



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
LOCAL PENSION BOARD**

CODE OF CONDUCT

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1 Policy summary

- 1.1 This document sets out the standards of conduct for members of the Local Pension Board (LPB) attached to Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Authority ('the Authority').
- 1.2 As required by law, the LPB assists the pension Scheme Manager (the Authority) in the governance and administration of the pension scheme by ensuring compliance with Scheme Regulations, legislation and other regulatory requirements.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The public is entitled to expect conduct of the highest standard and have confidence in employee integrity. It is important to remember that LPB members' actions are subject to public scrutiny and so must be transparent in nature at all times.
- 2.2 This Code has been drawn up to provide LPB members with guidance on how they will be expected to conduct themselves when carrying out duties and responsibilities associated with their role. The Code has also been designed to take account of other relevant Codes of Practice.
- 2.3 As it is not practicable to establish requirements which apply to all situations and circumstances, the Code should be considered as covering only the basic principles to be followed.
- 2.4 This Code does not replace the need to abide by any relevant ethical standards expected by a LPB member's professional body.
- 2.5 Where individuals do not follow the guidance set out in this Code, this may be investigated by the Authority and appropriate action taken. This may include disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal) against Authority employees.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This Code applies to those individuals appointed as members of the LPB attached to the Authority.
- 3.2 This Code also applies when LPB members are attending events related to the functioning of the LPB or where the LPB member is deemed to be representing the Authority.

4 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service values

- 4.1 We support the development of an ethical culture which will give the public confidence in our integrity, openness and accountability; both in the delivery of our services and as an employer.
- 4.2 The Service has adopted the principles of One Team Behaviours. This concept is captured by the model expressing the virtues we aspire to demonstrate. These are:
- Trust – We talk straight, we do what we say we will, we genuinely listen to others;
 - Respect – We praise and give credit to others, we help others to succeed, we value all people equally;
 - Results – We try to improve things, we seek feedback;
 - Commitment – We get the job done but not at others expense, we show loyalty to the service, we support the decisions taken;
 - Honesty – We admit if we are wrong, we challenge inappropriate behaviour, we are open and honest.
- 4.3 LPB members must follow and uphold the core values and expected standards of behaviour of the Service in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

5 Principles for standards of conduct

- 5.1 LPB members must maintain an understanding and abide by the principles set out by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life. These are:
- Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest;
 - Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships;
 - Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias;
 - Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this;

- Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing;
- Honesty - Holders of public office should be truthful;
- Leadership - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

5.2.1 The Authority is committed to maintaining an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, where the talents and skills of different groups are valued and where productivity and customer service improves because of a motivated and aware workforce.

5.2.2 LPB members are expected to treat others with dignity and respect and have a responsibility to report inappropriate behaviour as well as comply with the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination and harassment is unlawful, the Authority will not tolerate sexual, physical or mental harassment towards any Authority employee or LPB member and will take action against any instigator if this occurs. Please see the Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure (Service Order V18 01) for full details.

5.3 To ensure open communications in order to support the observance of ethical standards, good working practices and to prevent unprofessional behaviour, the Authority has a Protected Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy and Procedure (Service Order V10 06/07). LPB members are expected to bring any concerns to the attention of management either informally or through this procedure.

5.4 Due to the nature of public scrutiny and the ethical standards required, the Authority expects LPB members to act in a reasonable and responsible manner so that their actions do not bring into disrepute or damage the reputation of the Authority. This applies whether undertaking duties or otherwise.

5.5 LPB members must not use their position improperly to confer on or secure for themselves or any other person an advantage or disadvantage.

6 Inappropriate conduct and relationships between LPB members and Authority employees

6.1 Mutual respect between Authority employees and LPB Members is essential for the operation of the LPB. There must be no inappropriate criticism or intimidating or threatening behaviour of any kind.

6.2 Working relationships should be kept on a professional basis. Close familiarity can damage professional relationships and could be prejudicial to the interests of the LPB and Authority and must be avoided.

7 Health and safety

- 7.1 The Authority has a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees. LPB members have a duty to take care of themselves and others affected by their actions and co-operate with the Authority to enable its actions, policies and guidance in these matters. Please see Employee Handbook (DMS #157377) for full details.

8 Dealings with the press and social media

- 8.1 LPB members must not speak to the press on behalf of the LPB or Authority unless expressly authorised by a member of the Director Advisory Board (DAB).
- 8.2 If it is essential to speak to the press and no member of the DAB is available, the Head of Media and Communication should be consulted. If authorised to talk to the press, the LPB member should stress that any views are their own and not that of the Authority.
- 8.3 The Authority should not be used to endorse any services, products or ideas.
- 8.4 Written materials must be approved by the Head of Media and Communication or DAB before publication.
- 8.5 The guidance relating to the press also applies to social media (including official Authority accounts) please see Social Media Policy (DMS #301594) for full details.

