



THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ARRAN-ELDERSLIE

1925 Bruce Road 10, Box 70, Chesley, ON N0G 1L0
519-363-3039 Fax: 519-363-2203 info@arran-elderslie.ca

Policy Name:	<i>Code of Conduct for Members of Council</i>	Policy No:
Department:	<i>Municipality Wide</i>	
Effective Date:	<i>September 27th, 2017</i>	
Date Revised:		
Authority:		

1. Coverage

This Code of Conduct applies to all Members of Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie. It is the responsibility of all members to be aware and comply with this Code of Conduct and all other policies adopted by the Council of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

2. Purpose

The Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie is committed to achieving the highest standard of conduct in its actions which is essential to maintaining and ensuring public trust and confidence in decision-making and operations. The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Members of Council shall act in an accountable and responsible manner with Integrity and fairness in the decision-making process.

3. Definitions

"Clerk" means an employee authorized to act as the Clerk of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

"Child" has the same meaning as defined in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

"Closed Session Meeting" means a meeting or part of a meeting not open to the public in accordance with the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended*.

"Code" means this Code of Conduct as it applies to all Members of the Council

"Complaint" means an alleged contravention of this Code of Conduct.



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"Confidential Information" means any information in the possession of the Municipality that it is prohibited from disclosing and also means any information that is not available to the public and that, if disclosed, could result in loss or damage to the Municipality or could give the person to whom it is disclosed an advantage. Confidential information also includes items disclosed or discussed at Closed Sessions of Council meetings.

"Council" means the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

"Frivolous" means something that is not worthy of serious consideration or that is of little or no importance due to its lack of seriousness or sense.

"Gifts or Benefits" means any cash or monetary equivalent, fee, object of value, service, travel and accommodation or entertainment.

"Good Faith" means in accordance with standards of honesty, trust and sincerity.

"Hospitality" means instances where there is entertainment of Council, or by outside parties, for the furtherance of Municipality business.

"Integrity Commissioner" means the Integrity Commissioner appointed by the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

"Member" means a Member of the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

"Municipality" means the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

"Municipal Property" means items, services or resources which are the property of the Municipality, including but not limited to materials, equipment, facilities, technology, municipally-developed computer programs or technological innovations, databases, intellectual property and supplies.

"Office" means the authority and duties attached to the position of being an elected member.

"Parent" has the same meaning as defined in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

"Spouse" has the same meaning as defined in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.



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“Staff” means all full time and part time persons hired by the Municipality including the Clerk-Administrator, Deputy Clerk, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Chief Building Official, Managers, Supervisors, Salaried Employees, Administration Staff, contract and temporary employees, students and co-op placement staff.

“Vexatious” means without reasonable or probable cause or excuse.

4. General Integrity

- 4.1 Members are committed to performing their functions with integrity, accountability and transparency.
- 4.2 Members are responsible for complying with all applicable legislation, by-laws and policies that pertain to their positions as elected officials.
- 4.3 Members recognize that the public has a right to open government and transparent decision-making.
- 4.4 Members shall, at all times, serve and be seen to serve the interests of their constituents and the Municipality in a conscientious and diligent manner and shall approach decision-making with open minds.
- 4.5 Members will conduct their dealings with each other in ways that maintain public confidence in the position to which they have been elected and appointed.
- 4.6 Members will be open and honest, focus on issues rather than personalities and avoid aggressive, offensive or abusive conduct.
- 4.7 Members shall refrain from making disparaging remarks about other Members of Council, Staff, members of the public and/or Council decisions.
- 4.8 Members shall avoid the improper use of the influence of their offices and shall avoid conflicts of interest both apparent and real.
- 4.9 Members shall not extend, in the discharge of their official duties, preferential treatment to any individual or organization if a reasonably well-informed person would conclude that the preferential treatment was solely for the purpose of advancing a private or personal interest.



