

CODE OF CONDUCT

Intent To ensure employees, contractors, and volunteers understand and are aware of their obligations and responsibilities under the Cairns Regional Council Code of Conduct.

Scope Applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Administrative Instruction is to demonstrate Councils commitment to ensuring employees, contractors, and volunteers are provided opportunities to gain an understanding of the expectations in relation to:

- General standards of work behaviour, integrity and ethical conduct expected of the Chief Executive Officer and all employees of Cairns Regional Council to enhance both the public perception and confidence in Council administration and the system of Local Government;
- General standards which could be used to determine further significant ethical issues; and
- Standards for compliance with the statutory duty to act honestly and exercise due diligence and a high degree of care.

Council will provide the following training and information to employees at regular intervals through a combination of

- Online onboarding process for new employees and contractors
- Corporate Orientation
- Online learning modules
- Face to face workshops
- Availability of a copy of the Code of Conduct on the employee intranet
- Reference during performance and conduct processes



This Administrative Instruction is to remain in force until otherwise determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

Director responsible for Review	People and Organisational Performance
Key Stakeholders	People and Organisational Performance
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 278255 - Cairns Regional Council Code of Conduct• Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld)• 982429 - Benefits, Gifts and Prizes Guidelines Admin Instruction• 665474 - Media Management Policy• 3685241 - Online Social Media Administration Instruction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 943372 - Discipline Procedures Admin Instruction • 3317784 - Management of Public Interest Disclosures Admin Instruction
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Code of Conduct

#278255

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CODE OF CONDUCT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Code of Conduct is a set of standards and behaviours related to the way we do our work. It puts responsibility on each of us to use sound judgement while at work. All employees of Council (regardless of employment status, role or position e.g. – permanent, temporary, casual or part-time employees, managers, supervisor, team leaders, team members or individuals), contractors and volunteers must be familiar with and follow the spirit and content of the Code.

Employees are responsible for conducting themselves within the spirit of the Code. As a general guide, as Employee you should:

- Ensure you declare any conflicts of Interest – these could be real, perceived, or potential conflicts that could affect or be perceived to affect your objectivity in carrying out your duties.
- Not influence any person in an improper way with the aim to obtain personal advantage or favours. All decisions need to be, and be seen to be, fair and transparent.
- Adhere to Council's Councillor/Staff Interaction Protocol when engaging with elected members.
- Manage your participation with external organisations /activities by ensuring your involvement does not cause either a conflict of interest, and/or unduly restricts the performance of your official duties with Council.
- Declare gifts or benefits - Occasionally you may be offered gifts or benefits from people with whom you do business. The acceptance of Gifts or Benefits of a nominal value may be permitted in limited circumstances, however, you must not accept any gifts or benefits if there is a possibility that in doing so, you could create a conflict of interest, or be seen to be receiving a bribe.
- Declare any secondary employment (this includes any membership on boards, committees etc.)
- Never provide public comment on council business unless you have been authorised to do so. All media enquiries should be directed through to Council's Marketing & Communications Branch.
- Always demonstrate appropriate behaviour towards others by acting with trust, respect, honesty, fairness, sensitivity and dignity.
- Provide the highest level of customer service.
- Comply with Council's Procurement Policy to ensure fairness to suppliers.
- Maintain high standards of accountability if you deal with or collect Public Money.
- Ensure your actions do not infringe or breach the Copyright Act 1968, by unlawfully using Intellectual Property.
- Act within the Law, this includes complying with applicable legislation, awards, Council decisions, policies, and local laws.
- Never act outside your delegated authority
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality
- Act honestly and in good faith when raising complaints.
- Show concern for the environment.
- Never misuse Council assets (e.g. property, plant, equipment or information etc.).
- Act with diligence, care and attention
- Follow all Council's policies regarding attendance at work and leave. You must attend work on time, and be ready, willing, and able to perform your duties.
- Commit to going home safe and well today and everyday by adhering to all work health and safety obligations.

2. COUNCIL STATEMENT

Cairns Regional Council ("Council") conducts its business with integrity, honesty and fairness, and complies with all relevant laws, regulations, codes and corporate values. Everyone working for Council must follow the highest standards of behaviour when dealing with customers and each other. Our leaders must encourage a culture where ethical conduct is recognised, valued and followed at all levels. Council actively supports, encourages and develops its employees to work safely; be customer focused; use technology and Council's assets efficiently; adapt to changes and improve their own capability; and contribute to Council's Corporate and Operational Plans.

3. PURPOSE

The Code of Conduct (“Code”) is a set of standards and behaviours related to the way we do our work. It puts responsibility on each of us to use sound judgement while at work. It aims to deliver best practice by ensuring that those standards are clear and guided by sound ethics. By consistently applying these standards, we enhance public trust and confidence in each of us. Nothing in the Code infringes with your rights as a resident or a ratepayer.

Whilst the Code does not cover every situation, the ethics, values, principles, standards, and behaviours outlined in the Code are a reference point to help make good decisions. If you act in good faith, and keep in with the spirit of the Code, you can expect to be supported by your colleagues, supervisor/manager, and by Council. A ‘Guide for Ethical Decision-Making’ is included in Appendix A to help you in situations not covered by this Code.

4. COVERAGE

All employees of Council (regardless of employment status, role or position e.g. – permanent, temporary, casual or part-time employees, managers, supervisor, team leaders, team members or individuals), contractors and volunteers must be familiar with and follow the spirit and content of the Code.

5. APPLICATION

The Code is concerned with our work as public officials and behaviour as individuals at work and outside the workplace, where particular behaviour may be directly related to our employment and/or Council activities. It also applies in other circumstances where our actions may impact upon the reputation and activities of Council.

6. CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL CORPORATE PRINCIPLES

Council is committed to the following principles, which along with the Corporate Plan, guide and determine decision making at all levels:

- home safe and well today
- serving the community
- continuous improvement

7. LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

The *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (Qld) identifies four ethics principles which are fundamental to good public administration that guide our behaviour as Public Officials and form the basis for a good local government Code of Conduct. The four principles are:

- Integrity and Impartiality
- Promoting the Public Good
- Commitment to the System of Government
- Accountability and Transparency

The *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) sets out the way in which a local government is constituted and the nature and extent of its responsibilities and powers. The Act requires that a council’s actions are consistent with the following local government principles:

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

These legislative principles, together with Council’s Corporate Principles, form the basis of the Code.

8. ETHICS PRINCIPLES

8.1. Integrity and Impartiality

The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld) section 6 states:

“In recognition that public office involves a public trust, public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials seek to promote public confidence in the integrity of the public sector and -

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

Operationally, for you this requires the following standards of behaviour:

Conflicts of Interest

When making decisions, you must declare any conflicts of interest that could affect your objectivity in carrying out your duties. A Conflict of Interest involves a conflict between your official duties and responsibilities in serving the public interest and your private interests. A Conflict of Interest can arise from avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage – whether financial or otherwise. This includes advantages to relatives and friends. If you believe you have a Conflict of Interest, whether real, potential or perceived, you must tell your supervisor/manager promptly. Your team leader/supervisor/manager will then provide further direction on how to resolve the matter giving rise to the Conflict of interest.

Until the matter is resolved, you must take care to ensure that you are not part of any decision-making processes related to the matter.

The Local Government Regulation 2012 requires that chief executives, senior executives and their equivalents must declare any interests they, or their partners and/or dependants, hold that have a bearing, or may be perceived to have a bearing, on them doing their role properly and impartially, and that this must be maintained in a register.

Further, Council maintain a current *Related Parties Disclosure* General Policy, which outlines the obligation to identify and monitor related party transactions. In order to meet this requirement, all Councillors and key management personnel are required to maintain the information provided in their register of interests. They must also provide a declaration identifying any close family members not listed on their register of interests and any entities that those close family members control or jointly control.

Influences on Decision-Making

You must not influence any person in an improper way with the aim to obtain personal advantage or favours. All decisions need to be, and be seen to be, fair and transparent. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including clear record keeping and showing how decisions were made. Furthermore, you must not in any way misrepresent your qualifications, experience, or expertise in any recruitment and selection process.

Accepting Gifts and Benefits

Occasionally you may be offered gifts or benefits from people whom you do business (e.g. alcohol, invitations to paid social functions, prizes etc.). Pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) s199, it is an offence for an employee to ask for, or accept, a fee or other benefit for doing something as a local government employee. However, this does not apply to remuneration paid by Council, or a benefit that only has a nominal value.

The acceptance of gifts or benefits of a nominal value may be permitted in limited circumstances;

however, as a rule, you must not accept any gifts or benefits if there is a possibility that in doing so, you could create a real, potential, or perceived Conflict of Interest, or be seen to be receiving a bribe. The test to apply is whether you could be (not whether you are) influenced by your private interests in carrying out your official duties, or whether people are likely to believe that you could be influenced. For example, ask yourself if accepting a gift or benefit could suggest that the giver may or would receive favourable treatment. For more information refer to Council's Benefits, Gifts and Prizes Guidelines Administration Instruction.

Secondary Employment

It is not Council's intention to stop employees from holding secondary employment (including membership on any boards) over and above their official duties as a Council employee. Employees must notify the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") in writing of any secondary employment. Approval to undertake secondary employment will be granted if the following requirements are met:

- a) That no Conflict of Interest exists or develops between private employment and your official duties; and
- b) That your private employment has no effect on the performance of your official duties. This includes effects from a safety/fatigue management perspective; and
- c) That your private employment does not include the use of Council resource (physical, technological or intellectual; and
- d) You must ensure that your work outside Council continues to meet the requirements of a), b), and c).

Although you do not need written approval for hobbies or volunteer work, you also need to ensure that these activities meet the above requirements. If you are unsure you should discuss this with your supervisor/manager.

Public Comments on Council Business

As a general rule, 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. No Council employees outside of the Marketing and Communications Branch, or below level of Director, have any authority to talk to the media on any Council matter. Staff may be delegated by the Executive Manager Marketing and Communications and the CEO to discuss a specific issue. Refer to Council's Media Management Policy for further information.

Employees must also be aware of their obligations with regards to participating in online social media activities, as the lines between public and private, and personal and professional, can be blurred in this space. For further information refer to Council's Online Social Media Administration Instruction.

Advice Given to Elected Officials

Councillors may, from time to time, ask local government employees for advice for the purpose of assisting the Councillor to carry out their community responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld). Any requests for advice must be consistent with Council's Reasonable Request Guidelines General Policy, which has been adopted by resolution of Council. Council employees have a responsibility to provide relevant advice as requested by a Councillor and in doing so must ensure such advice that is thorough, responsive, objective, independent, apolitical and impartial. If you believe there is conflict between a request from a Councillor and Council policies, you must discuss this with your supervisor/manager.

Manage Participation with External Organisation & Activities

Council supports and is committed to ensuring all employees are free to engage in trade union, party-political, professional, interest group or charity activities of their choosing. However, you must make sure that your participation in such activities does not cause either a Conflict of interest, and/or unduly restricts the performance of your official duties with Council. You must not allow your involvement in any external organisation to intrude upon your duty as a

Council employee to give sound advice which is objective, independent, apolitical and impartial to Council.

You are not to take part in political affairs whilst on duty. Council's IT systems, including internet access and email, Council newsletters and workplaces must not be used for political messages or circulating defamatory or disparaging remarks against individuals or groups.

If you comment publicly in connection with external activities, you must make a clear distinction between your opinion as a member of the external organisation and your opinion as a Council employee.

You must not use your role in Council, Council information, or information gained in the course of your official duties as a Council employee, to advance your position or standing within an external organisation, nor for the benefit or promotion of an external organisation. You must not provide Council information to members of other groups or related persons, except where this information is publicly available.

As a member of an external organisation, you need to be aware that participating in activities in the public arena, where you may be identified as a Council employee, can give rise to a perception of Conflict of interest in some circumstances. Where such a situation arises, you must declare and manage the conflict in accordance with this Code.

Behaviour Towards Each Other

We must all treat others with trust, respect, honesty, fairness, sensitivity and dignity. This means treating people as we would like to be treated. Employees who supervise or manage other employees have a special responsibility to model this kind of behaviour, and to ensure that the people they supervise understand the standard of performance and behaviour that is expected of them at work, and when dealing with ratepayers and the public generally.

Council values diversity, and expects all its employees, contractors and volunteers to accommodate and respect different opinions and perspectives, and to manage interpersonal disagreements by rational debate. We must also be concerned for the safety, health, and welfare of ourselves, our fellow workers, and the public, to ensure that our conduct reflects Council's commitment to a workplace that is inclusive and free from harassment.

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

8.2. Promoting the Public Good

The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld) section 7 states:

"In recognition that the public sector is the mechanism through which the elected representatives deliver programs and services for the benefit of the people of Queensland, public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials—

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

Operationally, for you this requires the following standards of behaviour:

Customer Service

As a Council employee, it is expected that you will strive to provide excellent customer service. You must treat members of the public equitably, and with honesty, fairness, sensitivity and dignity.

All Council employees serve residents directly or indirectly. If your role in Council involves regular contact with the public, it is important to know how to deal comfortably and calmly with difficult situations and difficult people.

