



Milton Keynes
City Council

Officer Code of Conduct

February 2025

Introduction

Everyone working for the City Council is expected to do the right thing. Our residents and the people we work with expect us to always be honest and do our jobs properly.

Our Code of Conduct explains what sorts of behaviour and attitudes the City Council expects of all employees. You will find more detailed information about many of the topics covered in the Code of Conduct in our [Terms and Conditions Handbook](#).

If you do not understand the Code of Conduct or how to comply with it, you must ask your line manager to explain it to you.

When an employee breaks the Code of Conduct the City Council may take action in line with our Disciplinary Policy.

What's in the Code of Conduct?

1. Follow the law
2. Respect other people
3. Help protect other people
4. Behave professionally
5. Be honest at all times
6. Be very careful if offered a gift
7. Tell us about any other work
8. Send journalists to the Communications Team
9. Treat our information carefully
10. Follow our detailed policies and procedures
11. Ensure your team knows about the Code of Conduct



1. Follow the law

Whilst at work, you must comply with the law. If you have a reason to think that someone is breaking the law while at work, you should report this to a manager and/or the police, depending on the circumstances. Alternatively, you can contact Internal Audit or raise concerns confidentially using our [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

You are required to notify your manager in writing as soon as possible if you are, cautioned, charged or convicted of any crime at any point whilst employed by the City Council. Managers will decide if this has any impact on your employment with the City Council and if any action needs to be taken.

If your job involves working in children or adult services, you must tell your manager straight away if you are barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for any reason.

2. Respect each other

We all have a part to play in creating a positive and welcoming workplace.

The City Council expects you to support our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion. As a minimum this means you should not harass or discriminate against anyone else on the basis of age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity leave or because of a person's marital or civil partnership status.

You have a role in challenging any discriminatory behaviour or harassment that you see or hear. Managers are expected to support their team members who have been affected by discriminatory behaviour or harassment from other people.

Our [Grievance policy](#) sets out how colleagues can make a complaint of bullying or harassment and how we will handle it.

3. Help protect other people

The City Council is committed to safeguarding children and adults who need our support and everyone is expected to follow our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

You have a responsibility as set out in our [Health and Safety Policy](#) and you must never act wilfully or intentionally in a way that might place the public, your colleagues or yourself at risk.

If you have any health and safety or safeguarding concerns, you should raise these with your manager. If you cannot do this, you can use the [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

4. Behave professionally

You are expected to do your job well. This includes, for example dressing appropriately, arriving punctually for work and meetings, and co-operating with lawful management requests.

You must deal with residents and the people we work with in an appropriate and professional way at all times.

Everyone is expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of managers any deficiency in the provision of services. The [Whistleblowing Policy](#) is available for use in appropriate circumstances.

The City Council expects you to protect the council's reputation by not doing anything outside of work that might damage public confidence in your ability to carry out your job. You should not publish or post anything, including on social media, which would damage the reputation of the council. You can read more about this in our [Policy on Social Networking Sites and Personal Internet Presence](#).

If you work with elected councillors, you are expected to do this regardless of your own political beliefs. If you have a close personal relationship with an elected councillor, you need to disclose this.

5. Be honest

You must keep accurate records of your working time where this is required.

You cannot use council equipment or services for personal use without approval in advance from a manager. IT equipment can only be used in accordance with the council's acceptable use policy. You cannot order goods for your own personal use through a City Council account. You are not allowed to use your position to obtain a discount for goods or services unless this is part of our official employee discount scheme.

The City Council expects you to make accurate claims for expenses and allowances, claiming only for payments which you are entitled to receive. If you receive a payment in error, for example an overpayment of salary or expenses, you must tell your manager as soon as possible so it can be put right.

6. Be very careful if offered a gift

Obviously, bribes are never acceptable. A bribe is when an employee gets something to act in someone's favour (or an organisation's favour) when they shouldn't.

Generally speaking, you should try and avoid accepting gifts and hospitality, but there may be some circumstances where this would cause embarrassment. In these circumstances it might be OK to accept a small personal gift (under £25), but you should check with your manager if you can keep it and write it down to properly record it.

It can also sometimes be OK to accept hospitality, for example to attend a work-related event where a company is paying for the ticket or sponsoring the event. However, events should never be for social purposes or be seen as trying to influence you. Whenever you accept hospitality from a supplier, you should write it down to properly record it.

You will find the [Declaration of Hospitality or Gift Form](#) on the intranet, or you can ask your manager for a copy.

7. Tell us about any other work

Full-time employees paid at Grade H and above (or equivalent) cannot undertake other work without the council's written permission. The City Council might not give permission if there is a reason why it is not acceptable to the organisation.

Part-time employees at Grade H and above should tell their manager if they are doing other work or have another job so we can be sure that there isn't any conflict with your role at the City Council. If we think it does, we will set out exactly why and what we think should be done about it.

All other employees must complete the [Private Interests Form](#) before doing any private work.

Before undertaking any consultancy work for another organisation, all employees regardless of pay grade need to obtain permission from a very senior manager (Head of Service, Assistant Director, Director or Chief Executive).

You need to tell the City Council if you have any private interests outside work that may affect the decisions you might make at work. Being related to someone who owns a local company the City Council buys things from would be an example of a private interest that you should tell us about. Other interests would include involvement with organisations that provide similar services to the council or holding an influential or decision-making role with clubs and societies that we work with or fund.

You will find the Private Interests Form on the intranet or you can ask your manager for a copy.

8. Send journalists to the Communications Team

You must not make statements to reporters or provide information to online, print, radio or television channels on behalf of the City Council unless it is your job to do so, or you have permission from the City Council's Communications Team. All media enquiries should be quickly referred to our Communications Team.

9. Treat our information carefully

The City Council has clear rules on data security, set out in our Data Protection Policy which you must read. If you need a printed copy, ask your manager. You must follow these rules when handling our information. The rules cover things like how long we should keep information for.

You should never access or use any information obtained in the course of your employment for personal gain.

The City Council holds information on people who use our services and on employees and you must only access information that you need to see to do your job. You should never look up information on another person (including yourself) if it is not for work purposes.

If something goes wrong, you should report it in line with the Data Protection Policy straight away.

10. Follow our detailed policies and procedures

You are required to follow all our policies and procedures and comply with any other rules that are in place in your area of work, not just the ones included in this document. You will find these set out in the Terms and Conditions handbook and on the intranet. If you cannot use the intranet or don't know where to look you should ask your manager for a copy.

11. Ensure your team knows about the Code of Conduct

If you manage other people, you must make sure everyone in your team knows all about it and if anyone breaks the Code of Conduct you should act straight away.

We expect you to proactively manage any employment issues that arise in your team in line with City Council employment policies.

You are responsible for managing the performance of all your team members, supporting them and promptly addressing any performance issues. You must undertake regular one-to-one meetings with everyone you directly manage and ensure there is a note taken of the meetings.

You must not be involved in making significant decisions that involve a relative, partner or friend. You are not allowed to directly manage a partner or family member, in these circumstances other arrangements need to be put in place.

If you need any more information or have questions

If you have any questions about the Code of Conduct or would like more information, then you should speak to your manager. Managers requiring further guidance should speak to the HR Advisory Team.

