

Moreton Bay Regional Council
Employee Code of Conduct

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Message from the CEO

In my view, most people tend to judge others by what they say and do, and also how they say and do...

That applies to all of us that work with Moreton Bay Regional Council.

As the provider of civic facilities and services to the residents of our region, the communities that we serve have every right to expect that we do actually conduct ourselves in accord with the values we espouse; respect, service, integrity, teamwork and sustainability.

All council employees, contractors and volunteers need to be aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

This Code of Conduct outlines the standard of conduct required of council personnel. I consider it a privilege to be able to serve our communities, so each of us should strive to meet and in fact exceed these standards at all times.

Thank you.

Greg Chemello
Chief Executive Officer

Code Objective

The objective of Council's *Employee Code of Conduct* is to provide standards of conduct for employees in the performance of their duties. Nothing in this Code interferes with employees' rights as private citizens or ratepayers.

The Code does not specifically cover every situation. However, the values, ethics, standards and behaviours outlined are a reference point to help make decisions and guide behaviours in situations not specifically covered.

When acting in good faith and in keeping with the letter and spirit of the Code, employees can expect to be supported by colleagues, supervisors/team leaders/coordinators/managers and by Council.

A 'guide to ethical decision making' is included in Appendix B to help employees assess situations and make informed decisions on the appropriate action to take.

Who does the Code apply to?

The Code applies to the following individuals:

- (a) Permanent, temporary and casual employees.
- (b) Contractors.
- (c) Volunteers.

In other words, everyone who performs duties for or represents Council. We all directly or indirectly serve the community.

When does the Code apply?

The Code applies at all times when performing official duties or representing Moreton Bay Regional Council.

Official duties or representation includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Conferences.
- (b) Training events.
- (c) Business trips.
- (d) Attending work related social events.
- (e) Publicly commenting as a private citizen about Council business.

Council Statement

Moreton Bay Regional Council aims to conduct its business with integrity, honesty and fairness and to comply with all relevant laws, regulations, codes and corporate standards.

All Council employees should

- display the highest standards of behaviour when dealing with customers and each other
- encourage a culture where ethical conduct is recognised, valued and followed at all levels
- ensure appropriate action is taken to prevent fraud and corruption.

Council actively supports, encourages and develops its employees to work safely, be customer focussed, use technology and Council assets effectively, adapt to change and improve their own capabilities, contribute to Council's aims and Community Plan obligations, as well as to the Corporate and Operational Plans' objectives.

Council's Corporate Values

Moreton Bay Regional Council proudly upholds the following values in its daily operations with customers, external partners and staff:

Council's Corporate Values (cont'd)

Respect – starting point

- We listen to people
- We treat people fairly and consistently
- We embrace diversity and opinions
- We treat others as we wish to be treated

Service – this is what we do

- We seek to understand the needs of those we serve
- We strive to exceed expectations
- We communicate clearly
- We take a positive approach
- We are proud to serve our community

Integrity – how we do it

- We are ethical and honest
- We take responsibility for our actions
- We act within statute and law
- We take pride in the manner in which we perform our duties

Teamwork – working together

- We promote a friendly, supportive work environment
- We inspire and encourage innovation
- We develop and maintain relationships
- We work collectively to achieve common goals
- We work collaboratively with our community and external partners

Sustainability – outcome

- We focus on the future
- We respect the environment
- We demonstrate leadership by example

Legislative Principles

The *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* identifies four fundamental ethical principles that guide employee behaviour and which form the basis for this Code. The four principles are:

1. Integrity and Impartiality
2. Promoting the Public Good
3. Commitment to the System of Government
4. Accountability and Transparency

The *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* and the *Local Government Act 2009* requires all employees to observe the above ethical principles and to comply with this Code.

