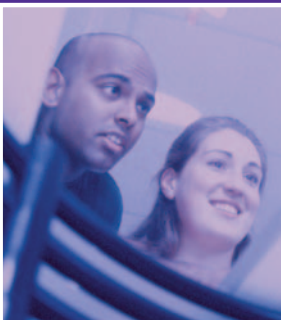




Code of Conduct



Introduction

This Code of Conduct (“the Code”) describes the standards of conduct and practice within which North Lincolnshire Council employees should follow. The Code does not apply to schools with delegated powers unless adopted by the governing body. This introduction is to help you understand what the Code is for and what it means to you as a North Lincolnshire Council employee.

The purpose of workforce regulation is to protect and promote the interests of all individuals. It forms part of the wider package of legislation, rules and guidance that relate to employment and services. This Code is comprehensive but may not cover all eventualities. In such circumstances the spirit of the Code is deemed to apply.

Using the Code at all times will help to provide high quality services and promote public trust and confidence – in North Lincolnshire Council in particular, and local government services in general.

This Code sets down standards of behaviour and conduct the council expects of all its employees. The council, for its part, will provide a positive culture, fair remuneration and the necessary resources, including accommodation, equipment, consumables, training and support, for a safe and effective working environment.

The Code complements, and should be read in conjunction with, the council’s policies and procedures on employment, conduct, gifts and hospitality and financial matters, as well as other professional codes of conduct. The Code confirms the standards expected of employees.

The Code applies equally to all employees regardless of position, grade, length of service or terms of employment. The Code will also be applied to those working for the council on a casual, voluntary or agency basis or as part of a service contract.

Operation of the Code

The Code is a key element in the employment relationship. It is therefore an integral part of the contract of employment. It will form a major part of every employee’s induction. Managers and supervisors must ensure that all employees are aware of and understand the Code.

They must also support employees in meeting the Code's conditions through advice, guidance, training and support.

Managers will also take appropriate action when employees fail to conform to the Code. They and councillors will take account of the Code when deciding any action to take on issues of employee conduct or capability.

In accepting a contract of employment with the council all employees are bound by the terms of the Code. Employees must have regard to and understand the Code and the standards of conduct and behaviour they must meet at all times.

The Council's Commitment

The council will ensure that:

- written policies and procedures are in place to confirm and encourage statutory, professional and locally agreed good practice
- its ideal culture is promoted and adhered to in all respects
- a safe and supportive working environment is provided
- the diversity of employees is recognised
- sufficient resources are available
- communication with employees is open and effective
- employees and the recognised trade unions are consulted about changes that are likely to affect them

Management and Supervision

Managers must ensure that people are suitable to enter the workforce and understand their roles and responsibilities by:

- Using rigorous and thorough recruitment, selection and induction processes focused on making sure that only applicants who have the appropriate level of competence are appointed;
- Checking criminal records, relevant registers and indexes, assessing whether people are capable of carrying out the duties of the job they have been selected for before confirming appointments;
- Seeking and providing reliable references;
- Giving workers clear information about their roles and responsibilities, relevant legislation and the organisational policies and procedures they must follow in their work;
- Managing the performance of new employees and taking appropriate action if necessary during the probationary period.

Managers must support good employment practice by:

- Making it clear that bullying, harassment or any form of unjustifiable discrimination against or by an individual or group is not acceptable and taking action to deal with such behaviour;
- Establishing and promoting procedures for individual employees to report dangerous, discriminatory, abusive or exploitative behaviour and practice and dealing with these reports promptly, effectively and openly;
- Making it clear that violence, threats or abuse are unacceptable, with clear policies and procedures in place for minimising the risk of violence and managing violent incidents;
- Supporting employees who experience trauma or violence in their work;
- Implementing written policies and procedures that promote staff welfare and diversity;
- Providing appropriate assistance to those affected by ill health or dependency on drugs and alcohol, and giving clear guidance about any limits on their work while they are receiving treatment;
- Achieving and promoting North Lincolnshire Council's culture through the five main principles:

Effective leadership
A listening and learning organisation
Mutual respect
Fair reward and recognition
A healthy work life balance.

Managers must ensure that training and development opportunities are in place to strengthen and develop skills and knowledge by:

- Providing induction, training and development opportunities to help individuals do their jobs effectively and prepare for new and changing roles and responsibilities;
- Contributing to the provision of education and training, including effective workplace assessment and continuing professional development;
- Responding appropriately to employees who feel insufficiently prepared to carry out their work.

Managers must ensure that the performance of employees is managed by:

- Giving clear information and guidance about the employee's roles and responsibilities;
- Giving clear information about the performance expected of the employee;
- Managing and supervising employees to support effective working, good conduct and supporting employees to identify areas for improvement in their performance;
- Having systems in place to enable individuals to report inadequate resources or operational difficulties, which might impede the service delivery.

