

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF AND CONTRACTORS CODE OF CONDUCT



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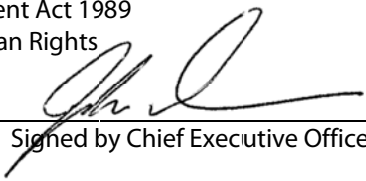
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RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS,
POLICIES OR PROCEDURES: Council Plan
Occupational Health and Safety – Drugs and Alcohol Policy
Staff Uniform Policy
Customer Service Charter
Strategic Document, Policy and Procedure Framework
Loddon Shire Style Guide
Equal Opportunity Policy
Bullying and Harassment Policy
Loddon Shire Enterprise Agreement
Mobile Phone Policy
IT Policy
Study Assistance Policy
Staff Recognition Policy
Smoking in Council Buildings and Plant Policy
Discipline Policy and Procedure
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
Council Vehicle Policy
Plant and Equipment Private Hire Policy

RELATED LEGISLATION: Local Government Act 1989
Charter of Human Rights

EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:


Signed by Chief Executive Officer

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This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.

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1 PURPOSE

The Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct (“Code”) sets out the values, expected minimum standards of behaviour and professional conduct for staff and contractors in their roles with Loddon Shire Council.

The Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct demonstrates to the community that Loddon Shire Council will carry out its statutory obligations with efficiency, impartiality and integrity.

2 BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct budget implications arising from adoption of this Code.

3 RISK ANALYSIS

If this Code of Conduct is followed, reputational risks will be minimised.

4 SCOPE

The Code applies to all staff at the Loddon Shire. ‘Staff’ includes managers, directors and the Chief Executive Officer, and all in-house contractors and work experience students who perform work for Council. Any contractors involved with the Loddon Shire projects or events are also expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with the principles of this Code.

The standards in this Code are in addition to any legal requirements, Council’s Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, policies and procedures with respect to staff. All staff and contractors should familiarise themselves with the Code and these other requirements and ensure they are observed and adhered to.

The Code does not cover or list every situation or circumstance that may arise. If staff are uncertain about their role, responsibility, conduct or behaviour surrounding a particular circumstance that is not covered within the Code, they must contact their immediate manager/supervisor or the Manager Organisational Development for further clarification.

5 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct (Code) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act).

Section 95AA (Code of conduct for Council staff) states:

- a) A Chief Executive Officer must develop and implement a code of conduct for Council staff.
- b) A code of conduct for Council staff must include any matters which are prescribed for the purposes of this section.
- c) The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that members of Council staff have access to the code of conduct for Council staff.

Section 95 (1) of the Act states Council staff must in the course of their employment:

- a) act impartially
- b) act with integrity including avoiding conflicts of interest
- c) accept accountability for results
- d) provide responsive service.

6 UNDERLYING VALUES

As employees of the Loddon Shire Council, there is a public duty to put public interest above personal interests. This can at times lead to situations where personal standards and values are challenged.

The Code provides a common set of minimum standards to help all staff members:

- make consistent and ethical decisions
- serve the public interest above personal interests
- act with integrity by being honest, accountable, objective, open and courageous
- be supportive of colleagues

The values included in the Code are:

Integrity	means obeying the law, following the intention of policies and procedures, fully disclosing actual or potential conflicts of interest, acting honestly and responsibly and observing organisational values and codes of conduct.
Accountability	means having justifiable reasons for decisions and actions, obtaining value for money, continuously improving, keeping proper records, and submitting to scrutiny.
Impartiality	means being fair by being fully informed, considering only relevant matters, and dispassionately assessing without fear, favour or bias.
Respect	means being open to feedback and other views, communicating with clarity and sensitivity, giving all relevant information, providing reasons for decisions, collaborating and working effectively in teams, being courteous and being punctual.
Leadership	means acting ethically, dealing with suspected wrongdoing, doing the right thing even in the face of adversity, giving proper advice fearlessly, taking initiative, being innovative, and acting strategically.

