



Councillor Toolkit 2023-2027

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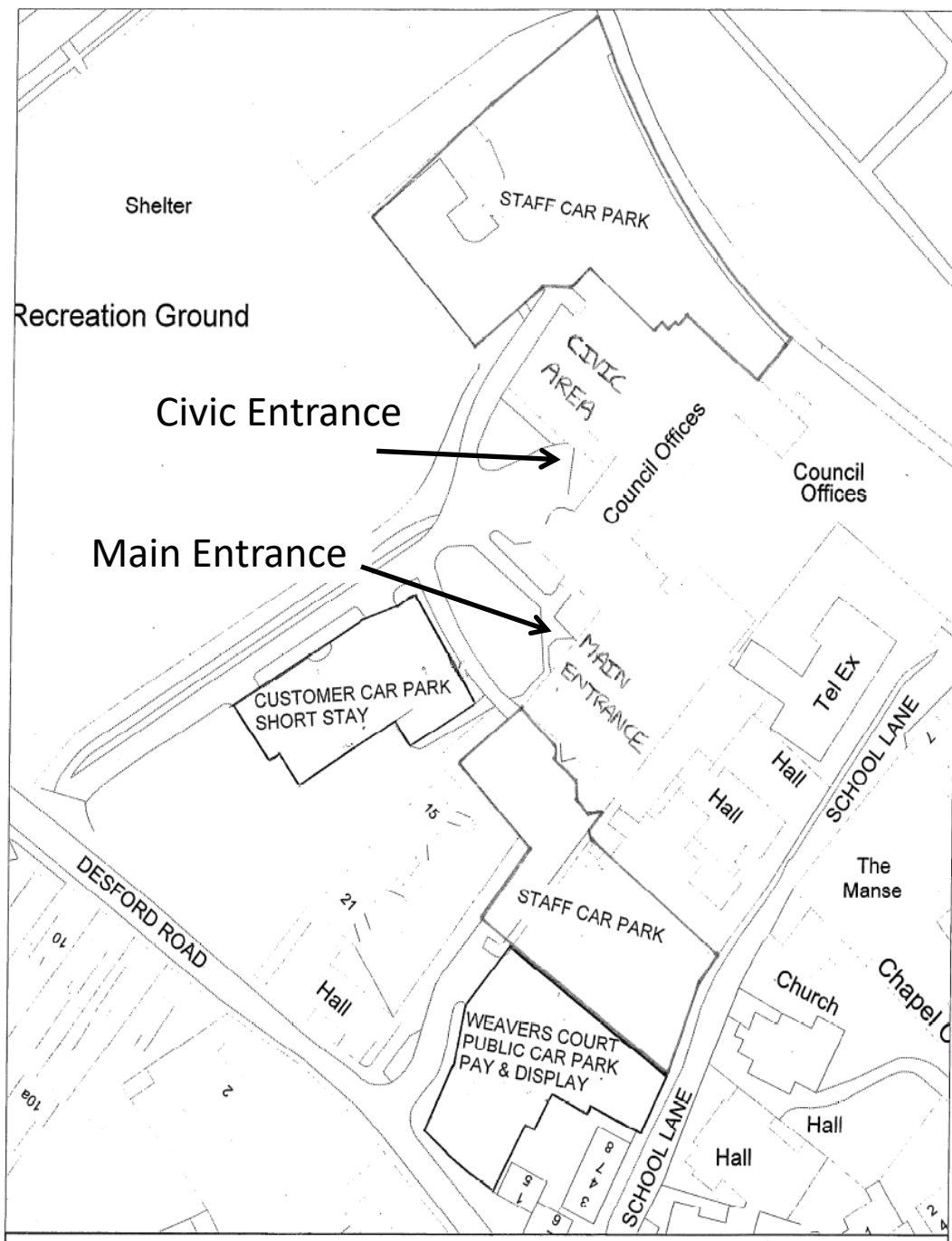
The forms listed below are enclosed separately at the back of the Toolkit. Please return them at the Members Essential Business Day on Wednesday 10th May 2023 at 5.30pm.

- Your Bank/Building Society Details
- Register of Members Interest Form
- HM Revenue & Customs Starter Checklist
- Your Car Details
- Car Parking Permit (for newly elected members)
- Member Details and Equality Monitoring Form
- Skills and Experience Self-assessment Form
- E Summons Consent Form
- Your Committee Preferences

Please envelope to return the forms

Members Parking at the Council Offices in Narborough

Members are issued with a BDC Car Park Permit which must be displayed in your car if you use the Council's Car Park. Members should park in the Staff Car Park or the Visitors Car Park (Displaying your Permit which allows parking for longer than 2 hours). If you are visiting an officer or attending a meeting between 8.45 am and 5.15 pm, please use either the Council Office main entrance and sign in at Reception or use the Civic Area Entrance and sign in. When attending meetings after 5.15 pm, please use the Civic Area entrance.



1. Committee Meetings from May – December 2023

Committee Names	May 23	June 23	July 23	Aug 23	Sept 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23
Council	Annual Council 23	20	25		26		21	
Cabinet Executive		12	03		11		08	
Scrutiny Commission		21	12		20		08	
Planning Committee		01 & 29	27		07	05	02 & 30	
Audit & Corporate Governance Committee			31			10		
Licensing & Regulatory Committee		19			13			
Member Development Steering Group			10			16		11

NOTE: the above meetings are subject to approval at Council on 23 May 2023.

Most meetings start at 5.30pm except for Planning Committee which starts at 4.30pm.

Download meeting dates direct to your Outlook calendar from the Council website:
<https://w3.blaby.gov.uk/decision-making/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>.

Please insert the amended SLT Structure and Contacts Directory here

Sections 2 & 3

4. Member Training

4.1.1 Induction programme for new and returning members

Further dates will be released to successful candidates following the election.

