

## Foreword from the General Manager

Wingecarribee Shire Council delivers an extensive range of services to the community. Quality service delivery at a reasonable cost increasingly requires Council to work in partnership with external service providers. Wingecarribee Shire Council is committed to conducting its business in a sound commercial and ethical manner.

This Statement of Business Ethics is a means of providing guidance regarding the standards of ethical behaviour that external service providers can expect from Council officials. Similarly, the Statement of Business Ethics also articulates the standards of ethical behaviour expected of external service providers in their dealings with Wingecarribee Shire Council.

## 1. Our Vision and Values

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

### Our Vision

**We strive to make a positive impact in our community!**

### Our Values

## Our Values Statement

**R E S P E C T**

**Resilience Empathy Sustainability Pride Efficiency Courage Teamwork**

Our Values have been developed by our people. We use them to guide our behaviours and use them strive towards providing the best possible outcomes for the community.

**RESPECT** - is the foundation of our culture and shapes our Values Statement. Our moral compass which guides us on our roadmap.

They define what behaviours are acceptable, expected, and celebrated. We will use them as our moral compass and guide us in decision-making and help navigate conflict.

They will also instil a sense of pride and create a foundation for our roadmap and cultural growth.

## 2. Doing Business with Council

Wingecarribee Shire Council is committed to this Statement of Business Ethics. The community rightly expects Council officials to be honest, reasonable and equitable in their dealings and always to act in the best interest of the public.

Similarly, we expect the same standards of behaviour from those we do business with. Council has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption or modern slavery in its business dealings.

Our Code of Conduct articulates the standards of conduct expected of Council officials to enable them to fulfil their statutory duty and to enhance public confidence in the integrity of local government.

For the purposes of this Statement, **Council officials** are defined as:

- Mayor and Councillors
- Council employees
- Consultants and contractors of Council
- Members of Council committees (including those under section 355 of the *Local Government Act 1993*)
- Delegates and volunteers of Council
- Administrators and Council advisors

Our **external service providers** include applicants, objectors, business partners, contractors, suppliers and anyone with whom we do business.

We have specific requirements in the following areas and we require our external service providers to meet these expectations.

### 2.1 Gifts and Benefits

In general, Council officials are expected to decline gifts or benefits offered during the course of their work. You should refrain from offering any such incentives to Council officials. All gifts offered, accepted or declined are required to be formally recorded in our public Gifts and Benefits Register.

### 2.2 Conflicts of Interest

Council officials are required to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. Council extends this duty of disclosure to all external service providers.

### 2.3 Use of Council equipment and resources

Council resources include financial, material and human resources. All Council equipment and resources are to be used for their intended, proper and official purpose. This requirement clearly extends to the private sector's use of our resources.

## **2.4 Use of Council Information**

Any confidential Council information should be treated as such and should not be revealed to persons other than those with a genuine need and authority. Private, confidential and commercial-in-confidence or proprietary information contained within applications, objections, tenders, quotations, expressions of interest, proposals, heads of agreements and the like, should never be given to competing interests or unauthorised persons. Suppliers handling private information on behalf of Council are expected to adhere to Council's Privacy Management Plan.

## **2.5 Development Applications**

Council is committed to assessing development applications in a manner which is compliant with legislation, open and transparent. There shall be no undue influence on the development assessment process by Council officials.

## **2.6 Communication**

All communication should be clear and direct to minimise the risk of perception of inappropriate influence on the business relationship.

## **2.7 Secondary and post-separation employment**

Council officials have a duty to maintain public trust and confidence and not use commercially sensitive information to facilitate future employment opportunities in the private sector. External service providers are to refrain from exerting pressure, offering inducements or incentives or offering future employment to Council officials.

## **2.8 Intellectual Property Rights**

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

## **2.9 Tenderers, Contractors and Subcontractors**

All tenderers contracted and sub-contracted employees are expected to comply with this Statement. It is the responsibility of contractors to make sub-contractors, if they are engaged, aware of this Statement.

## **2.10 Work Health and Safety**

When you work with Council you must give work health and safety top priority and comply with all safety laws, regulations, procedures and standards.

## **2.11 Sponsorship**

Council has adopted a Financial Assistance and Support Policy which applies to sponsorship arrangements with Council.

