

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS ETHICS POLICY



Responsible Department: Corporate Services
Responsible Section: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Director of Corporate Services

Purpose

Business dealings between Narrabri Shire Council and the private sector are becoming more extensive and often raise sensitive ethical questions. For this reason, Narrabri Shire Council has developed a Business Ethics Policy for behaviour appropriate to business dealings with Council.

This policy aims to provide external organisations, service providers, small business and individuals with an understanding of Council's expectation in relation to standards of ethical behaviour that meet Council's requirements. It also provides guidelines for staff on Council's expectations when conducting business

Policy

Our Shire Vision

Narrabri Shire will be a strong and vibrant regional growth centre providing a quality living environment for the entire Shire community.

COUNCILS VALUES

Integrity

Ensuring transparency and honesty in all our activities

Leadership

Providing guidance and direction to our community and our people

Customer Focus

Delivering prompt, courteous and helpful service and being responsive to people changing needs.

Accountability

Accepting our responsibility for the provision of quality services and information.

Respect

Treating everyone with courtesy, dignity and fairness.

Excellence

Being recognised for providing services, programs and information which consistently meet and exceed standards.

Key Business Principles

The principle of best value for money is at the core of council's business relationships with private sector suppliers of goods and services. Best value for money does not automatically mean the lower price. Rather, Council will balance all relevant factors including initial cost, whole-of-life costs, quality, reliability and timelessness in determining true value for money.

Part of obtaining best value for money also includes ensuring all of our business relationships are honest, ethical, fair and consistent.

Our business dealings will be transparent and open to public scrutiny wherever possible. Given the nature of some of Council work, there will be times when the details of some business relationships will not be made publicly available.

We are committed to the purchase of all goods, equipment and services through established NSW Government contracts systems, where possible and reasonably practical. Where Council does not use this established system, Council will define the reasons for this action.

Narrabri Shire Council will ensure that all its policies, procedures and practices related to tendering, contracting and the purchase of goods and services are consistent with best practice and the highest standards of ethical conduct.

What to Expect from Council

Our staff are bound by Council's Code of Conduct. When doing business with the private sector, Narrabri Shire Council staff are accountable for their actions and are expected to:

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

In addition, all Council procurement activities are guided by the following core business principles:

- All potential suppliers will be treated with impartiality and fairness and given equal access to information and opportunities to submit bids.
- All procurement activities and decisions will be fully and clearly documented to provide an audit trail and to allow for an efficient performance review of contracts.
- Energy efficient equipment, products containing recycled materials and environmentally friendly products will be purchased wherever reasonably possible.
- Tenders will not be called unless Council has a firm intention to proceed to contract.
- This Council will not disclose confidential or proprietary information.

What Council Expects

We require all private sector providers of goods and services to observe the following principles when doing business with Council:

- Comply with Council's procurement policies and procedures.

- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information when required.
- Declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of the conflict.
- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council.
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent the disclosure of confidential Council information.
- Refrain from engaging in any form of collusive practice, including offering Council employees inducements or incentives designed to improperly influence the conduct of their duties.
- Refrain from discussing Council business or information in the media.
- Assist Council to prevent unethical practices in our business relationships.
- There is to be no unsolicited contact by tenderers with Councillors, staff and or delegates of the Council regarding their submitted tender until such time that the tender has been determined.

Why Compliance Is Important

By complying with our statement of business ethics, you will be able to advance your business objectives and interests in a fair and ethical manner. As all Narrabri Shire Council suppliers of goods and services are required to comply with this statement, compliance will not disadvantage you in any way.

Complying with this Council's stated principles will also prepare your business for dealing with the ethical requirements of other public sector agencies, should you choose to do business with them.

Non-compliance with the Council's ethical requirements when doing business with the Council such as demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to:

- Termination of contracts.
- Loss of future work.
- Loss of reputation.
- Matters being referred for criminal investigation.

Incentives, Gifts, Benefits

Council expects its staff to decline gifts, benefits, travel or hospitality offered during the course of their work. You should refrain from offering any such "incentives" to Council staff.

If a gift is accepted, Council requires the staff member to provide a written report and to record the gift in a Public Gifts and Benefits Register. Inappropriate acceptance of gifts as an inducement to purchase goods and services may lead to disciplinary action.

Conflicts of Interest

Council staff are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. Council extends this requirement to all of our business partners, contractors and suppliers. Council staff should also declare any Related Party Disclosure, under the requirements of the "Related Party Disclosure Policy Confidentiality

All Council information should be treated as confidential unless otherwise indicated.

Communication Between Parties

All communication should be clear, direct and accountable to minimise the risk of perception of inappropriate influence being brought to bear on the business relationship.

Use of Narrabri Shire Council Equipment, Resources and Information

All Council equipment, resources and information should only be used for its proper official purpose.

Discrimination and Harassment

Staff shall not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of: race, sex, colour, nationality, religious conviction, ethno-religious background, marital status; age; pregnancy; physical, intellectual and / or psychiatric disability; sexual preference; transgender; association or political conviction.

References

- Code of Conduct Policy.
- Customer Service Policy.
- Related Party Disclosure Policy.

History

MINUTE NUMBER	MEETING DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE
42/2015	17 February 2015	Adopted
164/2017	15 August 2017	Reviewed