7 VISION AND KEY FOCUS AREAS FROM COUNCIL PLAN

The Code reflects the vision and key focus areas from the Council Plan. It states the values and principles that are expected from all staff, and includes a commitment to providing accountable and ethical programs and services to ratepayers, customers and clients of the Loddon Shire Council.

7.1 Our vision

Loddon Shire will be a vibrant, welcoming and connected community which looks back on its past with pride and looks forward to a strong and prosperous future.

7.2 Key focus areas

1. Advocacy

- To promote the needs of our communities to government and other authorities.

2. Economic Development

- To create more jobs by supporting and expanding Loddon's economy.

3. Land Use Planning

- To create opportunities for business and residential development in Loddon Shire ahead of demand.

4. Asset Management

- To provide infrastructure that meets the needs of current and future generations.

5. Township Amenity & Beautification

- To make our townships attractive places to live.

6. Social Connections

- To help the residents of Loddon to have a fulfilling life.

7. Community Engagement

- To give our community the opportunity to influence Council decision making and to enable Councillors to make fully informed decisions.

8. Organisational Development

- To improve the way we serve our community by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of what we do.

8 CODE RULES

8.1 Alcohol and drugs

The Loddon Shire prohibits the use of alcohol and illicit substances during work or at other times when it will result in your work being affected or your or other's safety being put at risk.

Should a function be held during working hours or at the end of the working day where alcoholic refreshments are provided, a sensible approach to the provision of such drinks both in alcoholic content and quantity will be adopted.

You should consult your pharmacist or doctor for advice if you believe that any prescribed medicines you are taking are likely to affect your work.

See OH&S – Drugs & Alcohol Policy

8.2 Appearance

Staff should ensure that their standard of appearance is neat, clean and appropriate for their particular area of work. Where a uniform and/or personal protective clothing/equipment is provided, it must be worn in accordance with Council policy. A high standard of personal hygiene is expected at all times.

See Staff Uniform Policy

8.3 Authorised officers

Council may formally authorise and appoint staff members as officers for the administration and enforcement of particular laws. This means that the authorised officer is given the powers of the statutory position they are appointed to. This is different to staff acting on behalf of Council under a delegated power.

All staff members who are authorised officers under section 224 of the Local Government Act must at all times carry with them a photo identification card indicating that they are appointed as authorised officer. This card must be shown, upon request, to an occupier of premises when the officer is entering premises for the purposes of conducting an inspection associated with their duties as an authorised officer.

8.4 Bribes

Staff members must not solicit, encourage or accept any form of bribe from anyone, including a supplier or potential supplier, contractor or potential contractor, customer or fellow staff member as an inducement for business, information, favorable treatment or any other purpose.

8.5 Business records

Staff members must not destroy or alter in an unauthorised manner business documents and records that are required to be maintained for a statutory period, nor must any records be falsified or tampered with.

Records and business documents includes anything provided by an external party, and also includes wage records and timesheets, medical certificates and records in any form including electronic form.

Staff have a responsibility to keep relevant records in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

8.6 Charter of Human Rights

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities sets out the basic rights, freedoms, and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. Since 2008, local councils have a legal obligation to ensure that:

- All council decisions give proper consideration to human rights
- All actions, policies and services are compatible with human rights
- Local laws are interpreted and applied consistently with human rights
- People who work on their behalf do so in a way that respects human rights.

8.7 Confidentiality and privacy

Staff and customers have the right to confidentiality and privacy with respect to their personal information in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2000. All staff members are responsible for maintaining this confidentiality, including the security of information for which they are responsible.

Unauthorised disclosure of Council information is prohibited.

Private addresses or telephone numbers of employees must not be provided to another person (except to the supervisor of the employee concerned) without prior written approval of the staff member.

8.8 Communication and teamwork

Council is committed to providing effective channels of communication among all staff members regardless of their location or roles. Open communication fosters teamwork, facilitates a healthy working environment, and promotes the sharing and exchange of ideas and information to help the Loddon Shire realise a greater potential than it might otherwise achieve.

