



Name	EM02 Code of Conduct for Elected Members
Policy Type	Administrative Policy
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
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1 Background

This Code of Conduct is a public declaration of the principles of good conduct and standards of behaviour that we the Elected Members of Litchfield Council have decided its stakeholders could reasonably expect of us as Members of the Council to demonstrate in the performance of our responsibilities as elected community representatives.

This Code of Conduct is made pursuant to Section 78 of the Local Government Act. It is to be observed by all Elected Members and members of Council Committees. The standards in this Code of Conduct are in addition to any statutory requirements of the Local Government Act. Elected Members must comply with the provisions of this Code in carrying out their functions as public officials. It is the personal responsibility of Elected Members to ensure that they are familiar with, and comply with, the standards in the Code at all times. Litchfield Council will provide training and education opportunities that will assist their members to meet their responsibilities under the Local Government Act.

2 Statement of the General Duties of Elected Members

The general duties of Elected Members are to act honestly and with reasonable care and diligence in the performance and discharge of official functions and duties. Elected Members should conduct themselves in a way that reflects community trust and confidence in them as individuals and enhances the role and images of local government. They should be well informed about the roles, functions and processes of their council.

Elected Members must not make improper use of information acquired or make improper use of their position as an Elected Member of Council. Elected Members in fulfilling their various roles and activities of office should focus on:

- Providing community leadership;
- Consulting with and representing the community;
- Contributing to the collective decision making of the Council;
- Setting policies, goals and objectives, and determining strategies to achieve the goals and objectives;
- Collectively monitoring the overall performance of the Council against the stated goals and objectives;
- Ensuring accountability and sound financial management;
- Representing the Council to the community;
- Being aware of the statutory obligations imposed on Elected Members and on Councils;
- Undertaking appropriate professional development activities.

3 Community Expectations

Local Government is the sphere of government closest to the people of the Northern Territory. The actions and behaviour of Elected Members are likely to be closely monitored by the local community. In performing their roles and functions, the community expects that Elected Members will:

- Be committed to ethical behaviour;
- Deal with all members of the community honestly, fairly and not offend or embarrass individuals or groups;
- Not discriminate against people on the basis of sex, sexuality, marital status, pregnancy, race, cultural background, physical impairment, intellectual impairment or age;
- Be aware of situations that may create a tension between their public and private roles and in such cases give priority to the public role;
- Ensure that Council mechanisms are in place to deal promptly and efficiently with the handling of community complaints and concerns.

4 Statement of Commitment

“We the Elected Members of Litchfield Council are committed to discharging our duties conscientiously and to the best of our ability.

In the performance of our community role, we will act with honesty and integrity and generally conduct ourselves in a way that both generates community trust and confidence in us as individuals and enhances the role and image of the Council and local government generally.

In addition to all legislative requirements, we the Elected Members of Litchfield Council have adopted the requirements of this Code of Conduct as the standards that we will adopt in the performance of our role.”

5 Code of Conduct

5.1 An Elected Member of Council must act in a fair, honest and proper manner according to the law.

We, the Elected Members of Litchfield Council, will endeavour to fulfil this principle by:

- *Understanding and giving proper consideration to legal requirements;*
- *Reasonable, just and non-discriminatory behaviour in all aspects of carrying out our roles and responsibilities;*
- *Actions to be undertaken in good faith and not for improper or ulterior motives;*
- *Behaviour that maintains and enhances the image of our Council and does not reflect adversely on the Council;*
- *Guidelines as to the appropriateness of the acceptance of gifts and gratuities;*
- *Impartiality in reaching Council decisions and acceptance of the responsibility associated with that decision;*
- *Honest and fair reimbursement of expenses and usage of Council equipment for official purposes.*

5.2 An Elected Member must act with reasonable care and be diligent in the performance of his or her duties and responsibilities.

We, the Elected Members of Litchfield Council, will endeavour to fulfil this principle by:

- *Appropriate and proper use of information, balancing the interests of the community against the rights of the individual;*

- *Attendance and participation in Council meetings, apologising or obtaining leave of absence in advance for non- attendance;*
- *The proper consideration of the business of the Council and being informed on the matters for decision;*
- *The fair and equitable treatment of all matters under consideration;*
- *Respect for decisions of the Council;*
- *Careful consideration to the allocation of resources and expenditure;*
- *Being informed of the effectiveness and efficiency of activities and service delivery;*
- *The proper and responsible use of Council resources.*

5.3 Elected Members must be fair and honest in their dealings with individuals and organisations and behave in a manner that facilitates constructive communication between the Council and the community.

We, the Elected Members of Litchfield Council, will endeavour to fulfil this principle by:

- *Honest and fair dealings with all members of the community;*
- *Courteous and sensitive behaviour that does not discriminate against people;*
- *Awareness and disclosure of any situation that may create a tension between public and private roles;*
- *Respect for elector's opinions and property;*
- *Prevention of misuse of our position to gain an advantage for ourselves or others;*
- *Recognition that an individual Elected Members has no authority to make decisions, direct staff or commit Council resources;*

When representing the Council in the Community, we will:

- *Provide an accurate and fair representation of Council decisions;*
- *Recognise that Elected Members have a duty to respect Council decisions and policy directions;*
- *Conduct ourselves in a manner that will not reflect unfavourably on the Council.*

5.4 Elected Members and employees will seek to achieve a team approach in an environment of mutual respect, trust and acceptance of their different roles in achieving the Council's objectives.

We, the Elected Members of Litchfield Council, will endeavour to fulfil this principle by:

- *Mature and constructive working relationships based on mutual trust and respect;*
- *Conduct of the relationship between ourselves and Council's employees with courtesy and respect;*
- *Acceptance and respect for the different but complementary roles in achieving the Council's objectives;*
- *Demonstration of respect for employees' professional opinion and expertise;*
- *Directing all requests for information from the Council administration to the Council's Chief Executive Officer or nominated delegate/s;*
- *Directing all requests for work or actions by Council staff to the Council's Chief Executive Officer or nominated delegate/s;*
- *Not bullying or harassing Council staff;*

5.5 Elected Members will establish a working relationship with fellow Members that recognise and respects the diversity of opinion and achieves the best possible outcomes for the community.

We, the Elected Members of Litchfield Council, will endeavour to fulfil this principle by:

- *Endeavouring to establish and maintain a respectful relationship with all Elected Members, regardless of differences of view and opinions;*
- *Not bullying or harassing Council Other Elected Members;*
- *Behaviour that seeks to establish mature and constructive working relationships;*
- *Following Council policies, legislation and by-laws in regard to meeting procedures;*
- *Allowing the right of all points of view to be heard;*
- *Ensuring that personal comments to the media or other public comments on Council decisions and other matters, clearly indicates that it is a private view, and not that of the Council (unless the individual has been specifically authorised by the Council to convey a particular position to the media).*

5.6 Information obtained by an Elected Member in the course of his or her duties is respected and used in a careful and prudent manner.

We, the Elected Members of Litchfield Council, will endeavour to fulfil this principle by:

- *Information obtained by an Elected Member as a result of his or her role is not to be used for any purpose other than Council business;*
- *Personal comments being clearly identified;*
- *Realising that information given in relation to the Council or Council decisions should be accurate and not be a misuse of information;*
- *Respect for and maintenance of confidentiality;*
- *Endeavour to provide accurate information to the Council and to the public at all times.*

6	Compliance with the Code of Conduct
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The responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct rests with individual Elected Members.

6	References and Related Legislation
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Local Government Act