
Statement of Business Ethics

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1. PURPOSE

This statement provides guidance for all sectors of the Community when conducting business with Shoalhaven City Council.

2. STATEMENT

This statement applies to all dealings between Council and sectors of the community when conducting business with Shoalhaven City Council. It outlines Council's aims to:

- Build and maintain ethical relationships with all sectors of the community - public and private sector.
- Encourage transparency and accountability in all dealings including lending, contracting, supply of goods and services and business partnerships.
- Ensure other sector partners understand Council's public duty obligations.
- Manage the potential risk and misunderstanding that can occur in business transactions between the public and private sectors.
- Maintain corruption-resistant, ethical work practices.

3. PROVISIONS

3.1. Council's Business Ethics

All Councillors, staff and delegates of Shoalhaven City Council are required to comply with its adopted Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct has been developed to assist Council officials to:

- Understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them.
- Enable them to fulfil their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and due diligence.
- Act in a way that enhances public confidence in the integrity of local government.

In all procurement dealings, Council will act in a manner that is honest, impartial, ethical, fair and consistent.

3.2. Confidentiality of Commercial Information

Whilst Council promotes the principles of public openness and transparency, on occasions this must be balanced against the need to ensure that businesses are not disadvantaged through the disclosure of their business affairs. Council will therefore consider the nature and sensitivity of information and if necessary consult with the contractor before publicly disclosing information in accordance with the requirements of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.

With regard to the purchases of goods and services, Council and its representatives will make decisions based on the principle of value for money. This means Council will balance all relevant (price and non-price) factors including quality, reliability, service, timeliness, and whole of life cost.

3.3. What to expect from Council staff and representatives

Council will ensure that all policies, procedures and practices related to contracting, purchase of goods and services and tendering are consistent with best practice and the highest standards of ethical conduct. Council staff are accountable for their actions having regard to the Code of Conduct, and are expected to:

- Use public resources effectively and efficiently.
- Avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest.
- Deal honestly, fairly and ethically with all individuals and organisations.

All Council procurement dealings will be underpinned by the following guidelines:

- Energy-efficient products containing recycled material and which are environmentally friendly will be purchased wherever reasonably possible.
- All potential contractors will be treated with fairness, given equal access to information and opportunities to submit bids.
- The Council will not disclose confidential or proprietary information without lawful excuse.

3.4. What Council expects from Contractors and Suppliers.

When dealing with Council staff or representatives, Council expects contractors and suppliers to:

- Comply with Council's procurement policies and procedures.
- Declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware of the conflict.
- Not engage in any form of collusive practices including offering employees inducements or incentives that may be designed to, or interpreted as, improperly influencing the conduct of their duties.
- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council.
- Assist the Council to prevent unethical practices in our business relationships.

Contractors and suppliers need to be aware that the offering of gifts or benefits to Councillors, staff and delegates are generally prohibited. (refer Part 5 "Personal Benefit" of Council's Code of Conduct).

3.5. Further Information

Further information in regard to the conduct required of staff, Councillors and delegates can be found in Council's Code of Conduct and any enquiries in that regard should be directed to the Public Officer.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy shall be administered through the General Manager's Group.

5. REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed within one year of the election of each new Council, or earlier should circumstances arise to warrant revision.

6. APPLICATION OF ESD PRINCIPLES

This Policy supports Council's commitment to ESD principles through requiring the consideration of energy efficiency and recycled component of goods provided to Council.