Date: **Wednesday 10th May 2023**

Title: **Essential Business Event**

Time: 5:30pm

Attendance: All Councillors are required to attend this event

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Narborough

- Welcome from the Chief Executive and Executive Directors
- Our Vision and Priorities – *Blaby District Plan*
- Code of Conduct training – Monitoring Officer
- Register of Members' Interest Form

Date: **Tuesday 16th May 2023**

Title: **I.T and Democratic Services Support Session**

Time: 5:30pm

Attendance: New members (returning members can attend if they wish)

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Narborough

- Laptops and equipment provided to new Councillors
- Demonstration of various Apps including Outlook (email) and Modern.Gov (accessing Committee papers)
- iLearn (online training) and how to complete modules
- Council Chamber layout and seating positions
- Allocating new Councillors a 'Buddy'

Date: **Tuesday 23rd May 2023**

Title: **Annual Council and Extraordinary Council Meeting**

Time: Annual Council: 5:30pm followed by Extraordinary Council at 6:30pm

Attendance: All Councillors

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Narborough

At Annual Council, Members will elect the Leader of the Council for a 4 year term and appoint Members to the Cabinet Executive. Other Members will be appointed to the Council's Committees.

A photographer will take individual portrait photos that will be used for the website and for I.D cards.

Following the Extraordinary Council meeting, a photo of the Administration (all 36 Councillors and the Chief Executive) will be taken in the Council Chamber.

Drinks will be available in the Brooks Room.

Date: **Thursday 25 May 2023**

Title: **Planning Committee Training**

Time: 5:30pm

Attendance: All Members are invited, though Members appointed to the Committee and substitute Members must attend.

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Narborough

Dates for the following sessions will be circulated to successful candidates:

- Key Briefing Sessions on Corporate Projects
- Licensing & Regulatory Committee
- Scrutiny
- Audit and Corporate Governance
- Emergency Planning
- Welfare Reform
- Housing, Homelessness and Affordable Homes
- Planning Masterclasses
- Chairing Skills
- Drop-in sessions for I.T related queries

ILEARN

(Online training modules)

iLearn is an e-Learning platform, which provides you with a range of courses which you can access from any computer or device, either at work or at home, when and where you need it. A series of e-learning modules on the following subject areas will be launched and phased throughout the Induction Programme.

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection – mandatory for all to complete
- Introduction to Scrutiny
- Community Leadership
- Bronze Level Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults
- Keeping Safe Online
- Freedom of Information (FOI's)
- Corporate Health & Safety information for Councillors
- Whistleblowing & Fraud

You can access online training module at iLearn through the following link:

<https://blaby.learningpool.com/login/index.php>.

4.1.2 ICT Choices for Members

The Council offers elected Members two ICT solutions to assist you in your role as Community Leaders.

Members are encouraged to sign up to the 'E-Summons' Consent Form (in the forms section) to receive agendas for meetings electronically.

The Council offers Members two options:

Option 1 - Laptop provided by the Council:

We offer Members a standard Dell latitude laptop (Intel Core i5) with a 15-inch screen that is Windows operated. It is also equipped with a web camera and will come with a laptop bag, headset, and a mouse. This device option will be managed by Blaby District Council and will provide you with various Microsoft Applications, including Outlook (email), Microsoft Teams and Modern.gov.

You will be able to have a look at the kit at the IT and Democratic Services Support Session on Tuesday 16th May, where all Members will be provided with a username and instructions on how to set up a password.



Members Email (Office 365)

All Members are provided with an email address to send/receive emails relating to Councillor duties. Members can expect to receive emails from the Democratic Services Team, other Council departments as well as residents/businesses in your ward. Your Councillor Email address is published on the Councillors page on the Blaby District Council website.

All Councillor Email addresses take the following form:

cllr.firstname.surname@blaby.gov.uk

Emails are accessible either through the Outlook App or a web browser.



Modern.Gov App

Access to Council agendas and minutes is available by using the Modern.Gov App on laptops and most other devices. This App allows Members to download agendas and minutes, mark up (annotate) documents at home and bring their devices with their notes saved to use at Council meetings.



Free Wi-Fi

Members that choose to use a laptop provided by the Council will automatically be connected to the Wi-Fi network.

Wi-Fi is available for all other Members at the Council Offices to enable you to access your agendas and documents on your laptops and other devices.



Microsoft SharePoint

As part of the Microsoft 365 package, SharePoint is available for new Members.

SharePoint allows Members and Officers to share and manage content, and quickly access information across devices.

Training on how to navigate SharePoint will be provided by the I.T Support Team and on 16th May 2023.

If you choose to use a laptop provided by the Council, SharePoint will already be downloaded. However, should you choose to use your own device, SharePoint can be installed from the Microsoft Store.

Option 2- Using your own equipment:

We appreciate some members will already have their own tablet/devices and you may prefer to use your own equipment.

We ask that members who wish to use their own equipment make sure that their devices are compatible with accessing Microsoft 365 Office Applications and the Modern.gov app.



Modern.Gov (4+)
Modern Mindset Ltd
★★★★★ 3.2 • 13 Ratings
Free

The app is available on the App store for Apple/Android devices. Please note that iOS 10.0 or later is required to download this application.

4.1.3 Livestreaming and Recording of Public Meetings

Livestreaming Public Meetings:

Members should be aware that all public meetings are livestreamed on the Council's YouTube channel in order to maintain full transparency with our residents. A Democratic Services Officer will always inform Members when a livestream recording begins. Once a meeting is finished the livestream will end and be put onto Private mode on YouTube (making it hidden from the public).

Live meetings can be watched from the following link:

<https://www.blaby.gov.uk/your-council/committee-meetings/watch-live-council-meetings/>

Protocol on audio/visual recording at meetings:

Members should also be conscious that recording at Council meetings is an unequivocal right for members of the public and that the Council has no control over where recorded materials may appear (for example posted on the Internet).

The Council's commitment to transparency is set out in Part 5, Section 12 of the Constitution:

- (a) The Council supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) and micro-blogging to communicate with people about what is happening, either as the meeting is in progress or later. All of these activities are covered by the terms 'record' or 'recording' in this protocol.

In cases where media organisations or members of the public intend to record a meeting, the following protocol applies:

- Media organisations or members of the public intending to record a meeting are requested to advise Democratic Services ahead of the meeting.
- Recording will take place from designated positions in the meeting room approved by the Chairman.
- If the Chair feels the recording is disrupting the meeting in any way the operator of the equipment will be required to stop. Anyone undertaking recording must comply with such requests.
- Members of the public reserve the right not to be filmed, recorded or photographed and can choose to move to an area of the meeting room not covered by the recording equipment.

Media and Public Exclusion:

If a resolution is passed under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the media and public may be excluded from a meeting to enable discussion of confidential business or exempt information. The media and public will be told about the nature of the exclusion relating to the business to be discussed. No recording will be permitted during this exclusion. All cameras, recording devices (including mobile phones) and sound equipment must be removed from the meeting room.

