

Appendix 13 - Ethics Statement

- 1 City of York Council works with private, public and non-profit sectors to provide a range of services to the community. Accordingly, organisations, service providers, small businesses and individuals can expect high standards of ethical behaviour from Officers. Underpinning these expectations are our organisational values. They drive our behaviour and reflect how we conduct ourselves in our business.
- 2 This Statement provides guidance regarding the standards of ethical behaviour that organisations, service providers, small businesses and individuals can expect from Officers and that are expected of them, in their dealings with Council. Our values guide our actions in conducting business in a socially responsible and ethical manner.
- 3 As an organisation, and as individuals, we respect, apply and comply with the law, support human rights and equal opportunity, protect the environment, achieve operational excellence and work for the benefit of our communities. Officers will, at all times, act with honesty and integrity in an open and transparent manner, performing their roles efficiently, effectively and fairly, thereby attracting the highest level of confidence from our community.
- 4 The Council's Code of Conduct for Officers sets the requirements of conduct in carrying out their functions. The Code of Conduct has been developed to assist Officers to:
 - a) Understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them;
 - b) Enable them to fulfil their duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence; and

- c) Act in a way that enhances public confidence in the integrity of local government.

5 Key Principles

5.1 This statement is based on a number of key principles and sets out standards of conduct that meet these principles and statutory provisions applicable to local government activities.

5.2 The key principles are:

- a) Integrity

We must not place ourselves under any financial or other obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence us in the performance of our duties.

- b) Leadership

We have a duty to promote and support the leadership of the Council in order to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Council. By doing so we promote public duty to others in the Council and outside, by our own ethical behaviour.

- c) Selflessness

We have a duty to make decisions in the public interest and not act in order to gain financial or other benefits for ourselves, our family, friends or business interests. This means making decisions because they benefit the public, not because they benefit the decision maker or someone associated with the decision maker.

- d) Impartiality

We should make decisions on merit and in accordance with our statutory obligations when carrying out public business. This includes the

making of appointments, awarding of contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits. This means fairness to all, impartial assessment, merit selection in recruitment and in purchase and sale of Council's resources, considering only relevant matters.

e) Accountability

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and should consider issues on their merits, taking into account the views of others. This means recording reasons for decisions, submitting to scrutiny, keeping proper records, establishing audit trails and conducting audits.

f) Openness

We have a duty to be as open as possible about our decisions and actions, giving reasons for decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands. This means recording, giving and revealing reasons for decisions, revealing other avenues available to the client or business, when authorised, offering all information, communicating clearly.

g) Honesty

We have a duty to act honestly. We must declare any private interests relating to our duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in such a way that protects the public interest. This means obeying the law, following the letter and spirit of policies and procedures, observing the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees and exercising any delegated authority strictly for the purpose for which the authority was delegated.

h) Respect

We must treat others with respect at all times. This means not using derogatory terms towards others,

observing the rights of other people, treating people with courtesy and recognising the different roles others play in local government decision-making.

- 5.3 In making our business decisions, we strive to obtain the best value for money. Depending on the circumstances, our decision-making takes into account many things including upfront costs, on-going costs, suitability, quality, reliability, availability, experience, reputation, safety, legal compliance, social value and environmental sustainability. While we strive to obtain the best price for goods and services, we do not necessarily buy at the cheapest price, nor sell at the highest price.
- 5.4 The Council is required to balance all relevant factors, including initial cost, whole-of-life costs, quality, reliability and timeliness in determining true value for money.
- 5.5 Although Council business dealings must be transparent and open to public scrutiny, there will be times when information on the Council's relationships with private sector suppliers of goods and services, cannot be made publicly available. However we will always act fairly in our decision-making. That means we are objective, reasonable and even-handed. It does not mean that we can satisfy everyone all of the time. We will publicly support our decisions unless we have to maintain confidentiality or protect privacy.

6 Reporting Unethical Behaviour

- 6.1 The Council is committed to promoting ethical behaviour. Allegations of unethical behaviour can be made to the Council's Monitoring Officer.