SECTION 1

ETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES FACT SHEET

This fact sheet outlines the standard of conduct expected of councillors, employees and the business community when undertaking business with council, and acts as a guide to successful business relationships.

Council's Code of Conduct

Logan City Council councillors and employees are bound by codes of conduct. The codes of conduct act as guidelines to ensure the highest standards of integrity and accountability when undertaking business and Council expects the community and business to respect the obligations outlined under these codes.

This Code of Conduct for Staff (the Code) has been developed in response to changes to the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* which formed part of the state government's integrity and accountability reform for all public sector organisations. The Code of Conduct is intended to provide a set of standards and behaviours supported by our corporate values that inform the way we work and how Council's image and reputation outside of work is reflected, but is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all behavioural issues that staff can encounter.

The Code applies to all employees of Council and other persons who perform work on behalf of Council, such as contractors, agency staff and volunteers. The Code applies while we are in the workplace, during work activities and at work-related functions. The Code also applies where our activities or behaviours impact upon the image, reputation or activities of Council.

The Code is supported by our corporate values of Our People, Excellence, Leadership and Integrity. These values underpin the way in which we conduct our business, interact with our clients and stakeholders and how we operate as individuals and teams within and representing Logan City Council.

There are four ethical principles which form the basis of our Code of Conduct, these are:

- Integrity and impartiality;
- Promoting the public good;
- Commitment to the system of government; and
- Accountability and transparency.

Each of these ethical principles cover a wide range of areas that we encounter in our daily working lives. As part of the review of this Code, the standards and behaviours that support the ethical principles have been updated to reflect the more contemporary issues facing us as Council employees. These standards and behaviours are designed to guide our behaviour, thinking, actions and decision making. In brief these are:

Integrity & Impartiality:

- Customer service - we will all strive to provide excellent customer service.
- Fairness to suppliers - we will comply with Council's procedures in the procurement of goods and services for Council.
- Conflicts of interest - we will declare when a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest exists or may exist, between our role in Council and our external activities.
- Influences on decision making - we will not influence or attempt to influence any person in an improper way to try to obtain any advantages or favours.
- Accepting gifts and benefits - we will ensure that when we are offered or accept gifts/benefits in the course of our employment we do not create an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.
- Additional employment - we will ensure that if we hold additional employment outside of Council this does not impact or conflict with our role as a Council employee.
- Public comments on Council business - if authorised and required to comment on Council business, we will do so in accordance with Council policy. If commenting as a member of the public, we will ensure that it is clear we are expressing our personal opinion and have no readily identifiable links to Council.
- External activities - we will not use our position within Council or Council assets/equipment for personal gain in our external activities. We will ensure that our outside interests do not interfere or conflict with our performance as a Council employee.
- Behaviour towards each other - we will treat each other, our customers, clients and business partners with respect, honesty, fairness, sensitivity and dignity.

- Non-discriminatory workplace - we will aim to provide a workplace free from unlawful discrimination.
- Harassment, sexual harassment and bullying - we will aim to provide a workplace free from bullying and harassment behaviour.
- Privacy - we will manage information, particularly that which is personal, confidential or sensitive, in accordance with Council policies and legislative requirements.

Promoting the Public Good:

- Using Council assets - we will take great care of Council assets and equipment and ensure that they are used safely, economically and efficiently.
- Limited personal use (email, intranet and the internet) - we will ensure that any personal use of Council information and communication technologies does not affect our performance, incur unreasonable cost, breach the Code or Council policy, or damage the image or reputation of Council.
- Financial delegations and transactions - we will ensure that Council's finances are used appropriately and will follow the correct documentation and approval procedures.
- Intellectual property - we will respect the intellectual property rights of Council as well as those of individuals and organisations outside of Council.

Commitment to the System of Government:

- Acting within the law - we will comply with all legislation and statutory obligations relevant to Council as well as Council local laws, policies, delegations and management directives.
- Raising concerns - when raising concerns we will do so in a reasonable and constructive way and take responsibility for our comments and views.
- Reporting unethical conduct - we will report unethical conduct to our supervisors, managers or other senior officers. We will not stay silent on unethical conduct.
- Handling information - we will respect the rights of our customers and clients and will handle information in accordance with Council policies and legislation.
- Lobbyist - we will not knowingly engage in lobbying activities.