5. Our Council Committees

This section provides Members with an overview of some of our most important committees. Members of the public are welcome to attend all of the below committees.

5.1 Council

Council meets approximately every 8 weeks, usually on a Tuesday evening at 5:30pm. . Major items of policy, such as the setting of the Council's budget and Council Tax levels, are decided by all Councillors at the Full Council meeting.

Full Council Functions:

- adopting and changing the Constitution (except as provided in Article 13 Clause 13.2(a)).
- Approving or adopting the policy framework (including any strategic policy), the budget and any application to the Secretary of State in respect of any Housing Land Transfer.
- Confirming the appointment of the Head of Paid Service

5.2 Cabinet Executive

The Cabinet Executive is at the heart of the day-to-day decision-making process. The Leader of the Council appoints a Cabinet selected from the elected councillors. The Cabinet Executive meets approximately every 8 weeks, usually on a Monday evening at 5:30pm.

The Cabinet Executive makes key decisions which are detailed in the Forward Plan and the Schedule of Executive Decisions.

The Cabinet Executive considers reports from Scrutiny Commission and all policy & budgetary framework documents.

Each Cabinet member is in charge of a portfolio.

The Cabinet Executive and its members have wide ranging leadership roles, including:-

- Leading the preparation of the Council's Policies and Budget
- Taking in-year decisions on resources and priorities and delivering and implementing the budget and policies decided by full Council
- Being the focus for forming partnerships with other public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs
- Monitoring performance

5.3 Scrutiny Commission

Scrutiny Commission meets approximately every 8 weeks, usually on a Wednesday evening at 5:30pm.

Scrutiny Commission assists with the following:

- Assists the Council and the Cabinet Executive in the development of its budget and policy framework
- View and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas
- Make recommendations to the Cabinet Executive arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process or direct to the Council if relating to functions reserved to the Council

Scrutiny Commission is keen to encourage all residents, partner organisations and other stakeholders to request a review of a service, policy, or local issues.

Scrutiny Commission approve an Annual Scrutiny Work Programme which enables dedicated Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups to commence efficiently.

General Role of Scrutiny Commission (according to Article 6 of the Constitution)

Within their terms of reference, the Scrutiny Commission will:

- (a) review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- (b) make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Cabinet Executive and external bodies;
- (c) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
- (d) exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet Executive; and
- (e) receive reports from the Cabinet Executive.
- (f) the Scrutiny Commission is designated as the Council's crime and disorder committee.

5.4 Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups

Scrutiny Task and Finish Group meetings occur as often as required.

These meetings usually take place in the evening at 5:30pm.

The scrutiny work programme provides a structured focus to support the Council's drive for improvement, with most work channelled through task and finish groups. If required separate working groups will be established to look at 'one-off' pieces of work.

Working groups do not have to be politically proportionate and work on a task and finish basis. Any non-executive Member can be on a working group, not only members of the Scrutiny Commission.

Where a member of the public has particular experience of an issue or related skill, they may be invited as a co-opted member to contribute to a review to support its evidence gathering.

5.5 Planning Committee

Planning Committee meets approximately every 4 weeks, usually on a Thursday afternoon at 4:30pm.

A site visit is carried out by Committee Members on the afternoon of the Planning Committee Meeting. Coach Transport is provided.

The role of the Planning Committee is to determine planning applications brought to it under the scheme of delegation. Members consider the applications principally against the policies of the development plan, and take into account any other material planning considerations.

Before serving on the Planning Committee, Members and/or Substitute Members must have undergone training, in both the procedural aspects of the Committee as well as the basic principles of planning, so Members may understand the basis on which decisions need to be made.

5.6 Licensing and Regulatory Committee & Sub Committee

Licensing and Regulatory Committee meets quarterly, usually on a Monday evenings at 5:30pm.

The Licensing and Regulatory Committee deal with All matters relating to the discharge by a licensing authority of its licensing functions under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005 and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

Members of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee may be occasionally required to form the Sub Committee as and when hearings are required.

The Licensing and Regulatory Sub Committee have full delegated powers to consider, to hold a hearing and determine any licensing applications, renewals, suspensions or revocations referred to the Committee by appropriate Officers.

5.7 Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

Audit & Corporate Governance Committee meets quarterly, usually on a Wednesday evening at 5:30pm.

Audit and Corporate Governance Committee oversee the following:

- Consider the Council's Annual Governance Statement and to recommend its adoption to Cabinet Executive.
- Consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- Review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption.

6. Blaby District Council's Constitution

The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that decisions are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the Council to decide.

Top Ten Tips

1. Petitions Scheme - tell members of the public about how they can submit one to Council, or an E-petitions on website.
2. Public Speaking Protocol – tells members of the public how they speak at full Council and Cabinet Executive.
3. Members Questions – ‘how do Members ask a question of the Cabinet Executive or a Chairman at Council?’
4. Motions to Council - what they are, how they are submitted?
5. Recorded Vote – what it is, how do I request one?
6. Any member can submit topics for debate – this shows you how to start a Debate at council on a subject?
7. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) – what does this mean for me?
8. Always consider the Code of Conduct and review your Registration of Interest form.
9. Three non-exec members or one of the Scrutiny Commissioners may call-in a Cabinet Executive decision with written justification of reasons.
10. Cabinet Members, the Head of Paid Service and/or any senior officer are required to attend Scrutiny if requested.

All sections of the Constitution are important and as part as part of your own personal development you should review the document – but we have highlighted below the sections you need to read now.

Below we have set out the contents and the current version is available to download in bite-sized documents from the Blaby website: <https://www.blaby.gov.uk/your-council/how-the-council-works/constitution/>.

Constitution of the Council

Part 1 - Summary and Explanation of the Constitution

- Introduction to the Constitution and how the Council operates.

Part 2 - Articles of the Constitution

- This sets out the basic rules governing the Council's business, and the rights of the citizens.

Part 3 - Responsibility for Functions

- This sets out who is responsible for which decisions, powers of delegation and Committee function.

Part 4 - Rules of Procedure

- Procedures for taking decisions and conducting meetings.

This is important for members to understand as it governs the conduct of meetings.