The *Local Government Act 2009* also requires that the Council's actions be consistent with the following principles:

- a) transparent and effective processes and decision-making in the public interest
- b) sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services
- c) democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement
- d) good governance of, and by, local government
- e) ethical and legal behaviour of councillors and local government employees

These legislated principles, together with Council's corporate values, form the basis of this Code and should guide employees' thinking, actions and decision-making.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE ... Integrity and Impartiality

In recognition that public office involves public trust, employees are required to promote public confidence in the integrity of the public sector and:

- (a) be committed to the highest ethical standards
- (b) accept and value their duty to provide advice which is objective, independent, apolitical and impartial
- (c) show respect towards all persons, including other employees, clients and the general public
- (d) acknowledge the primacy of the public interest and undertake to resolve any conflict of interest issue or appropriately manage in favour of the public interest
- (e) be committed to honest, fair and respectful engagement with the community

Operationally, for employees this means upholding the following standards of conduct and behaviours:

Customer service

All Council employees will strive to provide excellent customer service and will treat members of the public with honesty, fairness, sensitivity and dignity.

All Council employees serve ratepayers, directly or indirectly. Customers have a right to complain to Council and whilst employees should make all reasonable efforts to help customers lodge complaints, if they think a situation is threatening or intimidating they are entitled to withdraw and report the situation to their supervisor. If in doubt, they should ask for assistance from a more experienced colleague, or team leader/supervisor/coordinator/manager.

Fairness to suppliers

Council has established policies, directives and delegations of authority for various aspects of procurement of goods and services and carrying out of works.

Council employees will comply with these procedures when seeking suppliers for goods or services or for carrying out of works.

If an employee has responsibility for offering contracts or buying goods and services from outside Council, they must be sure they have taken reasonable, fair and consistent steps to allow all potential suppliers to bid in accordance with procurement processes.

Employees also need to ensure that they do not incur any liability or enter into any contract on behalf of Council or alter the terms or conditions of any contract which Council has already entered into - unless they are authorised to do so.

For further information, refer to Council's policy - Procurement.

Conflict of interest

When making decisions Council employees should declare and appropriately manage any conflict of interest.

A conflict of interest involves a conflict between an employee's official duties and responsibilities in serving the public interest and their private interests. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses as well as gaining a personal advantage - whether financial or otherwise. This includes advantages to relatives and friends.

If an employee considers that in the view of a reasonable person they have a conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, they should inform their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager immediately and if necessary declare the conflict of interest by following corporate processes. Until the matter is resolved, they will make sure they are not part of any decision-making processes relating to the matter.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE ... Integrity and Impartiality (cont'd)

If an employee feels they have a conflict of interest between professional and corporate values, they should discuss it with their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager.

All conflicts of interest must be managed appropriately and resolved in the public interest.

For further information, refer to Council's policy - Conflict of Interest.

Influences on decision-making

Council employees should not influence any person or allow themselves to be influenced in any improper way to obtain any advantages or favours. All decisions need to be fair and transparent. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including clear record keeping and showing how decisions were made.

Employees should not in any way misrepresent their qualifications, experience or expertise in any recruitment and selection process.

'A guide to ethical decision-making' in Appendix B has more information on this.

All decisions must be made in the best interests of the Moreton Bay Regional Council community as a whole.

Accepting gifts and benefits

Occasionally employees may be offered gifts or benefits from people with whom they do business. Employees can accept gifts or benefits in certain circumstances, however they must not accept any gift or benefit if there is a possibility that in doing so they could create a conflict of interest (real, perceived or potential). For example, they should ask themselves if accepting the gift or benefit in the view of a reasonable person, could suggest that the giver may, or would, receive favourable treatment. All gifts and/or benefits must be declared if accepted.

For further information, refer to Council's policy - Gifts, Sponsored Hospitality Benefits, Awards & Prizes.

Employment outside Council (secondary employment)

Some employees may wish to pursue additional employment over and above their official duties as a Council employee. The Chief Executive Officer's approval must be obtained prior to engaging in the additional employment activity in accordance with Council's policy.

