CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES

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1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct outlines the council's reasonable expectations of professional behaviour, to ensure that every member of council staff treats others and is treated themselves, with dignity and respect.

It is the responsibility of every member of the council to both act in accordance with this Code and to challenge others where they are not doing likewise.

We expect high standards from our employees because:

- Council services affect the health and wellbeing of local people
- We are accountable to the electorate
- We are publicly funded and expected to meet certain professional standards as a result

All staff must follow this code.

2. Expected standards

2.1. Working together

Staff should

- treat others with respect and dignity whether engaging in person, virtually or by email,
- support each other and work in a culture free of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination,
- promote the council's equality duty and not discriminate against any person and
- take all reasonable steps to make our services accessible and inclusive;
- work safely and responsibly wherever they are working whether in the office, within the community or remotely;
- maintain clear boundaries between professional and personal matters and declare to your manager any interests (direct or indirect) that might be or be perceived to be a conflict of interest.

  Some examples:
  Being involved in the selection of a supplier whose business you have a personal or familial connection with,
  Working alongside or closely with a personal friend, partner or relative (either within the council, with a partner organisation or a supplier of services), or
  Being part of a selection panel for a candidate who is a personal friend or relative.

2.2. Promote expected standards of behaviour

Staff should act with integrity, be honest and truthful.

Staff should understand and operate according to the Core Behaviours and performance standards set corporately or at service level.

2.3. Report Improper Conduct

We have very high standards of openness and accountability and expect you to tell an appropriate manager about any reasonable suspicion of improper conduct, fraud or corruption.

The council's whistleblowing policy is available to all staff and sets out how matters can be reported and how they will be investigated.

Promote the highest standards in public life

Staff should lead by example to promote the highest possible standards in public life and not do anything that could cause offense or adversely affect people's perception of the council.

2.4. Compliance with corporate governance and the law

We must carry out our business rationally, properly and fairly. We can't do anything without statutory authority and must follow the relevant procedures and legislation.

We expect staff to respect confidentiality. Information gathered while working for the council must not be used for commercial or personal gain or misused in any other way.

Staff should implement council policy impartially.

2.5. Working with councillors

Staff serve the authority as a whole. They serve all councillors and not just those of any controlling group/s. You must respect councillors' rights and maintain political neutrality at work. Staff in politically restricted posts will have additional requirements placed upon them.

Councillors and employees are expected to comply with the Protocol for Councillor and Officer Relations which forms part of the Constitution.

Staff should recognise that councillors are expected to abide by the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' in the way they go about their business. The seven Principles are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

2.6. Providing Services to Tenants

Housing Services staff will deliver services that are:

- Professional
- Respectful
- Fair
- Honest and accountable
- Focused on listening and resolving issues

Tenants and staff are expected to comply with the Housing Service Standard (Housing Service Standards | Canterbury City Council)

Housing Services staff are expected to understand and work in accordance with the Competency Standard Policy (Housing Services).

2.7. Working with Contractors

Where services are delivered by contractors we will:

- Require them to meet the same professional and behavioural standards expected of our staff;
- Monitor performance and compliance with those standards;
- Take appropriate action where standards, responsibilities, or contractual requirements are not met.

2.8. Contact with the media or via social media

You should not send out any communications on any media channel on behalf of the council without having first agreed it with the communications team.

Whether acting in a professional or personal capacity, be aware that anything that you post that relates to council services could impact on your own or the council's reputation. You should not post anything defaming the council, its staff or users of council services.

2.9. Use of ICT network and data

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the council's ICT information security policies and comply with their requirements, including the Acceptable Use Policy.

Care should be taken to comply with data protection and information security policies at all times.

3. Working within this code

This code will be applied consistently and fairly.

It is a public document and is distributed to all staff.

If you are concerned that you may have breached one of the policies referred to in this Code you must raise this with your line manager or Director immediately.

We may take disciplinary action if you do anything this code tells you not to do, or do not do anything it tells you to do.

4. List of Policies (A-Z)

The policies listed below form part of this code and provide further detail in specific policy areas.

- Absence Management policy
- Annual Leave policy
- Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy (Covered in Disciplinary policy and procedure)
- Anti Fraud & Whistleblowing policy/procedure.
- Competence Standard Policy (Housing Services)
- Declaration of Interests, gifts & hospitality
- Disciplinary Policy and procedure
- DBS Policy
- Equality Policy
- Financial Regulations and Standing Orders
- Flexible Working Hours Policy
- Gifts and hospitality procedure
- Gross misconduct and Summary Dismissal Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Information security, risk and governance framework (incorporating Acceptable Use Policy)
- Politically Restricted Posts
- Protocol for councillor and officer relations
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Sickness absence policy (Covered in Absence Management Policy)
- Smarter Ways of Working policy

Version control	Date of review	Key changes
V3 Agreed by CIB (8 August 2026)	Aug 2026	Included specific details relating to providing services to tenants and working with contractors
V2.1 Agreed by Management Team (27 June 2024)	April 2024	Removed summaries of other policies and instead signposted to them.

Agreed by Unison (September 2024)		Focused on important areas of conduct and thereby shortened and made more accessible. Modernised to apply to today's working environment and context. Provided a route for staff to raise any suspected breaches.