## 2.12 Political donations

The law requires that persons who have a financial interest in or have made a submission in relation to a development application or a planning instrument, are to disclose information about political donations and other gifts. This is a mandatory requirement if a donation or gift has been made to a Councillor or Council employee within the previous two years of the application of submission.

## 3. What you can expect from Council

Council will ensure that all policies, procedures and practices related to approvals, tendering, contracting and the purchase of goods and services are consistent with best practice and the highest standards of ethical conduct. All approvals and procurement activities and decisions will be fully and clearly documented to provide an effective audit trail and allow for effective performance review. Council officials must adhere to Council's Code of Conduct and they are expected to:

- Respect those with whom they deal with in the course of their duties;
- Use public resources effectively and efficiently;
- Abide by all relevant and applicable laws and regulations;
- Respect and comply with Council's policies and procedures;
- Deal fairly, honestly and ethically with all individuals and organisations;
- Assess applications objectively, considering all relevant and material factors;
- Promote fair and open competition while seeking best value for money;
- Avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest;
- Protect confidential information;
- Never solicit or accept remuneration, gifts or other benefits from a supplier or applicant for the discharge of official duties; and
- Respond promptly to reasonable requests for advice and information.

## 4. What is expected of you when dealing with Council

We ask all external service providers to observe the following when doing business with Council:

- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council;
- Respect and be courteous towards members of the public and Council officials;
- Comply with all relevant contractual and statutory obligations;
- Respect and comply with the conditions set out in any documents supplied by Council;
- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information when required;
- Declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest to Council as soon as possible;
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent unauthorised release of privileged and confidential information, particularly to the media;

- Refrain from engaging in any form of modern slavery;
- Immediately report instances of corruption, maladministration and waste;
- Refrain from lobbying or canvassing Council officials during procurement and tendering processes;
- Refrain from engaging in any form of collusive practice, such as offering Council officials inducements or incentives designed to improperly influence the conduct of their duties;
- Refrain from engaging in any activity with the purpose of reducing or eliminating competition;
- Refrain from behaving in a way that might bring the Council into disrepute; and
- Refrain making any statement or acting in any way that could mislead anyone to believe that they are representing Council, or expressing Council views or policies.

## 5. Why you must comply with this Statement

By complying with the principles and standards in this Statement of Business Ethics, members of the public, applicants, objectors and suppliers will be able to advance their objectives and interests in a fair and ethical manner. Wingecarribee Shire Council expects all external service providers to comply with this Statement of Business Ethics,

There will be consequences for external service providers not complying with the standards of behaviour outlined in this Statement. Demonstrated corrupt conduct or unethical conduct could lead to:

- Disqualification of tender
- Termination of contracts
- Termination of meetings
- Loss of future work with Council
- Investigation for corruption, inappropriate or unethical conduct
- Loss of reputation or
- Referral of the matter for criminal investigation.

Consequences for non-compliance with this Statement of Business Ethics for Council officials include:

- Disciplinary action
- Dismissal
- Loss of civic office
- Investigation for corruption, inappropriate or unethical conduct
- Referral of the matter for criminal investigation

## 6. Reporting Unethical Behaviour

If you do not believe Council or an external service provider is meeting the requirements described in this Statement, or have concerns about any conduct that could involve unethical behaviour, corrupt conduct (including fraud), maladministration or waste please contact:

- Council's Public Officer (Manager Governance and Corporate Performance), Professional Conduct Coordinator or the General Manager on 02 4868 0888
- Reports can also be made to the following external agencies:
- Independent Commission Against Corruption on (02) 8281 5999 concerning corruption conduct (including fraud)
- NSW Ombudsman on (02) 9286 1000 concerning maladministration
- NSW Office of Local Government on (02) 4428 4100 concerning corrupt conduct, maladministration or waste

Public officials reporting corrupt conduct, maladministration or waste are protected by the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*.

Wingecarrabee Shire Council also has several policies which relate to the Statement of Business Ethics, including:

- Code of Conduct
- Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy
- Model Privacy Management Plan
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy

These policies can be found on our [website](#) or contact us for further information:

- Our Civic Centre is open Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm and is located at:  
Civic Centre  
68 Elizabeth Street  
Moss Vale NSW 2577
- Call us on 02 4868 0888 or email us at [mail@wsc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@wsc.nsw.gov.au)
- Please send all correspondence to:  
Wingecarrabee Shire Council  
PO Box 141  
Moss Vale NSW 2577