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- 4.10 For greater clarity, this Code of Conduct does not prohibit Members from properly using their influence on behalf of constituents.
- 4.11 In accordance with both the *Municipal Act* and *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, every Member shall exercise his/her power and discharge his/her official duties pursuant to the following guiding principles:
- a) Seek to advance the common good of the Municipality
 - b) Exercise care, diligence and skill that a reasonable person would exercise in similar circumstances
 - c) Exercise his/her powers only for the purposes for which they were intended
 - d) Truly, faithfully and impartially exercise his/her office to the best of his/her knowledge and ability.

5. Conduct at Council and Committee Meetings

Members shall conduct themselves with decorum at all Council and Committee meetings in accordance with the provisions of the Municipality's Procedural By-law.

6. Discrimination and Harassment

All Members have a duty to treat members of the public, one another and Staff with respect and without abuse, bullying and/or intimidation and to ensure that the work environment is free from discrimination and harassment. The Ontario Human Rights Code shall be applied and the Municipality's Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy.

7. Conduct Respecting Staff

- 7.1 Members shall acknowledge the fact that staff work for the Municipality as a corporate body and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate objectives. Council has the authority to approve the budget, policy, governance and other such matters. Under the direction of the Clerk-Administrator, Staff serves Council as a whole and the combined interests of all Members as evidenced through the decisions of Council as recorded in the minutes and resolutions.



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- 7.2 Members shall acknowledge and respect the fact that Staff carry out Council's directions as a whole and administer the policies of the Municipality and are required to do so without any undue influence from any individual Member or group of Members.
- 7.3 Members shall refrain from publicly criticizing individual members of Staff in a way that casts aspersions on their professional competence and credibility. The role of Staff is to provide advice and service based on political neutrality, objectivity and professional judgment which may not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of a single Member of Council.
- 7.4 Members of Council have no individual capacity to direct Staff to perform specific functions. Inquires of Staff from Members of Council should be directed to the Clerk-Administrator or the appropriate Manager/Supervisor.
- 7.5 The *Municipal Act, 2001* sets out the roles of Members of Council and Municipal administration including specific roles for statutory officers such as the Chief Administrative Officer, Clerk, Treasurer and the Integrity Commissioner.
- 7.6 Members of Council are expected to:
- a) Represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the Municipality
 - b) Develop and evaluate policies and programs of the Municipality
 - c) Determine which services the Municipality provides
 - d) Ensure the administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of Council
 - e) Ensure the accountability and transparency of the Municipality's operations including the activities of the senior management of the Municipality
 - f) Maintain the financial integrity of the Municipality
 - g) Carry out the duties of Council under the *Municipal Act, 2001* or any other Act.
- 7.7 Municipal Staff is expected to:
- a) Implement Council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council's decisions



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- b) Undertake research and provide advice to Council on the policies and programs of the Municipality
 - c) Carry out any other duties required under the *Municipal Act* or any other Act and other duties assigned by the Municipality.
- 7.8 Members shall be respectful of the role of Staff to provide advice based on political neutrality, professional judgment and objectivity.
- 7.9 Members should not:
- a) Maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation or the prospects or practices of staff
 - b) Compel staff to engage in partisan political activities or be subjected to threats and/or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activities
 - c) Use or attempt to use their authority or influence for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding or influencing any staff member with the intent of interfering in Staff's duties.

8. Improper Use of Influence

- 8.1 As elected officials, members are expected to perform the duties of their office with integrity, accountability and transparency.
- 8.2 Members should not use the status of their position to influence the decision of another individual to the private advantage of oneself, one's parents, children, spouse, staff members, friends or business or other associates.
- 8.3 In the same manner and as outlined in the *Provincial Offences Act*, members shall not attempt to influence or interfere, either directly or indirectly, financially, politically or otherwise, with employees, officers or other persons performing duties under the *Provincial Offences Act*.

9. Use of Municipal Property and Resources

- 9.1 No member shall use or permit the use of Municipal property, equipment, services, Staff or other resources (such as the Municipal website) for any activity other than purposes connected with the discharge of Council duties or Council business.