Staff members should make it their habit to speak to their peers, subordinates and managers to share information and practices as appropriate and take part in team meetings, cross-organisation meetings and special interest meetings to ensure that they are informative, positive and fun.

Staff members should answer phones in their area and accept phone calls transferred by other staff members, all letters should be answered in accordance with the timelines in the Customer Service Charter.

8.9 Competition in Council business

Council aims to conduct business in an honest environment, as an effective competitor in accordance with community and ethical standards of behaviour.

It is not appropriate to make any disparaging or untruthful remarks about any of our competitors, their products or services. It is expected that employees will always speak truthfully about the products, quality and services offered by the Council.

8.10 Compliance with the law

Staff are expected to comply with all laws. If a staff member is convicted of a criminal offence, they must notify their responsible director immediately.

8.11 Corporate identity

Staff must adhere to templates for written documentation and follow any guidance or frameworks in place that ensures a consistent and professional image across the organisation.

See Strategic Document, Policy and Procedure Framework, Loddon Shire Style Guide

8.12 Customer service

Staff members will deliver efficient and quality customer service to our customers by conducting themselves with integrity and in a manner that ensures that:

- our customers are provided with our services at a consistent quality that meets their needs
- all decisions and actions are evaluated in terms of their impact on customers
- there is a safe and friendly environment at all times for our customers and
- all staff members, customers and others are treated fairly and without discrimination or harassment.

See Customer Service Charter

8.13 Dealing with Councillors

Staff members dealing with Councillors should treat Councillors with the same professional courtesy and respect with which they treat customers and colleagues. In the first instance, Councillors will approach the relevant director or manager for advice, who may then refer the enquiry to staff with professional expertise and who are personally familiar with the circumstances of the issue. However, any staff member may provide a Councillor with information and services on the same basis as they would to a customer.

Staff members should note that a Councillor does not have the authority to direct any member of staff to do anything. If staff feel that they are being directed by a Councillor to do something, and it is not simply a request for service from a customer, they should report the matter to the CEO, director or responsible manager.

8.14 Delegated functions, powers or duties

Council may formally delegate some of its legislated powers, functions or duties to particular staff members. This means that an action of the staff member according to the delegation is deemed to be an action of Council.

Any staff member who has been delegated a power, function or duty must be aware of and adhere to the legal, reporting and record keeping responsibilities that accompany that delegation. Failure to do so may put the Council at risk of prosecution.

8.15 Discrimination, harassment and bullying

The Council will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying against existing or prospective employees, especially, but not limited to recruitment, training, conditions of employment, remuneration or dismissal.

See Equal Opportunity Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy

8.16 Dispute resolution procedures

Before commencing any formal dispute resolution process, the parties to any disagreement will endeavour to resolve their differences in a courteous and respectful manner. Staff may seek assistance in resolving their differences.

The dispute resolution procedure is intended to be used when staff have been unable to resolve an interpersonal conflict, and where the situation is unduly affecting the operation of the Council.

See Loddon Shire Enterprise Agreement

8.17 Electronic communications usage

Electronic communications usage is available for most of the organisation. These facilities are provided for work usage and owned by the organisation. Whilst some incidental personal usage will be tolerated it must be minimal. Staff who use these facilities are expected to acquaint themselves with policies where they exist, such as internet, email and mobile phone usage.

See Mobile Phone Policy, IT Policy

8.18 Environment

All staff are responsible for maintaining and protecting the environment. Staff should, therefore, always consider the impact of their work activities on the environment and the local community, including the way in which waste is minimised or disposed of, chemicals are used and stored, and resources are utilised.

8.19 Intellectual property

Loddon Shire Council retains the copyright of work produced by staff during their employment. Staff retain the copyright of the work only if approved by the Chief Executive Officer, or if the staff member can demonstrate that they did not use the Shire's time, name, information or resources in producing the work.

