Peterston-super-Ely Community Council

Cyngor Cymuned a Llanbedr-y-Fro

Code of Conduct
Guide for Members and Co-opted Members

Adopted 14th September 2026 Minute 09.17

Important
This is a plain-English guide to the Council's adopted Code of Conduct. It is designed to make the rules easier to understand and use. The adopted Code remains the authoritative document if there is any difference in wording or interpretation.

At a glance

- Act in the public interest and make decisions fairly.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Protect confidential information.
- Do not misuse your position or Council resources.
- Declare relevant personal interests.
- If an interest is prejudicial, do not take part in the decision unless a valid exception or dispensation applies.
- Follow the rules on gifts, hospitality, expenses and members' interests.

1. When does the Code apply?

You must follow the Code when you:

- conduct Council business or attend a Council meeting;
- act, claim to act, or give the impression that you are acting as a councillor/member;
- act, claim to act, or give the impression that you are representing the Council; or
- engage in conduct covered by the Code's rules on bringing the office into disrepute and misuse of position/resources, which apply at all times and in any capacity.

If the Council appoints or nominates you to another relevant authority or body, you normally follow that body's Code when acting for it. If the body has no relevant Code, this Code applies unless it conflicts with another lawful obligation.

2. Treat people fairly and respectfully

As a member, you must:

- give due regard to equality of opportunity, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion;
- show respect and consideration to others;
- not bully or harass anyone; and
- avoid conduct that compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality of people working for or on behalf of the Council.

In practice
You can disagree with a proposal while being respectful to a person. Keep debate focused on the issue, listen to others, and avoid behaviour that could reasonably be seen as bullying or harassment.

3. Confidentiality and access to information

- Do not disclose confidential information, or information that should reasonably be regarded as confidential, unless authorised or legally required to do so.
- Do not stop someone from accessing information they are legally entitled to receive.

4. Protect the reputation of the Council

- Do not behave in a way that could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the Council into disrepute.
- If you reasonably believe another member or someone working for/on behalf of the Council is involved in criminal behaviour, report it through the appropriate route.
- If you reasonably believe another member has breached the Code, report the matter to the appropriate monitoring officer/proper officer.
- Do not make vexatious, malicious or frivolous complaints.
- Co-operate with requests from the monitoring officer or the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in connection with a lawful investigation.

5. Do not misuse your position or Council resources

You must not use, or try to use, your position improperly to give yourself or someone else an advantage, or to create or avoid a disadvantage.

Council resources must not be used:

- imprudently;
- against the Council's requirements;
- unlawfully;
- other than to support the Council's functions or your role as a member;
- improperly for political purposes; or
- improperly for private purposes.

6. Make decisions in the public interest

- Base decisions on the merits of the circumstances and the public interest.
- Take relevant professional advice into account, including financial, legal and monitoring-officer advice where applicable.
- Give reasons for decisions where required by law or by reasonable Council requirements.

A useful test
Ask: "Am I deciding this because it is best for the community and supported by the relevant facts and advice, rather than because it benefits me, someone close to me, or a particular organisation?"

7. Expenses, gifts and hospitality

- Follow the law and the Council's rules when claiming expenses and allowances.
- Do not accept gifts, hospitality, material benefits or services that could place you, or reasonably appear to place you, under an improper obligation.
- Official hospitality, such as an authorised civic reception or working lunch, is treated differently under the Code.
- Gifts and hospitality above the value set by the Council must be registered within 28 days, using the required written notification.

8. Personal interests — the key questions

For every item of Council business, consider first whether you have a personal interest and whether the Code requires you to disclose it.

A personal interest can arise where Council business relates to, or is likely to affect, matters such as:

- your employment or business;
- someone who employs or appoints you, a partnership in which you are a partner, or a company of which you are a remunerated director;
- certain payments connected with your election or Council duties;
- certain significant financial interests in corporate bodies;
- contracts between the Council and you, or relevant businesses/bodies connected with you;
- land in the Council's area in which you have a beneficial interest;
- a body to which the Council has elected, appointed or nominated you;
- certain public, charitable, campaigning, trade union, professional, club or society roles/memberships; or
- land in the Council's area that you have a licence to occupy for 28 days or longer.

The Code also covers situations where a decision could reasonably be regarded as affecting your wellbeing or financial position, or that of someone you live with or have a close personal association with, in ways that go beyond the effect on the majority of other residents/taxpayers affected.

9. How to disclose a personal interest

- If you have a personal interest and attend a meeting where the matter is considered, disclose the existence and nature of the interest before or when the matter is considered, or when the interest becomes apparent.
- If you make written representations about the matter, include details of the interest.
- If you make oral representations, disclose the interest at the start or when it becomes apparent, and confirm the representation and interest in writing within 14 days.
- For a personal interest not previously disclosed, provide the required written notification to the Council before or immediately after the meeting, including the interest, the business concerned and your signature.

Simple rule
If you think you might have an interest, say so early. It is safer to declare an interest and seek advice than to stay silent.

10. Prejudicial interests — when you must step back

A personal interest is also a prejudicial interest when a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

If you have a prejudicial interest, the general rule is that you must:

- leave the room, chamber or place where the matter is being considered at the appropriate point;
- not exercise executive or board functions in relation to the matter;
- not seek to influence the decision;
- not make written representations about the matter; and
- not make oral representations about the matter, or stop making them when the prejudicial interest becomes apparent.

11. Can I still speak?

The Code provides limited circumstances in which a member with a prejudicial interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence, provided the public is also allowed to attend for the same purpose. Written representations may also be possible where the public is allowed to make representations and the Council's procedure is followed.

There are also specific provisions for overview and scrutiny committees and for situations where a valid dispensation has been granted. If you are unsure, obtain advice before participating.

12. Registering members' interests

- Relevant personal interests must generally be registered within 28 days of the Code being adopted/coming into effect or your election/appointment, as applicable.
- New relevant personal interests must generally be registered within 28 days of becoming aware of them.
- Changes to registered interests must generally be registered within 28 days of becoming aware of the change.
- The Code contains specific provisions for community council members and for sensitive information.

13. Sensitive information

Information may be treated as sensitive where making it publicly available creates, or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or someone living with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation. Where the relevant monitoring officer agrees that information is sensitive, the Code provides an alternative to publicly registering the information itself. If circumstances change so that it is no longer sensitive, the Code requires notification within 28 days.

Quick decision guide for meetings

Question	What to do
1. Does this item affect me, someone close to me, my business, land, organisation or another relevant interest?	If yes or you are unsure, consider whether you have a personal interest.
2. Do I have a personal interest that must be disclosed?	Declare the existence and nature of the interest at the appropriate time and make any required written notification.
3. Is the interest prejudicial?	Normally do not participate in the decision. Follow the Code's rules on leaving, representations and any applicable exceptions.
4. Am I relying on a dispensation?	State this at the meeting and complete the required written notification.
5. Still unsure?	Pause and seek advice from the Council's appropriate officer/monitoring arrangements before acting.

Remember
The safest approach is transparency: declare interests, follow meeting procedures, respect others, protect confidential information, and put the public interest first.

Source and status

This guide is based on the uploaded "Peterston-super-Ely Community Council / Cyngor Cymuned a Llanbedr-y-Fro — Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members", adopted 14th September 2026. The source document contains the full English Code followed by the Welsh version. This guide simplifies the language and presentation; it does not replace the adopted Code.

Source: uploaded Code of Conduct, pp. 1–20. The source identifies the document as the Council's Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members and states that it was adopted on 14th September 2026.