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- 9.2 No member shall obtain financial gain from the use or sale of Municipally-developed intellectual property, computer programs, technological innovations or other kinds of property while he/she is an elected official or thereafter.
- 9.3 No member shall use information gained in the execution of his or her duties that is not available to the general public for any purpose than his or her official duties.
- 9.4 The Municipality assigns a corporate email account to each member and each member shall use the corporate email account for all purposes connected with the discharge of Council duties or business.

10. Conduct Respecting Lobbying

Members, as elected representatives, are often approached by various individuals attempting to influence Council decisions. While lobbying is an accepted practice, Council Members must be aware that it is their responsibility to make decisions based on an impartial and objective assessment of each situation, free from the influence of vendor for approval or decision-making.

11. Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

- 11.1 Members are expected to represent the public and the interests of the Municipality and to do so with impartiality and objectivity. The acceptance of a gift, benefit or hospitality can imply favouritism, bias or influence on the part of the member. At times, the acceptance of a gift, benefit or hospitality occurs as part of the social protocol or community event linked to the duties of an elected official and his/her representative role of the Municipality.
- 11.2 Members shall not accept gifts that would, to a reasonable member of the public, appear to be in gratitude for influence, to induce influence or otherwise to go beyond the necessary and appropriate public functions involved. For these purposes, a gift, benefit or hospitality provided with the member's knowledge to a member's spouse, child or parent that is connected directly or indirectly to the performance of the Member's duties is deemed to be a gift to that Member.



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11.3 Members are not precluded from accepting:

- a) Personal gifts, benefits, rewards, commissions or advantages from any person or organization which are wholly unconnected with the performance of the member as an elected representative
- b) Political contributions that are otherwise offered, accepted and reported in accordance with applicable law
- c) Services provided without compensation by persons volunteering their time
- d) Invitations from charity or not-for-profit organizations to attend their events
- e) Communication to a Member including subscriptions to newspaper and periodicals
- f) Gifts of a nominal value (eg. Baseball hat, tee shirt, boot, or similar)
- g) Food and beverages at banquets, receptions, ceremonies or similar events
- h) A memento received by a Member of Council at a function honouring the member
- i) A memento received as a result of being a speaker, participant or representative of the Municipality at an event
- j) Gifts or benefits received as a result of social protocol, customs or social obligations that normally accompany the performance of official duties
- k) Food, lodging, transportation and entertainment provided by other levels of government or other local governments, boards or commissions
- l) Sponsorships and donations for community events organized or operated by a member or a third party on behalf of a Member.

11.4 Those gifts received by members which have significance or historical value for the Municipality shall be left with the Municipality when the member ceases to hold office.

11.5 It is recognized that the extension and acceptance of forms of hospitality, including invitations to events, outings, engagements, performances, etc., is within the activity scope of a Member. Any hospitality should fall within the following parameters:



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- a) Members do not allow themselves to reach a position whereby they might be, or be deemed by others to have been, influenced in making a decision as a consequence of the offering or acceptance of such hospitality
- b) It serves a legitimate business purpose related to the responsibilities of the Member
- c) The person extending the invitation or a representative of the organization is in attendance
- d) The value and frequency is reasonable.

11.6 Members shall return any gifts or benefits or not accept hospitality which does not comply with the Code of Conduct along with an explanation to the donor as to why the gifts, benefits or hospitality cannot be accepted.

12. Election-Related Activity

Members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended*. The use of Municipal resources, both actual Municipal property and staff, for election-related activity is strictly prohibited. The prohibition applies to both the promotion and opposition to the candidacy of a person for elected office. Election-related activity applies not only to a Member's personal campaign for office but also other campaigns for Municipal, Provincial and/or Federal office.

13. Compliance with the Code of Conduct

13.1 Members are expected to adhere to the provisions of the Code of Conduct.

13.2 Where Council has received a report from its Integrity Commissioner that, in his/her opinion, there has been a violation of the Code of Conduct, the *Municipal Act, 2001, R.S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended*, provides Council with authority to impose the following sanctions:

- a) A reprimand
- b) Suspension of the remuneration paid to the member in respect of his/her services as a member of council or local board, as the case may be, for a period of up to ninety (90) days.



