

# Code of Conduct for Members

## 1. Introduction

There are references throughout this Code of Conduct (the Code) to 'you' and 'your' which means the member of Hawick Common Riding Committee who has signed acceptance of this Code. References to 'we', 'us' and 'our' mean the Hawick Common Riding Committee (hereinafter referred to as HCRC).

- 1.1 We attach the greatest importance to ensuring that high standards of governance and ethical behaviour are demonstrated by all of our members and in all of our activities.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct sets out the requirements and expectations which are attached to your role as a member of HCRC. You have a personal responsibility to uphold the requirements of this Code. To confirm that you understand its requirements and accept its terms, you must review and sign acceptance of this Code immediately upon becoming a member of HCRC and annually thereafter. You cannot be a member of HCRC if you do not agree to adopt and sign acceptance of this Code of Conduct.
- 1.3 We recognise the need to adopt and comply with an appropriate Code of Conduct as part of good governance. This Code is based on our Code of Governance in relation to the Behaviour principle.
- 1.4 This Code of Conduct is an important part of our governance arrangements. Members of HCRC are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the terms of this Code and that they always act in accordance with its requirements and expectations. You must also ensure you are familiar with any other documentation which complement this Code.
- 1.5 If a member of HCRC appears to have breached any part of this Code, the matter will be investigated in accordance with the procedures set out at Appendix 1 attached hereto. A breach of this Code may result in action being taken by HCRC to remove the member(s) involved.

## 2. Who the Code applies to

- 2.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all elected, appointed and co-opted members of HCRC and any of its sub-committees.

## 3. How the Code is structured

- 3.1 The Code is based on the seven principles which are recognised as providing a framework for good behaviour. They demonstrate honesty, integrity and probity.

Each principle is described, as it applies to the activities of a Committee and its Members, and supporting guidance is offered for each to provide more explanation of the Code's requirements. The guidance is not exhaustive and it should be remembered that Members are responsible for ensuring that their conduct at all times meets the high standards that HCRC is recognised for upholding.

#### 4. The Code of Conduct Principles:

4.1 The seven principles and what they mean for the purposes of this Code are:

- A. **Selflessness**
- B. **Openness**
- C. **Honesty**
- D. **Objectivity**
- E. **Integrity**
- F. **Accountability**
- G. **Leadership**

**A. Selflessness:** You must act in the best interests of HCRC at all times and must take decisions that support and promote our aims and objectives. Members should not promote the interests of a particular group or body of opinion to the exclusion of others.

A.1 You must always uphold and promote our aims, objectives and values and act to ensure their successful achievement.

A.2 You should exercise the authority that comes with your role as a member responsibly and not seek to use your influence inappropriately or for personal gain or advantage.

A.3 You must accept responsibility for all decisions properly reached by the HCRC (or a sub-committee or working group with appropriately delegated responsibility) and support them at all times, even if you did not agree with the decision when it was made.

A.4 You should not criticise in public a decision that has been properly reached by HCRC, even if you did not agree with such decision. If you are unable to refrain from criticism, you should resign.

A.5 You must consider the views of others and be tolerant of differences.

A.6 You must not seek to use your influence for the benefit of yourself or any business interests or the benefit of someone to whom you are closely connected or their business interests.

A.7 Mobile phones should be switched off during meetings. Recording of meetings is prohibited, unless explicit permission is granted, e.g. s is for Secretariat for the purposes of minutes etc.

**B. Openness:** You must be transparent in all of your actions; you must declare and record all relevant personal and business interests and must be able to explain your actions.

B.1 You should exercise reasonable skill and care in the conduct of your duties.

B.2 You should avoid any situation that could give rise to suspicion or suggest improper conduct.

B.3 You must declare any personal interest(s) and manage openly and appropriately any conflicts of interest.

B.4 You must not accept any offers of gifts or hospitality from individuals or organisations which might reasonably create, or be capable of creating, an impression of impropriety, influence, or place you under an obligation to these individuals or organisations.

B.5 You should ensure that you are informed about the views, needs and demands of service users and that your decisions are informed by this understanding.

B.6 You must ensure that HCRC is open about the way in which it conducts its affairs and positive about how it responds to any requests for information.

**C. Honesty:** You must ensure that you always act in the best interests of HCRC and that all activities are transparent and accountable.

C.1 You should always act in good faith when undertaking your responsibilities as a Member of HCRC.

C.2 You should use your skills, knowledge and judgement effectively to support our activities.

C.3 You should ensure that decisions are always taken and recorded in accordance with our Constitution and practices and procedures.

C.4 We must ensure that HCRC has effective procedures to enable, encourage and support any of its members or members of the public to report any concerns they have about possible wrongdoing.

C.5 You must report any concerns or suspicions about any wrongdoing to the Chair of the Executive Committee of HCRC via the Secretariat

C.6 You must not misuse, or contribute to or condone the misuse of our resources and must comply with our practices and procedures regarding the use of funds and resources.

