.

7.4 Ilminster Town Council employees shall not accept any payment, fee, reward or benefit either direct indirect, of any kind, in connection with their employment, from any person or body other than the Council itself except as provided for in 7.5 and 7.6 below.

7.5 Acceptance of any gift and /or hospitality must be approved by the Town Clerk or, if the recipient is to be the Town Clerk the approval of the Finance and Policy Committee must be obtained

7.6 Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented.

7.7 All offers of gifts and hospitality, whether accepted or declined, must be recorded by the Town Clerk.

7.8 Ilminster Town Council employees should declare to the Town Clerk membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance, and which has secrecy about rule, membership or conduct.

8. Tender and Contract Processes

8.1 Ilminster Town Council employees must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with contractors and suppliers.

- 8.2 Ilminster Town Council employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors should not knowingly disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- 8.3 Ilminster Town Council employees should ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

9. Corruption

- 9.1 It is a serious criminal offence for Ilminster Town Council employees in their official capacity to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person.

10. Resources

- 10.1 Ilminster Town Council employees must ensure any public funds entrusted to or handled by them are dealt with in a responsible and lawful manner. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and ensure that matters are conducted in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders .
- 10.2 Ilminster Town Council employees must not make personal use of property of facilities of the Council unless authorised by the Town Clerk to do so.

11. Standards of Dress and Appearance

- 11.1 Ilminster Town Council expects employees to observe a standard of personal appearance which is appropriate to the nature of the work undertaken and which portrays a professional approach in which the public can have confidence.

12. Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substance Misuse

- 12.1 Ilminster Town Council employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substance or have their work performance adversely impaired by such substances.
- 12.2 Ilminster Town Council employees whose performance or behaviour falls below the acceptable standard or who cause danger or inconvenience as a result of alcohol, drugs or other substance misuse may be the subject of the Council's disciplinary and / or capability procedures.
- 12.3 Ilminster Town Council employees taking prescribed drugs which may have an impact upon their performance or ability to undertake their duties are required to inform the Town Clerk.

13. Criminal Charges

- 13.1 An Ilminster Town Council employee must inform the Town Clerk if they are charged or convicted of a criminal offence (other than minor driving infringements)

14. Intellectual Property

- 14.1 Intellectual property is a generic legal term which refers to the rights and obligations received and granted (including copyright) in relation to, for example, inventions, patents creative writings.
- 14.2 All intellectual property created by an Ilminster Town Council employee during the course of their employment belongs to the Town Council.

15. Breach of the Code

- 15.1 Breach of this Code of Conduct will be regarded as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure.