

	BUSINESS ETHICS POLICY	Doc No.
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INTRODUCTION

Business dealings between Balranald Shire Council and the private sector are becoming more extensive and often raise sensitive ethical questions. For this reason, Balranald Shire Council has developed a Business Ethics Policy for behaviour appropriate to business dealings with Council.

This policy aims to provide external organisations, service providers, small business and individuals with an understanding of Council's expectation in relation to standards of ethical behavior that meet Councils' requirements. It also provides guidelines for staff on Council's expectations when conducting business.

PURPOSE

There are two main principles that form the basis of Balranald Shire Council's business agreements:

1. The need to get the best possible value for public money.
2. The need to demonstrate impartiality and fairness at all stages of the process.

These principles enable suppliers to promote their interests productively and avoid potentially questionable activity. Those providing goods and services also benefit from the assurance that their competitors are required to behave in accordance with the same guidelines.

All individuals and organisations that deal with Balranald Shire Council must adopt these standards of ethical behavior.

Value for Money:

Is determined by considering all the factors which are relevant to a particular purpose. For example quality, reliability, timeliness, service, initial and ongoing costs are all factors which can make a significant impact on benefits and costs. Value for money does not mean 'lowest price'. However, the lowest price bid might offer best value if it meets other essentials such as quality and reliability.

Impartiality and Fairness:

Are about being objective, even handed and reasonable. An impartial person will try to objectively establish criteria for determining best value for money and will work hard to objectively assess each tender against criteria. A fair person would not, for example, change or introduce new selection criteria midway through the tendering process without advising all tenderers.

Being impartial includes taking into account the practicalities of a given situation. Impartiality does not require, for example, inviting bids from firms which have performed poorly in the past. It would be unfair to call tenders when there is no serious intent to award a contract subject to a satisfactory offer.

Fairness does not necessarily mean pleasing everyone. Some people are occasionally adversely affected by fair decisions. Council operates from a viewpoint where we wish to be fair in all of our dealings and minimise where possible, any adverse effects of our decisions.

POLICY

Balranald Shire Council values selflessness, openness, honesty, objectivity, courage and accountability in all its operations.

Balranald Shire Council expects all its representatives, staff and Councillors to behave ethically and to abide by Council's Code of Conduct.

Council also expects private tenderers, suppliers, consultants and contractors to maintain similar standards of ethical conduct in their dealings with Council.

Balranald Shire Council expects its staff and Councillors to:

- Respect and follow Council's policies and procedures
- Treat all tenderers for the supply of goods and services fairly and equitably
- Promote fair and open competition while seeking best value for money
- Protect confidential information
- Meet or exceed public interest and accountability standards
- Avoid situations where private interest could conflict with public duty
- Never solicit or accept remuneration, gifts or other benefits from a supplier for the discharge of official duties
- Respond promptly to reasonable requests for advice and information

Balranald Shire Council expects tenderers, suppliers, partners, consultants and contractors to:

- Comply with the conditions set out in documents supplied by Council
- Respect the obligation of Council staff to abide by Council's Purchasing Policy (adopted February 2017)
- Abstain from collusive practices
- Prevent the unauthorised release of privileged information, including confidential Council information
- Refrain from discussing Council dealings with the media, except with Council's consent
- Refrain from offering Council employees or Councillors any financial or other inducement which may give any impression of unfair advantage
- Not to act fraudulently or secretively
 - Ensure all contractors, volunteers and other stakeholders engaged to perform work for Council are aware of and are required to comply with this Statement of Business Ethics.

RESPONSIBILITY

Councillors and staff are responsible to ensure that they comply with Council's Code of Conduct and Business Ethics Policy in all activities undertaken as part of their role with Council.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

- Balranald Shire Council's Purchasing Policy
- Balranald Shire Council's Code of Conduct

TRAINING

The policy will be included in the induction for all new employees and explained to existing employees and Councillors.