**CODE OF CONDUCT updated December 2021**

**NEWCASTLETON & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

1. **GENERAL**
   1. Members are expected to always show the highest standards of personal conduct in the performance of their duties.
   2. Their duty is to the whole community residing within the catchments of Newcastleton & District Community Council.
   3. This Code should be used to guide their conduct, it is their responsibility to make sure that they are familiar with this Code and that their conduct meets it.
   4. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership and example, always acting in such a way as to protect public confidence in the aims of the group
2. **SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**
   1. Members have a duty to act in the interests of the local community which they represent.
   2. Have a duty to establish and reflect the views of the community as a whole, irrespective of personal opinion.
   3. They should make sure that they are, within reason, accessible to their local community.
   4. Various mechanisms should be used to allow the general community to express their views; internet, social media, suggestion boxes, community surveys and opinion polls should, where possible, be made available and these should be respected in the decisions of the group.
3. **DUTY TO UPHOLD THE LAW**
   1. The group must uphold the law and act on all occasions in line with the public trust placed in them.
   2. The group has a responsibility to play their part in ensuring that it uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.
4. **COMMUNITY INTEREST**

Members should act to assist the Community Trust, Newcastleton Resilience Group and the Newcastleton Volunteer Flood Group as well as other community interest groups as far as possible, in the interests of the whole community that it and the other groups serve.

1. **SELFLESSNESS**

Members should act only in the public interest. They should never use their position to gain for themselves, their family or friends, any financial benefits, preferential treatment or other advantage, or to grant such benefits, treatment or advantage improperly to others.

1. **INTEGRITY AND PROPRIETY**

Members should not put themselves in a position where their integrity is called into question by any financial or other obligations. As well as avoiding actual impropriety they should avoid any appearance of it.

1. **DECISIONS**

Whilst members may be influenced by the views of others, including particular interest groups, it is their responsibility to decide what view to take, and how to vote, on any question which they have been empowered to decide.

1. **ACCOUNTABILITY AND STEWARDSHIP**
   1. Members are accountable through the community they serve for their actions and their part in reaching decisions and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
   2. Members should individually and collectively make sure that annual accounts are produced showing the financial undertakings of the group. They must also make sure that all resources are used efficiently, effectively, and fairly.
2. **OPENNESS**
   1. Members should be as open as possible about all their actions and their part in reaching decisions. They should seek to ensure that reasons are given for decisions of the group.
   2. When dealing with the media, members of the public, or others not directly involved in the group, members should make sure that that an explicit distinction is made between the expression of their personal views and opinions from any views or statement made about or on behalf of the group.
3. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Members should ensure that confidential material, including material about individuals, is handled appropriately regarding the public interests and is not used for private purposes.

1. **DECLARATIONS**
   1. Members must declare any private interests relating to their duties and should take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest. They should make relevant declarations of interest at meetings of the group, Sub-Committees or Working Groups to which they are appointed, and in all circumstances where they are active in their role as a member.
   2. If members have a private interest in a matter before their group, they should consider whether it is appropriate for them to declare this interest and withdraw from discussion and decision making on that matter. In considering this they should have regard to the following criteria:-
      1. That members of the public might reasonably think the private interest could influence them; and
      2. That members of the public might reasonably think the private interest creates a real danger of bias on the part of the member because it affects them or someone connected with them, more than any other person or more than the generality of other persons affected by the matter.
   3. In the case of a private interest that meets neither of these criteria, there may be no reason to declare the interest or to take any further action.
2. **RESPECT**

Members must respect fellow members and those they represent, treating them with courtesy, respect and in a non-discriminatory manner always.

1. **POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS**
   1. Whilst members are free to have political affiliations, the group itself is not a political body but exists to represent the interests of the whole community.
   2. Therefore, in participating in the business of the group, the concern of Members must be to represent the interests of their community and not those of a particular political party or group.
2. **PERSONAL CONDUCT**

Members personal conduct should be such as not to bring the group into disrepute. They should act courteously to fellow members, respective community groups, Scottish Borders Council Elected Members and Officers, members of the public and other bodies.

*adopted as policy by all members of the Newcastleton & District Community Council Dec 2021*