



CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY - COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND LOCAL BOARDS

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Approved By: Council

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Council of the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville is committed to providing its residents, staff, and others with confidence that Members elected to local government and those appointed by Council to serve as advisors on local boards and committees will adhere to the highest standards of conduct. Adherence to these standards will protect and maintain the reputation and integrity of the Town of Kingsville.
- 1.2 The Town has appointed an Integrity Commissioner to investigate complaints against Members pursuant to the *Code of Conduct Policy – Council, Committees and Local Boards* and any procedures, rules and policies of the Town and local boards governing the ethical behaviour of Members of Council, Committees or Local Boards. In addition, it is expected that the Integrity Commissioner will provide advice on ethical issues to individual Members and Council as a whole and will engage in education and training with all of those subject to the Code of Conduct Policy.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Municipal Act, 2001 Section 223.2 (1), requires the Town of Kingsville to establish codes of conduct for Members of Council, committees and local boards.
- 2.2 This policy ensures the integrity of municipal governance by encouraging high standards of conduct on the part of all Members.
- 2.3 This policy ensures that Members perform their duties with integrity, avoiding the improper use of influence in their office, and avoiding conflicts of interest, whether real or apparent.
- 2.4 This policy ensures that official business of the Town of Kingsville is conducted in a professional and ethical manner, and moves the Town forward in a positive and productive manner.
- 2.5 This policy helps ensure that all Members act impartially and with the public interest to guide them.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to every Council Member in the Town of Kingsville and

individuals appointed by Council to committees and local boards (collectively “Members”).

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. **Bullying** is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior could be a singular incident or something that has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. This includes physical, verbal, social/relational and cyber bullying.
- 4.2. **Child, parent and spouse** shall have the same meanings as in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- 4.3. **Confidential Information** includes any information in the possession of, received in confidence, or deemed as such by the Town of Kingsville, that is prohibited from disclosure.
- 4.4. **Conflict of Interest** exists when a member exercises an official power, duty or function that provides an opportunity to further their own interests, or those of their relatives or friends, or to improperly further another’s interests. For the purposes of this Code, there are two different types of conflicts of interest:
 - 4.4.1. A pecuniary interest as defined in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*; and
 - 4.4.2. A non-pecuniary interest which a member of the public would reasonably perceive as creating a conflict for the Member and an inappropriate advantage for a third party appearing before Council or otherwise benefitting from a decision of Council, a committee or local board.
- 4.5. **Council** refers to the current elected Council for the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville. This includes, as an entirety, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.
- 4.6. **Discrimination** is treating someone detrimentally based on certain characteristics or differences including age, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, family status, marital status and/or physical and mental disability.
- 4.7. **Electronic Communications** for the purpose of this policy Electronic Communication includes, but is not limited to, messaging or video chat platforms, websites, apps, email, texting and blogging. Electronic Communications encompass social media and other messaging forms that

enable users to interact, create, share and communicate information online, whether used for Town purposes or personally, which includes platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and similar entities.

- 4.8. **Harassment** is defined as improper conduct by an individual that is directed at and is offensive to another individual, including at any event or any location related to work, and that the individual knew, or ought reasonably to have known, would cause offence or harm.
- It comprises objectionable act(s), comment(s) or display(s) that demean, belittle, or cause personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat.
- 4.9. **Integrity** refers to the consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles expectations and outcomes. It denotes a deep commitment to do the right thing for the right reason. The Code of Conduct policy is the embodiment of the Town's commitment to integrity in municipal governance.
- 4.10. **Integrity Commissioner** refers to the Integrity Commissioner appointed by Council with all the powers and duties prescribed by the *Municipal Act*, *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and any other applicable law.
- 4.11. **Intellectual Property** is a set of intangible rights held by musicians, authors, artists, inventors, scientists and other individuals who have ownership of their intellectual and creative output. Others are prohibited from using intellectual property without prior and written permission of the owner of the rights. Intellectual property may have commercial value and encompasses the area of copyrights, trademarks, patents, and design.
- 4.12. **Intimidation** means to intentionally say or do something which would cause a person of ordinary sensibilities to be fearful of bodily harm or any other reprisal whether physical, psychological, social or economic.
- 4.13. **Member** means all elected officials and/or any individual appointed by Council to serve in an advisory or legislative capacity on any local Town committee or board.
- 4.14. **Pecuniary Interest** is as defined by the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- 4.15. **Person** includes an individual, corporation, partnership, association and any other entity as the context allows.
- 4.16. **Poisoned Environment** is a poisoned or toxic workplace that is hostile or unwelcoming as a result of insulting or degrading comments or conduct that has an influence on others and how they are treated.

