City of Whittlesea

Code *of* Conduct

Employee Handbook

Version 6 (2025)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This Code of Conduct promotes and reinforces the values and behaviours we live to deliver great outcomes for our community and to establish an environment in which employees can contribute at the highest possible ethical and professional standard.

The Code will:

- Underpin the decision-making and activities within Council as an organisation
- Result in effective compliance with relevant laws and policies
- Enhance the integrity and reputation of Council
- Help to define accountability and levels of responsibility
- Help the organisation to achieve best practice in corporate governance
- Assist employees in solving ethical dilemmas they face at work.

The Code will be provided to all employees at the start of their employment and all employees will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understood the Code.

Guidance and support on any aspect of the Code is always available from your manager[1], the People & Culture Department or the Risk and Assurance team.

Council is committed to providing any training that may be required to support the understanding of and compliance with this Code.

[1] Manager in the context of this Code means the relevant Manager, Director, Executive Manager, Supervisor, Coordinator or Unit Manager to whom the employee directly reports to.

1.2 Review

The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by June 2028.

1.3 Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to all Council employees and representatives including:

- Full-time, part-time and casual employees
- Permanent and temporary employees, including work experience or graduates performing work for Council
- Temporary and casual individuals engaged through an agency
- Staff on exchange/secondment
- Additionally, this code applies to contractors, volunteers and external parties when they work for and represent Council.

Note: the Code of Conduct excludes Councillors

1.4 Other related references

In addition to conduct prescribed in this Code, guidance for employees is also covered by the City of Whittlesea Enterprise Agreement (EA), other state and commonwealth legislation (including the Local Government Act, Fair Work Act, Equal Opportunity Act and OHS Act) and Council's policies and procedures.

Certain professions and funded programs (such as Aged Care) have their own professional Codes of Conduct which set out a range of matters relating to the profession including dealing with breaches of that Code. A breach of such a Code may affect your capacity to continue to act in that profession and may also affect your ability to undertake your duties for the City of Whittlesea.

This Code of Conduct specifies the behaviour expected of those working for or on behalf of Council and should be read in conjunction with any professional Codes of Conduct.

1.5 Breach of this Code

Any breach of the Code will result in appropriate action being taken by Council. In the case of Council employees, a breach may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

If you suspect that a Council employee, contractor or volunteer may be breaching the Code, you must refer the matter to your supervisor, unit manager or manager immediately.

1.6 Policies and procedures

All Council policies must be followed by all employees. Copies of these are located on Council's intranet *(Help me with > Corporate Strategy & Management > Strategy & Policy)* or may be obtained by contacting the People & Culture department.

1.7 Lawful instruction

Employees must comply with any lawful and reasonable instructions in the performance of their work.

If the instruction is unclear or appears contrary to this Code, they should seek clarification immediately from their manager or higher-level management.

1.8 Human Rights

This Code of Conduct is consistent with the principles of freedom, respect, equality and dignity as set out in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Employees are afforded these rights in the Charter and are expected to observe them with respect to interactions within the organisation and the community.

1.9 Child safe organisation

All children and young people have a right to feel and be safe.

> *We all have a legal and moral obligation to keep children safe from harm and abuse.*

As a child safe organisation, we are committed to providing welcoming, safe and accessible physical and online environments where children feel valued, listened to and considered in decisions that affect their lives.

The need to remove or reduce the risk of child abuse informs our decision-making concerning children in our community.

We have clear and robust policies and practices that employees and others are required to follow, to prevent harm to children and to respond when someone raises concerns about child safety or reports abuse.

Staff are required to undertake child safe training and to ensure they understand and comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Code.

We will ensure that children will be supported to express and enjoy their culture, and we demonstrate zero tolerance to racism including promptly acting on any instances of racism.

We have a commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, children who are same-sex attracted and/or gender-diverse, and to the safety of children with a disability.

City of Whittlesea

Our values and behaviours

Our Organisational purpose is to 'Make lives better', both for the employees and the community. We will deliver our purpose through the shared values and behaviours of Council, for which we are all responsible.

We live our values to deliver great outcomes for our community

To achieve our purpose of making lives better, we:

Deliver for our community

Our passion for our community energises our work and fuels us to create great experiences and achieve the best outcomes. We deliver on our promises, hold ourselves to account and continuously improve. Our decisions are informed by the genuine needs of our current and future communities.

