



# STATEMENT OF BUSINESS ETHICS

Adopted by Executive  
17 August 2010

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## **INTRODUCTION BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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Parramatta City Council is committed to serving our community with integrity, efficiency, fairness and impartiality. In conducting business we will put our public duty to the community ahead of our private interests. The people of Parramatta City and those who come in contact with Council, expect nothing less.

Council's strategic direction is supported by principles of sustainability which include Ethics, Equity and Basic Rights. Ethics has been defined as acting with respect, honesty, compassion, integrity and acting in the interest of the community which we represent.

Council's Delivery Program commits to "the highest level of good governance, teamwork, probity, openness, accountability, timeliness and compliance with legislation."

This statement of business ethics provides guidance and articulates what to expect when conducting business with Council.

That business may include, supply of goods and/or services, use of contractors and/or consultants, assessment of development applications and other business partnerships and alliances.

These ethical standards are not an additional requirement in doing business with us but are an integral part of sound commercial practice.

Staff and delegates (including volunteers) are required to observe a high standard of ethical behaviour and comply with legislation and ethical conduct standards and procedures. Therefore, we ask that in doing business with Council, you abide by this statement of business ethics in all your dealings.

If you feel Council is not meeting the standards set, please let me know or make a submission to Council's Public Officer.

Dr Robert Lang  
Chief Executive Officer

## STATEMENT

### *Our key commitments to our community*

Council staff and delegates must maintain the highest standards of conduct and shall abide by the following values when dealing with the community.

#### **Customer Service and Integrity**

We understand and meet our customer needs and are committed to acting ethically, fairly, honestly and with integrity in everything we do, we deliver on our promises.

#### **Co-operative Teamwork & Accountability**

We work together, across the whole organisation, united in our purpose, seeking each other's advice, recognising individual strengths and playing our part in the team. We hold ourselves accountable, celebrate our successes and own and learn from our mistakes.

#### **Sustainability and Community Focus**

We care about social, economic and environmental sustainability for our city and focus on delivering good outcomes for our communities.

### *Why a statement of business ethics?*

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.

Council expects all its business associates and suppliers to comply with this statement of business ethics. Therefore you will not be disadvantaged by complying with the statement.

It is important to be aware of the consequences of not complying with Council's ethical requirements when doing business with us.

Corrupt or unethical behaviour could lead to:

- investigation for corruption
- matters being referred for investigation
- termination of contracts
- loss of future opportunities with Council
- loss of reputation
- loss of development approval.

Consequences for staff and delegates may include:

- investigation
- disciplinary action
- dismissal
- potential criminal charges.

### *What you can expect from us*

Council will ensure that all its policies, procedures and practices relating to tendering, contracting, purchasing of goods or services, assessment of development applications, use of consultants and/or contractors, and engagement of strategic

partners and sponsors are all consistent with best practice and the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Staff and delegates are bound by Council's Code of Conduct. When doing business with the community or private sector, staff and delegates are accountable for their actions and are expected to exercise:

- integrity
- leadership
- selflessness
- impartiality
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- respect

To achieve probity, Council will consider at all stages of the purchasing, tendering, contracting, partnership, sponsorship and development application processes the following essential factors.

- Transparency of process.
- Accountability.
- Ethically managing conflicts of interest.
- Obtaining best value.
- Monitoring and evaluating performance.
- Environmental & social outcomes.

Council's dealings will be transparent, accountable and open to public scrutiny wherever possible. However, there will be times when confidentiality will be required by Council.

#### *What we ask of you*

We require all suppliers of goods and services, applicants, consultants, contactors, owners and applicants of development applications and anyone doing business with Council to observe the following principles.

- Act ethically and honestly in all dealings with Council.
- Declare actual or perceived conflicts of interests as soon as you become aware of the conflict.
- Comply with Council's procurement policies and procedures.
- Provide accurate and reliable information when required.
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent disclosure of confidential Council information.
- Refrain from engaging in any form of collusive practice including offering, staff and delegates inducements or incentives designed to improperly influence the conduct of their duties.
- Assist Council to prevent unethical practices in our business relationships.