Other common definitions, acronyms, and terms are available in related legislation and other Town Policy.

5. INTERPRETATIONS

Any reference in this Policy to any statute or any section of a statute shall, unless expressly stated, be deemed to be reference to the statute as amended, restated or re-enacted from time to time. Any references to a by-law or Town policy shall be deemed to be a reference to the most recent passed policy or by-law and any amendments thereto.

6. PRINCIPLES OF GENERAL APPLICATION

The principles of general application in this section shall be used to govern interpretation of the more specific rules and obligations outlined in this Code of Conduct.

These general principles shall also be used to determine issues not specifically addressed in this Code of Conduct.

The general principles are:

- a) Members shall uphold a high standard of ethical behaviour to ensure that their decision-making is impartial, transparent and free from undue influence;
- b) Members shall refrain from engaging in conduct that would bring the Municipality or Council into disrepute or compromise the integrity of the Municipality or Council; and
- c) Members recognize that ethics and integrity are at the core of public confidence in government and in the political process; that Members are expected to perform their duties in office and arrange their private affairs in a manner that promotes public confidence, avoids conflicts of interest both apparent and real, and upholds both the letter and the spirit of the law, including policies adopted by Council.

6.1 Integrity Commissioner

- 6.1.1 Section 223.3 of the Municipal Act, as amended, requires the appointment of an Integrity Commissioner to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct for Members. In addition, the legislation provides that the Integrity Commissioner can be delegated any or all of the policy matters surrounding the enforcement of Codes of Conduct for the municipality.
- 6.1.2 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide advice to any Members seeking clarification of this policy as it relates to the Member.
- 6.1.3 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide advice to any Members with regards to possible conflicts of interest pursuant to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, as amended.
- 6.1.4 The Integrity Commissioner has the power to deal with requests to investigate suspected contraventions of the Code of Conduct and has the right of free access to all records of the Town, and any Member that the Integrity Commissioner believes is necessary to investigate an inquiry as well as the right to interview any persons determined necessary for purposes of conducting any such investigation.
- 6.1.5 The Integrity Commissioner may recommend and may participate in providing educational information to Council in a manner to be determined in consultation with the CAO or Clerk.
- 6.1.6 All complaints received involving Members under the Respectful Workplace policy shall be referred to the Integrity Commissioner for investigation.
- 6.1.7 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide an annual report to Council summarizing his or her activities and advice provided but shall not disclose confidential information that could identify a person concerned.
- 6.1.8 Council can terminate the Integrity Commissioner only by a two-thirds vote of all Council Members.

6.2 Policies and Procedures

All Members are responsible to familiarize themselves with and adhere to the terms of all established policies and related procedures that are relevant to Members.

6.3 Discrimination and Harassment

- 6.3.1 No form of discrimination, intimidation or harassment will be tolerated, whether it involves a Member, staff or the public.
- 6.3.2 All Members have a duty to treat the public, other Members and staff with respect.
- 6.3.3 Any Member confronted with, or aware of discrimination or harassment of any nature related to other Members or staff, will immediately report said behaviour to the Mayor, CAO and/or Clerk.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT RULES

7.1 Gifts and Benefits

- 7.1.1 For the purpose of this policy, a gift or benefit provided to a Member, spouse, child, or parent that is connected either directly or indirectly to the performance of the Member's duties is deemed a gift to that Member.
- 7.1.2 Subject to 7.1.3, no Member shall accept a fee or advance, gift, gift certificate, bonus, reward, or personal benefit that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of his or her duties as a Member.
- 7.1.3 The following are recognized as exceptions:
 - 7.1.3.1. Compensation authorized by legislation, including council remuneration or remuneration paid as a result of being appointed to a board of directors as the Town's representative.
 - 7.1.3.2. A political contribution otherwise authorized and reported as required by law, in the case of a Council Member running for office. Political contributions are governed by the Municipal Elections Act, and similar provincial and federal legislation will apply to political contributions in the event a Member runs for a different office.

7.1.3.3. Food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment lawfully provided by any Provincial, regional, or local government or board or political subdivisions of any of them, by the Federal government, a foreign government, or by those organizing a conference, seminar, or event where the Member is speaking or attending in an official capacity. Official capacity means when invited to represent the Town or a body where the Member is appointed to a Board by Council or as a representative of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities or their related organizations.