Approved outside employment is conditional upon the following requirements:

- a) That no conflict of interest exists or develops between private employment and their official duties.
- b) That their private employment has no effect on the performance of their official duties. This includes effects from a safety/fatigue management perspective.
- c) That their private employment does not involve the use of Council resources (physical, technological or intellectual).
- d) Pursuant to section 198 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, where an employee seeks to be employed by more than one local government at the same time, approval of each of the local governments is required prior to being appointed to the second position.

Although employees do not need written approval if undertaking voluntary work or a hobby, they do need to give consideration as to whether there is any conflict of interest with their duties within the organisation. If they are unsure they should discuss this with their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager.

For further information, refer to Council's policy - Outside Employment.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE ... Integrity and Impartiality (cont'd)

Public comment on Council business

Generally, Councillors comment publicly on Council business. Council business can be topical, sensitive and controversial and there is a process to be followed when making public comments.

If an employee is asked to comment on any Council matter by the media or public relation companies/businesses, they should refer the request to Council's Communications Department.

Council employees must not discuss or release information relating to their employment in forums not relevant to their work if it involves information not available to the public. This includes comments made by employees on Facebook, Twitter or similar social media forums.

External activities

Employees are not to take part in political affairs whilst on duty. Council's ICT systems, including internet access and e-mail, must not be used for external activities such as political messages or for circulating defamatory or disparaging remarks against individuals, groups or organisations.

If an employee comments publicly in connection with such activities, they must make it clear that the comments represent their opinion as a private individual or as a member of the external organisation and not their opinion as a Council employee.

Behaviour towards each other

Council employees will treat each other with trust, respect, fairness, sensitivity and dignity. Employees who supervise or manage other employees have a special responsibility to model this kind of behaviour and ensure that the employees they supervise understand the standard of performance and behaviour that is expected from them.

Employees need to accommodate and respect different opinions and perspectives and manage disagreements by rational debate. They should not behave towards any other person in a way that could be perceived as intimidating, overbearing or bullying.

Effective teamwork is an essential part of a productive workplace culture. Each team member needs to work cooperatively with fellow employees and actively and willingly take part in team activities e.g. meetings.

For further information, refer to Council's corporate directives:

- Harassment, Discrimination & Workplace Bullying
- Equity and Diversity

Non-discriminatory workplace

Council is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace free from unlawful discrimination. All employees should ensure that discrimination is not part of our workplace or our practices.

For further information, refer to Council's corporate directives:

- Harassment, Discrimination & Workplace Bullying
- Equity and Diversity

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE ... Integrity and Impartiality (cont'd)

Harassment

Council is committed to providing an environment that is free of any form of harassment, either of employees or the public. Employees need to contribute to building a workplace that tolerates differences and which is free from intimidation, bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

For further information, refer to Council's corporate directives:

- Harassment, Discrimination & Workplace Bullying
- Equity and Diversity

Privacy

Council has information about individuals, businesses and commercial issues which is private and sensitive and which could be harmful if released. Council employees should only access information and records they require to perform their duties.

Employees must keep this information confidential at all times and comply with Council's Information Privacy Plan.

Employees can maintain privacy by:

- not discussing work matters with persons not entitled to know such information
- taking responsibility to safeguard confidential files and information
- ensuring that all personal information concerning individuals is collected and used in compliance with the Information Privacy Principles contained in the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE ... Promoting the Public Good

In recognition that the public sector is the mechanism through which the elected representatives of Council deliver programs and services for the benefit of the people of Moreton Bay Region, employees are required to:

- (a) accept and value their duty to be responsible to both the requirements of Council and to the public interest
- (b) accept and value their duty to engage the community in developing and effecting official public sector priorities, policies and decisions
- (c) accept and value their duty to manage public resources effectively, efficiently and economically
- (d) value and seek to achieve excellence in service delivery
- (e) value and seek to achieve enhanced integration of services to better service clients

Operationally, for employees this means upholding the following standards of conduct and behaviours:

Using Council Assets

Council's assets include property, plant, equipment, information systems, computing resources, goods, products and valuables (this includes surplus material, waste material and off-cuts).

