

Conduct

Honiton Town Council

1 Employee Code of Conduct

1.1 Employees of Honiton Town Council are required to:

- Undertake employee duties and responsibilities effectively, efficiently and diligently;
- Conduct work in a co-operative manner;
- Be punctual in time keeping;
- Be honest and trustworthy;
- Obey reasonable management instructions;
- Take care of yourself, your colleagues and others whilst at work; and take care of Council property.
- Use the Council's equipment with care to protect the asset and report any defects, including Council vehicle/s.
- Adhere to all corporate and service-specific policies and procedures.
- Demonstrate the Council's (or service-specific) values and behaviours through the course of your work.
- Follow any local rules laid down for your work location.
- Familiarise yourself with, and follow, the Health and Safety rules that apply to your particular area of work/location, including compliance with the Council's Smoke-free Policy
- Show respect for all people that you come into contact with in the course of your duties (e.g. the public, fellow employees, employees from other agencies, etc.) and demonstrate continually whilst at work your commitment to ensuring equality and respect for all. Employees must not engage in any activity whilst in or outside of work that may be, or may be perceived to be, a hate incident or crime.
- Demonstrate impartiality in respect of any decisions you take and advice you provide on behalf of the Council.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any confidential information obtained in the course of your employment. You must not: Disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired that you believe is of a confidential nature;
- Use any information obtained in the course of your employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should you pass it on to others who might use it in such a way; or
- Give information to the media unless you are authorised to do so.

Honiton Town Council - Conduct

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Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking is prohibited in all Council premises. You should not at any time bring onto the Council premises any alcohol or illegal substances (eg drugs) (other than those prescribed by your doctor) without the permission of the Clerk.

Safety & Risk Management

Both with regard to safety and appearance work areas must be kept clean and tidy at all times. Documents should not be kept on desks and should be filed and locked away as appropriate.

Disclosure of Information

It is generally accepted that open government is best. Legislation requires that certain types of information must be available to Members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. Generally the Council will only restrict discussion about confidential personal and commercial matters (as permitted by the LGA 1972, Data Protection Act 1998 & the Freedom Of Information Act 2000) and be open about all other matters in the course of conducting its business.

Statements to the Press/Media

You must not make any statements to the press or media without the prior clearance and authority of the Clerk. See the Council's Communications, Social Media and Media Communications policies.

Confidentiality

Refer to General Information.

Political Neutrality

Employees serve the authority as a whole. It follows they must serve all Councillors equally, and must ensure that the individual rights of all Councillors are respected. Subject to the Council's conventions, employees may also be required to advise political groups. They must do so in ways which do not compromise their political neutrality. Employees, whether or not politically restricted, must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

Relationships - Councillors

Honiton Town Council - Conduct

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Employees are responsible to the Council as a whole. For some, their role is to give advice to Councillors and managers and all are there to carry out the Council's work. Mutual respect between employees and Councillors is essential to good local government. Close personal familiarity between employees and individual Councillors can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and Councillors and should therefore be avoided.

The Local Community and Service Users

Employees should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the Council.

Contractors

All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, should be made known to the Clerk. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives in the tendering process. No part of the local community should be discriminated against.

Employees who engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, should declare that relationship to the Clerk.

Appointment and other employment matters

Employees involved in appointments should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship outside work with him or her. Similarly, employees should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any other employee who is a relative, partner, etc.

Intellectual Property

Employees should take advice on the ownership of intellectual property or copyright created during their employment.

Trade Union Membership

You are under no obligation to join a Trade Union. You are free to join or not join any Trade Union of your choice. An employee who is an official of an independent Trade union recognised by the employer must be granted time off to attend to duties.

An employee who is a learning representative of the Trade Union recognised by the employer must be granted time off under TULRCA 1992 s.168A, as inserted by s. 43 of the Employment Act 2002 for the purpose of analysis of learning and training needs, the provision of information and advice on learning and training matters, the promotion of the values of learning and training. The employer's obligation to allow time off is subject to a reasonable test.

Personal Interests

Employees must declare to the Council or the Clerk any financial interests which could conflict with the Council's interests. Employees should also declare to the Council or the Clerk membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct.

Separation of Roles - Tendering

Employees involved with tendering processes must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors.

Employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors should not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation. Employees should ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

Corruption

Employees must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person in their official capacity. If an allegation is made it is for the employees to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained and such allegations, if proven, will be treated as instances of gross misconduct.

Use of Financial Resources

Employees must ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner.

They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community.

Hospitality

Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the local Council in the community. Offers to attend

Honiton Town Council - Conduct

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purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Authority should be seen to be represented. They should be properly authorised and recorded. When hospitality has to be declined those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the Council. Employees should not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers, although you may keep insignificant items of token value such as pens, diaries, etc. Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal, where the Council gives consent to attendance in advance and where purchasing decisions are not compromised. Where visits to inspect equipment, etc. are required, employees should ensure that Council meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.

Sponsorship - Giving and Receiving

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a Council activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors. Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or service neither an employee nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to an appropriate manager of any such interest. Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grants, aid, or by other means, gives support in the community, employees should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.