- Section 1 - Council Procedure Rules - **To be read now**
- Section 2 - Access to Information Procedure Rules
- Section 3 - Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules
- Section 4 - Cabinet Executive Procedure Rules
- Section 5 - Scrutiny Procedure Rules (including Call-in Procedure)
- Section 6 - Officer Employment Procedure Rules

- Section 7 - Appeals Panel Rules
- Section 8 – Planning Committee Procedure Rules
- Section 9 - Election of Chairmen of Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels Procedure Rules

Part 5 - Codes, Dispensations, Protocols, Guidance, Statements

It is essential members understand their responsibilities in this section – as there are criminal (rather than civil) sanctions if Members fail to observe the Code of Conduct.

Part 6 - Members' Allowance Scheme

- Payment for Members depending on their responsibilities

Part 7 - Outside Bodies

- Details of Members appointed to Outside Bodies

Part 8 - Blaby District Council - Vision, Values and Corporate Priorities

- Sets out the vision and ambitions of the Council

Part 9 – Management Structure

- Describes the Management Structure and designation of statutory posts.

Part 10 – Financial Regulations

- Provides the framework for managing the Council's financial affairs. They apply to every Member and Officer of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf.

Part 11 – Contract Regulations

- Sets out the principles, roles and processes involved in procurement at the Council.

6.1.1 Member Code of Conduct

Members will receive Code of Conduct training from the Monitoring Officer on Wednesday 10 May 2023.

A summary of the Code of Conduct has been provided below:

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a member, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow members, Council officers and the reputation of the council and local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all members and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of member and local government.

General principles of member conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels, i.e. all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, members and council officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of member and these principles underpin the obligations in the Code of Conduct that follows.

In accordance with the public trust placed in you, you should:

- act with integrity and honesty
- act lawfully
- treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of member.

In undertaking your role you should:

- impartially exercise your responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- avoid conflicts of interest
- exercise reasonable care and diligence
- ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with your Council's requirements and in the public interest; and
- uphold high standards of conduct, show leadership at all times and not misuse your position when acting as a member

Standards of member conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a member. Should your conduct be perceived to fall short of these standards or the Nolan Principles, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken. Please ensure you read the full version.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a member:

1.1 I will treat others with respect.

1.2 I will treat council officers, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the council with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a member, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in members.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and notify them to the Council, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow members, where action could then be taken under the Member Code of Conduct, and council officers where concerns should be raised in line with the council's member-officer protocol.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a member:

2.1 I will not bully any person.

2.2 I will not harass any person.

2.3 I will promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-

to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Members have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the Council's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the Council

As a member:

3.1 I will not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the council.

Officers work for the council as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a member:

4.1 I will not disclose information:

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
 - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - iv. the disclosure is:**

- 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
- 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Council; and**
- 3. I have consulted the [Monitoring Officer] prior to its release.**

4.2 I will not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a member for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I will not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the council must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a member:

5.1 I will not bring my role or Council into disrepute or conduct myself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing my role or Council into disrepute.

As a Member, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other members and/or the Council and may lower the public's confidence in your or the Council's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring the Council into disrepute.

You are able to hold the Council and fellow members to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a member:

6.1 I will not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

6.2 I will not place myself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence me in the performance of my official duties.

Your position as a member of the Council provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

As a member you need to be able to act impartially in the exercise of your responsibilities and ensure that you make decisions in the interests of the local community. You should therefore avoid any financial or other obligations to outside individuals or organisations whose influence may prevent you from acting impartially.

7. Use of Council resources and facilities

As a member:

7.1 I will not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the Council or authorising their use by others:

- a. act in accordance with the Council's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Council or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Council to assist you in carrying out your duties as a member.

Examples include office support, stationery, equipment such as phones, ipads, dongles computers etc, transport, access and use of council buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a member more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the council's own policies regarding their use.

8. Making decisions

As a member:

8.1 When reaching decisions on any matter I will have regard to any relevant advice provided to me by officers and professional third parties.

8.2 I will give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed.

8.3 I will make all choices, such as making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, on individual and independent merit.

8.4 I will be as open as possible about my decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of the authority and will be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions, notwithstanding my other obligations under this Code.

To assist members in acting lawfully, officers may give advice from time to time. It is important that as a member you have due regard to any such advice given and consider it fully, even if (for good reason) you may choose not to follow that advice.

In making any decisions, giving reasons helps instil public confidence in the role of the member and can be a legal requirement in certain situations. You should ensure that you always give reasons in accordance with any specific requirements and having regard to the benefits of transparency generally.

As a member you must act impartially and not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person. It is therefore important that when you are making decisions that involve choosing one party over another, that you do so based on independent merit. You should be open and transparent about the decisions that you have made and the actions of the authority.

9. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Member:

9.1 I will undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my Council.

9.2 I will cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

9.3 I will not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

9.4 I will comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a member to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the Council or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the council's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Council

10. Interests

As a member:

10.1 I will register and disclose my interests in accordance with the provisions set out in Appendix B

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, Council employees and fellow members know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other members when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as defined in Appendix B, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

The provisions of this paragraph 10.1 shall be applied in such a manner as to recognise that this Code of Conduct should not obstruct a member's service on more than one local authority. For the avoidance of doubt, participation in discussion and decision-making at one local authority will not by itself normally prevent you from taking part in discussion and decision-making on the same matter at another local authority. This is on the basis that a reasonable member of the public will see no objection in principle to such service or regard it as prejudicing a member's judgement of the public interest and will only regard a matter as giving rise to an interest which might lead to bias in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, or from the clerk in the case of town and parish councils.

11. Gifts and hospitality

As a member:

11.1. I will not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the Council or from persons who may apply to the Council for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

11.2. I will register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

11.3. I will register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Council, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case, you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a member, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a member. If you are unsure, do contact the Monitoring Officer or Clerk for guidance.

12. Dispensations

As a member:

- 12.1 I may request a dispensation from the [Monitoring Officer] for one meeting only.**
- 12.2 I must make the request in writing detailing what my interest is, why the dispensation is required and for what meeting.**
- 12.3 I must make my request 5 days prior to the meeting at which the Dispensation is required.**
- 12.4 If I wish to make a further request for dispensation, this must be made to the [Audit and Standards Committee].**
- 12.5 I will only be granted a Dispensation where there are reasonable grounds for doing so and where such grounds are in the public interest.**

Appendix B sets out the situations where a Member's personal interest in a matter may prevent them from participating in the decision-making process. In certain circumstances, however, there may be reasonable grounds to allow a Member to participate in decision-making on that matter where it would be in the public interest to do so. Where you consider that there may be good grounds for you to continue to participate you should request a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

6.1.2 Appendix B - Interests

Form to be completed

- In the plastic envelope at the back of this Toolkit is a blank Register of Interest Form for you to complete. You will need to complete a new form, even if you are a returning member.