If an employee is in charge of assets they must take good care of them while they are in their possession or use, and ensure they are used safely, economically and efficiently.

It is an offence to misuse, or allow anyone else to misuse, Council assets. Employees must ensure Council assets are secured against theft and properly stored, maintained and repaired.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE ... Promoting the Public Good (cont'd)

If an asset is stolen or misplaced, it must be reported to their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager.

Employees must ensure that the use of Council assets is only for official Council business unless written approval has been granted by their manager.

Surplus or obsolete Council assets or materials are to be disposed of correctly.

When an employee leaves Council, they must return all Council property (including items with identifiable logo, swipe cards, name badges, uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and work related documents) to their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager.

For further information, refer to Council's corporate directive - Disposal of Property, Plant, Equipment and Scrap Material.

Fixed and Mobile Telecommunications - reasonable use

Employees must ensure the use of mobile or fixed devices is as cost effective as possible by:

- (a) Only using mobile devices (calls and data) for work related purposes.
- (b) Considering the cost effectiveness of the type of call.
- (c) Taking reasonable care to prevent accidental damage, loss or theft of Council's devices.

For further information, refer to Council's policy - Fixed and Mobile Telecommunications Appropriate Usage.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Systems

Council's ICT systems are to be used for carrying out Council business and not for personal business.

For further information, refer to Council's policy - Use of Council's Information and Communication Technology Systems.

General Purchasing, credit cards and petty cash

Should an employee have any reason to incur an expense in the workplace, they are to ensure that the expense is for a legitimate activity of Council. Employees should follow the correct procedure and have appropriate authority, as well as seek approval prior to incurring the expense.

There are a number of policies and directives relating to financial delegation, credit cards, petty cash, fuel cards and cash handling and these should be referred to prior to incurring the expense.

Council's policies and directives in this regard include:

- Corporate policy - Procurement
- Corporate directive - Petty Cash Guidelines
- Corporate directive - Purchasing Card Guidelines
- Corporate directive - General Purchasing Guidelines
- Corporate directive - Establishment and Use of Approved Purchasing Arrangements

Intellectual Property

Any original work, invention or product employees contribute to in association with their work remains Council property and they must not publish or disclose any matters relating to this intellectual property without appropriate authority.

Council employees retain the intellectual property rights to original or creative work produced outside the course of their employment where there is no link to their official duties.

Employees should not infringe the *Copyright Act 1968* or any other law relating to intellectual property by unlawfully using the intellectual property of any individual or organisation. For example, they should not store or keep audio, video or media files, printed media or software without the appropriate licence or approval, on Council's assets.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE ... Commitment to the System of Government

In recognition that the public sector has a duty to uphold the system of government and the laws of the State, Commonwealth and Local Government employees should at all times:

- (a) accept and value their duty to uphold the system of government and the laws of the State, the Commonwealth and Local Government
- (b) commit to effecting official public sector priorities, policies and decisions professionally and impartially
- (c) accept and value their duty to operate within the framework of Ministerial responsibility to government, the Parliament and the community

Operationally, for employees this means upholding the following standards of conduct and behaviours:

Acting within the law

Employees will comply with all legislation and other statutory obligations relevant to Council's operation.

Council's local laws, policies and directives and standard operating procedures apply to all employees and can be found on Council's intranet and web site.

It is generally accepted for an employee to question or raise concerns in relation to their work. In certain circumstances they also have a duty to raise issues e.g. where they think there is an imminent risk to the safety of themselves or others, or if they think that a direction may be in breach of the law or other operating procedure.

Employees will comply with all reasonable management directions, legislation and other statutory obligations relevant to Council. When an employee has raised a suggestion or concern, they are required to work as lawfully directed by their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager except when there is an imminent risk to safety. If the matter cannot be resolved within the work group it should immediately be referred to their manager.

Should an employee be convicted in any court of a criminal offence, they are required to immediately report the circumstances to their manager.

