

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead School Forum Members
CODE of CONDUCT

Members of the public are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all our officers, Members and school representatives. In performing your duties, you must act with integrity, honesty and objectivity at all times.

Status of the Code

- (1) The Code sets out the minimum standards that apply. It may be supplemented and clarified where necessary and should be used in conjunction with the Council's [constitution](#) and the [Schools Forum Best Practice Guide](#).
- (2) The aim of the Code is to lay down guidelines for School Forum members that will help maintain and improve standards and protect panel members from misunderstanding or criticism.

Scope

You must observe this Code of Conduct whenever you conduct the business of the Schools Forum and acting as a member of the Schools Forum for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

General Obligations

- (1) In your capacity as Schools Forum Member, you must not conduct yourself in a manner that could reasonably be regarded as bringing the Schools Forum into disrepute.
- (2) You must not do anything which compromises or which is likely to compromise the impartiality and integrity of those who work for, or are members of, the Schools Forum.
- (3) You must not as a Schools Forum member use your position as a Forum member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.
- (4) You must not misrepresent the School Forum or express views that may misrepresent the Schools Forum or those of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.
- (5) You must ensure you do not present your personal views in a way that could / may be misconstrued as representing your view as a member of the Schools Forum.

Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Personal or Prejudicial interests must be declared at Forum meetings (appendix A).

Relations with other Forum Members, the Public and Officers supporting the School Forum

It is vital that you conduct yourself in an exemplary manner in all aspects of your work as a Forum member, in particular:

- It is essential to have a good working relationship with other Forum members and the officers supporting the Schools Forum, and at all

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times you should show mutual respect and keep relationships on a professional basis.

- You should remember that forum members have a duty to represent their sectors and a right to discuss and debate items raised on the agenda.
- You will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with the Forum.
- You will support the Chairman in their role or ensuring appropriate conduct at meetings and outside meetings when representing the Forum.

Accountability

(1) You are accountable to the Forum for your actions and the manner in which you carry out your responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any investigations as a result of any actions carried out as a Forum member.

(2) You must assist and co-operate fully with the Council's Monitoring Officer where the Monitoring Officer is carrying out an enquiry or investigation about the lawfulness of the Council's or Forums actions.

(3) You must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

Proper Use of Council Resources

(1) You must not use Council premises, property or other Council facilities, including equipment or materials, unless permitted to do so by an authorised officer for the purposes of carrying out your function as a School Forum member (or other functions where otherwise authorised by an officer).

(2) You should assist the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead in discharging its obligations to follow proper accounting practices. You must operate within the required accounting standards and timetables to ensure that all the Council's transactions regarding your financial claims and other essential accounting information are recorded completely, accurately and on a timely basis.

(3) You are obliged to provide the Council's auditors with any information and explanations that they seek in the course of their work.

(4) You must not make any false claims on expenses.

Raising Concerns

(1) The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability.

(2) If you have concerns arising from any aspect of the Council's operations with regard to the Schools Forum, such as if you become aware of any activities that you believe are illegal, improper, unethical or in some other way inconsistent with this Code of Conduct, you should inform the Schools Forum Chairman, Clerk or the Head of Democratic Services.

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(3) If you become aware of any conduct by another Forum member which you reasonably believe involves a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct or brings the Forum into disrepute, you must write to that effect to the Schools Forums Chairman, Clerk or to the Head of Democratic Services, as soon as is practicable for you to do so.

Confidentiality

(1) You must respect the confidentiality of the information to which you have access to as a member of the Schools Forum.

(2) You must not disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which you believe is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless you are required by law to do so.

(3) After you leave membership of the School Forum, you still have a duty not to disclose any confidential information that you have been privy to in the course of your work on the Forum.

Safeguarding and Whistleblowing

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and young people in the community.

(1) If you are worried about a child or young person you must contact Social Services or the police.

The RBWM Whistleblowing policy can be found via the following link: [Whistleblowing](#).

Terms of Reference

The Schools Forum terms of reference can be found via the following link:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/members_part6_tor_constitution_10.pdf .

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Appendix A

MEMBERS' GUIDANCE NOTE

DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPIs)

The Localism Act 2011 makes failure by members to comply with the regulations in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs), without reasonable excuse, a criminal offence.

DPIs include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any license to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you have not disclosed your interest in the register, you **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as you are aware that you have a DPI in the matter being discussed. If you have already disclosed the interest in your Register of Interest you are still required to disclose this in the meeting. **A member with a DPI must not take part in discussion or vote at a meeting as this is a criminal offence.** The term 'discussion' has been taken to mean a discussion by the members of the committee or other body determining the issue. A member with a DPI **may make** representations at the start of the item if a member of the general public has a right to do so, but can not be part of the committee discussion. You should notify Democratic Services before the meeting of your intention to speak. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, it is suggested that you leave the room or at least move to the public area, having made your representations.

If the interest declared has not been entered on to your Register of Interests, you must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting, as this is also a potential criminal offence if you do not do so.

OTHER INTERESTS

If the issue being discussed is not a DPI, but affects you more than another member of the public (either positively or negatively), or if you have a conflict of interest, then you should obtain advice from the Legal or Democratic Services Officer before

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participating in the meeting. You may not be able to take part in the committee discussion or vote, as this could invalidate the decision and have further legal consequences. You could still speak at the meeting if a member of the public has a right to speak on the subject.

If you have any queries in relation to the above, please seek further advice from the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services.
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