

Draft 1

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

EMPLOYEES' CODE OF CONDUCT

1 Standards

1.1 Honesty, Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity

1.2 Employees must perform their duties with honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity.

1.3 Employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public.

1.4 Employees should bring to the attention of management any deficiency in the provision of service and must report any impropriety or breach of procedure.

1.5 Employees who are members of professional associations are expected to adhere to all codes of conduct, ethics and standards of the relevant body.

1.6 Employees must ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner, ensuring value for money to the local community and avoiding legal challenge to the Council.

1.7 Employees serve the Council as a whole. They must therefore serve all Members, not just members of any controlling group, and must ensure that the individual rights of all Members are respected.

1.8 Some senior employees are expected, within the Council's guidelines, to advise political groups and have a duty to advise minority groups as well as any controlling group.

1.9 Some employees (normally those in more senior positions) are in politically restricted posts and by law are prevented from taking part in certain political activities outside their work. These employees will be made aware of any such restriction and of the rules for claiming exemption. Any employee who is in doubt about their position should contact the Human Resources Manager.

1.10 Employees, whether politically restricted or not, must follow every lawful expressed policy of the Council and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

2 Accountability

2.1 *Employees must be accountable to the Council for their actions.*

3 Respect for Others

- 3.1** *Employees must treat others with respect; not discriminate unlawfully against any person; treat members and co-opted members of the Council professionally; and abide by the Council's Dignity at Work Policy.*
- 3.2** Relationships between employees should be based on mutual trust and respect and on a spirit of teamwork. Maintaining effective working relationships is everyone's responsibility but particularly that of managers at all levels. In cases of serious breakdowns in working relationships, the Council's established Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures may have a role to play.

4 Stewardship

- 4.1** *Employees must use any public funds entrusted to or handled by them in a responsible and lawful manner, and must not make personal use of the property or facilities of the Authority unless properly authorised to do so.*
- 4.2** All relationships with suppliers or potential suppliers must be made known to the employee's manager. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit by fair competition, and no favouritism should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives. No part of the community must be discriminated against.

5 Personal Interests

- 5.1** *Employees must not in their official or personal capacity allow their personal interests to conflict with the Authority's requirements; or use their position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.*
- 5.2** Employees must declare to their Head of Service any financial interests which could conflict with the Council's interests.
- 5.3** Employees must similarly declare non-financial interests that they consider could bring about conflict with the Council's interests – for example, involvement with an organisation receiving grant aid from the Council; membership of an NHS Trust Board; or involvement with an organisation or pressure group which may seek to influence the Council's policies.
- 5.4** Employees must declare to their Head of Service membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about its rules, membership or conduct (e.g. Freemasons)
- 5.5** Employees who have an interest, financial or non-financial, must not involve themselves in any decision on allocation of Council services or resources from which they, organisations with which they are involved, or their friends or family, might benefit, and must ensure that the matter is referred immediately to their Head of Service
- 5.6** Employees who engage, supervise or work with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship with the contractor in a private capacity

must declare that relationship to their Head of Service who will formally record the relationship and determine what steps, if any, are necessary to protect against actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

- 5.7** Employees' off-duty hours are their personal concern, but they must not subordinate their duty to their private interests or put themselves in a position where duty and private interests conflict.

6 Registration of Interests

- 6.1** *Employees must comply with any requirement of the Council to register or declare interests and declare hospitality, benefits or gifts received as a consequence of their employment in accordance with the relevant guidance.*

- 6.2** Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is sought to sponsor a local government activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the above rule concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality applies. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

- 6.3** Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or service, neither an employee nor any partner, spouse or relative of the employee must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to the employee's Head of Service of any such interest. Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees must ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

7 Reporting Procedures

- 7.1** *An employee must not treat another employee of the Council less favourably than other employees by reason that that other employee has done, intends to do, or is suspected of doing, anything under or by reference to, any procedure the Council has for reporting misconduct.*

8 Openness

- 8.1** *Employees must not disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which they believe is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless they are required by law to do so.*

- 8.2** *Employees must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.*

- 8.3** Employees must not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor must they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

- 8.4** Employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors must not disclose that information to any unauthorized party or organisation.

8.5 Employees must ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

9 Appointment of Staff

9.1 *Employees must not be involved in the appointment or any other decision relating to the discipline, promotion, pay or conditions of another employee or prospective employee who is a relative or friend.*

9.2 *In paragraph 9.1 above, "relative" means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons; and "partner" means a member of a couple who live together.*

10 Other Employment

10.1 Employees must not undertake additional work outside their employment with the Council if that work conflicts with or detrimentally affects the Council's interests, or in any way weakens public confidence in the conduct of the Council's business.

10.2 Employees whose post is graded above Scale 6 are expected to devote the whole of their service to the work of the Council and must not engage in any other business or take up any other additional appointment for financial gain without the agreement in advance of their Head of Service. If agreement is given, employees must not undertake outside work on the Council's premises, or using Council facilities (telephones, photocopying, computers, etc.)

11 Duty of Trust

11.1 *Employees must at all times act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.*