7.1.3.4. Food and beverages consumed at a banquet, reception, conference or similar event, if all of the following is applicable:

- a. Attendance by the Member is for a legitimate Town purpose;
- b. The person extending the invitation, or a representative of the organization holding the event, is in attendance; and,
- c. The value is considered reasonable and the invitation infrequent. For purposes of this policy, reasonable value means having an estimated value that does not exceed \$200 per person, and infrequent means accepting an invitation from the same person or organization (unless a government authority) no more than three times a year.

7.1.4 Except in the case of 7.1.3.3, a Member may not accept a gift or benefit worth in excess of \$500.00 or gifts and benefits from one source during a calendar year worth in excess of \$500.00.

7.1.5 An invitation to attend a fund-raising gala or charity golf tournament, as long as the invitation is infrequent, the value of the invitation does not exceed the amount established in section 7.1.7 and the person extending the invitation or a company representative is in attendance, is part of the responsibilities of holding public office and does not constitute a gift.

7.1.6 A gift given to a Member as a representative of the Town is a gift to the Town, and the Member will forthwith advise the Clerk of its receipt, to ensure it is recorded as such by the Clerk and that the item is

transferred to the Town. It may be displayed in a public place. As such, it is therefore not a gift to the Member.

7.1.7. Disclosure Statement:

If the value of the gift or benefit exceeds \$300, or if the total value of the gifts or benefits received from any one source during the course of a calendar year exceeds \$300, the Member shall file a disclosure statement with the Integrity Commissioner, within 30 days of receipt of the gift or benefit, or of reaching a total value in excess of \$300.00. Every disclosure statement filed with the Clerk under this policy shall be made a public record.

7.1.7.1. The disclosure statement must identify the following:

- a. The nature of every gift or benefit received;
- b. The source and date of receipt;
- c. The circumstances under which it was given and received;
- d. The estimated value;
- e. What the recipient intends to do with the gift; and,
- f. Whether any gift will at some point remain with the Town.

7.1.7.2. Upon receipt of a disclosure statement, the Integrity Commissioner shall examine to ascertain whether the receipt of the gift or benefit might, in his or her opinion, constitute a contravention of this policy or create a conflict between a private interest and the public duties or responsibilities of the Council Member. In the event that Integrity Commissioner makes such a determination, he or she shall call upon the Member to justify receipt of the gift or benefit. Disclosure statements will be posted to the Town's website for public viewing.

7.2 Conduct of Members

7.2.1 At Council and Committee/Board Meetings

7.2.1.1 Every Member shall conduct themselves with decorum and respect at council, committee, local board and other

meetings, and in accordance with the provisions of the Procedural By-law, this policy, and other applicable laws.

7.2.1.2 All Members shall take steps to prepare in advance of meetings and become familiar with items on the agenda.

7.2.1.3 Members shall demonstrate attentiveness and respect to all speakers, presenters, staff and the public by turning their mobile devices to vibrate and responding only to emergencies.

7.2.2 Respecting Staff

7.2.2.1 In accordance with the decisions of Council, staff serve the Town and Council as a whole. Members shall be respectful of the role of staff to provide advice based on professional opinion, political neutrality and objectivity.

7.2.2.2 Members shall show respect for staff, and for their professional capacities and responsibilities.

7.2.2.3 Members shall not maliciously or falsely injure or impugn the professional or ethical reputation of any member of staff.

7.2.2.4 Members shall not compel any member of staff to engage in activity for personal or private purposes, partisan political activities, or subject any member of staff to threat or discrimination for refusing to engage in any such activity.

7.2.2.5 A Member shall not use or attempt to exercise his or her authority or influence by intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding or improperly influencing any staff member or interfering with that person's duties, including the duty to disclose improper activity.

7.2.2.6 No Member shall make requests of staff for documents or information that is not publicly available, unless such information is required for the purpose of carrying out the Member's duties as a public official.

7.2.2.7 Members shall not direct staff. The CAO is responsible for directing staff.

7.2.2.8 Council as a whole may direct the CAO during any meeting of Council. Council is responsible for evaluating the actions of the CAO. The only employee of Council is the CAO who

reports to the whole of Council. Individual Members may not direct the CAO but may seek the advice or assistance of the CAO on a given matter. If the CAO believes a decision from Council is required, the CAO will refer the matter to Council as a whole for direction.

