



## **Code of Practice for Council Members**

### **Public Service Values**

The members of the Jersey Family Justice Council (the Council) must at all times:

- 1) observe the highest standards of integrity and objectivity in relation to the recommendations they provide and the management of this public body; and
- 2) be accountable for its activities and for the standard of recommendations it provides.

### **Standards in Public Life**

All Council members must:

- 1) follow the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Council on Standards in Public Life;
- 2) comply with this code, and ensure they understand their duties, rights and responsibilities. They must be familiar with the function and role of the Council; and
- 3) not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political purpose, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, businesses or other organisations.

### **The Role of Council Members**

Members of the Council have collective responsibility for the operation of this body. They must:

- 1) engage fully in collective consideration of the issues.
- 2) agree an Annual Report; and, where practicable and appropriate, hold at least one meeting a year in public.

### **The Role of the Chair**

The Chair has particular responsibility for providing effective leadership on the issues above. In addition, the Chair is responsible for:

- 1) ensuring that the Council meets at the appropriate intervals, and that the minutes of the meeting accurately record the decisions taken and, where appropriate, the views of individual council members; and
- 2) representing the views of the Council to the general public, where appropriate.

The Chair shall have a casting vote in the event of any matters where the Council members are evenly divided.



## **Handling Conflicts of Interest**

The purpose of these provisions is to avoid any danger of Council members being influenced, or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the exercise of their public duties. All Council members should, therefore, declare any personal or business interest which may be perceived (by a reasonable member of the public) to influence their judgement. This should include, as a minimum, personal direct and indirect pecuniary interests, and should normally also include such interests of close family members and of people living in the same household. A declaration on any interest should also be made at any Council meeting if it relates specifically to a particular issue under consideration, for noting in the minutes (whether or not the Council member also withdraws from the meeting).

Council members should not participate in the discussion or determination of matters in which they have an interest, and should normally withdraw from the meeting if their interest is direct and pecuniary.

## **Confidentiality**

Council members will in the course of their work receive confidential information in relation to members of the public and may receive confidential briefings in relation to various matters.

Council members should keep these matters confidential unless such matters are included in minutes of the Council, which members of the public are entitled to see or form part of reports for publications produced by the Council.

Council members must bear in mind that confidential information that they receive during the course of their membership of the Council may only be used in connection with their duties and responsibilities as Council members and not for their personal interests. Members shall not disclose publicly or to any third party personal information about named individuals that they may receive in the course of their duties unless it is both lawful and in the wider public interest to do so. Members must have regard to all relevant data protection, human rights and other principles when dealing with confidential information and must be aware of the consequences of breaching such confidentiality.

## **Breach of the Code of Practice**

A breach of the Code of Practice is sufficient ground for the removal of a member of the Council on a vote of the majority of members.

## The Seven Principles of Public Life

1. **Selflessness**: holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
2. **Integrity**: holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their duties.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **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 in a way that protects the public interests.
7. **Leadership**: holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.