8.20 Leaving the Loddon Shire Council

On finishing employment with the Loddon Shire Council, staff members must return all Loddon Shire property including documents, materials, software, keys, identification cards, or any other Loddon Shire property under their control or in the possession of the staff member. This includes any intellectual property that may have been created whilst working for the Loddon Shire.

The staff member agrees that the Loddon Shire may withhold any monies owing to the staff member including payment in lieu of notice period not actually worked after resignation, from the staff member's salary and entitlements at termination if the staff member has not returned all of the Loddon Shire's property in his/her possession.

8.21 Malicious or vexatious complaints and allegations

This means a complaint or allegation that is about another staff member, a supplier or a contractor that is made to cause harm, mischief or annoyance to the Loddon Shire or the person about who the complaint was made.

Making a malicious or vexatious complaint is contrary to the integrity and honesty that the Loddon Shire values and will be considered a serious breach of this Code.

8.22 Media relations and public comment

Only the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor can speak to the media on behalf of the Council. The Chief Executive Officer may delegate this authority to other staff.

Staff members shall not accept public speaking engagements or write for external publications in relation to the Council, its decisions, policy, strategy, operations products or services without permission from the Chief Executive Officer.

8.23 Occupational health and safety

The health and safety of our staff members, customers, suppliers and contractors is of paramount importance to the Loddon Shire. Health and safety cannot be sacrificed to achieve financial goals or for any other reason. The Loddon Shire is committed to providing services to its community that do not jeopardise the health and safety of staff members and contractors providing the service or our customers receiving the service. We all share the responsibility of ensuring that our customers and fellow staff members are safe and without risk of injury as far as is reasonable practicable.

All staff members and contractors are required to read and make themselves familiar with the Loddon Shire Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

8.24 Operating costs and financial probity

Staff members are expected to minimise operating expenses wherever practicable.

8.25 Organisational change

Council is continually identifying and implementing new systems or methods of work to keep pace with customer needs and changing external forces. In this constantly changing environment, staff are expected to keep an open mind about change and to positively contribute to and support new ideas or programs.

Council fosters a work environment in which staff are encouraged to keep an open mind of their career path and of the strategies that will help achieve their career plans. The principal mechanism to do this is the Staff Development Program and the Staff Study Assistance Program.

See Study Assistance Policy

8.26 Personal conduct

Staff members will aim to treat all people with whom they have contact in the course of their work with fairness, respect, courtesy and professionalism. Staff will respect and seek as required, the professional opinion of colleagues in their areas of competence, and acknowledge their contribution. They will not denigrate colleagues in public.

Managers and supervisors will treat their staff with fairness and consistency and involve them in decisions that affect them. They should create opportunities to provide positive feedback, affirm staff and their contributions, and provide equal opportunity for staff to develop their skills, performance and potential.

Verbal abuse, physical abuse, threatened physical abuse, fighting, bullying, harassment, including sexual harassment, will not be tolerated and are all likely to lead to the most serious of consequences.

8.27 Personal identification

All staff members should wear their Loddon Shire name badge at all times when working for Loddon Shire in a public environment or representing the Loddon Shire at public forums or at meetings.

8.28 Representing Council positively

Staff members are representatives of Council and as such, they should represent Council in public forums, with individual ratepayers and residents and to other government entities, in a positive way. Criticism of Council policy, decisions and actions should be raised with your supervisor and not discussed in public forums.

8.29 Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in Council buildings or Council vehicles, or in close proximity to Council buildings

See Smoking in Council Buildings and Plant Policy

8.30 Staff recognition

Council aims to recognise staff members who achieve a high level of performance and adherence to standards.

See Staff Recognition Policy

8.31 Theft and fraud

Any attempt to steal from the Loddon Shire or deliberately or recklessly defraud the Loddon Shire by a staff member will be considered to be serious misconduct and will result in disciplinary action that may include termination of employment.

See Discipline Policy, Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy

8.32 Use of Council assets

Staff members shall not deliberately misuse or damage Council property. When using Council property or equipment, staff are required to adhere to instructions, operating procedures and the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations in order to avoid personal injury, or unnecessary maintenance and replacement costs.