7.2.2.9 Members may make inquiries of managers in regard to areas within a manager's scope of responsibility. Members should be careful that a comment or question of a manager is not interpreted as a favour or request to take a certain action.

7.2.3 Respecting Others

7.2.3.1 Every Member has the duty and responsibility to treat members of the public, one another, and staff appropriately and without abuse, bullying, or intimidation, and to ensure that the work environment is not poisoned and is free from discrimination and harassment.

7.2.3.2 Members shall not use indecent, abusive, or insulting words or expressions toward any other Member, any staff, or the public.

7.2.3.3 Members shall communicate in a manner that is respectful to any individual, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, colour, marital status or mental or physical disability.

7.2.4 During Election Campaigns

7.2.4.1 Every Member shall comply with all applicable requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996, as amended and any other applicable Town policy.

7.2.4.2 No Member shall use confidential information for any election campaign or campaign-related activity.

7.2.4.3 No Member shall use facilities, equipment, supplies, services, or other resources of the Town, including any Councillor newsletter or website linked through the Town's website, for any election campaign or campaign-related activity.

7.2.4.4 No Member shall undertake campaign-related activities on Town property at any time.

- 7.2.4.5 No Member shall use the services of any person for election-related purposes during hours in which that person receives any compensation from the Town.
- 7.2.4.6 No Member shall use any Town logo on election campaign materials or websites. Social media accounts for campaign purposes must utilize personal cell phones, tablets or other devices.
- 7.2.4.7 Members shall not request staff to interpret or provide advice regarding the requirements placed on candidates for municipal office during the election period. In managing the municipal election, the Clerk must ensure that all candidates are treated equally, and no candidate should interfere with how the Clerk carries out these duties.

7.3 Communication Protocols including Traditional and Social Media Platforms

- 7.3.1 The Mayor is the official spokesperson for Council and shall be responsible for communicating Council's position on all municipal matters. The Mayor should clarify whether he/she is speaking for himself/herself or on behalf of a decision of Council.
- 7.3.2 Members of Council are welcome to speak to traditional media outlets and to use social media to engage and communicate with residents. Members of Council are free to speak their conscience and for their constituents. Members of Council shall accurately communicate the decisions of Town Council, even if they disagree with the majority decision of Council, and by so doing affirm the respect for and integrity in the decision-making process of Council. Members must also avoid posting, sharing, or supporting statements that contain false, misleading, or confidential information.
- 7.3.3 Members are encouraged to use communication platforms under their control carefully when posting respecting Town business (i.e.: a Facebook, Instagram, Twitter page created by them) and will be held accountable for the information posted to those platforms. Content added by others on media controlled by a Member must be monitored by the Member and immediately deleted if inappropriate and/or in violation of this Code of Conduct.
- 7.3.4 Members must recognize their professional boundaries and

responsibilities in the appropriate use of electronic communications and social media, whether using a Member's constituency or personal account.

7.3.5 Members shall direct constituents to use requests@kingsville.ca to file new or outstanding requests for service or complaints. This assists the Town to understand service needs and respond with appropriate resources accordingly.

7.3.6 Members should be careful not to criticize staff on social media and should be careful responding to third party criticism, while remembering that staff have their own social media policy with which they must comply and staff are unable to fully defend themselves on social media. In many circumstances third party criticism of staff is best brought to the attention of the Mayor or CAO for response.

7.3.7 Email, faxes and other written correspondence created or used in the capacity of an elected or appointed position may be considered documents of the Town under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and may be required to be kept as an official record. Members should consult with the Clerk or Solicitor if uncertain if a document is an official Town record.

7.4 Conflict of Interest

7.4.1 Where a Member, either on his or her own behalf or while acting for, by, with or through another, has any Conflict of Interest, direct or indirect, in any matter that is being considered by an officer or employee of the municipality or local board, or by a person or body to which the municipality or local board has delegated a power or duty, the Member shall not use his or her office in any way to attempt to influence any decision or recommendation that results from consideration of the matter.

7.4.2 The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act endorses the following principles in relation to the duties of Members:

7.3.2.1 The importance of integrity, independence and accountability in local government decision-making.

7.3.2.2 The importance of certainty in reconciling the public duties and pecuniary interests of Members.

7.3.2.3 Members are expected to perform their duties of office

with integrity and impartiality in a manner that will bear the closest scrutiny.

