



Warringah  
Council

# **STATEMENT OF BUSINESS ETHICS**

**JULY 2008**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Statement of Business Ethics applies to Council's elected representatives, Council Staff, contractors and business associates dealing with Council.

Warringah Council is committed to conducting its business in a sound commercial and ethical manner and this Statement of Business Ethics sets out the standards the Council requires of its elected representatives, Council staff, contractors and business associates. Both Warringah Council staff and private sector employees must always be aware of the ethical standards the community demands when Warringah Council money is used either directly or indirectly.

Warringah Council will demonstrate and practice a professional and ethical approach to all its business activities and all Warringah Council staff are required to conduct their activities in accordance with Warringah Council's Values of Responsibility, Integrity, teamwork, Excellence and Respect.

All individuals and organisations that deal with Warringah Council are required to comply with these values in their dealings with Warringah Council.

**Rik Hart**

**General Manager**

## **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US**

Our business dealings will be transparent and open to public scrutiny wherever possible. The way we deliver our services is driven first and foremost by the need to ensure and demonstrate our community receives the best possible value for its dollar. We are accountable for ensuring best value starts with the elected Council, but extends to the General Manager and Council staff at all levels.

In assessing the overall value for money being achieved, consideration is given to a range of factors, including environmental sustainability, not just achieving the lowest possible cost. We must also measure the true cost of our services and the value they add to the community.

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

Staff will ensure that procurement will be conducted with honesty and fairness, that all prospective contractors and suppliers are afforded equal opportunity to tender/quote for all goods and services, and that staff will comply with all aspects of Council's procurement manual. Our staff are bound by:

- Councils Values
- Council's Code of Conduct
- The Local Government Act, 1993
- Delegated Authorities
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2000

Staff will always ensure that no opportunity exists for their interest, or those of people they have an association with, conflict with the proper performance of their public duties. All members of the community must be confident that all decisions made by Council are impartial and in the best interests of the community.

## **OUR VALUES**

Council's values are the underlying attitudes that consistently affect all of our actions and decision-making processes.

It is important that these values be consistent across the organisation and at all levels of the organisation. We should use the same set of values in internal processes within the organisation as we do with dealing with people external to the organisation, be they ratepayers, visitors, private companies or government departments.

Our values are reflected in the following statements:

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

I will:

Focus on agreed priorities and meet obligations

Be accountable for actions and outcomes

Be pro-active in learning and development

Strive for the best possible performance

## **INTEGRITY**

I will:

Deliver on commitments

Act fairly and ethically

Apply sound judgement and common sense

Be consistent in decisions and actions

Act lawfully in all dealings

## **TEAMWORK**

I will:

Value all staff and their contributions

Share knowledge and skills with others

Work together with initiative and enthusiasm

Acknowledge contributions and celebrate success

## **EXCELLENCE**

I will:

Welcome, encourage and support new ideas and initiative

Encourage continuous improvement, learning and evaluation

Lead by example

Use resources productively

Encourage flexibility

## **RESPECT**

Treat others with kindness and courtesy

Communicate openly, honestly and in a timely manner

Acknowledge the values, ideas and contributions of others

## **WHAT WE WILL ASK OF YOU**

Warringah Council expects that its Tenderers, contractors, suppliers and their employees and subcontractors will all be guided by the same policies, procedures and practices that bind Warringah Council and its staff to act in an ethical manner.

Where delivering a service involves working with the private sector, we work together to plan, manage and deliver the service using a partnership approach focussed on providing the best outcome for the customer. We trust and respect each other.

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

- Deliver value for money
- Comply with Warringah Council's procurement policy 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 the Council
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent the disclosure of confidential Warringah Council information
- Refrain from engaging in any form of collusive practice, including offering Warringah Council employees inducements or incentives designed to improperly influence the conduct of their duties
- Refrain from discussing Warringah Council business or information in the media
- Assist Warringah Council to prevent unethical practices in our business relationships
- Co-operate with Warringah Council's post separation employment guidelines

#### **WHY SHOULD THE PRIVATE SECTOR COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE?**

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

Complying with Warringah Council's 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.

A copy of this Statement of Business Ethics will be included in all tenders and quotation documentation and will accompany any other relevant business documentation where Council requires work to be undertaken on its behalf.