Work as one team

Better outcomes are realised when we work together, across artificial boundaries. When we collaborate, we build strong trusting relationships, share knowledge and benefit from diverse perspectives.

Care for each other

We want the best for each other. We demonstrate genuine care and respect, value the unique qualities and strengths of each person and help each other grow. We build a sense of belonging, wellbeing and compassion.

2. Performance and conduct

2.1 Inclusive Workplace

At Council we value diversity and appreciate everyone's strengths.

We are an equal opportunity employer, and we are committed to attracting and retaining a diverse workforce that reflects our municipality.

We encourage people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people with a disability and people identifying as LGBTIQ+ to work for Council. Council is committed to providing an organisational culture where everyone belongs and feels safe to be themselves, and we are accepting and respectful of differences.

2.2 Appearance and presentation

It is a requirement that all employees who are supplied with identification badges/security cards or a uniform, wear them when they are representing Council in their daily duties including activities involving the community and visitors to Council.

2.3 Outside employment

Council employees must not engage in employment or other remunerative activity outside of their Council employment where the activity conflicts with, or has the potential to conflict with, their role as a Council employee, or if the performance of such outside employment or activity might affect their capacity to perform their duties with Council, or has the potential to impact on the safety and wellbeing ie. fatigue.

Employees are required to complete the Secondary Employment Form and obtain approval in line with relevant delegations before engaging in any outside employment or remunerative activity (including any employment, work or service for which payment is made by way of salary, honorarium, commission, fee, allowance or other reward). It is encouraged to seek advice from Compliance and Governance and/or People & Culture, as required. For avoidance of doubt, this would also include employees who nominate to be a candidate for Council elections.

It is not necessary for employees to obtain permission to involve themselves in or undertake voluntary or unpaid activities or paid recreational activities (for example, sport coaching) unless there is an actual, or potential, conflict of interest between such activity and their duties and/or role.

2.4 Compliance training

It is a requirement that all employees have completed all mandatory compliance training within allocated timeframes. Should an employee not do so, disciplinary action may result.

All supervisors are required to ensure employees reporting to them are provided with access to and have completed their required compliance training within allocated timeframes. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action, including performance management.

2.5 Personal Conduct

As an employee of the Council, you should always behave in a professional manner that will foster trust, confidence and goodwill in both your colleagues and in the community.

All employees are expected to present professionally, be punctual to work and meetings, and perform duties effectively and in a manner that promotes a productive and harmonious work environment.

Employees expectations, as a minimum:

- Act properly within the requirements of the law and the terms of this Code
- Act in accordance with Council values and behaviours
- Perform their duties to the best of their ability and in good faith for the benefit of the community
- Be frank, respectful and honest in their dealings with each other
- Make no untrue or improper allegations or statements
- Conduct themselves in a way that does not bring the Council into disrepute
- Act impartially and without favoritism
- Recognise and value other views, beliefs and ideas
- Always act in the best interests of the Council and the community
- Not unlawfully discriminate in their service delivery against any person, party, entity or group
- Will not record conversations with others without prior consent
- Refrain from using offensive language or abusing staff or others in the course of their duties.

2.6 Discrimination, harassment and bullying

Council is committed to providing a safe and productive environment free from discrimination, all forms of harassment and bullying.

If an employee is unsure whether a behaviour or practice is a form of discrimination, harassment or bullying, they should seek advice and support from Council's Peer Support Officers, their Manager, Director/Executive Manager, or the People & Culture department.

Employees are also able to refer to Council's Fair Workplace for All Policy.

If you are experiencing this behaviour from your direct supervisor, you should speak with their supervisor.

2.7

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Employees are also able to refer to Council's Fair Workplace for All Policy.

If you are experiencing this behaviour from your direct supervisor, you should speak with their supervisor.

2.9 Poor performance

Where performance issues have been identified with employees but not rectified within a stated timeframe, a performance improvement plan may be developed to train, mentor or coach employees to achieve acceptable output or behaviours.

If the plan doesn't achieve the set goals and unsatisfactory performance continues disciplinary action may commence.

