

Application of the Councillors' Code of Conduct with regard to planning matters

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Why do we need the planning element of the code?

- Promote ethics and standards of behaviour
- Accountability
- Assurance to public
- New responsibilities for councillors
- Clarity and reassurance

What is the planning element of the code about?

- All principles and rules of conduct in the Code of Conduct apply to planning
- Lobbying and access to councillors
- Decision making
- Disclosure and declaration of interests

Consultation on the application of the code to planning

- Consultation closed 21 November
- Received 21 responses, 5 of whom had no comments to make beyond welcoming the guidance. 3 supported the composite return made by NILGA
- Other respondees included Housing Executive, Community Places, National Trust and the NI Ombudsman amongst others

Consultation on the application of the code to planning

- Some of the points raised include:
 - some saw it as quite detailed and considered an expanded list of dos and don'ts would be useful, with more examples;
 - others considered the level of detail to be necessary at this stage; and
 - some saw it as quite prescriptive while others wanted the language to be tougher – e.g. change 'should' to 'must' etc.