The Nolan Principles of Public Life

Introduction
In 1994, the UK government established a Committee on Standards in Public Life. The remit of the committee was to make recommendations to improve standards of behaviour in public life. The committee was chaired by Lord Nolan, and the first report of the committee established the seven principles of public life, also known as the “Nolan principles”.

What are the seven principles of public life?

- **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to 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 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.

Further information

- Corporate Governance

Is this an area of concern for you? Contact Leading Governance for more help.