1. Definitions

“Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” means any interest described as such in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#) and includes an interest of yourself, or of your Partner (if you are aware of your Partner's interest) that falls within the descriptions set out in the following table. A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is a Registerable Interest.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the member during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	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 — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.

Land and Property	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.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the member's knowledge) — (a) the landlord is the council; and 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.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where — (a) that body (to the member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; 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 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.

* '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.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

"Other Registerable Interest" is a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect:

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

"Registrable Interests" are interests that you are required to register in accordance with this Code of Conduct and include both Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Registerable Interests.

"Non-Registrable Interests" are interests that you are not required to register but need to be disclosed in accordance with section 3.3.

A **"Dispensation"** is agreement that you may continue to participate in the decision-making process notwithstanding your interest as detailed at section 12 of the Code of the Conduct and this Appendix B.

A **"Sensitive Interest"** is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the member, or a person connected with the member, being subject to violence or intimidation. In any case where this Code of Conduct requires to you to disclose an interest (subject to the agreement of the Monitoring Officer in accordance with paragraph 2.2 of this Appendix regarding registration of interests), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, if it is a Sensitive Interest. In such circumstances you just have to disclose that you have an interest.

A matter **"directly relates"** to one of your interests where the matter is directly about that interest. For example, the matter being discussed is an application about a particular property in which you or somebody associated with you has a financial interest.

A matter **"affects"** your interest where the matter is not directly about that interest but would still have clear implications for the interest. For example, the matter concerns a neighbouring property.

2. Registering Interests

- 2.1 Within 28 days of becoming a member or co-opted member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and any Other Registerable Interests.
- 2.2 Where you have a Sensitive Interest, you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a Sensitive Interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.
- 2.3 You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

3. Declaration at and Participation in Meetings

If you are present at a meeting and you have either a Registerable or Non-Registerable Interest in any matter to be considered or being considered, and the interest is not a Sensitive Interest, you must disclose that interest to the meeting (whether or not it is registered).

To determine whether your interest affects your ability to participate in a meeting, you must first determine what type of interest you have and, if necessary, go on to apply the tests as set out below.

3.1 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 3.1.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:
 - a. you must disclose the interest
 - b. not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
 - c. must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

3.2 Other Registerable Interests

- 3.2.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests:
 - a. you must disclose the interest
 - b. may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
 - c. must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

- 3.2.2 The provisions of paragraph 3.1.1 and 3.2.1 shall be applied in such a manner as to recognise that this Code should not obstruct a member's service on more than one local authority. For the avoidance of doubt, participation in discussion and decision making at one local authority will not by itself normally prevent you from taking part in discussion and decision making on the same matter at another local authority. This is on the basis that a reasonable member of the public will see no objection in principle to such service or regard it as prejudicing a member's judgement of the public interest and will only regard a matter as giving rise to a Personal Interest which might lead to bias in exceptional circumstances.

3.3 Non-Registerable Interests

- 3.3.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to a financial interest or the well-being of yourself or of a friend, relative or close associate (and is not a Registerable Interest):

- a. you must disclose the interest
- b. may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
- c. must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

- 3.3.2 Where a matter arises at a meeting which does not directly relate to but **affects**

- a. a financial interest or the well-being of yourself or of a friend, relative or close associate; or
- b. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registerable Interests you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test in paragraphs 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 should be applied.

- 3.3.3 Where a matter under paragraph 3.3.2 **affects** the financial interest or well-being or body:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests or wellbeing 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 but otherwise 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.

3.3.4 Where a matter under paragraph 3.3.2 does not affect the financial interest or well-being or body:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests or wellbeing of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision; and/or
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would not believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest;

you may remain in the room, speak if you wish to and take part in any discussion or vote on the matter, provided you have disclosed your interest under paragraph 3.3.2.

Declaring Interests at Meetings

At most meetings of Council, Democratic Services have a supply of forms so that you can register an interest on any item on the agenda.

Advice is always available

We appreciate this can be confusing for members, so advice is always available from the Monitoring Officer, or any member of the Democratic Services team.

Registerable Interests

These are interests that you are required to register in accordance with the Code of Conduct. They are interests that you would know about in advance of an item coming up (e.g. land you own) and you should have included them when filling in your register of interests.

What type of Registerable Interest do you have in this matter?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

These are any interests that are described as DPIs under the Code of Conduct and include both the interests of yourself and of your partner.

Does the matter directly relate to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Yes

Other Registerable Interests

These are personal interests that relate to certain types of bodies that you may be involved in as set out in the Code of Conduct.

Does the matter directly relate to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests?

No

Does the matter affect a financial interest or the wellbeing of yourself or of a friend, relative or close associate?

Yes

Is the financial interest or wellbeing affected to a greater extent than the financial interests or wellbeing of the majority of inhabitants?

Yes

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

Yes

No

No

No

Yes

You must:

- Disclose the interest;
- Not speak on the matter;
- Not participate in any discussion or vote; and
- Not remain in the room unless you have a Dispensation

You must:

