



Name	EM02 Code of Conduct for Elected Members
Policy Type	Council
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	13/09/2017
Review Date	12/09/2021

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct is made pursuant to Section 77 & 78 of the Local Government Act. Its purpose is to govern the conduct of members of the Council.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Elected Members of Litchfield Council and governs the conduct of Council and members of Council Committees appointed under section 54 of the Local Government Act.

It is the personal responsibility of Elected Members to ensure that they are familiar with, and comply with, the principals in the Code at all times. Litchfield Council will provide training and education opportunities that will assist its members to meet their responsibilities under the Local Government Act.

The standards in this Code of Conduct are in addition to any statutory requirements of the Local Government Act.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Diligent	having or showing care and conscientiousness in one's work or duties.
Fair	treating people equally without favouritism or discrimination
Honest	free of deceit; truthful and sincere
Integrity	the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles
Prudent	acting with or showing care and thought for the future
Respect	due regard for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others

4. Policy Statement

Statement of 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 the council.

Elected Members must not improperly use information acquired or improperly use their position as an Elected Member of Council. Elected Members in fulfilling the 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.

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:

- Behave ethically;
- 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.

Statement of Commitment

The following Statement of Commitment will be signed by all Elected Members at the beginning of each term of office. It signifies to the community the commitment to abiding by the principals that form the Code of Conduct for Elected Members.

“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 honest, integrity and 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.

In addition to all legislative requirements, we adopt these Principals as our Code of Conduct, that we will adhere to in the performance of our role.”

Principals

The following principals form the Code of Conduct which Elected Members will abide by in fulfilling the role of Elected Member. They will accompany the statement of commitment to be signed at the beginning of each term of office.

1. An Elected Member 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;*
- *Being reasonable, just and non-discriminatory behaviour in all aspects of carrying out our roles and responsibilities;*
- *Ensuring our actions will 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;*
- *Adhering to guidelines as to the appropriateness of the acceptance of gifts and gratuities;*
- *Acting impartiality in reaching Council decisions and acceptance of the responsibility associated with that decision;*
- *Being honest and fair with our reimbursements of expenses and usage of Council equipment for official purposes.*

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;*
- *Proper consideration of the business of the Council and being informed on the matters for decision;*
- *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;*
- *Proper and responsible use of Council resources.*

3. An Elected Member 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:

- *Being honest and fair in dealings with all members of the community;*
- *Courteous and sensitive behaviour that does not discriminate against people;*
- *Being aware of and disclosing any situation that may create a tension between public and private roles;*
- *Respect for elector's opinions and property;*
- *Ensuring not to misuse our position to gain an advantage for ourselves or others;*
- *Recognising that individual Elected Members have 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.*

4. An Elected Member 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;*
- *Conducting the relationship between ourselves and Council's employees with courtesy and respect;*
- *Acceptance and respect for the different but complementary roles of the Chief Executive and officers 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. An Elected Member will establish a working relationship with fellow Members that recognises 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:

- *Establishing and maintaining a respectful relationship with all Elected Members, regardless of differences of view and opinions;*
- *Not bullying or harassing 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).*

6. An Elected Member will respect and use in a careful and prudent manner the Information obtained in the course of his or her duties.

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

- *Not using information obtained as a result of our role for any purpose other than Council business;*
- *Clearly identifying personal comments;*
- *Ensuring that information communicated in relation to the Council or Council decisions is accurate and not misused;*
- *Respect for and maintenance of confidentiality;*
- *Providing accurate information to the Council and to the public at all times.*

5. Associated Documents

Litchfield Council Policies

6. References and Legislation

Northern Territory Local Government Act

7. Review History

Date Reviewed	Description of changes (Inc Decision No. if applicable)
13 September 2017	Updated policy. Decision 17/0003
19 November 2015	Decision 15/0166/02 – new policy