

# CODE OF CONDUCT

In accordance with section 27 of the Localism Act 2011, Attleborough Town Council has adopted this Code of Conduct to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members whenever they conduct the business of the Council, including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed, or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council, acknowledging that they each have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with the council's staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic, and environmental outcomes for Attleborough Town.

For the purposes of this Code, and unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a member of the Council includes a member of any committee or sub-committee of the Council who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee.

## 1 Expected Behaviour

- a) All members must be committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following general principles governing councillors conduct under the Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001, as set out below:

- Selflessness

Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

- Honesty and Integrity

Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

- Objectivity

Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

- Accountability

Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

- Openness

Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

- Personal Judgement

Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.



- Respect for Others

Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

- Duty to Uphold the Law

Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

- Stewardship

Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

- Leadership

Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

b) When a member of the Council acts, claims to act or gives the impression of acting as a representative of the Council, he/she has the following obligations:

- They shall behave in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful.
- They shall not act in a way which a reasonable person would regard as bullying or intimidatory.
- They shall not seek to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- They shall use the resources of the Council in accordance with its requirements.
- They shall not disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

## 2 Confidentiality Requirement

a) Under the legal requirement of The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 to include a confidentiality clause in the Code of Conduct, the following must be observed by all Councillors.

b) Members must not disclose to anyone else any information given to me in confidence; nor disclose any information coming into their possession (including at a meeting or committee meeting of the Council) which they believe or might reasonably be expected to believe to be of a confidential nature; except in one of the following circumstances:

- they have received the consent of a person authorised to give it; or
- they are required by law to do so; or
- the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice, provided that the third party undertakes not to disclose the information to any other person; or
- the disclosure is reasonable and in the public interest and made in good faith to comply with a reasonable requirement of the Council.



### 3 Registration of Interests

- a) Within 28 days of this Code being adopted by the Council, or the member's election or the co-opted member's appointment (where that is later), he/she shall register with Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer of the interests which fall within the categories set out in clause 4.
- b) Upon the re-election of a member or the re-appointment of a co-opted member, he/she shall within 28 days re-register with Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer any interests set out in clause 4.
- c) A member shall register with Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer any change to interests or new interests in set out in clause 4 within 28 days of becoming aware of it.
- d) A member need only declare the existence but not the details of any interest which Breckland Council's Monitoring Officer agrees is a 'sensitive interest'. A sensitive interest is one which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead the member or a person connected with the member to be subject to violence or intimidation.

### 4 Description of Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made to the member during the 12 month period ending on the latest date referred to in clause 3(a) above for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her election expenses.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract made between the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of**) and the Council —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</li><li>b) which has not been fully discharged.</li></ul>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the member or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer.



Corporate Tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge)—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the landlord is the Council; and</li> <li>the landlord is the Council; and</li> <li>the tenant is a body that the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities** of.</li> </ol>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities** of a body where—</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council; and</li> <li>either— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the total nominal value of the securities** exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the member, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the member is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Other Interests	<p>Any other interest which relates to or is likely to affect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any body of which the member is in a position of general control or management and to which he/she is appointed or nominated by the Council;</li> <li>any body— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exercising functions of a public nature;</li> <li>directed to charitable purposes; or</li> <li>one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which the member of the Council is a member or in a position of general control or management;</li> </ul> </li> <li>any gifts or hospitality worth more than an estimated value of £50 which the member has received by virtue of his or her office. Please refer to clause 6 for more information.</li> </ol>

\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\*\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.



## 5 Declaration of Interests at Meetings & Dispensations

- a) Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to an interest listed in clause 3 the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He/she only has to declare what his/her interest is if it is not already entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it. Please refer to the Council's Meetings Protocol for more information.
- b) On a written request made to the Proper Officer, the Council may grant a member a dispensation to participate in a discussion and vote on a matter at a meeting even if he/she has an interest in clause 3 if the Council believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business; or it is in the interests of the inhabitants in the Council's area to allow the member to take part or it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation. Please refer to the Council's Meetings Protocol for more information.