You are expected to treat complaints from customers, residents, the community, or fellow employees seriously, and respond to constructive feedback as an opportunity for improvement.

Customers have a right to complain or criticise Council. Council expects its employees to show respect towards complainants. While you must make all reasonable efforts to help customers lodge complaints, if you think a situation is threatening or intimidating, you are entitled to withdraw. If in doubt, ask for help from a more experienced colleague, or a team leader/supervisor/manager. Council will support any employee who believes they are under threat from a member of the public.

Council's image can be impacted by the presentation of staff. Council requires its employees to appear neat and tidy, and maintain a professional standard of dress, or a reasonable standard of PPE. If you are unsure about what constitutes appropriate dress, please discuss this with your supervisor/manager. Where you have been provided with Council uniforms/PPE, you are required to wear all components of the uniform without alteration (other than alterations designed to ensure a proper fit) and ensure that uniforms are clean and tidy. If you are a manager, you are expected to ensure that employees are appropriately presented at all times.

Fairness to Suppliers

Council's contracting activities are regulated pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) s104. Further, Council has established procedures and delegations of authority for various stages of procurement of goods and services which reflect sound contracting principles as defined pursuant to the *Local Government 2009 Act* (Qld) s104 (3). You must ensure you comply with the sound contracting principles as defined by the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) s104 (3) and follow all Council's Procurement procedures when seeking suppliers for goods and services.

If you have been approved to be involved in offering contracts or buying goods and services from outside Council, you must be sure you have taken reasonable, fair and consistent steps to allow all potential suppliers to bid for work.

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

Public Money

You must maintain high standards of accountability if you collect and use public money. You are not to borrow or use Council money for private purposes. This also applies to such items as taxi vouchers or other vouchers.

Intellectual Property

Council expects its employees to ensure that their actions do not breach or infringe the *Copyright Act 1968*, by unlawfully using the intellectual property of any individual or organisation.

You must respect the copyrights, trademarks and patents of suppliers and other organisations outside Council, which includes that you do not reproduce or quote suppliers' material unless your license specifically allows it. Similarly, you must not store or copy audio, video or image files, printed media and software on Council assets without an appropriate license or approval.

Where this is unclear you must seek written approval before arranging to publish, disclose or reproduce any articles or materials as part of your official duties.

Any original work, invention or product you have contributed to in association with your official duties as a Council employee remains the property of Council. Similarly, you must not publish or disclose any matters relating to Council's intellectual property without appropriate authority. This

does not stop you from sharing with other organisations information relating to your official duties. However, if you do, and if you are unaware of whether such action may breach this Code, you must first seek clarification from your supervisor/manager.

Concern for the Environment

We all share the 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 our own actions (e.g. taking care in disposing of waste and using and storing chemicals, reducing energy consumption and waste in our workspaces where we can, and applying high standards of environmental protection across the region).

In performing your duties at Council, you must ensure that you comply with your general environmental duty, and where applicable, your duty to notify of environmental harm: Refer to Chapter 7, Part 1 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

8.3. Commitment to the System of Government

The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld) section 8 states:

“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, public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials—

- a) accept and value their duty to uphold the system of government and the laws of the State, the Commonwealth and local government; and*
- b) are committed to effecting official public sector priorities, policies and decisions professionally and impartially; and*
- c) accept and value their duty to operate within the framework of Ministerial responsibility to government, the Parliament and the community.*

This does not limit the responsibility of a public service agency, public sector entity or public official to act independently of government if the independence of the agency, entity or official is required by legislation or government policy, or is a customary feature of the work of the agency, entity or official.”

Operationally, for you this requires the following standards of behaviour:

Acting within the law

As an employee of Council, you are expected to comply with applicable legislation, awards, certified agreements, Council decisions, policies and local laws. You have the right and responsibility to respectfully question how you do your work, particularly if you think there is an imminent risk to the safety of yourself or others, there is a better way of doing something, or if you think that a direction may be in breach of the law. When you have recorded your suggestion or concern, you are required to work as directed by your supervisor/manager, except where there is an imminent risk to safety. If the matter cannot be resolved within the workgroup, it should be immediately referred to your manager.

If you are charged with having committed any indictable offence, are subject to an indictable offence conviction, or are subject to a summary conviction, you should immediately report the circumstances to your executive manager. Such disclosure shall be treated with discretion and will only be disclosed to those who are required to have the information.