Employees are required at all times to be appropriately licensed, qualified or certified to fulfil the requirements of their position. If any of these are revoked or lapse for any reason, they are immediately to inform their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager.

Fraud and Corruption

Fraud and corruption pose a serious risk to Council, the potential damage extends well beyond any financial losses and threatens both the Council's and individual's integrity.

Fraud and corruption can take many forms. Fraud is normally the deliberate, intentional and premeditated dishonest action that causes actual or potential loss to any person or organisation. Corruption is the breach of trust in the performance of an official duty.

Examples are:

- Theft of money, assets or other property;
- The deliberate falsification, concealment or destruction of documentation; or
- The improper use of information or position.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE ... Commitment to the System of Government (cont'd)

Council has adopted the following guiding principles:

- Prevention of fraud and corruption is an integral part of Council business processes and the responsibility of all employees;
- Employees are accountable for their own conduct;
- Employees are required to report fraudulent and corrupt activities, and will be supported in doing so; and
- The use of integrated risk management principles to contain or minimise risk of fraud and corruption.

This Code will help to provide the expectations and standards of ethical behaviour within Council. Fraud and corruption can result from departures of these expected standards of behaviour.

For more information please see:

- Council policy - Fraud & Corruption Control
- Corporate directive - Disposal of Property, Plant, Equipment and Scrap Material

Raising concerns

All employees have the right to comment on, or raise concerns about Council's policies and practices where they impact on their employment however, they should do this in a reasonable and constructive way, utilising the appropriate Council processes, and they should take responsibility for their comments and views.

When raising concerns or grievances, employees are expected to act with honesty and in good faith. As such, complaints or grievances which are considered malicious, vexatious or frivolous will not be progressed. Council's disciplinary process should apply if an employee knowingly raises any such malicious, vexatious or frivolous complaint or grievance.

For further information refer to Council's current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement - Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedure.

Handling Confidential Information

Employees must comply with Council's Information Privacy Plan, which assumes that all information given to Council, managed by Council or produced by Council is confidential and will only be released by an authorised process.

Employees must not access or interfere with information from other work sources which is not required or relevant to their role. Examples of this include where an employee has made a complaint in their capacity as a ratepayer and uses Council's corporate information system to track the progress of the complaint.

If an employee requires access to information that is not available administratively, they should apply under the *Right to Information Act 2009* or the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Lobbyists

Under the provisions of the *Integrity Act 2009* persons covered by this Code are to ensure that they do not knowingly engage in lobbying activities with unregistered lobbyists. Employees should refer to the Guidelines for the undertaking of lobbying activities on Council's webpage for further information regarding any involvement with lobbyists.

Unauthorised Recording

To protect employees Council prohibits the unauthorised recording of employees, regardless of the circumstances. Unauthorised recording in the workplace is considered workplace harassment and is in breach of the Code.

For more information refer to Council's policy - Unauthorised Recording.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE ... Accountability and Transparency

In recognition that public trust in public office requires high standards of public administration, Council employees are to:

- (a) commit to exercising proper diligence, care and attention
- (b) commit to using public resources in an effective and accountable way
- (c) commit to managing information as openly as practicable within the legal framework
- (d) value and seek to achieve high standards of public administration
- (e) value and seek to innovate and continuously improve performance
- (f) value and seek to operate within a framework of mutual obligation and shared responsibility between public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials

Operationally, for employees this means upholding the following standards of conduct and behaviours:

Diligence, care and attention

Council aims to conduct its business with integrity, honesty and fairness and to achieve the highest standards in service delivery.

Employees contribute to this aim by carrying out their duties honestly and responsibly, in a conscientious and accountable manner and to the best of their ability.

This includes:

- behaving and acting in accordance with Council's Corporate Values and the principles in this Code
- giving priority to official duties over personal duties during work time
- helping Council achieve its mission and goals by acting to improve systems and practices
- conducting themselves in a way so others gain confidence and trust in the way Council does business
- not allowing their conduct to distract or prevent others from working
- not exposing Council to legal liability as a result of their negligence or breach of any law, policy or directive.