Managers must ensure that employees are made aware of written policies, procedures and good practice by:

- Monitoring written corporate policies such as human resources, health and safety, finance, procurement, diversity, risk assessment and record keeping;
- Developing and promoting service specific policies and procedures to meet statutory requirements, government initiatives and local needs

Managers must ensure that they recognise that they remain responsible for the work that they have delegated to others by:

- Communicating effectively;
- Adequately supervising the work of others;
- Providing guidance and support as required;
- Taking corrective action if necessary;
- Promoting a learning culture.

Managers must promote this code of conduct by:

- Informing North Lincolnshire Council employees about this Code and their responsibility to comply with it at all times;
- Making customers and service users aware of the Code and informing them about how to raise matters that relate to the Code;
- Taking account of the Code in making any decision that relates to the conduct of employees

Personal Conduct

Employees must:

- Honour work commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explain why to their manager and other individuals;
- Be honest and trustworthy;
- Communicate in a clear, courteous, accurate and straightforward way
- Be punctual and maintain good attendance;
- Report absence in line with the absence policy;
- Not make or condone fraudulent claims for mileage and subsistence or benefits;
- Respect confidential information;
- Declare issues that might create conflicts of interest and make sure that they do not influence their judgement or practice;
- Follow council policies and procedures;
- Never treat other employees less favourably because they use or are involved in the council's procedures for reporting misconduct or poor practice;

- Not behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question their suitability to work for the council;
- Report any criminal conviction relevant to their job.

Health and Safety at Work

Employees must:

- Work in a safe way at all times, including when driving whilst at work;
- Wear protective clothing where provided;
- Be aware of health and safety policies and procedures and safe working practices;
- Not put themselves or other people at unnecessary risk;
- Follow risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether behaviour or circumstances presents a risk of harm to themselves or others;
- Ensure that relevant colleagues and others affected by the work are informed about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments;
- Report any accidents or dangerous occurrences;
- Inform their manager (or the appropriate authority) about any personal difficulties that might affect their ability to do their job competently and safely;
- Report medical conditions that may affect their job;
- Advise their line manager if they take any additional employment.

Diversity and Equality

Employees must:

- Act in accordance with the diversity policies and show respect and consideration for others at all times;
- Deal with and record or report complaints in accordance with the complaints procedures;
- Either challenge inappropriate behaviour and practice or bring such behaviour to the attention of a manager;
- Participate in agreed diversity training and development.

Capability

Employees must:

- Meet relevant standards of practice and work in a lawful, safe and effective way;
- Maintain clear and accurate records as required by procedures established for their work;
- Be aware of policies, procedures and good practice;
- Participate constructively in Employee Development Reviews and undertake relevant training to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others;
- Seek assistance from their manager if they do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of their work, or are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter.

Customer Care

Employees must:

- Treat customers and service users with respect;
- Maintain statutory, professional and/or locally agreed standards of care at all times;
- Not discriminate unlawfully against any person;
- Not disclose information given in confidence or acquired and believed to be of a confidential nature without the consent of the provider, a person authorised to give consent or unless required to do so by law;
- Not prevent any person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled;
- Respect and, where appropriate, promote the individual views and wishes of customers and clients.

Resources

Employees must:

- Use public funds entrusted to them or handled by them in an honest, responsible and lawful manner;
- Take reasonable care of plant, equipment and materials;
- Not make personal use of council property or facilities unless properly authorised to do so.

Personal Interests

Employees must:

- Not allow personal interests to conflict with the council's requirements;
- Disclose or seek advice on any potential conflict of interest;
- Not use their position to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or organisation;
- Not be involved in the appointment or any other decision relating to the employment of a relative, associate or close friend (See note below);
- Comply with council requirements in the registration of interests;
- Declare hospitality, benefits or gifts received as a consequence of employment.

NOTE:

A relative means a spouse, civil partner, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or the spouse or partner of any of the above.

An associate means a fellow member of a club, association or business partner.

A close friend means someone held in particular affection who is in regular contact outside of work.

Dress

Employees must:

- Wear protective clothing, where provided, at all times;
- Wear uniform if provided;
- Ensure that the type and style of clothes worn is appropriate to the work environment, the nature of the duties and responsibilities undertaken and the feelings of colleagues and members of the public;
- Ensure that any personal ornamentation is also appropriate;
- Be aware that inappropriate dress and/or ornamentation can create the impression that the council is inefficient, may intimidate others, create offence or be interpreted as disrespectful by members of the public.

NOTE:

The council recognises and values the diversity of its workforce and will take account of ethnic and religious dress requirements with sensitivity by ensuring that employees are free to observe them.