## 6 Gifts & Hospitality

- a) Councillors are required to register any gifts or hospitality worth £50 or over that you receive in connection with your official duties, and the source of the gift or hospitality. You must notify the Council in writing within 28 days of receiving it.
- b) As with other registered interests, you have a personal interest in any matter under consideration at a meeting if it is likely to affect a person giving you a gift or hospitality. You must declare the existence and nature of the gift or hospitality as an interest at the meeting. You will also need to consider whether your interest is prejudicial.
- c) The receipt of gifts or hospitality can be misinterpreted. This is intended to help you to consider the implications of receiving gifts and hospitality and to make an appropriate judgement.
  - Treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally which may possibly be perceived to be in connection with your position within the Council.
  - Your personal reputation and that of the Council can be seriously jeopardised by the inappropriate acceptance by you of gifts or hospitality.

## 7 Code of Conduct Complaints

- a) Upon notification by Breckland Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Clerk shall report this to the council.
- b) Where the notification in 7(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Clerk, the Clerk shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been concluded.
- c) The council may:
  - provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d) Upon notification by Breckland Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.



# MEETINGS PROTOCOL

It is the duty of councillors to attend the meetings of Attleborough Town Council and, as well as stating their own views, to fairly represent the views and needs of the community.

Councillors should read agendas in advance and prepare any notes prior to the meeting. They should also arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the start of a meeting, dress appropriately, and ensure their mobile phone is placed on silent to avoid unnecessary interruptions.

## 1 Conduct at Meetings

- a) All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights must observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- b) Councillors shall treat each other with mutual respect, listen to the points of view of others, and address the Chairman when speaking. If two or more councillors wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide who to call upon.
- c) No-one shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly, or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute. If this is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- d) If person(s) disregard the request of the Chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- e) If a resolution made under 1(d) above is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

## 2 Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

- a) All members of the Council shall be issued with a copy of the Code of Conduct on joining the council and all members shall conform to the Code of Conduct. A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the council's Code of Conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter. All members have to provide a record of their disclosable pecuniary interests in a public register of interest. Members must tell the Monitoring Officer at Breckland Council in writing within 28 days of taking office, or within 28 days of any change to the members register of interests of any interest which fall within the categories set out in the Code of Conduct.
- b) Unless granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c) If a member has a non-pecuniary interest, they shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of the interest as required. The member may speak on the matter but not vote.
- d) Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.



- e) A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- f) Subject to 2(d) and 2(e) above, dispensation requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- g) A dispensation may be granted in accordance with 2(h) below if, having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:
  - without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business; or
  - granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or
  - it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- h) A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final, after consulting with the Chairman.

### 3 How Decisions are Made

- a) The Council and its Committees take decisions by means of voting on a motion at meetings. A motion is a proposal which is discussed and voted upon, and a simple majority decides. The outcome then forms a resolution upon which the Council acts.
- b) A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event must relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- c) Except as provided by the Standing Orders, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless the business to which it relates it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- d) Significant proposals shall be supported by an explanation of the recommendations, which will be published with the agenda for the meeting.
- e) The Proper Officer may correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- f) If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least 5 clear days before the meeting.
- g) If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- h) Subject to 3(g) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final, after consulting with the Chairman.



- i) The following motions may be moved at a meeting without prior written notice to the Proper Officer;
- to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - to move to a vote;
  - to defer consideration of a motion;
  - to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
  - to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
  - to change the order of business on the agenda;
  - to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
  - to require a written report;
  - to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
  - to extend the time limits for speaking;
  - to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
  - to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
  - to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
  - to temporarily suspend the meeting;
  - to suspend a particular Standing Order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
  - to adjourn the meeting; or
  - to close a meeting.
- j) A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least four councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with 3(c) above, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- k) When a motion moved pursuant to 3(j) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

#### 4 Handling Motions & Amendments

- a) Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- b) A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c) A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d) If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e) An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f) If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion as amended becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g) A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.



