

## CONSULTATION EXERCISE - COMMENTS RECEIVED

Responses received to consultation	Response to comments
<p>1.“Councillors should not be able to be both local and county councillors as there is a potential / actual conflict of interest or even local favouritism in some circumstances.</p> <p>Having a practice of allowing multiple councillors from the same family should be stopped. It allows single families to wield too much influence and power. It’s just plain wrong.</p> <p>Councillors should have to declare interests more widely than their immediate family and remove themselves from decision making when there is even just a slight possibility that it could be seen as contentious. This should extend to local party members (aka mates and other relatives) who can wield undue influence over councillors.</p> <p>Councillors should not be able to stand for more than a set number of terms (say 3 - that’s 12 years): They are there to hold local government to account rather than build empires around themselves and a fresh perspective is often beneficial for all.”</p>	<p>This is outside the scope of the review of the Code of Conduct and is governed by primary legislation.</p> <p>There is no scope to introduce a limitation on numbers within the remit of the Code of Conduct regarding member conduct and declaration of interests.</p> <p>Members should note that the requirement of the code is to declare an interest where a matter <b>directly affects OR relates to</b> a financial interest or well-being of a <b>relative or close associate</b>. (Emphasis added) This therefore already provides some accountability in relation to family members, and friends who would be covered by the phrase ‘close associates’.</p> <p>This is outside the scope of the review of the Code of Conduct and is governed by primary legislation.</p>
<p>2.“<u>Vested Interests</u></p> <p>Local politicians are motivated to serve in many ways. The ghastly words” open and transparent” are used when someone anticipates being found out to be the opposite. Better to understand just how much those weasel words mean in real life is for councillors to list their outside interests. These to include:</p>	<p>The draft Code provides for Members to declare a personal interest “in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:</p>

Membership of lobby groups

RSPB

RSPCA

Greenpeace

Friends of the Earth

Extinction Rebellion

Trades Union Officials

Paid up Political Party membership (Conservative, Labour, Lib Dem, etc)

National Union of Students

Noise Abatement Society

Natural England Official

Ramblers Association membership

Cycling Association membership

RAC Competition Licence holder

An example of the consequences of accepting a lobby group

The huge desire to see everyone walking or on bikes is laudable, but only as a recreational ideal is it likely to be widely practical.

Your Council Car Park outside Covid times is usually packed, with visitors parking limited to some 10 spaces. I don't see bike racks outside or round the back. Ever tried carrying a weekly shop on a bike, or on foot? The latter OK if it's a 10 minute walk, but not for town centre shopping. Prices Mead and B&Q car parks are usually packed, and it is of necessity, not for a drive in the country. I can't ride a bike. There is plenty of room and space as it is for loads of walkers and cyclists, but, frankly, you don't see them. Yet an enthusiast in Lycra plus cycle clips is likely to be highly vociferous in pursuit of ensuring that their passion for two wheels, or just a pair of feet. Fine, but let you espoused independence of thought and action have a few teeth, eh?

We need four wheels. Electric, ICE, Hybrid. Taxi, Bus. Emergency Services. Delivery vehicles. They are not an indulgence, but a

a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority

b) any body

i) exercising functions of a public nature

ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or

iii) **one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)**" (Emphasis added)

The list of examples of lobbying groups provided in this response are covered by the requirement to declare a personal interest.

Furthermore, the Code requires Members to apply an additional test Where a matter **affects your financial interest or well-being:**

a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;

b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

<p>necessity. Keep them moving, accommodate them, don't imprison them. Short cuts are just that. In, out, gone. Not stuck up a cul-de-sac. Not stuck in a traffic jam. Not getting road rage.</p>	<p>Accordingly it is a matter for Members to consider their position on any given decision where they have declared a personal interest and the Code provides this to include membership of lobbying groups of the type described by the respondent.</p>
<p>3. "The Model Code of Conduct is a balanced set of rules and regulations for Councillors to follow. I haven't compared it to what rules and regulations are currently in place for Councillors, so am unable to comment on any differences.</p> <p>It makes sense to me for all Local Authorities to follow the same generic rules, but if this not practical then certainly those adjacent to each other should."</p>	<p>For noting</p> <p>For noting</p>
<p>4. I am happy with the LGA model, and just have the following minor comments:</p> <p>7.2 - I think the word 'authority' should appear after 'local'</p> <p>Appendix A - Selflessness. I'm not sure what 'in terms of the public interest' means. If it's the same as 'in the public interest', then the two superfluous words should be dropped. If it means something else, then clearer wording is needed</p>	<p>This word is in the Council's draft Code.</p> <p>This description is taken directly from the Seven Principles of Public Life and it would therefore not be appropriate to change this wording.</p>

Table 2 - I think the left column should read 'Licences' rather than 'Licenses'."

This typo was within Table 1 and had been corrected.