14. Enforcement of the Code of Conduct – Integrity Commissioner

- 14.1 Council shall appoint an Integrity Commissioner to investigate alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct.
- 14.2 Any person, including members of the public, Municipal Employees and members of Council who has reasonable grounds to believe that a member has breached a provision of the Code of Conduct, may proceed with a complaint.
- 14.3 Complaints must be submitted within six (6) weeks of the matter becoming known to the individual and no more than six (6) months after the alleged violation occurred. No action will be taken on a complaint occurring outside these deadlines.
- 14.4 A complainant may wish to pursue the informal complaint process as established by this Code of Conduct but is not required to do so prior to proceeding with the formal complaint process set out herein.
- 14.5 No member shall obstruct the Integrity Commissioner while carrying out his/her responsibilities.
- 14.6 Any reprisal or threat or reprisal against a complainant or anyone for provided relevant information to the Integrity Commissioner is prohibited.

15. Other Duties of the Integrity Commissioner

- 15.1 In addition to conducting investigations regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct and other related policies adopted by Council, the Integrity Commissioner shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a) Provide information to Council as to their obligations under the Code
 - b) Provide advice to individual members regarding specific situations as they relate to the application of the Code
 - c) Provide advice to Council on other policies and procedures that relate to the ethical behavior of members
 - d) Provide general advice on conflict of interest issues, noting that this advice may not be used in defense of an allegation related to a conflict of interest
 - e) Provide information to the public regarding the Code and the obligations of the member under the Code



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- f) Provide an annual report to Council on activities of the Integrity Commissioner.
- 15.2 Where an individual member is seeking to obtain advice from the Integrity Commissioner, the member shall submit to the Clerk a completed Request for Advice Form (see Appendix A) which shall be forwarded to the Integrity Commissioner for response.
- 15.3 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide his or her advice in writing to the member. Any written advice given by the Integrity Commissioner to a member, as it relates to the Code, binds the Integrity Commissioner in any subsequent consideration of the member's conduct in the same manner provided the relevant facts known to the member were disclosed to the Integrity Commissioner.
- 15.4 Any written request for advice and responses to such requests are covered under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- 15.5 The Integrity Commissioner's annual report to Council shall include information on the nature and volume of activity for the past year and provide anonymized examples with respect to the advice provided and the nature of complaints received and responded to.
- 15.6 The annual report of the Integrity Commissioner shall be provided to Council for information. The report is a public document.
- 15.7 The Integrity Commissioner shall file his or her report no later than (6) months after his or her initial appointment and annually thereafter.

16. Procedure – Informal Complaint

Any individual who has identified or witnessed behavior or activity by a Member that appears to be in contravention of the Code of Conduct may address his/her concerns in the following manner:

- a) Advise the member that their behavior or activity contravenes the Code of Conduct
- b) Encourage the member to stop the prohibited behaviour or activity
- c) If applicable, confirm to the member satisfaction or dissatisfaction with his or her response to the concern identified



- d) Keep a written record of the incident(s), including dates, times, locations, other persons present and any other relevant information, including steps taken to resolve the matter
- e) If not satisfied with the response received from the member through the informal process, an individual may proceed with a formal complaint through the Integrity Commissioner as outlined in Part 17 Procedure – Formal Complaint.

17. Procedure – Formal Complaint

Any individual who has identified or witnessed behaviour or activity by a member that appears to be contravention of the Code may address their concerns through the formal complaint process as follows:

- a) All formal complaints must be made using the Municipality’s Complaints Form/Affidavit (see Appendix B) and shall be dated and signed by the complainant.
- b) The complaint must include an explanation as to why the issue raised may be a contravention of the Code and any evidence in support of the allegation must be included with the Complaints Form/Affidavit.
- c) Any witnesses in support of the allegation must be identified on the Complaint Form/Affidavit.
- d) The Complaint Form/Affidavit must include the name of the member alleged to have breached the Code, the section of the Code allegedly contravened, the date, time and location of the alleged contravention and any other information as required on the Complaints Form/Affidavit.
- e) The complaint shall be filed with the Clerk who shall confirm that the information is complete as to steps a), b) and d) of this section. The Clerk will forward the Complaint Form/Affidavit to the Integrity Commissioner who will determine whether the matter is, on its face, a complaint with respect to non-compliance with the Code and not covered by other legislation or policies.
- f) The Integrity Commissioner may request additional information from the complainant.