- h) If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- i) Subject to 4(h) above, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- j) One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman of the meeting considers this expedient, but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- k) A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- l) The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- m) Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- n) Unless permitted by the Chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
  - to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
  - to make a point of order;
  - to give a personal explanation; or
  - in exercise of a right of reply.
- o) During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the Standing Order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- p) A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- q) When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - to amend the motion;
  - to proceed to the next business;
  - to adjourn the debate;
  - to put the motion to a vote;
  - to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - to exclude the public and press;
  - to adjourn the meeting; or
  - to suspend particular Standing Order(s), excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.
- r) Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- s) Excluding motions moved to suspend particular Standing Order(s), excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the Chairman of the meeting.



## 5 Voting

- a) Voting shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor voted for or against that question or abstained. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- b) The Chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.
- c) Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chairman of the meeting.

## 6 Handling Confidential or Sensitive Information

- a) The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b) Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

## 7 Public Participation & Press at Meetings

- a) Members of the public may make representations, answer questions, and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- b) The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with 7(a) above shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- c) Subject to 7(b) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- d) In accordance with 7(a) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- e) A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort).
- f) A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- g) Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- h) The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
- i) The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 provides that a person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if they are present but otherwise may:
  - film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting;
  - use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;
  - report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.



## 8 Annual Meeting

- a) Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Deputy Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:
- In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
  - Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
  - Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - Review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing orders;
  - Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
  - Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
  - Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
  - Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
  - Review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
  - Review of the council's Complaints Procedure;
  - Review of the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
  - Review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media; and
  - Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next Annual Meeting of full council.

## 9 Extraordinary Meetings

- a) The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.
- b) If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place, and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.
- c) The chairman of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.
- d) If the chairman of a committee or a sub-committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested by to do so by two members of the committee or the sub-committee, any two members of the committee and the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee and a sub-committee.



## 10 Committees & Sub-Committees

- a) Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.
- b) The members of a committee or sub-committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.
- c) The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - shall determine their terms of reference;
  - shall permit a committee to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - shall appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
  - shall permit a committee to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
  - shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee, which shall be no less than three;
  - shall determine if the press and public may attend a meeting of a committee;
  - shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee that they are permitted to attend;
  - may dissolve a committee.



# VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOL & GUIDANCE

The guide below provides an overview of how to attend virtual meetings using the Zoom video and audio conferencing tool.

## Pre-requisites

Before you attend the virtual meeting, you should check the Zoom conferencing software is downloaded on your device. You can access the meeting from any internet connected device with audio and video capability.

Please ensure your device is fully charged before attending the meeting, and if possible, have it connected to a power supply throughout to avoid the possibility of the battery running low and your device turning off during the meeting.

## Attending the Meeting – Zoom

An invite will be sent to you by email. The invite will include a link in the message to join the meeting or register prior to the meeting.

You can also join the meeting from any device with Zoom installed by typing in the unique 9-digit meeting code which will be included in your invite, or approved registration code.

When joining the meeting you may be held in the 'Waiting Room' and will be admitted to the meeting by the host/co-host, you will then be asked to provide your name. Please do so using your full forename and surname prefixed with the word "Cllr" as this will allow all participants to see who has joined the meeting.

Please be mindful of the physical location you are joining the meeting from.

## Meeting Etiquette

The meeting will be live streamed on YouTube. Once you join the meeting please mute your microphone audio. This avoids unnecessary background noise disturbing the meeting. Controls to mute/unmute your audio will be displayed on the screen; however, you should only use this button in the circumstances mentioned below. Remember the public can hear and see you, even if you cannot see or hear them.