Staff shall not misuse Council assets, intellectual property or the services of other staff members for their personal gain. This includes:

- copying computer software programs regardless of whether or not the programs are protected by copyright
- use of Council letterhead paper or postage when corresponding on personal or other matters not directly related to the Council
- unauthorised use of Council logo.

Any staff member intending to take Council assets home for use is required to have the authority of their director.

Loddon Shire's property must not be given away, lent, destroyed or otherwise disposed of unless authorised by the relevant manager.

See Council Vehicle Policy, Plant and Equipment Private Hire Policy

8.33 Use of privileged information for unfair personal gain

Staff members who have access to information that is not available to the public must not use that information to gain improper advantage for themselves or any other person or organisation.

8.34 Work performance and behaviour

Staff members are expected to provide a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Staff are expected to work consistently and diligently, and be punctual and conscientious.

Staff members are expected to commit to the Council Plan.

Where performance standards or behaviour standards are not met, supervisors are expected, in the normal course of their role as managers, to raise such matters informally with employees in order to rectify any aspect. Staff are encouraged to raise such matters informally with their supervisors.

There also may be instances where performance or behaviour standards are not met and where formal action is necessary.

See *Discipline Procedure*

9 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The term 'conflict of interest' refers to a situation where there is a conflict between a personal interest in a matter and a public duty.

The conflict is to be avoided. Members of the public rightly expect Loddon Shire staff to make decisions or exercise their public duty objectively without personal consideration or gain.

Council staff must ensure there is no conflict between their personal interests, whether financial or otherwise, and the fulfillment of their duty.

9.1 Local Government Act requirements

The Local Government Act 1989 defines the circumstances that give rise to a conflict of interest. A member of staff has a conflict of interest if they have a direct interest in a matter, including where there is financial gain or loss or some impact, good or bad, on where they live (referred to as residential amenity).

However, the act also identifies five types of indirect interest because of:

- a) a close association with a family member, relative or housemate
- b) an indirect financial interest, including holding shares above a certain amount in a company with a direct interest
- c) a conflicting duty with another entity or person with a direct interest in a matter. For example, a member of a governing body of a company or organisation that has a direct interest in a matter
- d) having received an applicable gift valued at \$200 or more from a person with a direct interest, and
- e) being a party to the matter by having become a party to civil proceedings in relation to the matter.

9.2 Disclosing conflicts of interest

Members of staff are required to inform their line manager of any possible or potential conflict of interest. If there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, it is wise to raise the issue just in case.

If a conflict has been identified the staff member must step aside from the decision making process or the relevant matter.

The onus is on the staff member to disclose the conflict, or raise the issue of a potential conflict with their manager or appropriate officer.

Failure to disclose conflict will be regarded as a serious breach of this Code.

It is neither a crime nor morally wrong to have a conflict of interest. They can occur from time to time and are often unavoidable. It is, however, important to identify the conflict and report it. It is the failure to do anything about it that can cause problems because of the risk or suspicion that private interests have influenced the exercise of a public duty.

Recording whether a person has a conflict or not is also important because it demonstrates transparency, accountability and objectivity in a decision making process.

Members of staff and Loddon Shire contractors who provide advice or report to the Loddon Shire or a special committee must disclose direct or indirect interests. This is required under section 80C of the Act.

Where a staff member or contractor provides a report and has a direct or indirect conflict of interest, the interest must be disclosed when providing the report and before the advice or report is considered by the Loddon Shire Council or committee. As a matter of practice this would usually be recorded in the report itself.

If advice is provided in person, disclosure of any direct or indirect interest should be made in person at the time.

It should be noted that the Loddon Shire or special committee may ask the person disclosing a conflict of interest the nature of the interest. For this reason, an officer who has prepared a report and disclosed an interest would have to attend the relevant meeting. If attendance is not possible, the detailed nature of the interest must be included in the report.