C.7 We forbid all forms of bribery, meaning a financial or other advantage or inducement intended to persuade someone to perform improperly any function or activity. You are not allowed to accept or give bribes from/to anyone. You are also obliged to report any instances of suspected bribery within HCRC or any of its business partners.

C.8 You or someone closely connected to you, cannot as a result of your role with us receive preferential treatment relating to any services provided by HCRC or its contractors/suppliers, and you should be able to demonstrate this.

**D. Objectivity:** You must consider all matters on their merits; you must base your decisions on the information and advice available and reach your decision independently.

D.1 You must ensure that the decisions that you take are consistent with our aims and objectives and with any relevant legal requirements (including those of OSCR).

D.2 You must prepare effectively for meetings and ensure you have access to all necessary information to enable you to make well-informed decisions.

D.3 We must monitor performance carefully to ensure that the Committee's purpose and objectives are achieved, and take timely and effective action to identify and address any weaknesses or failures.

D.4 You should use your skills, knowledge and experience to review information critically and always take decisions in the best interests of HCRC, our townspeople and our service users.

D.5 You should ensure that HCRC seeks and takes account of additional information and external/independent advice where necessary and/or appropriate.

D.6 You should ensure that effective practices and procedures are implemented so that all decisions are based on an adequate assessment of risk, deliver value for money, and ensure the financial well-being of HCRC.

**E. Integrity:** You must actively support and promote our aims, objectives and values; you must not be influenced by personal interest in exercising your role and responsibilities.

E.1 You must always treat your Committee colleagues and their opinions with respect.

E.2 You must always conduct yourself in a courteous and professional manner; you must not, by your actions or behaviour, cause distress, alarm or offence.

E.3 You must declare any personal interests and in the event that you have a continuing personal interest which conflicts with our activities, values, aims or objectives, you should resign.

E.4 You must ensure that you fulfil your responsibilities, that you maintain relationships that are professional, constructive and that do not conflict with your role as a member of HCRC.

E.5 You must respect confidentiality and ensure that you do not disclose information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it, both whilst you are a member of HCRC and after you have left.

E.6 You must not seek or accept benefits, gifts, hospitality or inducements in connection with your role as a member of HCRC, or anything that could reasonably be regarded as likely to influence your judgement. You must not benefit, or be perceived to benefit, inappropriately from your involvement with HCRC.

**F. Accountability:** You must take responsibility for and be able to explain your actions, and demonstrate that your contribution to our governance is effective

F.1 You must observe and uphold the principles and requirements of our Code of Governance.

F.2 You should contribute positively to our activities by regularly attending and participating constructively in meetings of HCRC, and any of its sub-committees or working groups.

F.3 You should always be courteous and polite and behave appropriately when acting on our behalf.

F.4 You must not speak or comment in public on our behalf without specific authority to do so.

F.5 You must co-operate with any investigations or inquiries instructed in connection with this Code.

F.8 You recognise that HCRC as a whole is accountable to its townspeople and service users, and you reflect this in your actions as a Committee Member and comply with this Code.

**G. Leadership:** You must uphold our principles and commitment to delivering good outcomes for our townspeople and other service users, and lead by example.

G.1 You must ensure that our aims, objectives and activities deliver good outcomes for our townspeople and service users and ensure that you make an effective contribution towards this.

G.2 You must ensure that our aims and objectives reflect and are informed by the views of our townspeople and service users.

G.3 You must always be a positive ambassador for HCRC.

G.4 You must not criticise HCRC or our actions or decisions in public.

G.5 You must not criticise other members in public; any such matters should be discussed privately with the Executive Committee.

G.6 You must not use social media to criticise or make inappropriate comments about HCRC or any member of HCRC or its actions or the actions of any member.

G.7 You must not act in a way that could jeopardise our reputation or bring us into disrepute.

## **5. Declaring and Managing Personal Interests**

5.1 Where you have a personal, business or financial interest in any matter that is relevant to our discussions or activities being considered (or likely to be considered), you must declare it.

## **6. Breach of this Code**

6.1 Each member of HCRC has a personal and individual responsibility to promote and uphold the requirements of this Code. If any member of HCRC believes that they may have breached the Code, or has witnessed or has become aware of a potential breach by another member, they should immediately

bring the matter to the attention of the Chair of the Executive Committee, via the Secretariat.

- 6.2 Alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with by the Chair and Executive Committee who will be responsible for leading the investigation. Where the allegation of a breach is against a member of that Committee, that member will be excluded from having any dealings in such investigation. The procedure for dealing with alleged breaches is described in Appendix 1 to this Code.
- 6.3 Each member of HCRC has a duty to co-operate with and contribute to any investigation relating to the Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in expulsion.

## **7. Review**

- 7.1 This Code of Conduct was adopted by Hawick Common Riding Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019. It will be reviewed on its one year anniversary of the adoption date and 3 yearly thereafter.
- 7.2 All Trustees of Hawick Common Riding Committee SCIO have agreed to this statement on their appointment.