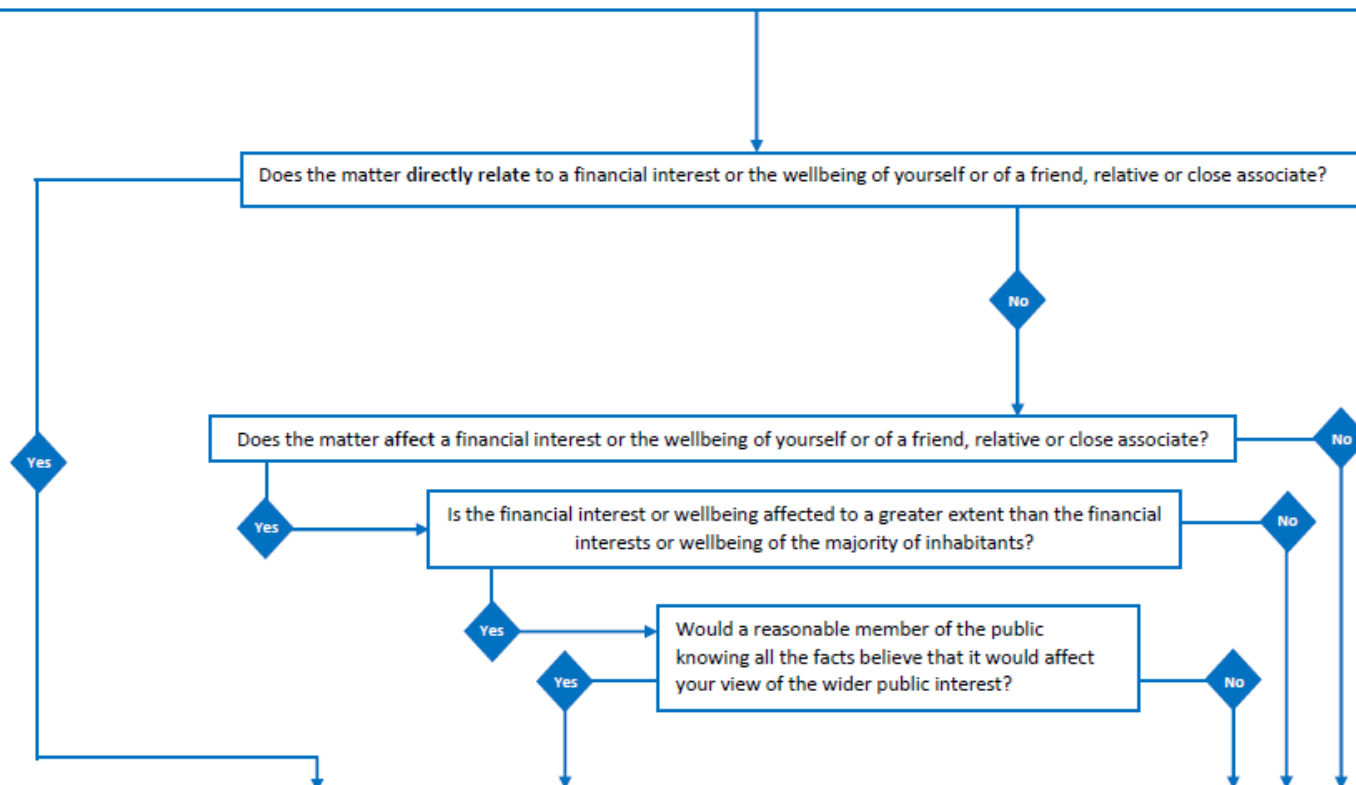
- Disclose the interest;
- Only speak on the matter if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting;
- Not take part in any discussion or vote; and
- Not remain in the room unless you have a Dispensation

You must:

- Disclose the interest
- You may:
- Speak;
 - Participate in any discussion or vote; and
 - Remain in the room

Non-Registerable Interests

These are interests that you are not required to register but may become relevant when a particular item arises. These are usually interests that relate to other people you are connected with (e.g. friends, relatives or close associates) but can include your own interests where you would not have been expected to register them.



You must:

- Disclose the interest;
- Only speak on the matter if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting;
- Not take part in any discussion or vote; and
- Not remain in the room unless you have a Dispensation

You must:

- Disclose the interest

You may:

- Speak;
- Participate in any discussion or vote; and
- Remain in the room

6.1.4 Summary of Members' Allowance Scheme

Blaby District Council provides allowances for Members – in line with the requirements of Local Authorities Regulations.

The allowance scheme comprises:

- Basic allowance – payable to all members
- Special Responsibility allowance – payable to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Leaders of Opposition (minority groups); members of the Cabinet Executive; Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission and Commissioners; Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee; Chair of the Audit Committee; Member Champions. All members of the Planning Committee also receive an allowance for attendance at the site visit and committee meeting.
- Dependents carer's allowance – to cover the cost of care of a member's children or adult dependents if the member is required to attend a committee meeting.
- Travelling and subsistence allowance – covers mileage on Council business and certain meals.

Full details of the Scheme, including entitlement to various allowances can be found in Part 6 of the Constitution.

Review of the allowance Scheme is undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel, which makes recommendations to Council for approval.

Members can if they wish elect to forgo the payment of any allowances.

All claims for payment in response of carer and travelling/subsistence allowance need to be made within three months of the expenses being incurred. Receipts to enable the Council to reclaim VAT must be submitted with travel or subsistence claims.

An Expenses Form is enclosed at the back of this toolkit, and further copies can be requested from the Democratic Services Team. Details of how to access an electronic version of the allowance form as well as submission deadlines will be available in the monthly Members' E-bulletin. Once completed the forms should be submitted (either in paper format) or by email to committees@blaby.gov.uk.

7. Emergency Planning Overview

Elected Members can play a valuable role during and following emergencies, in support of the work of the responding agencies. There are two broad scenarios in which Elected Members can provide particular assistance and these are detailed below.

MAJOR INCIDENT	COMMUNITY RESPONSE
Definition: <i>An event which threatens serious damage to human welfare, damage to the environment, or terrorism activities which threaten security - requiring a multi agency response (emergency services, local authorities, health and others).</i>	Definition: <i>Residents, communities and businesses harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves during an emergency, in a way that complements the work of the responding agencies.</i>
Examples: <i>Fire or industrial accident with the possibility of casualties, the evacuation of homes, schools and businesses, road closures and environmental impact.</i>	Examples: <i>Severe winter storms or floods with prolonged power cuts, school closures and the suspension of support services due to travel disruption.</i>
Response structure: <i>Multi agency collaboration to manage incident site, traffic diversions, etc. and depending on circumstances the treatment of casualties, emergency centres, environmental cleanup, humanitarian assistance and recovery.</i> <i>Strategic & Tactical Coordinating Groups</i>	Response structure: <i>Utility companies, local authorities and health services working to provide continuity of services, prioritising those most at risk, with the support of other partners.</i> <i>Community Response Teams – local people providing local help to those affected.</i>
Elected Members role: <i>Elected Members provide a vital interface with the communities and are well placed to pass information to and from the local people who are affected. They can:</i> <i>• Provide support and encouragement for the efforts of officers of all services involved in the response</i> <i>• Attend at locations set up to deal with the incident as a “familiar face” of the Council</i> <i>• Focus on lifting morale both amongst staff and the affected community</i> <i>• Relay the statements supplied by the Media and Communications team and direct enquiries for information to the official press releases</i> <i>• Provide local knowledge and contacts</i>	Elected Members role: <i>Elected Members are ideally placed to facilitate the formation of Community Response Teams (except where a community has existing plans already in place). This might entail:</i> <i>• Arranging an initial meeting and opening a venue</i> <i>• Encouraging a collective approach to the team’s decisions on how it should proceed</i> <i>• Liaising with the local authority – providing eyes and ears on the ground</i> <i>• Providing advice, reassurance, support and encouragement to community members</i> <i>• Providing valuable local knowledge and contacts</i>

8. Health & Safety

8.1.1 Personal Safety for Councillors

This section comprises a summary of the Personal Safety Guidelines provided by the Local Government Association (LGA)

According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), reporting in March 2020, there is no evidence that Councillors are more at risk than anyone else in a front-facing role. Even so, the current political climate, combined with the controversial decisions that are often made at local level, may mean that Councillors feel more exposed.