- 7.4.3 Members are encouraged to seek guidance from the Integrity Commissioner when becoming aware that they may have a conflict or pecuniary interest in any matter.
- 7.4.4 Members shall disclose a Conflict of Interest at the public meeting where the matter will be discussed, or as soon thereafter as possible. Absence from a public meeting where the matter is discussed does not relieve a Member from disclosing the interest.
- 7.4.5 Upon disclosing a Conflict of Interest, the member shall:
 - 7.3.5.1 Immediately withdraw from the discussion;
 - 7.3.5.2 Refrain from participating in the debate or voting on the matter; and,
 - 7.3.5.3 Not attempt to influence Members of Council, Committees, Local Boards, staff or any other public person.
- 7.4.6 A Member shall within 30 days of disclosing an interest publicly, submit the interest in writing to the Clerk on a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form and the Clerk shall maintain an interest registry as a public record in the Clerk's Office.
- 7.4.7 Contravention of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act is subject to the sanctions under the Act and/or the Code of Conduct.
- 7.4.8 A Member may also have an interest in a matter on the Council agenda that does not constitute a conflict but could lead to an apprehension of bias or interest. Members are encouraged to be active in community organizations, as a volunteer or as an employee or owner of a business. Members are encouraged to disclose the interest but may still participate in the debate and vote on the matter unless there is a Conflict. Members are encouraged to seek guidance from the Integrity Commissioner when in doubt.

7.5 Confidential Information

- 7.4.1 In this policy, "confidential information" includes any information in the possession of, or received in confidence by the Town that the Town is prohibited from disclosing, or has decided to refuse to disclose, under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, or any other law.

7.4.2 “Confidential Information” also includes:

- 7.4.2.1 Information of a corporate, commercial, scientific, or technical nature received in confidence from third parties.
- 7.4.2.2 Personal information.
- 7.4.2.3 Information that is subject to solicitor-client privilege.
- 7.4.2.4 Information that concerns any confidential matters pertaining to:
 - a. Personnel.
 - b. Labour relations.
 - c. Litigation.
 - d. Property acquisition or disposition.
 - e. The security of property of the Town or a local board.
 - f. Any other information determined by Council to be confidential, or required to remain or be kept confidential by legislation or order.

- 7.4.3 No Member shall disclose, release, or publish by any means to any person or to the public any confidential information acquired by virtue of his or her office, in any form, except when required or authorized by Council or otherwise by law to do so.
- 7.4.4 No Member shall use confidential information for personal or private gain or benefit, or for the personal or private gain or benefit of any other person or body.
- 7.4.5 A matter, the substance of a matter, and information pertaining to a matter, that has been debated or discussed at a meeting closed to the public shall be confidential information, unless authorized by the Council or legislation to be released, generally or subject to conditions, and such have been complied with. No information pertaining to such a matter, the manner in which it was dealt with at the meeting, or any part or description of the debate, shall be disclosed unless authorized by the Council or otherwise by law.
- 7.4.6 A Member may only disclose the content of any matter referred to in the preceding paragraph or the subject matter of deliberations, at an in-camera (closed) meeting, only after the Council or committee lawfully and knowingly discusses the information at a meeting that is open to the public or releases the information to the public.

7.4.7 Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, no Member shall, without lawful authority, disclose, or make personal use of, any of the following types of confidential information:

7.4.7.1 Information concerning litigation, negotiation, or personnel matters.

7.4.7.2 Information which may infringe on the rights of any person (e.g. source of a complaint where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence).

7.4.7.3 Price schedules in any contract, tender, or proposal document while such remains a confidential document.

7.4.7.4 Information deemed to be “personal information” under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

7.4.7.5 Any information or statistical data required by law not to be released.

7.4.8 No Member shall obtain, access, or attempt to gain access, to confidential information in the custody of the municipality except to the extent that such access is necessary for the performance of his or her duties and such access is not prohibited by Council or otherwise by law.

7.6 Use of Town Property and/or Other Resources

7.5.1 No Member shall use, or permit the use of, municipal land, facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff, or other resource, including any municipally owned information, the website, and funds allocated for expenses for any purpose or activity other than business of the Town.

7.5.2 No Member shall seek or acquire any personal financial or other gain from the use or sale of any confidential information, or of any municipally-owned intellectual property, including any invention, creative writing or drawing, computer program, technical innovation, or any other information or item capable of being patented or copyrighted, of which property remains exclusively that of the Town.

