

Part 5

Staff Code of Conduct



Officers' Code of Conduct

Officers are currently subject to the National Scheme of Conditions of Service supplemented by local provisions as attached.

The Council will adopt the model Codes of Conduct when received and may adopt a local Councillor/Officer Protocol to cover matters not provided for by the Codes, if necessary.

1. Conduct of Local Government Officers

1.1 The Council wish to remind all members of staff of the code of conduct applicable to local government officers, as set out in the National Scheme of Conditions of Service supplemented by local conditions shown below which forms part of your contract of employment with the Council.

(a) Paragraph 70. General

- (i) The public is entitled to demand of a local government officer conduct of the highest standard and public confidence in this integrity would be shaken were the least suspicion, however ill founded, to arise that he could be in any way influenced by improper motives.
- (ii) An officer's off duty hours are his personal concern, but he should not subordinate his duty to his private interest or put himself in a position where his duty and his private interest conflict. The employing authority will not attempt to preclude officers from undertaking additional employment, but any such employment must not, in the view of the authority, conflict with or react detrimentally to the Authority's interests, or any way weaken public confidence in the confidence of the authority's business.

(b) Paragraph 71. Whole-time Service

- (i) Officers above Grade Scale 6 shall devote their whole time service to the work of their Council, and shall not engage in any other business, or take up any other additional appointment **without the express consent of the Council.**

- (ii) No objection is made to staff undertaking additional employment in off- duty hours which satisfies the intentions of paragraph 70 of the National Scheme of Conditions of Service provided that no use is made of any office equipment of other facilities; but employment which might conflict with or react detrimentally to the Council's interests would be permitted only in exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the **Head of Paid Service**. (S.1/74 (c)).

NB: The involvement in any work for submission to this Council that could lead to a conflict of interests should be avoided, examples of this include involvement in planning applications and applications for building regulations approval. Should an officer be involved in any type of submission or application for his own personal property then his chief officer must be informed, in writing at that time. If an officer wishes to be involved in submissions or applications for a close relative, then his chief officer's permission is required in advance of the application being submitted (see also note below).

(c) Planning Applications by Members of Staff or their Relatives

All members of staff must draw to the attention of the Planning Department (or Building Control in the case of applications under Building Regulations), in writing, any applications submitted by them or close members of their family or where they may have an interest.

(d) Confidentiality of Information

Much of the information the Council holds is confidential. Any information an employee gains as a result of his/her employment is legally the property of the Council and should not be disclosed without permission.

(e) Miscellaneous Matters

(i) Pecuniary advantages through virtue of office

Officers must not accept goods or services without payment or on a special discount basis from contractors and/or suppliers with whom they have dealings as part of their duties with the Council.

NB: Even where payment is made at full retail price for such goods or services public confidence in the integrity of the Council's officers could be undermined. Officers engaged on duties concerning compliance with statutory regulations, eg, Building Inspections, Environmental Health and Planning are particularly at risk.

(ii) Hospitality

Hospitality offered by any firm seeking or having business with the Council should be treated with caution. Such offers should always be reported to the Monitoring Officer.

(iii) Pressure Selling

The dangers of current practices in pressure selling, including promotional offers, free gifts, etc, by certain firms supplying goods to local authorities are well known and regularly drawn to the attention of staff.

If any member of the staff is approached with offers or, or receives, inducements of any kind, his chief officer and Internal Audit should be informed immediately. Staff involved in placing orders are particularly vulnerable.

Officers are reminded that the acceptance of an inducement from a supplier may constitute a criminal offence.

NB: The list of circumstances detailed above is not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive. There may be other sets of circumstances where an officer's conduct could be called into question. In case of any doubt staff should seek advice from their senior or chief officer.