9 Care of Authority property

- 9.1 LPB members are expected to take reasonable care to prevent loss or damage to Authority equipment, documents and premises at all times. LPB members are responsible for their own property and the Authority cannot accept liability for any loss or damage to it.
- 9.2 Authority property should not be removed from site without the permission from the Chair of the LPB.
- 9.3 If Authority computing equipment is used to fulfil LPB duties then this must be used in accordance with the Information Security Policy (DMS #254182) and Internet Policy (DMS #392835), which should be read before use.

10 Financial probity

- 10.1 LPB members must ensure public funds and pension funds entrusted to them are used in an efficient, responsible and lawful manner in accordance with the Authority's regulations and national legislation.
- 10.2 The Authority's property, vehicles and other resources must not be used for personal use unless authorised to do so.

11 Other paid and unpaid employment

- 11.1 LPB members must not undertake any other paid or unpaid work which due to its nature could conflict or interfere with the performance of their duties on the or in any way weaken public confidence in LPB.
- 11.2 Authority employees must abide by the Secondary Employment Policy and Procedure.
- 11.3 LPB members must comply with the LPB's Conflicts of Interest Policy (DMS #454635).

12 Political neutrality and membership of organisations

- 12.1 All LPB members (whether or not their role is politically restricted by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) must follow all Authority policies and not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their duties.
- 12.2 Authority employees holding a role that is politically restricted under Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are not able to participate in the following activities (further details are available from the Human Resources Section):
 - Candidature for public elected office (other than in a parish or community council);
 - Acting as an election agent or sub agent;
 - Holding office in a political part;
 - Canvassing at elections;
 - Speaking or writing publicly (other than in an official capacity) on matters of party political controversy.
- 12.3 LPB members' behaviour whilst under the scope of this code must not conflict with the Authority's Equality and Inclusion Policy (DMS #182843). Membership of an extremist party or organisation that contravenes with this policy may result in disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal) against Authority employees.
- 12.4 In order to ensure transparency, LPB members who are members of organisations that are not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and that have secrecy about rules of membership or conduct should declare this membership to the Chair of the LPB or to the Authority.
- 12.5 Authority employees must not advise any political group of the Authority without the prior consent of the Chief Fire Officer. Personal political activities must not in any way bring the Authority or LPB into disrepute.

13 Compliance with Authority policies and procedures

- 13.1 All LPB members must comply with Authority policies and procedures (including Service Orders) whilst under the scope of this Code. Failure to do so is a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal) against Authority employees.

14 Intellectual property

- 14.1 If as a result of LPB duties, an LPB member invents or designs anything that has some connection to their work, details of the invention or design must not be disclosed to anybody until the LPB member has reported the matter to the Authority and the disclosure has been authorised. The right to register the design or patent the invention may be lost and premature disclosure and the interests of both the LPB member and Authority damaged as a result.

15 Confidentiality

- 15.1 LPB members must read the Data Protection Policy (DMS #335019) prior to conducting LPB duties to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 15.2 Confidentiality of information provided to LPB members during their duties must be maintained at all times. Information should only be disclosed on a 'need to know' basis and in line with the Data Protection Policy.
- 15.3 LPB members have an obligation to respect the confidentiality of information about the Authority's affairs acquired in the course of their work, and must not use such information for personal or a third party's advantage.

16 Decision-making

- 16.1 When reaching decisions on any matter, LPB members should have regard to any relevant advice provided to them by relevant Authority employees.
- 16.2 Reasons must be given for all decisions in accordance with legislation and any reasonable requirements imposed by the Authority.
- 16.3 All decisions made must be on merit, must be impartial and seen to be impartial.

17 Hospitality, gifts and bribery

- 17.1 In undertaking their duties, LPB members may be offered gifts or hospitality from persons or organisations having, or proposing to have, a contractual or client relationship with the LPB or Authority. Such offers could be made to gain an advantage over another person or organisation, or could be construed as such, and therefore must be declined unless the value of gift/hospitality does not exceed the sum of ten pounds (£10).

- 17.2 If employees receive a gift of any description, this must be made known to the Chair of the LPB and recorded as detailed below. Likewise, only hospitality given prior approval by the Authority should be accepted from outside persons or organisations and recorded.
- 17.3 In any event, any gifts or hospitality agreed and accepted must be recorded in writing in the Register of Hospitality and Gifts held by the Principal Officers' Secretary, which is available for public inspection.
- 17.4 For these purposes, food and beverages offered during the course of a normal meeting are not considered to be hospitality.
- 17.5 It is a criminal offence to accept money or any other bribe as a reward for doing or not doing something, or showing favour or disfavour to any person or organisation. LPB members should refer to the Acceptance of Hospitality and Gifts Policy (DMS #11542) for full details.