

Statement of Business Ethics

Policy Approval and Distribution

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1. Introduction

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is proud to be a professional, friendly and ethical organisation.

Council provides a large number of services, and our community expects strong ethical standards in the provision of those services, and in everything else Council does. How Council manages relationships with business is a key to maintaining the community's trust and confidence.

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council has developed this Statement of Business Ethics to set the principles and standards that third parties are expected to apply when dealing with Council or acting on Council's behalf.

This statement is a guide for suppliers, contractors, service providers, businesses and individuals to adopt standards of ethical behaviour that meet Council's requirements. It also outlines what to expect when external parties are conducting business with or on behalf of Council.

Phil McMurray

ACTING GENERAL MANAGER

2. Key Business Principles

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council expects all its Councillors, employees and other delegates to behave ethically and abide by Council's Code of Conduct.

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council expects external parties and their representatives to maintain similar standards of ethical conduct in their dealings with Council.

There are two main principles that form the basis of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council business agreements. One is the need to get best value for public money. The other is the need to demonstrate impartiality and fairness at all stages of a process.

- **Best value for money** does not automatically mean the lowest price. Rather, Council will balance all relevant factors including initial cost, whole of life costs, quality, reliability and timeliness in determining true value for money.
- **Impartiality and fairness** are about being objective, even-handed and reasonable. This does not mean pleasing everyone. If some people are adversely affected by a particular decision, that is unfortunate, but not necessarily unfair or unreasonable. Council will strive to be fair by ensuring that its processes are appropriate and demonstrate this by being open and accountable, wherever practical.

3. What can you expect from Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council?

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional 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 ethical conduct.

Staff are bound by Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council's Code of Conduct. When doing business with external parties Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council staff are accountable for their actions and are expected to:

- Act with integrity
- Use public resources effectively and efficiently
- Deal fairly, honestly and ethically with all individuals and organisations
- Avoid actual, potential or perceived personal or professional conflicts of interest
- Treat all potential suppliers impartially and fairly
- Make decisions solely on merit
- Give reasons for decisions (where appropriate)
- Not call tenders unless there is a firm intention to proceed to contract
- Respect confidentiality of commercial information and privacy of individuals
- Respect and follow Council's policies and procedures
- Promote open competition while seeking best value for money
- Meet or exceed public interest and accountability standards
- Never solicit or accept remuneration, gifts or other benefits from a supplier for the discharge of official duties
- Respond promptly to reasonable requests for advice and information.

4. Interaction with Council Officers

Any interaction between suppliers and Council Officers must comply with the following requirements:

- Meetings are to be by appointment only, unannounced visits to Council sites are not allowed
- Businesses wishing to demonstrate a new product or service should provide details to Council's email address, mail@cgrc.nsw.gov.au for referral to the Procurement Officer and other appropriate staff.

5. What can Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council expect of you?

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council requires all external parties to observe the following principles when conducting business with Council:

- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council
- Abstain from collusive practices
- Comply with the law including legislation and regulations, and relevant Council documentation, policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct, Procurement Policy, and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan
- Respect the obligation of Council staff to abide by Council policies
- Not offer Council employees or Councillors or other Council delegates any financial or other inducements, gifts or benefits. Further information is detailed at item 6, Incentives, Gifts and Benefits.
- Provide accurate and reliable information and advice when required.
- Prevent actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and declare these as soon as possible if they occur
- Respect confidentiality of commercial and Council information, and privacy of individuals
- Obtain Council's consent before discussing Council business in the media
- Provide working conditions for your employees that comply with industrial relations laws and regulations
- Ensure that you do not lobby or seek to influence Council Officers or Councillors while business proposals or tenders are being considered
- Advise the General Manager if you believe any person has breached the law, this Statement of Business Ethics or Council's other policies and procedures.

6. Incentives, Gifts & Benefits

Council has guidelines with respect to gifts and benefits. All public officials are required to comply with these guidelines at all times. There is no need or place for incentives when dealing with Council.

Gifts must not be given in connection with any prospective business dealings and public officials are not permitted to ask for any reward or incentive for doing their job.

7. Why should external parties comply with this Statement of Business Ethics?

Compliance with this Statement of Business Ethics will make doing business with Council is easier and more effective. You can be sure that you are not disadvantaged because Council requires others who deal with Council to do the same. Ethical practice makes good business sense.

8. Non-compliance

You should be aware of the consequences of not complying with the Council's ethical requirements when doing business with Council. Non-compliance with the requirements of the Statement of Business Ethics resulting in demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to:

- Termination of contract
- Loss of future work or opportunities
- Loss of reputation
- Investigation for corruption
- Referral to external agency for investigation of criminal activity
- Disqualification of tender

If an apparent breach of any agreed standard of ethical conduct is identified the matter should immediately be brought to the attention of the General Manager on 1300 459 659.

9. Contact Information

If you have questions or comments concerning this Statement of Business Ethics, or have information on suspected corruption, maladministration or serious waste of funds, please contact the General Manager's office by letter, phone, or email (details below).

If you would like a copy of Council's Code of Conduct, or any other relevant policy or procedure, please visit Council's website at www.cgrc.nsw.gov.au or contact Council's Public Officer (details below).

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