If employees are responsible for managing or supervising others, they should also ensure that:

- they model the values and principles outlined in this Code and ensure that employees within their area of responsibility understand and comply with the Code
- they do not come under a financial obligation to any employee they supervise or manage
- their work, and the work of those they supervise, contributes to the achievement of Council's goals
- employee time is not wasted, abused or misused
- employee performance is monitored and individuals given constructive and relevant feedback in line with procedures
- where practicable, employees are given training opportunities to assist them in developing their careers
- resourcing levels for a work team are neither excessive nor inadequate for the job
- employees who collect, handle or disburse public money are properly supervised
- employee work times, overtime, allowances and absences are correctly recorded on time sheets and pay summary reports
- appropriate action is taken if breaches of this Code occur.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE ... Accountability and Transparency (cont'd)

Attendance and absences from duty

Employees are expected to follow agreed working arrangements in relation to attendance. This includes not being absent without approval and accurately and truthfully recording work and leave periods.

Absence without approval or a reasonable excuse can create concern for their safety and unproductive time for others. Employees are expected to verbally report unplanned absences to their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager prior to their commencement time. Failure to do so is considered unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence may result in deductions in salary/pay for the period of absence and/or disciplinary action.

Advice given to elected officials

Councillors may request advice from an employee only in accordance with Council's policy - Acceptable Requests by Councillors for Advice or Information Guidelines and section 170A of the *Local Government Act 2009*. This policy is available on Council's intranet.

If an employee believes there is a conflict between a request from a councillor in relation to the requirements of these Guidelines, they should discuss this with their supervisor/team leader/coordinator/manager.

Appropriate standard of dress and appearance

Council employees are expected to be well-groomed and wear either Council's corporate uniform or to dress in a manner which reflects a professional image and is appropriate to their work activities and shows responsibility to serving our customers and working with our colleagues.

For further guidance in this regard, refer to Council's corporate directive - Dress Code and Personal Grooming.

Concern for the environment

All employees share a level of responsibility to protect our natural environment, creating healthy surroundings for our community and for managing the impacts of air, water, land and noise pollution. This includes individual responsibility for their own actions e.g. taking care in disposing of waste and using and storing chemicals, reducing energy consumption and waste in their work space where they can and applying high standards of environmental practice across the region.

Work Performance and Self Development

Employees are expected to achieve and maintain a reasonable standard of work performance.

Employees have a continuing responsibility to maintain and enhance their skills and expertise and keep up-to-date with knowledge and practices associated with their area of work. Council will assist by providing access to relevant training and development opportunities where deemed appropriate.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE ... Accountability and Transparency (cont'd)

Workplace Health and Safety

All employees must show a commitment to maintaining a safe work environment when conducting business and Council activities.

They must take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety, health and welfare in the workplace and also have a duty of care to both fellow employees and members of the public.

Employees must:

- identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety
- perform all work safely and follow safe work practices
- correctly use personal protective equipment if required
- report any incidents or hazards immediately and support investigations
- take corrective action to 'make safe' and implement improvements

Employees are required to complete the Employee Site Induction Program within 2 days of commencing employment and must revisit the program at intervals not exceeding 12 months. The completion of this training is a legislative requirement.

To recognise how important the issue of workplace health and safety is, Council has developed:

- Council policy - Workplace Health and Safety
- Policy directive – Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy Statement

These documents can be viewed on Council's intranet site and employees are required to comply with this policy and directive.

Drugs, alcohol and gambling

Employees must keep the workplace drug and alcohol free to maintain the trust and confidence of customers and the health and safety of all employees.

Employees must ensure they are able to safely perform their duties during work time.

Employees must not:

- inappropriately use or disclose private medical information about a staff member. Such action will be in breach of the Code and the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.
- use, possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol whilst on duty
- consume alcohol whilst on duty or in the workplace (except at an authorised social activity)
- gamble or bet on Council premises (except for authorised sweeps or tipping competitions).