Acting in accordance with Delegations Register

If you are requested to undertake an action on behalf of the CEO or Council, prior to exercising any power, you must ensure there exists an appropriate delegation pursuant to State of Federal legislation that allows you to exercise the power. Refer to Council’s Corporate Delegations Approval Authorities Register.

Raising Concerns

You have the right to comment on or raise concerns with your supervisor/manager about Council

policies, practices or priorities where they impact on your employment. However, you must do this in a reasonable and constructive way, and take responsibility for your comments and views.

Further, you must accept that Council has the right to determine its policies, practices and priorities and that you must comply with all reasonable and lawful instructions, whether or not you personally agree with a given policy direction. If Council has provided a decision or outcome, repeated submission of the same matter will be considered to be vexatious.

When raising complaints or grievances, employees are expected to act with honesty and in good faith. Complaints that are considered vexatious or frivolous will not be progressed, and such complaints may be managed as acts of misconduct in accordance with Council's Discipline Procedures Administration Instruction.

Employees who raise concerns or witness a breach of this Code of Conduct should be prepared to provide a written statement including any evidence, witnesses, times, dates and relevant details before action can be taken.

Refusal to investigate

Council can refuse to investigate a complaint if:

- The complaint is considered to be trivial, frivolous or vexatious, lacks substance or credibility
- The complainant does not have sufficient direct interest in the administrative action the subject of the complaint; or
- It is made using rude, aggressive, abusive or threatening language, or where the complainant is physically harassing or stalking a Council officer(s).
- The complainant is pursuing the complaint through an alternative review process, or it has already been reviewed through an alternate review process.

Privacy

Council maintains information about individuals, businesses and commercial issues which is private and sensitive, and which could be harmful to a person's interest if released. Employees should only access information and records they require to perform their official Council duties.

Employees must ensure that the collection, storage and use of personal information is done so in accordance with the Privacy Principles outlined pursuant to the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

It may be appropriate to share information based on your personal and professional experience (e.g. in seminars or training programs). However, in sharing your experiences, you must ensure that where personal information is involved, you don't breach Council's privacy obligations. You may breach this obligation even if comments are made or personal information other than your own is shared in your personal life, including via social media. For more information with regards to obligations surrounding privacy refer to Council's Information Privacy Policy.

8.4. Accountability and Transparency

The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld) section 9 states:

"In recognition that public trust in public office requires high standards of public administration, public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials—

- a) are committed to exercising proper diligence, care and attention; and*
- b) are committed to using public resources in an effective and accountable way; and*
- c) are committed to managing information as openly as practicable within the legal framework; and*
- d) value and seek to achieve high standards of public administration; and*
- e) value and seek to innovate and continuously improve performance; and*
- 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 you this requires the following standards of behaviour:

Using Council Assets

Council's assets include property, plant, equipment, information systems, computing resources, goods, products and/or valuables (this includes surplus material, waste material and off-cuts). All employees share the responsibility for looking after them.

If you are in charge of assets you must take good care of them while they are in your possession or use, and ensure they are used economically and efficiently. It is an offence to steal, misuse or allow anyone else to misuse Council assets. You must make sure assets are secured against theft and properly stored, maintained and repaired.

You must ensure that you use Council assets only for official Council business, unless written approval has been granted by your executive manager. Any files stored on, or information accessed using Council assets, are discoverable by Council. Refer to Council's accompanying policies regarding use of specific assets, i.e. motor vehicle and ICT assets etc.

Upon your employment terminating with Council, you must return all Council property and work-related documents as soon as practicable.

Diligence, Care and Attention

Council aims to conduct its business with integrity, honesty and fairness, and to achieve the highest standards in service delivery. You contribute to this aim by carrying out your duties honestly, responsibly, in a conscientious manner and to the best of your ability. This includes:

- maintaining punctuality and not being absent from your workstation/location during work time without reason;
- ensuring you are fit for work;
- giving priority to official duties over personal activities during work time;
- ensuring you do not undertake personal work during work time;
- not wasting time chatting about personal matters and interrupting other employees;
- helping Council achieve its mission and goals by acting to improve systems and practices;
- conducting yourself in a way so others gain confidence and trust in the way Council does business;
- not allowing your conduct to distract or prevent others from working;
- not exposing Council to a judgment for damages against it, as a result of your negligence or breach of any law or policy.

If you are responsible for managing or supervising others, you must also ensure that:

- you model the values and principles outlined in this Code and ensure that employees within your area of responsibility understand and comply with the Code;
- you do not come under a financial obligation to any employee you supervise or manage;
- your work and the work of those you supervise contributes to the achievement of Council's goals;
- employee performance is monitored, and individuals are given constructive and regular feedback on their performance in line with procedures;
- where practicable, employees are given training opportunities to assist them in developing their careers;
- employees are provided with information that is vital for effective work performance;
- the opinions of employees are respected and considered;
- workloads are fairly distributed;
- resourcing for a work team is 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 timesheets, applicable forms, and pay summary reports;
- appropriate action is taken if breaches of this Code occur.

Attendance at and Absence from Duty

You are expected to follow Council employment and working arrangements, agreements and rulings on attendance at work and leave. This includes not being absent without approval and

accurately and truthfully recording work and leave periods. Council's operational efficiency depends on your punctuality and attendance. If you are unavoidably detained, please advise your team leader/supervisor/manager as soon as reasonably possible before your expected start time.

Absence without approval and without reasonable excuse can create concerns for your safety and lead to unproductive time for others. All employees have an obligation to ensure that they promptly notify Council as soon as practicably upon becoming aware that they are going to be absent from work. Failure to promptly notify Council may result in the non-payment of salary/wages for the period of absence and/or may result in Council taking disciplinary action.

Self-Development

All Local Government employees have an obligation to be proactive in the continual improvement of all aspects of their work performance: refer to section 13 of the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld). You should aim to maintain and improve your work performance and that of your work unit in the delivery of customer service. You have a continuing responsibility to maintain and enhance your skills and expertise and keep up to date the knowledge associated with your area of work.

Council will assist you by providing equitable access to training and development opportunities. This may include accessing the study assistance program, learning new work duties, participating in project work or undertaking internal or external training.

Work Health & Safety

As Council employees we are all committed to going home safe and well today and reflecting this in the way we conduct our business and Council activities. You must adhere to all Work Health & Safety obligations and other workplace legislative standards.

9. BREACHES OF THIS CODE

Council expects all employees to ensure they demonstrate the basic standards of acceptable conduct as enshrined in this Code. All employees have the responsibility to comply with this Code and all other policies which Council may implement and/or vary from time to time.

A breach of the Code damages business effectiveness, public perception of Council and interpersonal work relationships. Any act or lack of action by an employee of Council that contravenes this Code may result in Council taking disciplinary action against that employee, which may in serious cases result in dismissal. All suspected breaches will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Suspected Official Misconduct must be referred to Council's CEO. The CEO has an obligation to notify the Crime and Corruption Commission ("CCC") of the suspected Official Misconduct.

All disciplinary action taken by Council against an employee for suspected breaches of this Code will be in accordance with Council's Discipline Procedures Administration Instruction, and in compliance with Council's obligations pursuant to Part 3 of Chapter 8 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (Qld).

10. IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (Qld) and the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld) aim to create a work environment where public sector and local government employees understand and maintain appropriate standards of conduct. Where you honestly believe on reasonable grounds that you possess information about another Council Officer's conduct that relates to:

- Official Misconduct; or
- maladministration that adversely affects a person's interest
- a substantial misuse of public resources, other than an alleged misuse based on mere disagreement over policy that may properly be adopted about amounts, purposes, or priorities of expenditure; or
- a substantial or specific danger to public health or safety; or
- a substantial or specific danger to the environment

you have the right to make a Public Interest Disclosure to a proper authority subject to, and in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (Qld).

For further information refer to Council's Management of Public Interest Disclosures Administration Instruction.

If you have any questions regarding the Code you can approach your supervisor/manager for advice, or alternatively you can contact Human Resources and Organisational Change.

11. TRAINING

All new Council employees will receive training on the Code of Conduct at their Corporate Induction. Council will also endeavour to deliver refresher training to all employees every two years.

Appendix A – A Guide to Ethical Decision-Making

The following guide is designed to help you 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 Viewpoint.

- 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?
- Will your decision or action stand up to public scrutiny?

Step 4: Consider the Options.

- Ask your team leader/supervisor/manager, or any person who is able to give sound, relevant advice.
- What options and consequences are consistent with Council's values and Corporate Principles, the five local government principles, the four ethics principles fundamental to good public administration and your obligations?
- What are the costs and long-term consequences of each option?
- How would the public view each option?
- What will be the outcome for Council, your colleagues, others and you?

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 and the public;
- documented so a statement of reasons can be supplied;
- consistent with Council's mission, goals and values; and
- backed by advice from Council specialists, if this is appropriate.