18. Refusal to Conduct Investigation

18.1 If the Integrity Commissioner is of the opinion that the referral of a matter to him or her is frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith or that there are no grounds or insufficient grounds for an investigation, the Integrity Commissioner shall not conduct an investigation, or, where that



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becomes apparent in the course of an investigation, terminate the investigation.

18.2 Other than in exceptional circumstances, the Integrity Commissioner will not report to Council on any complaint described above, except as part of an annual or other periodic report.

19. Response to Complaint Outside of the Jurisdiction of the Integrity Commissioner

19.1 If the complaint received by the Integrity Commissioner is deemed not to be a complaint with respect to non-compliance with the Code, the Integrity Commissioner shall advise the complainant in writing, as follows:

- a) Criminal Matter – if the complaint is an allegation of a criminal nature consistent with the Criminal Code of Canada, the complainant shall be advised that pursuit of such an allegation must be made through the appropriate police service
- b) Municipal Conflict of Interest – if the complaint is an allegation with respect to the matters under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, the complainant shall be advised to review the matter with their own legal counsel
- c) Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy – if the complaint is more appropriately address under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the complainant shall be referred to the Clerk to have the matter reviewed under that Act

19.2 If the matter is covered by other policies or legislation, the complainant will be advised and directed to proceed in a manner that is considered appropriate by the Integrity Commissioner.

20. General Provisions

Appendix A, being the Request for Advice Form

Appendix B, being the Formal Complaint Form/Affidavit and Appendix B-1 (Additional Comments Form)

Council Code of Conduct – Commitment of Council



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Appendix A
Council Code of Conduct – Request for Advice Form

Name of Member: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Advice Requested: (Please provide as much detail as possible. Attach additional pages if required.)

Signature of Requester

Date Received by Integrity Commissioner

Date

Date Reply Issued



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Appendix B
Council Code of Conduct – Formal Complaint Form/Affidavit

Affidavit of _____
(full name)

I, _____, of the _____
(full Name) (City, Town, etc.)
_____ in the Province of Ontario Make
(County of Residence)

Oath and Say (or Affirm):

1. I have personal knowledge of the facts as set in this affidavit, because

(insert reasons e.g. I work for I attend a meeting at which..... etc.)

2. I have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a member of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Council

(Specify name of member)

has contravened section(s) _____
(specify sections (s))

of the Code of Conduct of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie, the particulars of which are as follows:

(set out the statements of fact in consecutively numbers paragraphs in the space below, with each paragraph being confined as far as possible to a particular statement of fact. If you require more space please use the attached Appendix B-1 form (Additional Information Form). If you wish to include exhibits to support this complaint, please refer to the exhibits as Exhibit A, B, etc. and attach them to this Affidavit.)



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This affidavit is made for the purpose of requesting that this matter be reviewed by the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie’s appointed Integrity Commissioner and for no other purpose.

Sworn (or affirmed) before me at the)

_____)
(City, Town, etc.)
in the County of Bruce,
in the Province of Ontario on

(Signature)

(Date)

(Signature of Commissioner)
A Commissioner for taking affidavits etc.

Please note that signing a false affidavit may expose you to prosecution under Sections 131, 132 or 134 of the *Criminal Code*, R.S.C. 1985 c. C-46 and also to civil liability for defamation.



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A Code of Conduct for Council Members

COMMITMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

We the Members of the Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Council are committed to observing this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the Council of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie the year following a municipal election year.

Mayor

Deputy Mayor

Councillor

Councillor

Councillor