For more information refer to Council's policy – Drug & Alcohol Testing.

Breaches of the Code

A breach of the Code damages business, public and work relationships. Suspected breaches will be treated individually and all relevant circumstances will be taken into account.

Suspected breaches will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with Council's investigatory procedures. The principles of natural justice will apply, including reasonable notice and the right to representation when investigating suspected breaches.

Depending on the severity of the breach, formal disciplinary proceedings may be taken.

Public Interest Disclosures

A Public Interest Disclosure (PID) is a report about a suspected wrongdoing in the public sector. Council is committed to protecting those who report wrongdoing.

For a report to be considered a PID it must be:

- a disclosure of information specified in the Act
- made in the public interest
- made to the proper authority.

A person who makes a PID will attract certain protections under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*.

To ensure the appropriate handling of PIDs, Council has approved a Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Public Interest Disclosure Standards and Guidelines.

Employee Access to the Code

In accordance with the requirements of section 19 of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* the Chief Executive Officer must provide reasonable access to persons to whom the Code applies. Therefore Council will make the Code available to new staff during their induction, on its internet site and intranet site and on request from their manager or the Manager Human Resources.

Training

Training will be provided at induction and thereafter on an annual basis in accordance with section 21 of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*.

Relevant Information

Council's policy documents, management directives and other procedural documents are available on Council's intranet. The Executive Services Section can provide assistance in locating these documents.

Legislation cited in the Code can be found at www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

APPENDIX A - Glossary

Benefits	Anything that implies that a favour has been given is considered a benefit. This is inclusive of and not limited to gifts, gratuities, money (other than salary), allowance, free subsidy, privilege, consideration, free service, accommodation, transport and entertainment/ meals.
Code	This Employee Code of Conduct.
Employee	An employee of Council, whether employed on a permanent, temporary, part-time, or casual basis. The term also includes volunteers, contractors and employees of businesses and entities contracted to provide services to, or on behalf of Council.
Interest	<p>Interests can be financial or non-financial (personal family or business).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A financial interest is when the employee could gain a personal financial benefit including having shares, receiving gifts, benefits or bribes or receiving hospitality or travel. For example an employee's partner owns a company which is tendering for work with Council.• Some examples of non-financial interests are below:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- You work in the funding application area and you are also president of a local group applying for funding from Council.- You work in the development application's area and your children's school will be affected by a new development and the development proposal has been submitted to Council for approval.
Lobbyist	Has the meaning given under the <i>Integrity Act 2009</i> .
Public Interest	For a public official 'acting in the public interest' means acting lawfully and in a way that best serves the community as a whole.

APPENDIX B - A guide to ethical decision-making

The following guide is designed to help employees reach an ethical decision based on the relevant facts and circumstances of a situation.

Step 1: Assess the situation

- What is your aim?
- What are the facts and circumstances?
- Does it break the law or go against Council policy?
- Is it in line with the code's principles?
- What principles does it relate to? Why?
- Who is affected? What rights do they have?
- What are your obligations or responsibilities?

Step 2: Look at the situation from Council's and the community's viewpoints

- As a public official, what should you do?
- What are the relevant laws, rules and guidelines?
- Who else should you consult?

Step 3: How would others see your actions

- Would a reasonable person think you used your powers or position improperly?
- Would the public see your action or decision as honest and impartial?
- Do you face a conflict of interest?

Step 4: Consider the options

- Ask your supervisor, team leader, coordinator, manager, senior manager, director, or any person who is able to give sound, relevant advice.
- What options and consequences are consistent with Council's values, the four principles and your obligations?
- What are the costs and long-term consequences?

Step 5: Choose your course of action

Make sure your actions are:

- within your power to take, legal and in line with policy and this code
- fair and able to be justified to your manager, Council and the public
- documented so a statement of reasons can be supplied; consistent with Council's stated mission, goals and values
- backed by advice from Council specialists, if this is appropriate

Notes

