

APPENDIX 8 - THE NINE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE IN SCOTLAND

Nolan Principles

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee) identified seven principles of conduct underpinning public life "for the benefit of those who serve the public in any way" and recommended that public bodies should draw up Codes of Conduct incorporating these principles. The seven Nolan Principles are as follows:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Scottish Executive took the Nolan Committee recommendations one step further with the introduction of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 which brought in a statutory Code of Conduct for Board Members of Devolved Public Bodies and set up a Standards Commission for Scotland to oversee the ethical standards framework.

The Scottish Executive also identified nine key principles underpinning public life in Scotland, which incorporated the seven Nolan Principles and introduced two further principles.

Public Service

Holders of public office have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which they are a Board member and to act in accordance with the core tasks of the body.

Respect

Holders of public office must respect fellow members of their public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.