

Proposed amendments to Code of Conduct for Employees

Proposed amendments to existing sections (amendments/additions in italics):

4. Health and Safety

4.1 You have a duty of care as prescribed in the corporate Health and Safety policy, and must not act wilfully or intentionally in a manner liable to place the public, your colleagues, or yourself at risk.

Identity Cards

4.2 *You must display your identity card at all times on Council premises.*

Conflicts of Interest

7. Public Duty and Private Interest

7.1 Your off-duty hours are your personal concern but you should not put yourself in a position where there is a conflict of interests between your private life and public duties. If, for example you are a member of a secret society which may cause a conflict of interest, such as the Freemasons, you must declare your membership to your manager and on a declaration form that will be held on your HR record.

7.2 *You should raise suggestions or concerns about service delivery with your manager. Suggestions about service delivery away from your own service area can also be raised with relevant management, through staff forums or with your trade union.*

7.3 *Any questions or statements you wish to submit as a citizen for public council meetings must be drafted and sent in your own time and using your own resources (e.g. not with work email). You must be clear that you are doing so as a citizen and not as a council employee. You should not lobby a councillor inappropriately on personal employment matters. If you are unsure about the process you are advised to speak to your manager. This does not restrict your right to raise concerns regarding possible malpractice under the whistleblowing policy.*

7.4 The council reserves the right to bring action against you where your conduct outside work conflicts with your public duties, or could undermine the council's reputation or public confidence.

7.5 *Employees must disclose information which is relevant to their capability, capacity and suitability to carry out the duties and responsibilities for which they are employed. An employee must immediately inform their manager in writing if, during their employment with the council, they are subject to any of the following which it would be reasonable to understand may impact upon their role, professional standing or the reputation of the council:*

- *Advised that they are under investigation for a criminal act (including road traffic offences)*
- *Arrested in connection with a criminal act*
- *Notified that criminal charges are being considered against them*
- *In receipt of a summons to appear before a Court of Law for an alleged offence*
- *Found guilty and convicted of any offence*
- *Given a police caution*

Employees who are required to drive as part of their duties must also declare any penalties received in connection with motoring offences.

In all cases, a failure to disclose relevant information or the deliberate withholding of such information can amount to a breach of trust and confidence and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

7.6 Serious misconduct or criminal offences committed during or outside working hours, which bring you or the council into disrepute, will be subject to disciplinary action under the council's Disciplinary policy, and may result in dismissal.

7.7 If you are involved with granting permissions or benefits, for example, planning permission, you must take no part in considering any application made by yourself, relative, friend or neighbour.

19. The Media

19.1 In general, all communications with the media relating to the activities of the council are handled through the Corporate Communications Office. You are not permitted to communicate with the media on matters relating to the activities of the council without authorisation from the Corporate Communications Office. If you are contacted by journalists you should refer them to the Corporate Communications Office. *This is not intended to prevent or deter lawful whistleblowing.*

22. Use of Council Facilities and Systems

22.1 The council's property and facilities are provided for official council business. *You are responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of any portable equipment provided to you.* All council-owned portable equipment and devices must be returned on leaving council employment and any council-owned or supplied data must be deleted. Access to systems used for council purposes must be terminated permanently.

24. Telephones and Mobile Phones

24.1 *Generally,* You should use the telephone or other mobile devices provided by the council for business use only. ~~*Where personal use outside working hours of specific devices, e.g., Blackberrys, is permitted, costs must be paid in line with repayment procedures.*~~

24.2 The council recognises in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for you to make or receive personal calls or email during working hours using the device - personal use should be brief, and made during your breaks if possible. *You must not use your device for personal calls outside the U.K.*

27. Social networking websites

27.2 The council respects your right to a private life and you are encouraged to exercise discretion and use social media responsibly at all times. The council must also ensure relevant protection for its operations, confidential information and reputation. If using social networking websites at work or in your private life, the following applies to you:

- You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage the council's business, operations or reputation, even indirectly.
- You must not use social media to:
 1. defame or disparage the council, staff or any third party;
 2. harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties;
 3. make false or misleading statements; or
 4. impersonate colleagues or third parties
 5. *upload or publish without consent photographs taken on council premises or of council employees (refer to section 'x' [tbc] for further information on photography)*

Proposed new sections:

Photography

Any photography which takes place during the course of your employment or your working time, should be with the consent of the individuals being photographed and if relevant, your line manager. Photographs which are taken during your working time of or within non-council premises must have the permission of the owner of the premises.

If you plan to publish or upload any photographs to the internet or social media you must get the written permission of all identifiable people before doing so. Photographs of children require the written consent of parents or carers and permission from your line manager.

Recordings

The council expects that the recording of a meeting or conversation during the course of employment will take place only with the consent of all those present. Where a request is made to make a recording, it will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account relevant considerations, for example where the recording of a meeting may be a reasonable adjustment related to an employee's disability. The council will reserve the right to request a copy of the recording. The council does not permit covert recording under any circumstances. Any such recording will be considered to be a disciplinary matter.

Professional Qualifications, Registrations and Conduct

If your employment with the council is in a post which requires you to either be registered with a statutory and/or professional organisation, to hold membership of a professional body or hold any other qualification, it is your duty to ensure you are able to comply with the relevant obligation. You may be requested to provide evidence of compliance to your line manager. You should also comply with any duty you may have to inform your professional body of a matter which may impact on your registration or membership. You should inform your line manager of the matter too.

You must ensure that the relevant code of practice is followed during the course of your duties, this includes formal reporting to the professional body on any matter where there is a duty to do so.