

Introduction

This Code of Conduct is the Model Code of Conduct made by Order of the Minister for Planning and Local Government.

Model Code of Conduct

PART 1 - Decision making

- 1.** A councillor must bring an open and unprejudiced mind to all matters being decided upon in the course of his or her duties, including when making planning decisions as part of the Council's role as a Planning Authority.
- 2.** A councillor must make decisions free from personal bias or prejudgement.
- 3.** In making decisions, a councillor must give genuine and impartial consideration to all relevant information known to him or her, or of which he or she should have reasonably been aware.
- 4.** A councillor must make decisions solely on merit and must not take irrelevant matters or circumstances into account when making decisions.

PART 2 - Conflict of interest

- 1.** When carrying out his or her public duty, a councillor must not be unduly influenced, nor be seen to be unduly influenced, by personal or private interests that he or she may have.
- 2.** A councillor must act openly and honestly in the public interest.
- 3.** A councillor must uphold the principles of transparency and honesty and declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest at any meeting of the Council and at any workshop or any meeting of a body to which the councillor is appointed or nominated by the Council.
- 4.** A councillor must act in good faith and exercise reasonable judgement to determine whether he or she has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.
- 5.** A councillor must avoid, and remove himself or herself from, positions of conflict of interest as far as reasonably possible.
- 6.** A councillor who has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest in a matter before the Council must –
 - (a)** declare the conflict of interest before discussion on the matter begins; and
 - (b)** act in good faith and exercise reasonable judgement to determine whether the conflict of interest is so material that it requires removing himself or herself physically from any Council discussion and remaining out of the room until the matter is decided by the Council.

PART 3 - Use of Office

1. The actions of a councillor must not bring the Council or the office of councillor into disrepute.
2. A councillor must not take advantage, or seek to take advantage, of his or her office or status to improperly influence others in order to gain an undue, improper, unauthorised or unfair benefit or detriment for himself or herself or any other person or body.
3. In his or her personal dealings with the Council (for example as a ratepayer, recipient of a Council service or planning applicant), a councillor must not expect nor request, expressly or implicitly, preferential treatment for himself or herself or any other person or body.

PART 4 - Use of resources

1. A councillor must use Council resources appropriately in the course of his or her public duties.
2. A councillor must not use Council resources for private purposes except as provided by Council policies and procedures.
3. A councillor must not allow the misuse of Council resources by any other person or body.
4. A councillor must avoid any action or situation which may lead to a reasonable perception that Council resources are being misused by the councillor or any other person or body.

PART 5 - Use of information

1. A councillor must protect confidential Council information in his or her possession or knowledge, and only release it if he or she has the authority to do so.
2. A councillor must only access Council information needed to perform his or her role and not for personal reasons or non-official purposes.
3. A councillor must not use Council information for personal reasons or non-official purposes.
4. A councillor must only release Council information in accordance with established Council policies and procedures and in compliance with relevant legislation.

PART 6 - Gifts and benefits

1. A councillor may accept an offer of a gift or benefit if it directly relates to the carrying out of the councillor's public duties and is appropriate in the circumstances.
2. A councillor must avoid situations in which the appearance may be created that any person or body, through the provisions of gifts or benefits of any kind, is securing (or attempting to secure) influence or a favour from the councillor or the Council.
3. A councillor must carefully consider –

- (a) the apparent intent of the giver of the gift or benefit; and
 - (b) the relationship the councillor has with the giver; and
 - (c) whether the giver is seeking to influence his or her decisions or actions, or seeking a favour in return for the gift or benefit.
4. A councillor must not solicit gifts or benefits in the carrying out of his or her duties.
 5. A councillor must not accept an offer of cash, cash-like gifts (such as gift cards and vouchers) or credit.
 6. A councillor must not accept a gift or benefit if the giver is involved in a matter which is before the Council.
 7. A councillor may accept an offer of a gift or benefit that is token in nature (valued at less than \$50) or meets the definition of a token gift or benefit (if the Council has a gifts and benefits policy).
 8. If the Council has a gifts register, a councillor who accepts a gift or benefit must record it in the relevant register.

PART 7 - Relationships with community, councillors and Council employees

1. A councillor –
 - (a) must treat all persons with courtesy, fairness, dignity and respect; and
 - (b) must not cause any reasonable person offence or embarrassment; and
 - (c) must not bully or harass any person.
2. A councillor must listen to, and respect, the views of other councillors in Council and committee meetings and any other proceedings of the Council, and endeavour to ensure that issues, not personalities, are the focus of debate.
3. A councillor must not influence, or attempt to influence, any Council employee or delegate of the Council, in the exercise of the functions of the employee or delegate.
4. A councillor must not contact or issue instructions to any of the Council's contractors or tenderers, without appropriate authorisation.
5. A councillor must not contact an employee of the Council in relation to Council matters unless authorised by the General Manager of the Council.

PART 8 - Representation

1. When giving information to the community, a councillor must accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council.

2. A councillor must not knowingly misrepresent information that he or she has obtained in the course of his or her duties.
3. A councillor must not speak on behalf of the Council unless specifically authorised or delegated by the Mayor or Lord Mayor.
4. A councillor must clearly indicate when he or she is putting forward his or her personal views.
5. A councillor's personal views must not be expressed in such a way as to undermine the decisions of the Council or bring the Council into disrepute.
6. A councillor must show respect when expressing personal views publicly.
7. The personal conduct of a councillor must not reflect, or have the potential to reflect, adversely on the reputation of the Council.
8. When representing the Council on external bodies, a councillor must strive to understand the basis of the appointment and be aware of the ethical and legal responsibilities attached to such an appointment.

PART 9 - Variation of Code of Conduct

1. Any variation of this model code of conduct is to be in accordance with section 28T of the Act.