7.7 Improper Use of Influence

7.6.1 Members are expected and required to perform their duties with integrity, accountability and transparency.

- 7.6.2 Members shall not use the status of their position to influence the decision of another individual to the private advantage of oneself, or one's parents, children or spouse, staff members, friends, or associates, business or otherwise.
- 7.6.3 No Member shall attempt to secure preferential treatment beyond activities in which Members normally engage as part of their official duties.
- 7.6.4 No Member shall hold out the prospect or promise of future advantage through the Member's supposed influence within the municipality, in return for any action or inaction.
- 7.6.5 In this policy, "private advantage" does not include:
 - 7.6.5.1 A matter in common with electors generally.
 - 7.6.5.2 A matter that affects a Member, their parents, children, spouse, staff members, friends or associates, business or otherwise, as one of a broad class of persons.
 - 7.6.5.3 A matter that concerns the remuneration or benefits of a Member.

8. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

- 8.1. A Member who has been found by the Integrity Commissioner, to have contravened any provision of this policy, is subject to one or more of the following sanctions imposed by Council, as referred to in the following two paragraphs:
 - 8.1.1 The Municipal Act, 2001 authorizes Council, where it has received a report by the Town's Integrity Commissioner that, in his or her opinion, there has been a violation of this Code of Conduct policy, to impose upon the offending Member:
 - 8.1.1.1. A reprimand.
 - 8.1.1.2. Suspension of the remuneration paid to the Member (where applicable) in respect of his or her services as a Member for a period of up to 90 days.
 - 8.1.2 The Integrity Commissioner may, for remedial purposes, also

recommend that Council take one or more of the following actions:

- 8.1.2.1 Removal from membership on a committee or local board.
- 8.1.2.2 Removal as chair of a committee or local board.
- 8.1.2.3 Request an apology to Council, the complainant, and/or the community.
- 8.1.2.4 Any other or additional action deemed by Council to be appropriate, and which is within its powers.

8.2 Acting on the Advice of the Integrity Commissioner

- 8.2.1 Any written advice given by the Integrity Commissioner to a Member binds the Integrity Commissioner in any subsequent consideration of the conduct of the member, as long as:
 - 8.2.2 All of the relevant facts known to the Member were disclosed to the Integrity Commissioner; and,
 - 8.2.3 The Member has acted in accordance with the written advice provided, as determined through the sole discretion of the Integrity Commissioner.

9. NO REPRISAL OR OBSTRUCTION IN THE APPLICATION OR ENFORCEMENT OF THIS POLICY

- 9.1 Every Member must respect the integrity of the Code of Conduct Policy – Council, Committees and Local Boards Policy and inquiries and investigations conducted under it and shall cooperate in every way possible in securing compliance with its application and enforcement.
- 9.2 Any reprisal or threat of reprisal against a complainant or any other person for providing relevant information to the Integrity Commissioner, or any other person, is prohibited.
- 9.3 It is also a violation of this policy to obstruct the Integrity Commissioner, or any other municipal official involved in applying or furthering the objectives or requirements of this policy, in the carrying out of such responsibilities, or pursuing any such objective.

10. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

10.1 In addition to this policy, the following Ontario legislation also governs the conduct of Members in Council:

10.1.1. Code of Conduct Complaint Protocol – Informal and Formal Complaint Procedure (attached)

10.1.2. *The Municipal Act, 2001* as amended.

10.1.3. *The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c M.50*

10.1.4. *The Municipal Elections Act, 1996.*

10.1.5. *The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

10.1.6. *The Public Inquiries Act, 2009*

10.1.7. *Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990*

10.1.8. *Ontario Accessibility Act, 2005*

10.1.9. *Criminal Code of Canada, as amended*

10.2 The Integrity Commissioner's annual and/or investigation reports, as well as any other public reports/policies may be relied upon for reference.

10.3 A Council Member may become disqualified and lose his or her seat by operation of law, including being convicted of an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada or being found to have failed to comply with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, whether or not the conduct in question involves contravention of this policy.

10.4 In the case of any inconsistency between this policy and Federal or Provincial statute or regulation, the statute or regulation shall prevail.