9.3 Types of conflict of interest

Outlined below are some of the types of conflict of interest that staff may encounter.

9.4 Outside employment

Staff who have or are considering undertaking additional paid employment should ensure that it does not conflict with their employment with Loddon Shire.

Staff must ensure that any additional paid employment does not compromise their ability to perform their duties for Loddon Shire through reduced physical capacity, mental alertness or through a conflict of interest.

9.5 Community interest

The Loddon Shire encourages all staff members to participate in local activities that address the needs of our community. Where a staff member is involved in a community group that has contact or dealing with the Loddon Shire, the staff member must advise the community group to use the appropriate channels to deal with its issue with the Loddon Shire and must not act to provide that group with priority access or special benefits.

Where a staff member is involved with a community group and that group is using the media to exert pressure on the Loddon Shire, the staff member must not act as a spokesperson for the group or be seen, from a public perspective, to be in conflict with the Loddon Shire.

9.6 Suppliers and contractors

Staff members who are required to deal with external suppliers or contractors or internal departments competing with external contractors, must avoid placing themselves in situations of potential conflict of interest. Suppliers and contractors include, but are not restricted to those who supply the Loddon Shire with goods, services and consultancies or undertake works.

A potential conflict of interest could arise if the staff member, a member of his/her family, a friend or associate:

- owns any shares in
- has any other financial interest in
- participates in the business of
- conducts any private business with, or
- accepts a gift of shares or the opportunity to acquire discounted shares in an actual or potential supplier's or contractor's business.

If the staff member's work with the Loddon Shire involves dealing with the business or others in the same industry, the staff member should disclose such circumstances to the Loddon Shire and refrain from any of the above.

Where a staff member (a member of his/her family; a friend or associate) has an existing financial interest in an actual or potential supplier or contractor to the Loddon Shire this must be declared to their immediate coordinator. The staff member should take no part in any decisions affecting that supplier or contractor. Where any doubt exists the principles to be considered are:

- the capacity of the staff member to influence dealing that the Loddon Shire may have with the supplier or contractor
- the improper personal benefit that may flow to the staff member or relative, friend or associate through the exercise of that influence, or
- whether the activity is fraudulent, corrupt or is an irregular transaction.

When a staff member is dealing with a supplier or contractor in who another staff member (or a Councillor) has an interest, the staff member must ensure that he/she deals with that supplier or contractor on the same basis as the Loddon Shire would with any other supplier or contractor.

9.7 Gifts, prizes, meals and entertainment

The receipt of gifts and entertainment is often part of normal business practice. However, in order to ensure that the integrity of the Loddon Shire is maintained as is seen to be maintained, the following will apply in relation to the receipt of gifts, prizes and entertainment.

Unsolicited promotional materials of little or nominal value such as pens, pencils, key rings and diaries are not considered gifts for the purposes of this Code.

Where a staff member wins a prize that has been provided from an actual or potential supplier or an actual or potential contractor, the prize will become the property of the Loddon Shire. It will be used for business purposes where appropriate, may be donated to a local charity or may be returned to the receiving officer at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer. Examples of how prizes can be won may include, but are not limited to:

- door prize at a conference
- reward for buying more than a specified value of goods from a supplier or contractor
- being a milestone customer of a supplier or contractor
- reward for loyalty to a supplier or contractor.

Staff will not accept gifts in their role where it could be perceived to influence the staff member except:

- where the gift would generally be regarded as only having a token value (less than \$50) and could not be perceived to influence the staff member's actions
- where refusal of the gift may cause offence or embarrassment, in which case the gift may be accepted on behalf of the Loddon Shire and becomes the property of the Loddon Shire.

Details of gifts received in excess of \$50 must be included on the gift register.

Participating in business related functions, including accepting meals with a supplier or competitor, customer or contractor is permissible business practice. However, care should be exercised to ensure these functions have an underlying business purpose and that their value and frequency is not excessive. Particular care should be exercised to ensure that any such function falls within the limits of socially acceptable behaviour and that the staff member's presence does not reflect badly on the Council.

