

Code of Conduct for Employees

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1 Purpose

1.1 The LGSCO is committed to promoting and maintaining an ethical environment and the conduct of all employees must reflect this key principle.

1.2 We endorse the Nolan Principles of Public Life and this Code of Conduct is based on them. They are:

Selflessness – You should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. You should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family or your friends.

Integrity – You should not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence you in the performance of your official duties.

Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, you should make choices on merit.

Accountability – You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public and must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your office.

Openness – You should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty – You have a duty to declare any private interests relating to your public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership - You should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

1.3. These principles should inform your actions and decisions as an employee.

2 Duties and responsibilities

You should familiarise yourself with this Code of Conduct and conduct yourself in accordance with its principles. In particular you are required to:

- support our vision, to remedy injustice and improve local services, and our values to:
 - **Listen** – carefully, with respect and empathy
 - **Understand** – by assessing information impartially, effectively, consistently and proportionately
 - **Communicate** – clearly, professionally, and constructively in plain language
 - **Learn** – and share knowledge openly to improve
- treat people with courtesy, consideration, openness and honesty, and respect their privacy;
- discharge public functions conscientiously and according to the law;
- demonstrate a high standard of professional conduct in the way you perform your job and in the way you deal with others, using due diligence, timeliness, and accuracy;
- comply with financial instructions and regulations.

You must not act or speak in a way which would bring the organisation into disrepute or damage the organisation's reputation for independence, integrity and impartiality.

No single Code of Conduct can set out the appropriate conduct or behaviour for every situation. If not covered by the Code of Conduct, we rely on you to make a reasoned judgment as to what is right and proper in any situation and to seek advice from a member of the Leadership Team if you are not sure what to do.

3 Accountability

You should act at all time in ways which are consistent with this Code of Conduct recognising:

- your accountability to the organisation as your employer
- the respective roles of the Department for Communities and Local Government and the LGSCO as set out in the [Framework Document](#)
- that the Chair is ultimately accountable to Parliament for our independence, effectiveness and efficiency

You are required to conduct yourself with integrity, impartiality and honesty. You should not deceive or knowingly mislead anyone.

If you are involved in casework decisions or decisions on commercial contracts, you must ensure that any possible conflicts of interests are identified and resolved at an early stage. The Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for employee propriety, including conduct and discipline.

It is a serious criminal offence for you to receive, accept, or attempt to obtain any gift or consideration for doing, or not doing anything, or showing favour or disfavour, to any person in their official capacity. Please see the Fraud and Bribery Policy.

If you deal with the public you should do so empathetically, efficiently, promptly, and without bias. The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct and service from employees.

4 Confidentiality

You owe a general duty of confidentiality to your employer under civil law. You are therefore required to protect official information held in confidence. You are also expected to continue to observe your duty of confidentiality after you have left our employment. See [Information Security policy](#).

This does not preclude you from making a protected disclosure in accordance with the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 – see Whistleblowing Policy.

5 Data Protection

You should be aware of your obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000. See [Information Security policy](#) and [Access to Information Policy](#).

6 Conflicts of interest

You are required to tell your manager of any personal interest, or relationship, which may affect your ability to deal with a particular complaint or any aspect of your job.

The [rules about conflicts of interest](#) are on the website.

7 Use of resources

You are expected to ensure the proper, economic and efficient use of all public resources within your control. You should not misuse your official position or information acquired in the course of your work to further your private interests or those of others. You should not receive benefits of any kind from a third party which might reasonably be seen by members of the public to compromise your personal judgment and integrity, see [Financial Instructions](#) for the policy on Gifts and Hospitality.

Guidance on the use of LGSCO equipment can be found in the [Financial Instructions](#).

Guidance can be found in our policy on use of the internet. When using the internet or email, staff should adhere to the guidance detailed in the IT policies.

Misuse of LGSCO facilities or equipment may result in disciplinary action.

8 Employee concerns about improper conduct

If you believe you are being required to act in a way which:

- is illegal, improper, or unethical
- is in breach of a professional code
- may involve possible maladministration, fraud or misuse of public funds, or
- is otherwise inconsistent with this Code

you should either raise the matter with your manager, or any member of the Leadership Team, or make a disclosure in confidence under the Whistleblowing policy.

You should also draw attention to circumstances where:

- you believe there is evidence of irregular or improper behaviour elsewhere in the organisation, but where you have not been personally involved
- there is evidence of criminal or unlawful activity by others
- you are required to act in a way which, for you, raises a fundamental issue of conscience.

Where you have reported a matter as set out above and believe that the response does not represent a reasonable response to the grounds of your concern, you may report the matter in confidence using the Whistleblowing policy.

Human Resources
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