Appendix A

COMPLAINT PROTOCOL Integrity Commissioner Requests for Inquiries

1.
 - a. A request for an investigation of a complaint that a Member has contravened the Code of Conduct (the “complaint”) shall be filed with the Municipal Clerk, along with a filing fee of \$100 payable by Cheque. **A CODE OF CONDUCT - FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM** must be completed to file the complaint.
 - i. All complaints shall be signed by an identifiable individual (which includes the authorized signing officer of an organization).
 - ii. A complaint shall set out reasonable and probable grounds for the allegation that the member has contravened the Code.
 - iii. The complaint shall include:
 - the name of the alleged violator,
 - the provision of the Code allegedly contravened,
 - facts constituting the alleged contravention,
 - the names and contact information of witnesses; and,
 - contact information for the complainant during normal business hours.
 - b. For any Inquiry which has not been completed before nomination day for a regular election, as set out in section 31 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, the Commissioner shall terminate the inquiry on that day.
 - c. If an Inquiry is terminated due to non-completion before the nomination day, the Commissioner shall not commence another inquiry in respect of the matter unless, within six weeks after voting day in a regular election, as set out in section 5 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, the person or entity who made the request or the member or former member whose conduct is concerned makes a written request to the Commissioner that the inquiry be commenced.
 - d. Once the Integrity Commissioner has determined that the complaint is valid, and not frivolous or vexatious, the \$100 filing fee will be returned to the complainant.
 - e. Where a complaint is received directly by the Integrity Commissioner that is not on the formal complaint form, the Integrity Commissioner shall not investigate the matter before advising the Clerk, who will then ensure the matter is properly documented and the fee is paid.

Initial Classification by Integrity Commissioner

2.

- a. Upon receipt of the request, the Integrity Commissioner shall make an initial classification to determine if the matter is, on its face, a complaint with respect to non-compliance with the Code and not covered by other legislation or other Council policies as described in Section 10.
- b. If the complaint is not, on its face, a complaint with respect to non-compliance with the Code, or the complaint is covered by other legislation or a complaint procedure under another Council policy, the Integrity Commissioner shall advise the complainant in writing as follows:
 - i. If the complaint, on its face, is an allegation of a criminal nature consistent with the Criminal Code of Canada, the complainant shall be advised that if they wish to pursue any such allegation, the complainant must pursue it with the appropriate police force;
 - ii. If the complaint, on its face, is with respect to non-compliance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the complainant shall be advised that the matter will be referred to the Municipal Clerk;
 - iii. If the complaint, on its face, is with respect to non-compliance with a more specific Council policy, with a separate complaint procedure, the complainant shall be advised to pursue the matter under that procedure; and,
 - iv. In other cases, the complainant shall be advised that the matter, or part of the matter, is not within the jurisdiction of the Integrity Commissioner, with any additional reasons and referrals as the Integrity Commissioner considers appropriate.
- c. The Integrity Commissioner shall determine whether a report to Council is warranted for a specific complaint that is not within the jurisdiction of the Integrity Commissioner.
- d. The Integrity Commissioner shall report annually to Council on complaints not within the jurisdiction of the Integrity Commissioner, but, where possible, shall not disclose information that could identify a person concerned.

Integrity Commissioner Investigation

3.

- a. The Integrity Commissioner is responsible for performing the duties set out in this Protocol independently, and shall report directly to Council in respect of all such matters. The Integrity Commissioner shall file an annual report to Town Council respecting the advice, education and investigations carried out in the previous year, and developments or recommendations of significance related to the role of the Integrity Commissioner.
- b. If the Integrity Commissioner is of the opinion that a complaint 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 becomes apparent in the course of an investigation, terminate the investigation.
- c. Other than in exceptional circumstances, the Integrity Commissioner will not report to Council on any complaint described in subsection (b) except as part of an annual or other periodic report.

4.

- a. If a complaint has been classified as being within the Integrity Commissioner's jurisdiction and not rejected under section 3, the Commissioner shall investigate and may attempt to settle the complaint.
- b. Upon receipt of a formal complaint pursuant to the Code, and where the Integrity Commissioner determines that the complaint meets the criteria to be investigated, the Integrity Commissioner may elect to conduct an informal investigation or alternatively to exercise the powers of a Commission under Parts I and II of the Public Inquiries Act, as contemplated by Subsection 223.4(2) of the Act.
- c. If the Integrity Commissioner elects to conduct an inquiry under the Public Inquiries Act, he/she shall report to Council and seek instructions before proceeding, setting out the reasons for the investigation and providing an estimate of the expected cost and time that the investigation will require.
- d. When the Public Inquiries Act applies to an investigation of a complaint, the Integrity Commissioner shall comply with the procedures specified in that Act and this Complaint Protocol, but, if there is a conflict between a provision of the Complaint Protocol and a provision of the Public Inquiries Act, the provision of the Public Inquiries Act prevails.

5.