With this in mind, we provide the following tips and techniques which centre around the main elements of the role. As you read through, you will be able to reflect on the way you carry out your role and identify any actions you could take which would increase your safety.

Making early choices

An “early choice” is a way of describing a conscious activity or decision made early on, which can help us later if we run into a problem.

Although this can feel like packaged common sense, it is surprising how often this element of personal safety is ignored.

It is not untypical for people who have been involved in an incident to have major regrets about their failure to plan.

Early choices include:

- Deciding to tell a friend or a relative where you are going and an indicator of what time you will be back
- Programming emergency or important numbers into your mobile telephone’s memory
- Checking a route or public transport timetable before setting off.
- Choosing to wear clothes and shoes which allow you to move freely.

Routine

Routine is often described as the enemy of personal safety because habitual behaviours can make us predictable and reliable.

When you can, though, deliberately change your rhythm and routine so that you avoid:

- Leaving or returning home at exactly the same time
- Walking the same routes at the same times
- Parking in the same spot
- Always catching the same bus
- Going to the same coffee shop for coffee at 11.00am every day.

Visiting people in their homes

It should always be your aim to arrange meetings with residents in public places; home visits must be treated as a last resort.

Before automatically agreeing to a home visit:

- Could the meeting be carried out by telephone?
- Or by e-mail – or over Zoom/Teams?
- Is there a public place where you could meet such as a local community centre or a café?
- Could they attend your next surgery?

Some Members will be more flexible about house calls to older or disabled members of the public, or if they are asked to look at a housing or neighbourhood issue.

If you decide that a home visit is essential, make sure that you carry out proper checks before going into anyone's property.

In preparation for a planned meeting, you should carry out some research. This may involve talking to the case Officer, who should provide any relevant background information. They should also make you aware of any previous issues or concerns. You should also check the Electoral Register to confirm identity.

Anyone with a history of poor behaviour should not be visited in their home and should be met in a public place or at your Council's offices. There should also be more than one person present if someone's past conduct is a concern.

Remember also to check the Electoral Register to see if the person who has requested your visit appears at this address. If they are not shown, seek advice from an Officer.

If you are satisfied with your findings, you should also:

- Ask someone to accompany you: this could be an Officer, a fellow Ward councillor or a friend
- Arrange the visit during the working day (if possible)
- Check beforehand who else may be in the property including whether there are dogs on-site. If there are, request that they are put in another room before you arrive
- Make sure that a responsible person knows exactly where you are and has an idea of what time your meeting will finish.

Managing the Meeting

- Avoid meeting in the kitchen unless your visit is to view the room. The kitchen is full of items which could be used as weapons
- During the discussion, if their behaviour deteriorates, or you start to feel uncomfortable, smooth things over and make an excuse to leave. Find sensible a reason, such as referring a decision back to the officer or checking facts.

- In extreme situations, you can agree to anything which enables you to get away safely. Whilst lying is generally a mortal sin, if you are being threatened you must be prepared to promise anything which enables you to leave. This can be unpicked later when you are safe and have consulted with others on how to proceed
- In a heated situation, even if the other party appears to calm down, you have seen a flash of their behaviour. Whilst things are calmer, find a legitimate reason to leave.

Callers to your own home

Whilst some Councillors are happy to see people in their own home, others will avoid home meetings unless the person is well known to them.

In personal safety terms, unannounced visitors should not enter your home unless you have a long-standing relationship with them and trust the person implicitly.

It is now possible for Councillors to use the Council's registered address rather than publishing their own home location.

It is recommended that you never invite unexpected doorstep callers into your home unless they are well-known to you and you trust them.

Ward surgeries

Choose your venue carefully and avoid holding surgeries alone in an otherwise empty building. Some Councillors use busy supermarkets, libraries or shopping centres where there is good footfall. Make sure your room has good access and exits. Check for a strong and reliable mobile telephone signal.

Use of interview rooms

- Be careful about taking someone whose behaviour is uncertain or threatening into a confined space
- Always let somebody else know you are in there
- Sit closest to the door so that you can exit swiftly
- Have a table between you to create a safe space

Personal alarms

It is recommended that you invest in a personal safety alarm. Contrary to popular belief, the purpose of the device is not to alert others but is designed to disorientate an attacker. Their surprise element can buy you valuable escape time.

You can choose from a number of designs:

- Belt clip with quick release cord or push button
- Keyring push button
- Wristwatch type with push button
- Hand-held compressed air cannister

You may find the following websites useful:

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Category/personal-alarms/>

<https://www.wealarms.co.uk/>

<https://www.crimepreventionproducts.co.uk/personal-alarms/>

Canvassing

Many elected Councillors and prospective candidates will canvas before and election – or leaflet all year around.

Before

- Find someone to canvas with you – this could be another councillor or a friend.
- Swap telephone numbers and provide details of anyone you would want contacted in an emergency situation.
- Canvas in daylight, if you can, rather than after dark.

Doorstep conversations

- When you knock, stand back from the doorstep
- Stand slightly tilted so that you are not “squared up” when the person answers the door.
- Use your judgement: if someone looks like they do not want to engage, then do not persist with the conversation. If someone is abusive or aggressive, keep your distance and make your excuses.
- It is always worth having a few pre-planned phrases ready that you can use as part of your extraction strategy.
- It would be a good idea to let your colleagues know about any households you chose to avoid so that they can make sure they do not visit either.

