

# **Conflicts of Interest Policy for The Kimble Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (WG)**

This policy applies to all members of the WG.

## **Why we have a policy**

Members have an obligation to act in the best interest of the WG in order to avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest.

As parish residents, at the extreme, each member has a conflict of interest regarding the location of the new housing. The aim of the policy is to deal practically and proportionately with such conflicts.

It is assumed that if you own land or directly adjoin land to be used for development, the conflict is likely to be at its most significant, but that significance will diminish as proximity diminishes.

The policy acknowledges there will be conflicts of interest, but these need to be managed transparently for the benefit of the parish and other WG members.

Our approach is set out below.

Conflicts of interest arise where a member's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the WG. Such conflicts can:

- inhibit free discussion
- result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of the WG
- risk the impression that the WG has acted improperly
- risk challenge from the parish.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the WG and members from any appearance of impropriety.

## **The declaration of interests log**

Accordingly, members are asked to declare their interests. A declaration of interests log is maintained for this purpose.

To be effective, the declaration of interests log needs to be updated, as required, at each WG meeting and when any material changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the WG Chair for guidance.

## **Gifts and Hospitality**

The acceptance of any gifts or hospitality offered to members in connection with the business of the WG is prohibited.

## **Data protection**

**Information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles** set out in The Data Protection Act 2018 and will not be used for any other purpose.

## **What to do if you face a potential conflict of interest**

If you believe you have a conflict of interest you should:

- declare the interest at the earliest opportunity
- withdraw from discussions (unless invited by the WG to remain in order to provide information) and decisions relating to it.

If you fail to declare an interest that is known to the WG secretary and/or the WG Chair, the WG secretary or WG Chair will declare that interest.

## **Decisions taken where a member has an interest**

In the event of the WG having to decide upon a question in which a member has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote (the member concerned not voting) with a simple majority.

All conflict of interest decisions will be recorded by the WG secretary and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes will record:

- the nature and extent of the conflict
- an outline of the discussion
- any action required to be taken to manage the conflict.

## **Comment on Planning Applications made outside of The Kimble Neighbourhood Plan**

Except where a member is also a member of the Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh Parish Council (Council), in which case comment can be made in confidence to the Council, no member, while they are a member of the WG, shall comment on any planning application which relates to a Stage 1 site being considered by the WG.