2.10 Misconduct

When an employee does not adhere to an acceptable standard of conduct, Council policies, procedures, practices and relevant legislation, they may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Examples of behaviour which may constitute misconduct are:

- Theft/failure to report a theft
- Fraud/deceit/corruption/or failure to report
- Dishonesty
- Failure to comply with a reasonable lawful direction
- Non-disclosure of criminal or civil charges, court actions, accepting of gifts, legislative and license requirements that may impact on their ability to perform the inherent requirements of their role
- Disorderly or indecent conduct
- Failure to declare a conflict of interest relating to recruitment and selection process
- Assault, or threatened assault, of another employee or member of the public
- Drug or alcohol use or intoxication
- Possession or use of illegal drugs
- Deliberate damage or misuse of Council property
- Use of Council property without appropriate authorisation
- Inappropriate use of Council property
- Serious and/or deliberate breach of Council policy and procedures
- Negligence
- Misuse of work email and/or internet including but not limited to accessing, downloading, storing, displaying or distributing offensive or unlawful material in hardcopy, on email, internet, via phone, Council's network, or social networking sites
- Use of Council equipment or resources for gambling and/or gaming activities, undertaking gambling/gaming activities while engaged in work time or promoting gambling/gaming in any Council activities or services
- Any deliberate unsafe act which results in, or could lead to, injury to self or others
- Harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, victimisation or bullying
- Physical or verbal abuse against another person
- Family violence threats against a family member at or from the workplace, including the use of workplace resources to perpetrate this behaviour
- Gross insubordination
- Breach of privacy/confidentiality or a failure to comply with conflict of interest laws
- Breaches of applicable legislation
- Conduct which jeopardises Council's reputation, viability or financial position
- Acting corruptly for personal gain
- Bribery
- Lateral violence
- Possession of any unauthorized weapons on Council premises or whilst on Council duties
- Unauthorised absences from work
- Other serious misconduct which would prejudice the name, reputation and standing of Council.

- Aged care workers (including volunteers) and governing persons are required to comply with the Code of Conduct for Aged Care. Non-compliance with the Aged Care Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action and depending on the severity of the conduct, the matter may be subject to review by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. The Commission has the authority to apply civil penalties and/or ban workers and governing persons from working in the Aged Care Sector.

2.11 Support person

A support person may accompany an employee to attend a formal meeting relating to their performance or a formal investigation.

A support person is chosen/nominated by the employee and may include the following:

- Peer Support Officers
- Union delegate and/or union official
- Health and Safety Representatives
- Work colleague
- Other nominated support person.

A support person must not have a conflict of interest with the matter.

The role of a support person is to support and provide guidance. Should the employee choose to nominate a union delegate and/or official their role will be as outlined in the Enterprise Agreement.

2.12 Prevention and settlement of disputes

Any dispute or grievance arising in relation to the application of this Code will be addressed in accordance with the processes outlined in the City of Whittlesea Enterprise Agreement or the Complaints Resolution procedure.

2.13 Criminal offences

Employees must immediately advise their manager if they are charged with an indictable offence, which, if found guilty, could reasonably affect their ability to meet the inherent requirements of the work they are engaged to perform (eg, loss of license).

2.14 Portable and attractive assets

Portable and attractive assets are Council-issued items, generally small in size and provided to staff to perform the inherent duties of their role. These may include, but are not limited to, laptops, mobile phones, cameras, power tools, drones, key passes, personal protective equipment, corporate uniforms, body-worn cameras, and surveying or surveillance equipment.

Employees are required to return all Council-issued equipment in their possession upon separation from Council, commencement of long-term leave, or placement on WorkCover—on or before their final working day.

Failure to return Council equipment may result in the initiation of legal proceedings to recover the cost of the equipment and any associated legal expenses.

2.15 Ability to meet essential requirements

Employees must immediately notify their manager of any loss, suspension of, or change to, a registration, accreditation, licence or other qualification that affects their ability to perform their duties.

If the employee does not advise their manager or unlawfully drives a vehicle, they will be referred to the police and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

3. Working in local government

3.1 Gifts

The acceptance of gifts and other benefits can give the impression that you are using your position for personal gain, rather than to serve the community, which reflects badly on you and on Council.

Employees must not seek or accept any immediate or future reward or benefit in return for the performance of any duty or work for the Council. The acceptance or otherwise of a gift or other benefit such as hospitality must be dealt with in accordance with Council's Gift Policy (Staff).

