**EVERBROOK HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. Introduction

1.1 Everbrook Housing Co-operative expects its members to maintain high standards of personal behaviour and to behave honestly and transparently when acting on behalf of the co-operative.

1.2 This Code of Conduct sets out the standards that we expect our members to meet and explains what actions we will take if a member fails to meet these standards.

1.3 As a co-operative organisation our approach to our business is underpinned by the co-operative principles and values as formulated by the International Co-operative Alliance. Our code is based on those values and sets out standards for personal and professional conduct that will enable our members to meet them.

1. Objectives of the code of conduct

2.1 The objectives of the code are:

* To explain how the co-operative principles and values are relevant to Everbrook Housing Co-operative as an organisation, and why they are relevant to all our members, whether or not they serve on the management committee.
* To define our business ethics and to explain why these ethics are important.
* To set out what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour at Co-operative meetings.
* To ensure that members, and especially committee members, are aware that they must declare any relevant interests and must not accept gifts or hospitality.
1. Breaches of the code

3.1 Everbrook Housing Co-operative will take very seriously any report that a member has breached the code of conduct. Breaches of the code should be reported to the management committee.

3.2 On receipt of an allegation that the code has been breached, the management committee will investigate and will then consider the matter at a committee meeting. Alternatively, the committee may appoint an independent expert to investigate in its place, and to recommend an appropriate course of action.

3.3 Any person who is alleged to have breached the code will be entitled to defend those allegations in person to the management committee.

3.4 If the management committee determines that there has been a breach of the code, the following sanctions will be available, subject always that the sanction is provided for in the rules, which may be amended from time to time:

* A reprimand and/or a request for an apology.
* Temporary suspension from the management committee.
* Temporary prohibition from attending general meetings.
* Removal from the management committee.
* Expulsion from the co-operative, subject always to a vote at a general meeting.
1. Personal behaviour at meetings

4.1 Everbrook Housing Co-operative will only be successful if our members put the co-operative’s interests above their own personal interests. Members must not allow their private interests to influence the way they vote at meetings or the decisions they take on our behalf.

4.2 There will be an agenda and order of business for each meeting. All the members attending the meeting will respect the agenda and will only propose changes to the order of business in the manner provided for by the standing orders. It shall be the responsibility of the chair to ensure that debates are kept to a proportionate length, and that all the items listed on the agenda are given a fair hearing.

4.3 We expect our members to treat each other with dignity and respect during meetings and to respect the authority of the chair. Whilst we recognise that there will on occasions be legitimate disagreement between members and we encourage constructive debate, disruptive, aggressive, and bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. The chair shall have the right to ask a member who persists in behaving aggressively or unreasonably to leave the meeting.

4.4 Respect for diversity and the promotion of equality are fundamental co-operative values. We expect all our members, both at meetings and elsewhere, to respect the rights and feelings of others, and not to make comments that may be considered racist, sexist, or homophobic, or that may otherwise offend sections of our community. The chair shall have the right to ask anyone whose language or conduct is persistently discriminatory or offensive to leave the meeting.

4.5 For our meetings to be effective, it is important that those attending behave rationally and responsibly. Members shall not attend meetings whilst their conduct or judgement is impaired due to the excessive consumption of alcohol or drugs. The chair shall have the right to ask any member who is disrupting a meeting to leave.

* 1. We aim to govern our co-operative democratically and transparently. This may sometimes mean that members of the committee are made party to private.

information about individual members or others. Such information will be kept strictly confidential by all concerned. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information will be treated as a breach of this code.

1. Declarations of interest.

5.1 Every member of the management committee will be expected to declare any private interests which might conflict with their role as a committee member with a duty to act in the interests of the co-operative. Examples of relevant interests include:

* A relationship (e.g., family, friendship, business relationship, employment) with a contractor or other supplier.
* A relationship with an applicant on the waiting list.
* A relationship with any organisation with which the co-operative has a contractual or statutory relationship.
* An investment or other financial interest in any organisation or individual with whom the co-operative does business invests.

5.2 Everbrook Housing Co-operative will maintain a register of interests. Each committee member should make a fresh declaration each year and when any new potential conflict of interest arises. Members with no relevant interests must also make a declaration to this effect.

5.3 When any member becomes aware that a matter is to be discussed at a committee meeting in relation to which they may face a conflict of interest, the member shall immediately make a declaration to the chair. The chair will then consider the declaration and may ask the member to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.

**6.**Gifts, Hospitality, and payment in kind.

6.1 No person acting on behalf of the co-operative shall make any offer of a gift, hospitality, or payment in kind to any person, company, or organisation. Any person making such an offer, whether the offer is accepted, will be in breach of this code.

**7**. Members’ expenses.

7.1 Members of Everbrook Housing Co-operative will have the right to claim for out-of-pocket expenses incurred whilst carrying out approved activities on behalf of the co-operative. The management committee will determine a procedure for claiming expenses, which may include the requirement that certain expenses are always pre-approved.

7.2 Expenses must be claimed using an expenses form and receipts must be provided. Any member making a fraudulent claim for expenses will be considered to have breached the code of conduct. The member may also have committed a criminal offence.

**8.** Policy Review.

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually. It will also be reviewed if there are changes to relevant legislation or to the regulatory framework.

**Agreed 0n ………………………………….**