

## KEY EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

### EMPLOYEE INFORMATION BRIEFING

ISSUE 22: SEPTEMBER 2018



NEW POLICY



POLICY REVIEW



REGULAR REMINDER

#### CODE OF CONDUCT

##### POLICY OVERVIEW

The council's [Code of Conduct](#) for Employees is based on the recommendations of the Nolan Committee on standards of conduct in public life.

The code provides individuals with clear advice and guidance on the minimum standards of conduct expected from them by the council. Equally it sets out the rights of employees in terms of the treatment that they should expect from the council in return.

The code sits along-side the council's [Disciplinary Code](#) and the [Promoting Appropriate Working Relationships and Behaviour - Code of Practice](#) which are also aimed at setting clear standards of conduct and behaviour.

##### KEY INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES

- In line with the Seven Principles of Public Life identified by the Nolan Committee the council expects the following from you as an employee:
  - not to make decisions that will result in any financial or other benefit to yourself, your family or friends. Your decisions should be based solely on the council's best interests.
  - not to place yourself under any financial or other obligation to an individual or an organisation that might influence you in your work with the council.
  - to make decisions in the course of your work based solely on merit, including making job appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.
  - to be accountable to the council as your employer (who in turn is accountable to the public).
  - to be as open as possible in all decisions and actions you take.
  - to declare any private interests that might affect your work with the council.
  - if you are a manager, to promote and support these principles by your leadership and example.

- The Code requires you to register with your line manager, any interests you have that could impact on your work with the council. There are **6 categories** of interest including a Register of Paid Employment outside the Council, all of which you are encouraged to familiarise yourself with in order to avoid breaching the code.
- It is a condition of employment that you disclose any unspent criminal conviction(s) received prior to commencing or during the course of employment with the council. In addition, employees in regulated positions (work with children or protected adults) must disclose the following:
  - Spent criminal convictions listed under '[Offences which must always be disclosed](#)'.
  - Involvement in police investigations
  - Criminal charges
  - Police cautions
  - Disciplinary action taken by professional or regulatory bodies.
- During the course of your work, you should only contact the media where this has been expressly authorised by the council.
- You must always be courteous and helpful when dealing with members of the public as users of services, clients or citizens. You should deal with each member of the public fairly, equitably and consistently in line with the council's Policy on Equality in Employment and Service Provision.
- You should be aware of your responsibilities with regard to working and communicating with Councillors as set out in the Code.
- You are expected to carry out your duties in a politically neutral way by serving the council and all councillors regardless of their political outlook and by implementing the policies of the council irrespective of your personal views.
- If asked by a councillor to provide assistance with a matter which is party political or which does not have a clear link with the work of the council, you should explain to the councillor that you need to refer the matter to your line manager.

#### **ROLL OUT ARRANGEMENTS**

- Services should ensure that records are kept of the date that employee briefings were conducted and the employees who attended. Those records may be subject to internal audit at any given time to ensure that council employment policies are being properly disseminated throughout services.
- Employees should be encouraged to read the full Code of Conduct available on Mytoolkit and accessible from work and home at:
- <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/1553/CodeofConduct/doc/CodeOfConductForEmployees.docx>