A gift is any disposition of property without payment or with inadequate payment including the provision of goods and services such as food hampers, containers of alcohol and building materials.

As a general rule, all gifts must be refused.

If a gift cannot be refused it should be accepted on behalf of Council and then surrendered to the Compliance and Governance Team. You should never accept gifts of alcohol, money or vouchers.

Offers of bribes, commissions or other irregular approaches from an individual or organisation must be brought to the attention of the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator.

Hospitality is defined as free or discounted goods and services such as meals, entertainment, travel and accommodation. Hospitality must be refused with the exception of 'reasonable hospitality' received when attending an event or function in an 'official capacity'.

Reasonable hospitality is hospitality that is not excessive in the particular circumstances and is in proportion to the likely benefits to Council. A person is acting in an official capacity if they are exercising the powers or performing the responsibilities of their Council role.

Free tickets to a sporting or cultural events at which the employee is not performing any official duty, or free membership to an organisation, do not constitute reasonable hospitality and, therefore, must be refused.

Offers of gifts or other benefits, either accepted or declined, must be declared using the prescribed form and will be recorded in a register.

Guidance and support is always available from your Manager, the Compliance and Governance team or People & Culture. Please refer to Gifts Policy (Staff).

3.2 Procurement

Employees are required to adhere to procurement policy and procedures at all times when purchasing goods, works and/or services. This will ensure that purchasing is conducted in an open and accountable manner, risk is mitigated and best value for Council is achieved.

Employees must be mindful of their role and financial responsibilities and ensure that all procurement is within their delegated authority.

3.3 Conflict of interest and Prevention of Fraud

You must act with integrity including avoiding conflicts of interest when carrying out your Council duties.

A conflict of interest can arise when you are acting in your Council role and making a decision or providing advice about a matter in which you also have a private interest. The determining test is whether your private interests could influence, or be seen to influence, the performance of your Council duties.

Some types of conflicts of interest are proscribed by law; however, many other types of conflicts can occur in the workplace even though they are not specifically proscribed by law. Many of these relate to relationships. Relationships with your friends, friends of your family, extended family members, former work colleagues, Council contractors and Councillors can often trigger conflicts of interest.

If you have a private interest in a Council matter you have not committed an offence or done anything wrong. However, if you act in favour of your private interests you are not acting with integrity and are breaking the law and breaching Council's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Managing conflicts of interest in an open and transparent manner helps to build community trust and confidence in Council.

If you believe that a conflict of interest may exist, you should declare this to your Manager and, if required, stand aside from any further participation in or provision of advice about the matter. All conflicts (potential or actual) should be disclosed using the Conflict of Interest Declaration Form.

If you are unsure about a possible conflict of interest, you should seek advice or clarification from your Manager, the Compliance and Governance team or People & Culture. Please refer to Council's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Fraud and corruption involves dishonest actions, or dishonest failures to act, that cause actual or potential financial loss or an unjust advantage.

Employees must not be involved in an act or acts of bribery by providing, or promising to provide, a benefit. Please refer to Council's Fraud and Corruption Control System.

If you have a personal (romantic) relationship within the same team/department/directorate and/or including direct reporting lines, this must be declared and a relevant Workplan completed and approved by your Manager and Director/Executive Manager.

3.4 Councillor and council employee interaction

The *Local Government Act 2020* provides for Council to appoint and direct the Chief Executive Officer, who in turn is responsible for the organisation. Councillors may not direct employees to perform duties or undertake specific actions.

Any Councillor requests must be directed through the Office of Council and CEO or your Director/Executive Manager. Employees must at all times adhere to the CEO's issued Councillor and Staff Interaction Protocol.

3.5 Remaining apolitical

Council employees will conduct themselves in an apolitical manner.

> *Employees will avoid, in the course of their work, any participation in activities which support a political party or individual Councillors that is not Council business.*

Whilst off duty, employees are not permitted to wear any Council corporate attire or identify as a Council employee for the purposes of this clause.

3.6 Reporting unethical behaviour (Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012)

Employees must report to their supervisor or the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator any workplace behaviour that violates any law, rule or regulation or could represent fraud or corrupt conduct, mismanagement of public resources, or is a danger to public health or safety to the environment.

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* is designed to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct by employees and Councillors.

The Act provides protection to persons who make disclosures and establishes a system for matters disclosed to be investigated and rectifying action to be taken.