### **General Rules**

- Please ensure your background, which will be visible on video, is suitable;
- Please ensure you dress appropriately;
- Please ensure you are sitting in clear view of the camera;
- Please close all doors to the room you are sitting in to avoid unnecessary interruptions;
- Please keep your mobile phone on silent to avoid unnecessary interruptions;
- Please ensure you read the agenda fully in advance of the meeting;
- Please prepare any notes prior to the meeting for ease of reference during the meeting – this may save you time when referring to the agenda during the meeting;
- You may find it useful, if you have 2 devices, to view your papers on one and the meeting on the other.
- Please ensure that no confidential papers can be seen on screen.
- Please join the meeting at least 10 minutes prior to the start to ensure any technical issues can be resolved;
- When discussing an exempt item, the Councillor/Officer must ensure that they are alone and cannot be overlooked/overheard.



## Practical steps

1. Attendance at the meeting.
  - a. When you join the meeting please ensure that your name appears correctly. You can 'rename' by clicking on the 'Participants' button and choosing the rename option.
  - b. The Chairman will work through the agenda inviting the lead Councillor/Officer to introduce and speak on each item as appropriate. Any members who wish to ask a question will need to raise their hand.
  - c. Remain on mute until invited to speak – and then to avoid feedback, re-mute after you have asked your question.
  - d. The Chairman will seek Declarations of Interests in the usual manner. Members with a declaration should indicate this by raising their hand. The Chairman will invite the councillor to unmute and declare their interest. This councillor will, at the relevant item, be removed from the meeting and placed in the virtual waiting room until discussion and voting on that item has completed, after which they will return to the meeting.
2. Voting at the meeting.
  - a. Once a motion/report has been discussed and all questions answered, the Chairman will ask for a proposer and a seconder (if required) – this again should be done by raising your hand – each councillor will then be invited to speak in turn.
  - b. The Chairman will then invite the Councillors to vote, again by raising their hand.
  - c. At the end of the votes the Chairman will read out the conclusion of the votes.
  - d. A record of how each member voted will not be recorded unless a formal recorded vote has been requested in accordance with Standing Orders.
3. At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman will formally close the meeting and all Councillors will need to leave the meeting.



## COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION PROCEDURE

Town councils are permitted to co-opt a qualifying person on to the Council to fill a vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met. To ensure the open and transparent co-option of Councillors the following procedure will be followed.

1. Attleborough Town Council will advertise councillor vacancies on its website and social media. The Mayor of the Council, or Chair of the meeting if the Mayor of the Council is unavailable, will announce vacancies in a Full Town Council meeting.
2. Interested candidates who are eligible to stand as a Councillor are invited to send an email to [enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@attleboroughtc.org.uk) by a specified date of no less than 3 weeks from the announcement. This email should include:
  - a. The reason for them wishing to be a Councillor.
  - b. Previous community, council, educational, work, or vocational experience;
  - c. Other skills they can bring to the Council; and
  - d. Contact information (Please note councillors are required to have a means of contact by telephone and/or email publicly listed, and these emails will form part of a meeting pack prior to the meeting at which a Town Councillor is to be co-opted).
3. At the following Full Town Council meeting (after the deadline noted in point 2) candidates are invited to publicly say something about themselves. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of 5 minutes. Councillors will be given an opportunity to ask the candidates questions before voting takes place. If there are a significant number of candidates, the Town Council may call an Extraordinary Full Council meeting to allow time for this process.
4. The Chair of the meeting will request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. One candidate needs to receive an absolute majority of votes to become a Councillor.
5. The Chair of the meeting will then place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and proceed to vote. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled. Voting will be by a show of hands and will continue until one candidate has received an absolute majority of those Councillors present. At this stage, the successful candidate will be declared co-opted. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. Voting will then take place for the remaining candidates until one person receives an absolute majority.
6. The successful candidate is then declared co-opted to the Town Council and will be asked to join the meeting as a Councillor. The successful candidate is a Councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.