

Tamworth Regional Council
Statement of Business Ethics
Published in 2010



INTRODUCTION - Trim No SF4782

Tamworth Regional Council is committed to high ethical standards and this Statement of Business Ethics sets out the standards the Council requires of Council officials (Councillors, staff and delegates), contractors and their staff, and, other business associates.

It is essential that all Council officials, contractors and their staff, and, other business associates work together to maintain a reputation of ethical excellence.

The standards contained in this Statement are based on those in Council's Management Plan and Council's Code of Conduct.

In dealing with Council private sector personnel are responsible for maintaining high ethical standards in all contract work. Tamworth Regional Council expects all parties to perform their duties with integrity, honesty and fairness.

COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Council's Code of Conduct describes a number of key principles that sets out standards of conduct that meet these principles and statutory provisions applicable to local government activities.

These eight principles are:-

- Integrity
- Leadership
- Selflessness
- Impartiality
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Respect

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM COUNCIL

When doing business with the private sector, Council officials are accountable for their actions and are expected to:-

- Be accountable and act in the public interest
- Respect and follow Council's policies and procedures, and abide by the law
- Promote fair and open competition while seeking best value for money
- Avoid personal conflicts of interest with public duty
- Respond promptly to reasonable requests for advice and information
- Not solicit or accept any benefit from a provider for the discharge of official duties
- Protect confidential information
- Assess applications objectively, considering all relevant and material factors
- Use public resources effectively and efficiently
- Deal fairly, honestly and ethically with all individuals and organisations

WHAT COUNCIL ASKS OF YOU

Council requires that all private sector providers of goods and services observe the following principles when doing business with the Council:-

- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with the Council
- Respect the conditions set out in documents supplied by Council
- Respect the obligations of Council staff to abide by Council's policies and procedures
- Abstain from collusive practices and not act secretly or fraudulently
- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information when required
- Declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as possible
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent the disclosure of confidential Council information
- Refrain from lobbying or canvassing Councillors or members of staff during the tender process

- Refrain from offering Council employees or Councillors bribes or gifts of any financial or other inducement which may give any impression of unfair advantage
- Corrupt acts such as bribes or gifts or any financial or other inducements are not acceptable and if offered will be reported by Council to the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)
- Refrain from discussing Council business or dealings in the media, except with Council's consent
- Assist the Council to prevent unethical and fraudulent practices in our business relationships when discussing Council business or dealings in the media
- Deliver value for money

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

If a conflict of interest in your work with Council exists or arises, you must disclose it to the Council. A conflict of interest arises if your own interests, or those of other people close to you, conflict with your obligations to the Council.

A conflict would exist where you have a personal interest, or your relative, company, employer or other person known to you has an interest, that could lead you to be influenced in the way you carry out your duties for the Council.

REPORTING CORRUPTION, MALADMINISTRATION AND WASTAGE

When contracted to Tamworth Regional Council you are considered to be a public official for the purposes of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Act and subject to the ICAC's jurisdiction.

When doing work for the Council you have a responsibility to report any suspected instances of corruption, maladministration or serious and substantial waste of the resources of the Council.

Alternatively you can report any suspected instances of corruption to the ICAC or maladministration to the Ombudsman.

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

You must take care to maintain the security of any confidential or personal information you become aware of in your work with the Council.

You must abide by the privacy legislation governing the collection, holding, use, correction, disclosure or transfer of personal information obtained through your dealings with the Council.

Personal information is any information about a person where you know who the person is or you can guess who the person is. No one should access, use or remove from Council premises any Council information or personal information, unless they need it for their work with the Council and have authorisation to use or disclose the information.

Any breach of the security, or misuse, of the Council's confidential or personal information must be reported to the Council's Director of Corporate and Governance (Public Officer).

COUNCIL RESOURCES

Council resources including materials, equipment, vehicles, documents, records, data and information, may only be used to do work for the Council with Council's approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

You must not make any public comment or statement that would lead anyone to believe that you are expressing the views or policies of Council.

This includes comments or statements made at public and community meetings, via the media, or when it is reasonably foreseeable that the comments, or statements, will become known to the public at large.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

No one should come to work for the Council, or return to work, under the influence of alcohol; or, other drugs that could impair their ability to carry out their job or cause danger to the safety of themselves or others.

OFFERS OF SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT TO COUNCIL STAFF

If you offer a Council staff member a second job, whilst they are still employed with the Council, the Council staff member will need to seek approval from Council's General Manager.

Approval will not be given if the second job could conflict with their official duties with the Council.

GIFTS OR BENEFITS

Gifts or benefits must not be offered to any Council official, which is designed to gain an advantage for yourself or your organisation, or which the public could reasonably see as likely to cause that Council official to depart from his or her proper course of duty.

Token gifts may be given or accepted if the gift is not likely to be seen as compromising. Council officials should not accept any gift in relation to their work at Council, which could influence, or be seen to influence, their impartiality in relation to the work or services that you are providing to Council. Cash must never, in any circumstances, be offered to a Council official.

If a gift or benefit is offered to a Council official to influence the way they do their work, they must report it immediately under the Council's policies and procedures.

BREACHES OF THE CODE

Failure to comply with this Statement of Business Ethics may cause penalty clauses in a contract with Council to be invoked and/or civil or criminal proceedings to be brought or other action considered appropriate by Tamworth Regional Council.

SPONSORSHIP

Tamworth Regional Council seeks and receives requests for financial and/or in-kind sponsorship from organisations, businesses or individuals to support specific events, promotions or other activities of Council.

It is essential that any sponsorship does not limit the Council's ability to carry out its functions fully and impartially nor will sponsorship influence a Council decision.

All sponsorship arrangements must comply with Council's *Sponsorship Policy*.

TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT

Council is committed to the standards in this Statement of Business Ethics. This Statement reflects the high standards expected by our community and you are expected to maintain these standards and principles when undertaking work for, or on behalf of Council.

If you have any questions, or are unsure about any matter relating to this Statement of Business Ethics you can contact Council's Director of Corporate and Governance.

**For further information regarding this brochure contact the Director of
Corporate and Governance - (02) 6767 5438
or visit our website - www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au**