8.1.2 Corporate Health & Safety Information for Councillors

BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Issue Date 6th February 2023

Information for Councillors

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION FOR COUNCILLORS

The Health and Safety at Work Act, together with the Management of Health and Safety Regulations, imposes duties on all employers in respect of Health and Safety at Work. These duties extend both to Council employees and also all other persons who may be affected by the Council's work.

STAFF AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policies rests with the Chief Executive.

Day to day responsibility for the implementation of health and safety is devolved to the Corporate Health & Safety Adviser.

The Council employs a competent person to provide day to day advice and guidance to all managers, members of staff and Councillors. This post is designed to ensure the Council is able to meet its obligations to staff and the public within the district. The Corporate Health and Safety Adviser is Roy Fellows, who is based at the Council offices.

Corporate Health and Safety is positioned within the Leader's portfolio.

Group Managers are responsible for ensuring the operational safety of their teams.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly. Membership is made up of management elected Safety Supervisors and Trade Union elected Safety Representatives. The Committee chairman is Sarah Pennelli. The main purpose is to promote co-operation between management and employees, but the Committee also investigates accident trends, gives decisions on procedures and safety rules, comments on new policies and resolves outstanding issues. Minutes are widely published including being reviewed by the Joint Consultative Committee.

The Corporate Health and Safety Adviser is a member of the Joint Consultative Committee.

RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION

The Council maintains high level corporate policies and procedures which are published on iBlaby - the Council's intranet site. The policies and procedures reflect legal requirements and UK best practice. All policies are adopted by Council and the procedures give information to departments on how to comply with the policy requirements.

At departmental level, managers maintain a local Health and Safety Quality Management System. Referred to as the corporate 'Health and Safety Blueprint', these are working documents that ensure managers' local procedures and documentation is complete. The Corporate Health and Safety Adviser audits these systems at appropriate intervals, working with the managers to recommend corrective action and enhancement as

necessary. The Blueprints are supported by local risk assessments and safe methods of operation for the work conducted.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR COUNCILLORS

Be aware of the need to maintain your own health and safety whilst undertaking civic duties.

Familiarise yourself with any emergency procedures that are applicable for the venue that you are at. When undertaking civic functions you will be operating under the safety procedures for that particular venue.

Any accidents or incidents should be reported to the venue host. If you have an accident on Council premises details must be reported on the Council Accident form which a member of staff will be able to supply you with. The form is available on iBlaby.

Members of staff are first aid trained so there is cover at Council meetings. We also have a public access Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) outside the Council offices Civic Entrance.

If working alone in relation to your duties as a Councillor, make sure somebody dependable knows where you are and what time you are expected to return, so action can be taken if a problem occurs. The person must be made aware that it is important that they call the Police directly if there is any suspicion regarding your well-being. If there are times that no dependable person is available to assist in this manner, please refer to the Democratic Services Manager who will arrange an alternative.

Always sign in and out when visiting Council property. If working late at the Council offices always ensure the caretaker or security guard knows you are in the building. This requirement is part of the Council fire precautions and for lone worker safety.

The Council maintains a list of 'problem customers' – officially known as the 'Tread Carefully List' – who we need to take care with. Democratic Services will supply you with the list of such persons known to ourselves within your Ward. This information is updated regularly and will only be forwarded to you should there be any such person(s) that you need to be aware of.

The internal corporate health and safety policies and procedures, including emergency evacuation procedures for the Council offices, are published on iBlaby with a direct link from the left-hand side of the home page.

The Corporate Health and Safety Adviser is available for advice and guidance on any matter regarding safety should you wish to discuss anything with him.

9. Useful Sources of Information

Websites for neighbouring authorities www.leicestershire.gov.uk Leicestershire County Council www.leicester.gov.uk Leicester City Council www.charnwood.gov.uk Charnwood Borough Council www.harborough.gov.uk Harborough District Council www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council www.melton.gov.uk Melton Borough Council www.nwleics.gov.uk North West Leicestershire District Council www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk Oadby & Wigston Borough Council www.rutland.gov.uk Rutland County Council	Local Government Association www.local.gov.uk Blaby is a member of the Local Government Association (LGA). The LGA is the national voice of local government. It works with councils to support, promote and improve local government. It is a politically-led, cross-party organisation that works on behalf of councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice with national government. It aims to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils, so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems. Its website provides a wealth of information for Members, including workbooks on a range of useful subject to boost Members knowledge. (Democratic Services has a full set of workbooks – for you to borrow). As a Member you are entitled to sign up and receive daily news digests.
Leicestershire Public Sector Bodies www.leics.police.uk Leicestershire Constabulary www.leics-pa.police.uk Leicestershire Police Authority https://leics-fire.gov.uk/ Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/ Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	Parish & Town Council Support www.leicestershireparishcouncils.org/blaby Access to the individual websites of the 19 local councils and 5 Parish Meetings areas in the Blaby District. www.leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk Website of the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils. This association provides advice and support to parishes.

East Midlands Council
www.emcouncils.gov.uk

East Midlands Council is a consultative forum for local government in the East Midlands. Its role and purpose is to:

- represent the interest of local councils to national government and other organisations
- enable local councils to work together on key issues of common concern
- support the improvement and development of local councils and their workforce
- bring together political group leaders
- make appointments to national and regional bodies
- provide a reporting and governance mechanism for regional local government partnerships e.g. East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership
- establish and maintain an effective relationship with the national Local Government Association (LGA)
- provide a range of training and briefing opportunities for councillors – **but these must be booked through Democratic Services.**

Central Government Websites

www.parliament.uk

Provides access to all Bills being considered by Parliament, information on the current work of Select Committees and records of Hansard.

www.legislation.gov.uk

Provides access to copies of Acts of Parliament passed since the 13th Century and Statutory Instruments released since 1972.

www.direct.gov.uk

Provides advice and information on services provided by central and local government.

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience

UK Resilience provides links to government and nongovernment sources on a wide variety of emergencies and crises that can affect the UK, plus emergency planning guidance and government information.

Other Useful Sources of Information

<http://www.cfqs.org.uk/>

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny is a registered charity (part funded by the LGA) to promote public scrutiny, accountability, transparency and involvement for the public benefit, through:

- advancing education in the principles and practice of public scrutiny and accountability, maintaining a national centre of expertise and promoting national debate and networks;
- promoting the development of, and improving the practice of, public scrutiny and accountability within government and public services, including promoting standards of professional practice.

www.lginform.local.gov.uk

LG Inform is the local area benchmarking tool from the Local Government Association

To be inserted