You should also be aware of the consequences of not complying with Warringah Council's ethical requirements when doing business with us. Demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to:

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

#### **ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR**

A Statement of Business Ethics will not be effective unless the organisation and its employees are committed to it. That will demand explicit commitment by the elected members, senior management, clear commitment by line management, allocation of resources to educating employees and adoption of internal measures for ensuring compliance.

The community rightly expects councillors and staff to be honest, reasonable and equitable in their dealings with them and to have the public interest at heart. Council's adopted Code of Conduct is a key mechanism to assist council officials to act honestly, ethically, responsibly and with accountability.

The Code of Conduct has been developed to assist council officials to:

- Understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them
- Enable them to fulfil their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence
- Act in a way that enhances public confidence in the integrity of local government

**Particular situations in which industry and Warringah Council should exercise care include:**

### **Gifts, Benefits and Inducements**

Staff, must never request any gift or benefit for themselves or anyone else in connection with their work or accept any token gift that may give a perception that the person offering the gift is trying to influence you.

Token gifts do not have significant monetary value and may be accepted in appropriate circumstances. Token gifts include ties, scarves, coasters, tie pins, diaries, chocolates, flowers and small amounts of beverages, single bottles of reasonably priced alcohol, free or subsidized meals of a modest nature and refreshments, of a modest nature. Staff accepting token gifts shall notify their supervisors as soon as practicable and complete an entry in Council's gifts register, which is to be sighted by the General Manager.

Unacceptable non-token gifts may include hospitality (such as free attendance at major sporting events or an invitation to lunch at a restaurant) and gifts (such as expensive pens, clothes or alcohol). Any offer of a non-token gift is to be immediately rejected.

Under no circumstances shall any amount of cash be accepted.

### **Confidentiality of Information**

Council deals with most requests for information under Section 12 of the Local Government Act, however occasionally will deal with an application under the Freedom Of Information Act. Council is transparent in all its dealings and will only deal with a matter in confidential session at Council Meetings in accordance with Section 10 of the Local Government Act.

Council recognizes that there is a potential for former employees, who may have had access to confidential or sensitive information during the course of their employment, to disclose or misuse that information for commercial or private purposes. To that end, Council will take all lawful steps to ensure former employees do not disclose or misuse information acquired during the course of their employment once that employment or membership of Council ceases.

### **Use of Council Resources**

Council resources include financial, material and human resources. They should only be used:

- For the benefit of Council
- Effectively, economically and carefully

## **Other Employment or Business**

Staff shall not engage in outside employment or business that could conflict, or be seen to conflict, with their duties with the Council and can only engage in a second job or business if they have the approval of the General Manager. Prior to engaging in a second job or business staff should provide a written request for approval to their supervisor who will pass it onto the General Manager for approval.

Any second job or business will be done in private time. It must not:

- Adversely affect normal work
- Lead to a conflict of interest
- Lead a fair person to think that a conflict of interest may arise
- Involve the use of Council's resources
- Involve the use of information obtained from the Council

## **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.

## **Reporting Corruption and Maladministration**

It is the responsibility of staff to act not only honestly, but also to report any instances of possible corruption, or maladministration to their immediate supervisor, Manager, Director, the Internal Ombudsman or the General Manager.

## **Work Place Behaviour and Safety**

Members of the public and work colleagues are to be treated in accordance with Warringah council's core values.

Staff acknowledge that their actions outside work are a reflection on the Council and how it is perceived by the community.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that they do not attend work, under the influence of drugs or alcohol or consume drugs or alcohol during working hours.

It is acknowledged that Council and those that deal with Council will ensure that workplace safety is of paramount importance and that all legislative and procedural safety requirements are complied with.

## **Supervisory Responsibility**

Supervisors are both required to be responsible for their staff and to Council for fostering an ethical and equitable work environment. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the staff they supervise are aware of the requirements of the Code of Conduct and are an effective role model for their staff.

## **MAKING CONTACT**

If you are concerned about a possible breach of this statement, or about any conduct that could involve fraud, corrupt conduct, maladministration or serious and substantial waste of public funds,

please contact Warringah Council's General Manager or Internal Ombudsman on 9942 2111, or ICAC on (02) 8281.5999.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I/We have read, understand and agree to comply with the requirements of Council's Statement of Business Ethics.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Company: \_\_\_\_\_