Employees can make a disclosure in the strictest confidence to the Council's Public Interest Disclosure Officer (Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO).

3.7 Privacy and Data Protection

Employees are required to protect personal, health and sensitive information and to use this information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic), the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) and Council's P*rivacy and Data Protection Policy* and associated Guidelines.

Personal Information is information or an opinion that is recorded in any form, whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion, excluding health information.

Personal information held by Council may include an individual's name, street address, email address, telephone number, date of birth, Medicare number or credit card details.

Health Information is information or an opinion about a person's health, disability or health services that is also personal information. It also includes some other forms of personal information.

Health information can include information about an individual's physical, mental or psychological health, vaccination status, an individual's disability, health services provided to them and preferences about the future provision of health services.

Sensitive Information is a type of personal information which includes an individual's racial or ethnic origin or heritage, political views, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and membership of groups or criminal record.

There are additional restrictions on the collection and use of sensitive information because of the inherent risk to an individuals' privacy and other rights.

Employees may have access to personal information relating to other employees or members of the community. This information will have been provided on the understanding it will only be used for specific Council purposes.

This information always remains confidential, must be managed and stored in accordance with the relevant Acts and must not be disclosed to any person except in the course of official duties.

If you are unsure about your privacy obligations or would like to report a privacy breach, you should seek advice from your Manager, the Compliance and Governance team and/or the Privacy Officer.

3.8 Council information and intellectual property

Past and present employees must not make unauthorised use of Council's confidential information or intellectual property.

> *Employees must not use any Council information other than for the purpose for which it was provided.*

Information generated while working for Council, always remains the property of Council and is subject to the *Public Records Act 1973*.

Employees are not permitted to remove or copy any information and/or store Council information in any non-approved hardware or software as determined by Council's Information Services Department.

3.9 Delegations and authorisations

Many Council officers have delegations as part of their position or are deemed authorised officers.

Delegations are conferred on particular Council positions (not individuals) with delegated power to make decisions or do an act or function on behalf of the Council or CEO.

Unlike delegations that are made to positions, authorisations are made to individual staff members (not positions). Authorisations are made under the Local Government Act 2020 or other relevant Acts and Regulations. Authorised officers are provided with an authorisation card which must be carried on them at all times while working.

Staff are required to be aware of their delegations and authorisations and comply with relevant delegated powers, duties and functions.

For advice on delegations please refer to Council's Instrument of Delegations or contact the Compliance and Governance team.

4. Health, safety and wellbeing

4.1 Wellbeing

The Council is committed to providing a working environment where staff are safe and well at work.

Council supports a mentally healthy workplace where people contribute their best effort, are recognised for their work and go home at the end of the day with energy left over.

Council takes a proactive approach to supporting and promoting the physical and mental wellbeing of staff with a focus on caring for ourselves, others and the environment. This includes a proactive Wellbeing@Work program, safety training, induction, leadership training and Council's Occupational Health and Safety management system.

4.2 Responsibilities of employees

All staff are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care to ensure their own safety, health and wellbeing in the workplace
- Performing all work safely, following safety instructions, procedures and safe systems of work
- Taking reasonable care to not put other people at risk (including members of the public, contractors, staff)
- Not interfering with or misusing anything that may impact on the health, safety or welfare of others
- Wearing and taking care of any personal protective equipment
- Identifying and reporting hazards, near misses and incidents immediately and managing risks to health and safety
- Implementing corrective actions to mitigate risks
- Participating in Council's workplace safety and wellbeing initiatives including any specified safety training.

4.3 Incidents, injuries and hazards

Employees must immediately report any workplace incidents, injuries, potential risks, near misses and hazards in an attempt to maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, contractors, volunteers and members of the community.

All reports will be entered electronically into Council's incident management system (BeSafe). The employee's direct supervisor will follow up and investigate hazards, incidents and injuries promptly to mitigate any safety and wellbeing risks.

4.4 Return to work

Council is committed to reducing the incidence and severity of workplace injuries or illness and providing an early, safe and sustainable return to work for injured or ill staff.

Where an employee has sustained a work-related injury they must immediately report this to their supervisor. A return to work plan will be prepared with the intention to support the employee to return to work safely and as soon as possible.

