

DOING BUSINESS WITH LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

A GUIDE FOR CONSULTANTS, CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

INTRODUCTION

Liverpool City Council is committed to the maintenance of high ethical standards by Councillors, members of Council staff and by everyone who conducts business with our Council. This guide provides a summary of the standards that Council requires of persons or organisations doing business with Council as consultants, contractors and suppliers. These standards are set out in detail in Council's Code of Conduct, other Council policies and relevant NSW legislation. When dealing with Council in your capacity as a provider of goods and services, you must conduct your business with Council in accordance with Council's ethical standards and legal requirements.

Our local community is entitled to expect that the business of Council will be conducted with efficiency, impartiality and integrity and that the public interest will always have priority over private interests.

Breaches of our ethical standards and/or the law by you, your employees, your agents or your organisation could jeopardise your working relationship with Council, compromise Council's official dealing with you, or even result in prosecution. (A Council official includes Councillors and all members of Council staff.)

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

If Council is to keep the confidence and trust of the local community, you must ensure, to the extent practicable, that the actions and decisions of any Council official, which involve dealings with your business are free from any conflicts of interest, and are also clearly seen by any reasonable person to be free from any conflicts of interest.

Your business relationship with Council would result in a conflict of interest if a Council official has a personal or financial interest that could lead the official, or a reasonable person, to think it could lead the Council official to be influenced in the way the official carries out Council work in regard to dealings with you.

Whenever a Council official is your immediate family member, domestic partner, associate or friend, then the official might be unduly influenced by your relationship. Likewise, a reasonable person could think that the Council official could be unduly influenced in the way that the official carries out Council work in regard to dealings with you.

Therefore, you and the particular Council official you are dealing with must identify and declare any possible conflict of interest.

GIFTS AND BENEFITS

A Council official must never demand or request a gift or benefit for themselves or for anyone else in regard to Council work or public duties. If a Council official demands or requests a gift or benefit from you, please contact the General Manager immediately. Please do not offer Council staff or Councillors any type of gift or benefit as this may jeopardise your working relationship with Council and may compromise the particular Council official.

Any offer of cash or its equivalent to a Council official would be referred immediately to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

USE OF INFORMATION

It is important that the community has confidence that any information acquired by Council is used only for Council purposes.

If you or your organisation obtains personal, confidential, or commercial information from Council during the course of your business dealings with Council, you must:

- Protect the confidential, commercial or personal information
- Only access it when needed for your work for Council
- Not use the confidential, commercial or personal information for any non-official purpose outside the Council work
- Only release the confidential, commercial or personal information when you have the authority to do so
- Only use confidential, commercial, or personal information for the purpose it is intended to be used.

USE OF COUNCIL'S RESOURCES

Council equipment, facilities, property and other resources must be used:

- Carefully, efficiently and ethically
- In connection with your work for Council
- For Council purposes only (except for limited, private usage of phones, e-mail, hand tools etc as authorised by Council)

You, your employees and your organisation must use Council resources and equipment only according to the specific conditions of a formal contract or agreement with Council.

OFFERS OF SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS VENTURES TO COUNCIL STAFF

Members of Council staff must not engage in any secondary employment or business venture that could involve a conflict of interest with their Council duties. In any case, if they are seeking work or engaging in any business venture outside Council, they must have prior permission from the General Manager.

Contractors, consultants and suppliers who deal with Council should not offer Council staff members secondary employment or business proposals. Such offers would immediately create a conflict of interest situation for the particular staff member and the perception that the consultant, contractor or supplier is trying to offer an inappropriate gift or benefit with the intent to influence the Council staff member.

GENERAL CONDUCT

You, your employees or agents must avoid behaviour that is in breach of Council's ethical standards, including conduct that:

- is improper or unethical
- contravenes the Local Government Act, other Acts and Regulations, Council's Code of Conduct, its Fraud and Corruption Prevention Plan and its Gifts and Benefits Policy
- is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to misconduct
- causes, comprises or involves prejudice or discrimination in the provision of services to the community
- causes, comprises or involves verbal abuse, harassment or intimidation
- does not respect Council's community and environmental responsibilities

CORRUPTION, MALADMINISTRATION OR SERIOUS OR SUBSTANTIAL WASTE

Council officials who become aware of any matter involving possible maladministration, corruption, or serious and substantial waste must report the matter immediately to the General Manager or to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Contractors, consultants or suppliers are also obliged to report such instances to the General Manager or the Independent Commission Against Corruption immediately. In this regard, you can make a confidential or "protected disclosure" under the Public Interest Disclosures Act.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND THE MEDIA

You must not make any public comment that would give anyone the impression that you are representing Council, or expressing its views or policies. All media statements and public comments representing Council must be approved by Council.

BREACHES OF COUNCIL ETHICAL STANDARDS

As a Council consultant, contractor or supplier, you must act in line with our standards. Breaches of our standards may result in disciplinary action for Council officials, sanctions being applied to your business, and referral to investigative bodies such as the Ombudsman, the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the Police.

For more information please contact Council's Customer Contact Centre Ph 1300 36 2170 (TTY, 9821 8800)

or email: publicofficer@liverpool.nsw.gov.au or visit Council's website: www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au

