

THE LOCALISM ACT

27 Duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct

- (1) A relevant authority must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority.
- (2) In discharging its duty under subsection (1), a relevant authority must, in particular, adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.
- (3) A relevant authority that is a parish council—
 - (a) may comply with subsection (2) by adopting the code adopted under that subsection by its principal authority, where relevant on the basis that references in that code to its principal authority's register are to its register, and
 - (b) may for that purpose assume that its principal authority has complied with section 28(1) and (2).
- (4) In this Chapter “co-opted member”, in relation to a relevant authority, means a person who is not a member of the authority but who—
 - (a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or
 - (b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority,

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee.
- (5) A reference in this Chapter to a joint committee or joint sub-committee of a relevant authority is a reference to a joint committee on which the authority is represented or a sub-committee of such a committee.
- (6) In this Chapter “relevant authority” means—
 - (a) a county council in England,
 - (b) a district council,
 - (c) a London borough council,
 - (d) a parish council,
 - (e) the Greater London Authority,

- (f) the Metropolitan Police Authority,
 - (g) the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority,
 - (h) the Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a local authority or police authority,
 - (i) the Council of the Isles of Scilly,
 - (j) a fire and rescue authority in England constituted by a scheme under section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 or a scheme to which section 4 of that Act applies,
 - (k) a police authority (in England or in Wales) established under section 3 of the Police Act 1996,
 - (l) a joint authority established by Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1985,
 - (m) an economic prosperity board established under section 88 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009,
 - (n) a combined authority established under section 103 of that Act,
 - (o) the Broads Authority, or
 - (p) a National Park authority in England established under section 63 of the Environment Act 1995.
- (7) Any reference in this Chapter to a member of a relevant authority—
- (a) in the case of a relevant authority to which Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 applies, includes a reference to an elected mayor;
 - (b) in the case of the Greater London Authority, is a reference to the Mayor of London or a London Assembly member.
- (8) Functions that are conferred by this Chapter on a relevant authority to which Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 applies are not to be the responsibility of an executive of the authority under executive arrangements.
- (9) Functions that are conferred by this Chapter on the Greater London Authority are to be exercisable by the Mayor of London and the London Assembly acting jointly on behalf of the Authority.
- (10) In this Chapter except section 35—
- (a) a reference to a committee or sub-committee of a relevant authority is, where the relevant authority is the Greater London Authority, a reference to—
 - (i) a committee or sub-committee of the London Assembly, or

- (ii) the standards committee, or a sub-committee of that committee, established under that section,
 - (b) a reference to a joint committee on which a relevant authority is represented is, where the relevant authority is the Greater London Authority, a reference to a joint committee on which the Authority, the London Assembly or the Mayor of London is represented,
 - (c) a reference to becoming a member of a relevant authority is, where the relevant authority is the Greater London Authority, a reference to becoming the Mayor of London or a member of the London Assembly, and
 - (d) a reference to a meeting of a relevant authority is, where the relevant authority is the Greater London Authority, a reference to a meeting of the London Assembly;
- and in subsection (4)(b) the reference to representing the relevant authority is, where the relevant authority is the Greater London Authority, a reference to representing the Authority, the London Assembly or the Mayor of London.

28 Codes of conduct

- (1) A relevant authority must secure that a code adopted by it under section 27(2) (a “code of conduct”) is, when viewed as a whole, consistent with the following principles—
 - (a) selflessness;
 - (b) integrity;
 - (c) objectivity;
 - (d) accountability;
 - (e) openness;
 - (f) honesty;
 - (g) leadership.
- (2) A relevant authority must secure that its code of conduct includes the provision the authority considers appropriate in respect of the registration in its register, and disclosure, of—
 - (a) pecuniary interests, and
 - (b) interests other than pecuniary interests.

- (3) Sections 29 to 34 do not limit what may be included in a relevant authority's code of conduct, but nothing in a relevant authority's code of conduct prejudices the operation of those sections.
- (4) A failure to comply with a relevant authority's code of conduct is not to be dealt with otherwise than in accordance with arrangements made under subsection (6); in particular, a decision is not invalidated just because something that occurred in the process of making the decision involved a failure to comply with the code.
- (5) A relevant authority may—
 - (a) revise its existing code of conduct, or
 - (b) adopt a code of conduct to replace its existing code of conduct.
- (6) A relevant authority other than a parish council must have in place—
 - (a) arrangements under which allegations can be investigated, and
 - (b) arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made.
- (7) Arrangements put in place under subsection (6)(b) by a relevant authority must include provision for the appointment by the authority of at least one independent person—
 - (a) whose views are to be sought, and taken into account, by the authority before it makes its decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate, and
 - (b) whose views may be sought—
 - (i) by the authority in relation to an allegation in circumstances not within paragraph (a),
 - (ii) by a member, or co-opted member, of the authority if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation, and
 - (iii) by a member, or co-opted member, of a parish council if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation and the authority is the parish council's principal authority.
- (8) For the purposes of subsection (7)—
 - (a) a person is not independent if the person is—
 - (i) a member, co-opted member or officer of the authority,
 - (ii) a member, co-opted member or officer of a parish council of which the authority is the principal authority, or
 - (iii) a relative, or close friend, of a person within sub-paragraph (i) or (ii);

- (b) a person may not be appointed under the provision required by subsection (7) if at any time during the 5 years ending with the appointment the person was—
 - (i) a member, co-opted member or officer of the authority, or
 - (ii) a member, co-opted member or officer of a parish council of which the authority is the principal authority;
 - (c) a person may not be appointed under the provision required by subsection (7) unless—
 - (i) the vacancy for an independent person has been advertised in such manner as the authority considers is likely to bring it to the attention of the public,
 - (ii) the person has submitted an application to fill the vacancy to the authority, and
 - (iii) the person's appointment has been approved by a majority of the members of the authority;
 - (d) a person appointed under the provision required by subsection (7) does not cease to be independent as a result of being paid any amounts by way of allowances or expenses in connection with performing the duties of the appointment.
- (9) In subsections (6) and (7) “allegation”, in relation to a relevant authority, means a written allegation—
- (a) that a member or co-opted member of the authority has failed to comply with the authority's code of conduct, or
 - (b) that a member or co-opted member of a parish council for which the authority is the principal authority has failed to comply with the parish council's code of conduct.
- (10) For the purposes of subsection (8) a person (“R”) is a relative of another person if R is—
- (a) the other person's spouse or civil partner,
 - (b) living with the other person as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners,
 - (c) a grandparent of the other person,
 - (d) a lineal descendant of a grandparent of the other person,
 - (e) a parent, sibling or child of a person within paragraph (a) or (b),
 - (f) the spouse or civil partner of a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e), or
 - (g) living with a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e) as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners.

- (11) If a relevant authority finds that a member or co-opted member of the authority has failed to comply with its code of conduct (whether or not the finding is made following an investigation under arrangements put in place under subsection (6)) it may have regard to the failure in deciding—
- (a) whether to take action in relation to the member or co-opted member, and
 - (b) what action to take.
- (12) A relevant authority must publicise its adoption, revision or replacement of a code of conduct in such manner as it considers is likely to bring the adoption, revision or replacement of the code of conduct to the attention of persons who live in its area.
- (13) A relevant authority's function of adopting, revising or replacing a code of conduct may be discharged only by the authority.
- (14) Accordingly—
- (a) in the case of an authority to whom section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (arrangements for discharge of functions) applies, the function is not a function to which that section applies;
 - (b) in the case of the Greater London Authority, the function is not a function to which section 35 (delegation of functions by the Greater London Authority) applies.