Staff are required to ensure that participation in functions does not influence their behaviour or decision-making in respect to the sponsor of the function.

This form of hospitality is a gift and must be included on the gift register.

9.8 Investments

Staff members may own shares or other interests in any public or private company. In most cases these interests will not present a problem. However, staff members should carefully assess the potential for a conflict of interest where they, their partners or other relatives own shares or other interests in a company or firm that is a regular customer of or a supplier to the Loddon Shire. If a potential conflict of interest appears to exist, then the facts of the matter must be disclosed to the Chief Executive Officer or responsible Director.

9.9 Loddon Shire information

In addition to keeping Loddon Shire information confidential, staff members must not use information obtained at the Loddon Shire for their private business purposes. This includes information about the Loddon Shire's business contracts, information about business opportunities at the Loddon Shire and information about planning scheme changes, future land developments and growth plans for the Loddon Shire.

9.10 Employment of family or friends

It is a fundamental value of the Loddon Shire that it deals with all matters with integrity and honesty. It is also vital that the Loddon Shire is seen to act in this manner. Therefore, any staff member who has the authority to employ staff whether on a permanent, temporary or casual basis must not employ a member of his/her family or any friend.

Where a member of a staff member's family or a friend is a candidate for a position within the Loddon Shire, that staff member must disclose their association with the candidate to the CEO, Director or Manager and must not participate in the selection process. Furthermore, they must not seek to influence the selection process.

Any failure to disclose an association with a candidate for a position or any attempt to influence the outcome of a recruitment and selection process, in which a member of your family or a friend is a candidate, will be considered a serious breach of this Code.

10 ADMINISTRATION

10.1 Non-compliance

Where non-compliance with this Code is reported and proven, remedial action will be taken. This may involve counselling and training in the case of unintentional and less serious breaches of the Code. It may involve mediation through to dismissal in the case of intentional and serious breaches.

10.2 Breaches of the Code by other staff members

If you believe that another staff member is breaching the expected standards of conduct outlined within this Code, you should discuss the other staff member's behaviour, without risk of reprisal, with your immediate coordinator, the CEO, relevant Director or Manager Organisational Development.

10.3 Grievance

Staff have the right to access at any time the Grievance and Disputes Settling Procedures outlined in the Enterprise Agreement.

10.4 Making fair decisions

As per the Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, a fair hearing will be given to all parties in order to make fair decisions.

10.5 Promotion of the Code

The Code will be included as an Appendix to the Employee Handbook and placed on the Intranet and Internet. The Code will be promoted in the Staff Newsletter and will be referred to in all new or revised Position Descriptions. It will be referred to in Staff Performance Reviews. The Code's existence should be acknowledged in Council publications, such as the Council Plan, Annual Report, and Customer Service Charter.

10.6 Education and awareness

All supervisors should ensure that new employees are made aware of the Code, and provide a full explanation to the employee at the time of induction.

At all times, employees and managers/supervisors should be aware of the importance of reporting non-compliance and breaches of the Code.

The Code should be referred to in staff performance reviews. It can be included in team-based discussions to resolve workplace problems.

The Code should be referred to by supervisors when important staff-related decisions are being made and announced.

10.7 Policies and procedures

Loddon Shire Council is required to make relevant policies and procedures accessible and employees are required to make every effort to acquaint themselves with them.

10.8 Review

The Code will be reviewed every 4 years.

APPENDIX 1: STAFF MEMBER'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Loddon Shire Employee

Please read the Loddon Shire Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct document carefully.

The document provides an outline of the behaviour and conduct required of all Shire staff members and contractors.

It is a requirement of the Loddon Shire that all staff members will work in accordance with the Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct as described.

ACCEPTANCE:

I.....(please print name), have read, understood, and agree as an employee or volunteer of the Loddon Shire, to work in accordance with Loddon Shire Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct as described.

.....
(Signature)

Date: / /