Where an employee has sustained a non-work related injury or suffers a medical condition that affects their capacity to perform their normal duties, they are required to report this to their supervisor who will liaise with the Injury Management Advisor.

If there is concern that an employee is unable to perform their normal duties and hours due to a non-work-related injury/condition, the employee may be required to sign a medical authority to enable Council to liaise with relevant medical practitioners, complete an evaluation or participate in an independent medical examination.

Care for each other

4.5 Safe driving

All staff driving vehicles for work purposes, must ensure they have a valid driver's license, drive safely and in accordance with law. Any vehicle damage or vehicle accident must be reported immediately.

Please refer to the Light Vehicle Policy and Heavy Fleet Policy for more information.

4.6 Drugs and alcohol

An employee's ability to work can be influenced by the consumption of alcohol and/or prescription or illegal/illicit drugs. Employees must not attend work or work functions under the influence of drugs or have blood alcohol content over zero.

Social club functions that are specifically off site and after hours are excluded from this clause. Employees attending these functions must still act in a responsible manner. Please refer to Council's Drug and Alcohol Policy.

4.7 Smoking

Council is a smoke/vape free workplace.

Smoking and/or Vaping is limited to clearly marked designated areas only. It is not permitted in Council vehicles, while attending to clients or servicing the public.

Staff may only smoke/vape in their own time during authorised breaks.

Employees working from home are not permitted to smoke and/or vape when participating in Teams meetings.

5. Use of Council resources and property

Work as one team

Employees will ensure that Council resources are used effectively and efficiently and will not be used or sold for private purposes, unless authorised to do so.

6. External communications

6.1Contact with the media

Employees are not permitted to make public comments on behalf of Council to any media (electronic or print), this includes social media and other public forums.

All media enquiries must be referred to the Public Affairs Department.

The Chief Executive Officer, through the relevant Director or Executive Manager may, in some circumstances, authorise an employee to make comment including at public forums (such as speaking engagements and community forums) or appearing in audio visual material on behalf of Council. These requests must be approved by the CEO in accordance with their delegations outlined in Council's Communication Policy.

6.2 Internet and email systems

Limited personal use of the internet and email system is permitted as long as it:

- Does not interrupt or interfere with their own or another staff member's work performance
- Is consistent with Information Services policies and procedures
- Does not result in significant cost to Council or disrupt Council's computer systems.

Limited personal use includes not making lengthy or long distance personal telephone calls, sending large group emails, browsing the internet for matters of personal interest if it affects your productivity or sending any significant non-work related attachments via email.

Use of the internet and email to access or disseminate pornographic or other offensive material, material which promotes hatred, racism or discrimination, playing games, gaming, wagering and betting etc. is strictly prohibited. For a full list of prohibitions, please refer to the email and internet policies.

Council can and does monitor use of Council systems including personal use of Council's email system and the internet.

Users should therefore not have any expectation of privacy for any actions performed when using the City of Whittlesea internet and intranet connections.

6.3 Social media

Council recognises that social media provides opportunities for interactive two-way communications with our community and will use social media as a communication and engagement channel.

Social media includes any digital space where individuals, communities and organisations can share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content or pre-made content posted online, including but not limited to websites, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), YouTube and podcasts.

Private use of social media is covered by this Code of Conduct. Council's Code of Conduct applies to behaviour on social media, which is considered a public forum, regardless of a user's privacy settings.

When using social media in a private capacity, employees:

- Must not make any disparaging comments about the City of Whittlesea, its services, employees, volunteers, contractors or Councillors
- Must make it clear that any personal opinions are your own and that comments relating to the City of Whittlesea and its activities are not official
- Must not publish content that could in any way bring the City of Whittlesea, its employees, volunteers, contractors, Councillors and/or visitors into disrepute
- Must ensure any personal comments do not raise questions about your capacity to perform your role at the City of Whittlesea in an unbiased manner
- Must not use social media to bully, threaten, harass or discriminate against others, or make comments that may be deemed offensive.

Employees are entitled to join and participate in closed community-run social media groups as a resident/community member but must not communicate information in an official capacity pertaining to the City of Whittlesea, its Councillors, employees, policies and services, suppliers or other stakeholders on Council-related issues unless authorised. This includes unintended official communication if they are easily identifiable as staff members through their contact with community or identifying details on their social media profile. Staff should not share City of Whittlesea posts into closed social media groups. