

Cambridge City Council

Code of Conduct for all employees

Key information

What is the Code of Conduct?

The Code of Conduct tells you what Cambridge City Council expects of you in your daily work and your dealings with your colleagues and members of the public. The Council wants to maintain high standards of service and reputation and this document tells you how you play your part in that.

In all aspects of your employment, the Council is committed to treating you fairly and with dignity and respect at all times, in line with the [Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy](#).

Who does it apply to?

This Code applies to all employees, whether permanent or fixed term. Contractors, consultants, temporary agency staff, casuals and volunteers are required to follow the Code when carrying out work for the Council.

Additional guidance for Senior Managers (including Directors, Heads of Service and managers who report directly to a Head of Service) is given at

Appendix 1 to this Code.

Elected Members have their own separate Code of Conduct, available on the intranet.

What does the Council expect from you?

Under this Code of Conduct, you are required to:

- Conduct yourself with the highest standards of honesty and integrity so the Public maintain confidence in the Council.
- Understand and follow the Code of Conduct and other rules and procedures relevant to your job.
- Follow reasonable management instructions.
- Attend work in a condition to be able to carry out your work safely.
- Act professionally and treat others with dignity and respect.

If you breach the rules of this Code of Conduct it could result in disciplinary action being taken against you.

Council money and equipment

If public funds are entrusted to you they must be used in a lawful and responsible manner, and following any local rules and procedures. Council facilities, vehicles or property must not be used for personal use. Specific rules about [internet and e-mail](#) use can be viewed on the Intranet.

Conduct outside work

Although what you do in your free time is your own concern, you should avoid any actions that will negatively affect the reputation of the Council. If you are charged, cautioned or convicted with a criminal offence, or implicated in a criminal investigation; you must notify the Council immediately.

Having another job

If you have another job, you must inform your Manager, and ensure that it does not conflict with your job at the Council. You must not work a total of more than 48 hours per week on average (as stated in the Working Time Regulations), unless the Council have agreed to you 'opting out' of this maximum. This will only be agreed to in exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the [Working Time policy](#) for more information.

If you are in pay band 4 or above you must obtain the consent of your Manager before taking another job.

Accepting gifts

The principle is that you should refuse any gift you are offered by external people you come into contact with at work. The only exception is for small items such as calendars, diaries, sweets or similar token low value gifts and where refusal is likely to offend the donor.

If you are offered something unexpectedly, inform your Director/Head of Service, who will consider the circumstances under which the gift has been offered and decide whether it is appropriate to accept it. For example, if you are involved in a tendering exercise and one of the potential supplier's offers you a gift or generous hospitality, this offer should be reported to your line manager and recorded in the gifts/hospitality register, even if the gift/hospitality is subsequently refused.

You should ensure there is a record of any gift received (other than the small, low value items described above) in the Gifts and Hospitality Register and that your Manager has authorised this.

You should be aware that under the Bribery Act 2010 it is a criminal offence to corruptly receive a gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing anything in your official capacity.

Hospitality

You should only accept hospitality where it is on a corporate rather than a personal basis, and it is appropriate to the occasion, e.g. tea / coffee / biscuits / cake / refreshments.

Attending a working lunch, or a dinner or ceremony where you will be representing the Council are examples of acceptable hospitality, although you must obtain approval from your Manager and this should be recorded in the gifts/hospitality register.

Further [advice on gifts and hospitality](#) is contained in a set of FAQs on the HR intranet pages.

Being politically neutral

You must be politically neutral and unbiased in your dealings at work, whether or not you are in a 'politically restricted' post. This means you can't allow your political opinions to influence or interfere with your work. If your post is politically restricted, further [political restriction guidance](#) is available on the intranet.

Expressing your views

You should not publicly voice or associate yourself with an opinion, which is in conflict with a Council view, on a matter that relates to your job. This could lead to loss of public confidence in the Council.

If you are required to explain a decision the Council has made, in the course of your job, you should not express your personal views. The [Media Protocol](#) gives further information. Guidance for attendance at public/political meetings is contained in

Conflicts of interest

You should inform your Manager immediately if any conflict of interest occurs between your work duties and your personal life. Examples of where a conflict of interest could arise include:

- Involvement with a business that is competing with the Council for work.
- Relationships of a business or a personal nature with an external contractor.
- Involvement with an individual or firm who has submitted a planning application.
- Membership of a community group whose views and actions may oppose that of the Council.
- Being on the panel of an interview where you have a personal friendship or are related to the interviewee; or being in a position where you are the line manager to a close personal friend or relative
- You (or a relative or close friend) submitting a planning application.
- Matters that affect you or your family, such as lodging an objection to a planning application as a Cambridge resident.

You must declare personal membership of any organisation which is not open to the public, without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about rules or members conduct.

If you think a conflict of interest has arisen please inform your Manager immediately. Where a conflict of interest arises, this should be formally recorded by your Line Manager.

Concerns

If you have a general concern at work, you should speak to your Line Manager.

If you have a concern about serious malpractice at work, such as something unethical, fraudulent or illegal, you can contact the Whistle blowing line. Telephone: extension 8180 / 01223 458180 or e-mail: whistleblowing@cambridge.gov.uk

View the full [whistleblowing policy](#) on the intranet.

If you are concerned about bullying or harassment, you should refer to the [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#).

Confidential Information

In the course of doing your job, you may have access to confidential information such as information about members of the Public. You must never disclose such information without authorisation, or make personal use of it. You must also ensure that confidential information sent outside of the organisation is sent securely, via

recorded delivery or is encrypted if being sent electronically. The Data Protection pages on the intranet give further guidance.

Separation of roles during tendering

If you are involved in the tendering process you should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles. You must not disclose confidential information on tenders or costs of internal / external contractors to any unauthorised person or organisation.

Safeguarding

The council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. We take our responsibilities seriously and expect everyone to share this commitment. You must:

- be aware of the safeguarding policy and service procedures
- attend safeguarding training identified for your post or specialist role
- not undertake any unsupervised regulated activity involving access to children and / or adults prior to receiving a satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Certificate
- be aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour for staff working with children and adults at risk of harm and the signs of potential abuse
- know who the [Designated Officers](#) are and how to contact them
- report any concerns, disclosures, actual or suspected cases of child or adult abuse, however small.
- report any concerns of inappropriate behaviour or bad practice

Further [information on safeguarding](#) is published on our Intranet.

Where to get more information

The Council's Intranet site contains employment policies and guidance, as well as health and safety information.

Speak to your Line Manager if you have any questions or if you cannot access the required information from the Intranet.

Appendix 1 - For Senior Management

Scope

This guidance applies to you if you hold a senior Management position (where you report directly to a Head of Service) or the position of Head of Service or Director. You are also bound by the 'Code of Conduct for All Employees'.

Your responsibilities

As a senior manager of Cambridge City Council, you hold a position of greater trust and confidence. You are expected to:

- Be a role model for all employees in upholding the Code of Conduct, and ensure your teams are aware of its contents.
- Conduct your role with openness, honesty and integrity at all times.
- Ensure that employees understand their roles and that Council policies and procedures are accessible to all.
- Act promptly, thoroughly and fairly when responding to reports of wrong doing within the Council.
- Consider sustainability issues when carrying out your role including in the procurement of goods and services.
- Report any personal conflict of interest immediately.
- Ensure Council funds and resources are used in a proper manner.

Political neutrality

In the course of your work you are expected to adopt a politically neutral and objective approach at all times. You may be required, as part of your role to attend public meetings or private political meetings. You must refer to the Guidance for attendance at public/ political meetings contained in

Appendix 2.

If you hold a politically restricted post, you must read and comply with the [Political Restriction Policy](#).

Personal relationships

Close personal familiarity with another employee, Councillor or member of the Council or a contractor may lead to an accusation of bias or other employees feeling uncomfortable; it should therefore be avoided where possible. If a relationship arises this must be immediately disclosed to your Manager.

You must not be involved in the appointment of any applicant for a job if you are their relative, friend or partner; nor should you take a role in their discipline, promotion or pay adjustment. If you are put in a position of being the line manager to your relative, close friend or partner this must also be immediately disclosed. You must not be involved in the awarding of a contract for anyone you are in a close personal relationship with outside of work.

Ethical decision making

As a senior manager you make decisions daily that could be analysed or interpreted by others. Not every ethical dilemma can be outlined in a written Code. You should consider:

- Is the public's confidence in the Council at risk?
- Would a member of the public see the proposed action, decision or practice as fair, honest and appropriate?
- Would the action comply with relevant legislation, policy and practice?

Annual declaration

Directors and Heads of Service are required to complete a Declaration of Pecuniary Interests on an annual basis. This includes details of any outside business interests. The declaration form will be sent to you when it is due to be completed.

You should speak to your Manager if you are in any doubt about a particular issue or aspect of your role.

Appendix 2 - Guidance for attendance at public / political meetings

Scope

This guidance applies to all employees.

Public meetings

You may be expected to attend a public meeting called by a Councillor, to give a professional or technical view or answer questions.

Attendance at public meetings is acceptable only when meetings are genuinely open and invitations to platform speakers are not restricted to one political group.

Public political meetings

It is not acceptable for you in your official capacity to speak at a public political meeting called by a political group.

Private political groups

You will not be called upon to attend or advise any private political group meeting. However the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service may attend a private political group meeting to explain or advise on Council policies or issues; provided that this facility is available to all political groups who are represented on the Council.

Politically restricted posts

If you hold a politically restricted post, you may not speak in public or publish material that affects support for a political group. However it is acceptable to explain the Council's position on a policy or issue in your official capacity. Refer to the Political Restriction Policy for further guidance.

Political publicity

In the course of your work, you must not publish any material, or give quotes which partly or wholly appear to support one political group. This includes materials or quotes referring to a political group, or promoting or opposing a point of view that is identifiable to one political group.

Speak to your Head of Service or Director if you require further guidance about attendance at public/ political meetings.