

# **Pensions Board for Bexley**

## **Members' Code of Conduct**

### **1. Scope**

- (1) You must comply with this Code whenever you act in your capacity as a member of the Pensions Board for Bexley.
- (2) As a member of the Pensions Board for Bexley you shall have regard to the Seven Principles of Public Life set out in the Annex, namely: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.
- (3) When acting in your capacity as a member of the Pensions Board for Bexley you must act in accordance with the following provisions set out below.

### **2. General Obligations**

- (1) You must act solely in the interest of carrying out your duty to assist the Administering Authority in its role as scheme manager and should not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend or a close associate.
- (2) You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
- (3) You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your post and shall not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the Pensions Board for Bexley into disrepute.
- (4) You must not:
  - (a) bully or intimidate any person;
  - (b) do anything that compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality or integrity of those who work for, or on behalf of, the Authority;
  - (c) disclose information given to you in confidence, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to believe, is of a confidential nature, except where:
    - (i) you have the written consent of a person authorised to give such consent; or
    - (ii) you are required by law to do so; or

- (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice, provided the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
    - (iv) the disclosure is made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Authority;
  - (d) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
- (5) If you believe that a potential conflict of interest has arisen or is likely to arise, you must declare this immediately so that it can be considered under the Board's policy on conflicts of interest.

### **3. Failure to Comply with the Code of Conduct**

- (1) Any written allegation received by the Administering Authority that a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct will be referred for further investigation.
- (2) If it is found that a member has failed to comply with the Code, the Administering Authority may have regard to this failure in deciding whether to take action and, if so, what action to take.

### **4. Councillor Members and the Code of Conduct**

- (1) Any members of the Pensions Board who are also Councillors must also comply with the Council's Members' Code of Conduct and its disclosure requirements when acting as a member of the Pensions Board for Bexley.
- (2) Any allegation that a Councillor member of the Board has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct when acting as a member of the Pensions Board will be dealt with under the Council's usual process for dealing with such complaints.

### THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

The Seven Principles of Public Life are set out in full to assist members of the Pensions Board for Bexley and in order to help maintain public confidence in its work. Members of the Board are committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles.

**SELFLESSNESS:** You should act solely in terms of the public interest and never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend or close associate.

**INTEGRITY:** You should exercise independent judgment and not compromise your position by placing yourself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties. You should behave in accordance with all legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within the Pensions Board's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of resources. You should value your colleagues and staff and engage with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect that is essential to good governance. You should treat people with respect, including the organisations and public you engage with and those you work alongside.

**OBJECTIVITY:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, you should make choices on merit. You should deal with representations or enquiries from residents, members of the communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially. You should champion the needs of the whole community and especially your constituents, including those who did not vote for you.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** You are accountable to the public for your decisions and actions and should fully co-operate with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office.

**OPENNESS:** You should be as open and as transparent as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take to enable residents to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding you and other members to account. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest or the law clearly demands it. You should listen to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.

**HONESTY:** You have a duty to declare interests relating to your public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest. You should not allow other pressures, including the financial interests of yourself or others connected to you, to deter you from pursuing your duties or working in the best interests of the Administering Authority.

**LEADERSHIP:** Through leadership and example you should promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your public post. You should provide leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this Authority.