Accountability and Transparency:

- Diligence, care and attention - we will carry out our duties honestly, responsibly, in a conscientious and accountable manner and to the best of our abilities.
- Attendance at and absence from duty - we will notify our supervisors in a timely manner if we are unable to attend work.
- Advice given to elected officials - we will ensure that when providing information or advice to the Mayor or Councillors we do so in accordance with Council policy.
- Following lawful direction - we will fulfil the responsibilities of our role and the duties lawfully directed by our supervisor.
- Appropriate standard of dress and appearance - we will ensure that our dress and appearance reflects a professional image and shows respect to our customers and colleagues.
- Concern for the environment - we will take individual responsibility for protecting our natural environment
- Self-development - we will strive to maintain and improve our work performance and that of our team
- Workplace health and safety - we are committed to improving safety in the way we conduct our business and Council activities.
- Drug, alcohol and gambling - to maintain the trust and confidence of customers and the health and safety of ourselves and our colleagues we will ensure that we are not impaired by the effects of drugs and alcohol in the workplace.

These principles, the underpinning standards and behaviours, and our Corporate Values inform the way we work. These reflect how the Council's image and reputation is portrayed to the community which we service and the customers and clients with who we interact. By consistently applying these standards and behaviours and modelling our corporate values, we enhance the image and reputation of Council and the community's public trust and confidence in us.

How you can help

Understanding the ethical principles outlined in this fact sheet will help create positive relations between the business sector and Council. Council asks business operators and suppliers to:

- Respect ethical obligations of councillors and employees
- Avoid pressuring or inducing councillors and/or employees to depart from Council policy
- Avoid collusive and unfair practices
- Avoid and disclose conflicts of interest
- Maintain confidentiality of privileged Council information
- Provide accurate and complete information to Council
- Report corrupt business practices to Council's Fraud Prevention Advisor

Council considers unethical, fraudulent or corrupt conduct to be unacceptable. Councillors, employees, business and the community are encouraged to report any such matters or potential conflicts of interests to Council's Governance Branch on (07) 3412 5358. Reports will be dealt with promptly, professionally and confidentiality. Forms of protection are available for those who report such matters.

Suppliers should note that Council requires a purchase order to be received prior to supplying goods or services.

Benefits, Gifts, Hospitality & Gratuities

Offering personal benefits, gifts, gratuities, hospitality, travel or accommodation to councillors or Council employees is not encouraged. Councillors and employees may be required or may prefer to refuse benefits to avoid potential conflicts of interest that may compromise Council.

Tendering and Contracts

During tendering or contracting periods, current or potential suppliers are discouraged from offering any form of benefit to employees who are involved on the decision making process.

Responsible Reporting

Councillors and employees aspire to set a standard of excellence that will benefit the community, business operators and suppliers or Council.
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Ethical Principles - Councillors

Apart from their statutory responsibilities, under their code of conduct councillors have the following obligations:

- Integrity of Local Government - Act in a way that promotes and maintains the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of Council & its ability for good rule and government.
- Primacy of Public Interest - Act and make decisions in the public's interest and take appropriate actions to avoid, resolve or disclose conflicts of interest.
- Independence of action - Ensure they do not place themselves (or their families) under any financial obligation that may influence them in discharging their duties and responsibilities as councillors.
- Appropriate use of information - Ensure information received in the course of carrying out their duties is not misused, particularly for personal gain.
- Transparency and Scrutiny - Disclose financial interest for scrutiny by relevant bodies.
- Appropriate use of Entitlements - Ensure compliance with Logan City Council's Councillor Remuneration Policy.
- Ethical Principles - Employees - Under the code of conduct Council employees have the following obligations:

- Act lawfully, action lawful instructions and provide information and assistance according to legislation or policies.
- Respect for People - Show no favouritism, respond correctly to requests and ensure members of the public know their rights and receive their entitlements.
- Integrity - Act honestly and impartially without abusing available powers or resources and declare any conflict between personal interest and official duties. Conduct themselves in a way that strengthens public confidence in the system of government.
- Diligence - Observe procedural requirements when making decisions and make all reasonable efforts to provide high standards or service. Act in accordance with their duty of care under relevant legislation and policies and maintain high standards of government and public administration, avoiding negligent conduct.
- Economy and Efficiency - Effectively manage public resources (human, material, financial, intellectual property and information) to safeguard public assets and revenues. Ensure efficient programs and service delivery.