- a. The Integrity Commissioner will proceed as follows, except where otherwise required by the *Public Inquiries Act*:
 - i. Serve the complaint and supporting material upon the Member whose conduct is in question with a request that a written response to the allegation by way of affidavit or otherwise be filed within fifteen business days; and,
 - ii. The Integrity Commissioner may serve a copy of the response provided upon the complainant with a request for a written reply within fifteen business days.
- b. If necessary, after reviewing the written materials, the Integrity Commissioner may speak to anyone relevant to the complaint, access and examine any of the information described in subsections 223.4(3) and (4) of the *Municipal Act*, and may enter any Town work location relevant to the complaint for the purposes of an investigation and settlement.
- c. The Integrity Commissioner may make interim reports to Council where necessary and as required, to address any instances of interference, obstruction or retaliation encountered during the investigation.

6.

- a. The Integrity Commissioner shall report to the complainant and the Member generally no later than 90 days after the making of the complaint.
- b. Where the complaint is sustained in whole or in part, the Integrity Commissioner shall also report to Council outlining the findings, the terms of any settlement, or recommended corrective action.
- c. Where the complaint is dismissed, other than in exceptional circumstances, the Integrity Commissioner shall not report to Council except as part of an annual or other periodic report.
- d. Any recommended corrective action must be permitted in law and shall be designed to ensure that the inappropriate behaviour or activity does not continue.

7. If the Integrity Commissioner determines that there has been no contravention of the Code of Conduct or that a contravention occurred although the Member took all reasonable measures to prevent it, or that a contravention occurred that was trivial or committed through inadvertence or an error of judgement made in good faith, the Integrity Commissioner shall so state in

the report and shall recommend that no penalty be imposed.

8. The Municipal Clerk shall process the report for the next meeting of Council.

Council Review

9.

- a. Council shall consider and respond to the report within 90 days after the day the report is laid before it.
- b. In responding to the report, Council may vary a recommendation that imposes a penalty, subject to Section 223.4, subsection (5) of the *Municipal Act*, but shall not refer the recommendation other than back to the Integrity Commissioner.
- c. Upon receipt of recommendations from the Integrity Commissioner, Council may, in circumstances where the Integrity Commissioner has determined there has been a violation of the Code of Conduct, impose either of two penalties:
 - i. a reprimand; or,
 - ii. suspension of the remuneration paid to the Member in respect of his/her services as a Member of Council or a local board, as the case may be, for a period of up to 90 days.
- d. The Integrity Commissioner may also recommend that Council take the following actions for remedial purposes:
 - i. removal from membership of a committee;
 - ii. removal as chair of a committee;
 - iii. repayment or reimbursement of monies received;
 - iv. return of property or reimbursement of its value;
 - v. a written and/or verbal request for an apology to Council, the complainant, or, both.

Confidentiality

10.

- a. A complaint will be processed in compliance with the confidentiality requirements in sections 223.5 and 223.6 of the *Municipal Act*, which are summarized in the following subsections.
 - i. The Integrity Commissioner and every person acting under her or his instructions shall preserve secrecy with respect to all matters that come to his or her knowledge in the course of any

investigation except as required by law in a criminal proceeding.

- ii. All reports from the Integrity Commissioner to Council will be made available to the public.
- iii. Any references by the Integrity Commissioner in an annual or other periodic report to a complaint or an investigation shall not disclose confidential information that could identify a person concerned.
- iv. The Integrity Commissioner, in a report to Council on whether a Member has violated the Code of Conduct, shall only disclose such matters as in the Integrity Commissioner's opinion are necessary for the purposes of the report.

APPENDIX A
Town of Kingsville
Code of Conduct - Formal Complaint Form

I, _____ (full name), of _____ (municipality of residence) in the Province of Ontario

1. Have personal knowledge of the facts as set out in this complaint because:

(insert reasons i.e.: I work for....., I attended a meeting at which, etc.)

2. I have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a Member, namely:

(name of Member), has contravened section(s) _____ *(specify sections)* of the Code of Conduct Policy. The particulars of which are as follows:

(If more room is required, please use Schedule "A" to set out the statement of facts in consecutively numbered paragraphs, with each paragraph being confined as far as possible to a particular statement of fact. 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 complaint form.)

(Signature of Complainant)

Date

SCHEDULE 'A'
Additional Information

To the complaint form required under the Formal Complaint Process of the Code of Conduct.

(If more than one page is required, please photocopy this blank page and mark each additional page as 2 of 2, 2 of 3, etc. at the top right corner of this page.)

(Signature of Complainant)

Date