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

### *Gifts, benefits and hospitality*

Gifts, benefits or hospitality should not be offered to staff or delegates in connection with any prospective business dealings. Similarly, staff and delegates are not permitted to ask for any personal reward or incentive for doing their job.

Business associates and suppliers should respect the decision by a member of staff or delegate to refuse a gift or benefit.

Token gifts may be accepted by staff and delegates providing acceptance does not create any sense of obligation. All gifts of value must be declared by staff in Council's Gifts and Benefits Register. All attempts should be made to decline gifts of value where possible.

### *Conflicts of interest*

Conflicts or potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed in writing by staff and delegates and (where relevant) our business associates and suppliers to ensure their actions withstand public scrutiny.

Conflicts of interest exist when it is likely that a staff member or delegate may be influenced or perceived to be influenced by a personal interest in carrying out their public duty.

Conflicts of interest that lead to partial decision making may constitute corrupt conduct. Perceptions of a conflict of interest can be as important as actual conflicts.

### *Corporate information*

Council maintains a large amount of information about our customers and the community.

Council has an obligation to protect this information and maintain integrity in its systems.

Council expects that customers will treat all information appropriately and all information collected must be used for the purpose it was provided.

### *Confidentiality*

Information which is marked confidential, or which a reasonable person would expect to be confidential, will be treated as such. The information could be in various formats and the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 provides mechanisms for the public to gain access to Council's information, except in certain circumstances.

Council is transparent in all its dealings and will only deal with a matter in Closed Session at Council meetings in accordance with Section 12 of the Local Government Act.

### *Intellectual property*

In business relationships with Council, all parties will respect each other's intellectual property rights and will formally negotiate any access, licence or use of intellectual property.

Transfer of intellectual property will be addressed via contractual agreement.

### *Legislative & policy requirements*

All legislative and policy requirements must be adhered to by staff, delegates, business associates and suppliers involved in the contracting or tendering for services or supplies, or other business relationships.

### *Development applications*

In its formal role in determining a development application Council has to consider the matters prescribed in legislation in a way that is open and transparent and is seen to be fair to all parties involved.

Staff and delegates are to ensure that no action, statement or communication with applicants, proponents or objectors conveys any suggestion of willingness to provide concessions or preferential treatment.

Staff and delegates should not be expected to offer support or otherwise for any party associated with the development application process. Staff are professional people and will treat all aspects of the development application process in a professional and ethical manner.

### *Council resources*

Council resources should only be used for Council purposes and in the public interest. Members of staff, delegates and customers doing business with Council are expected to be efficient, economical and ethical in their use and management of Council resources, including staff time.

### *Secondary or future employment of staff*

Staff will not be authorised to undertake secondary employment if such employment has the potential to create a real or perceived conflict of interest between the public role and the private interests of the staff member.

Staff have a duty to maintain public trust and not use commercially sensitive information to facilitate future employment opportunities in the private sector.

### *Reporting unethical behaviour (Whistleblower's policy)*

Council is committed to promoting ethical behaviour. Reports of unethical behaviour, fraud, corruption, maladministration or waste can be made to the Chief Executive Officer on 9806 5055 or Council's Public Officer on 9806 5474.

Public officials reporting corrupt conduct, maladministration or waste can be protected by the Protected Disclosures Act 1994. This Act protects public officials who are disclosing corrupt conduct from reprisal or detrimental action and ensures disclosures are properly investigated.

#### *Who to contact*

The *Guidance Notes* contain a number of supporting policies. If you have any questions regarding this Statement of Business Ethics or these policies, including how it applies to you, please contact Council's Public Officer on 9806 5474 or the Chief Executive Officer on 9806 5055.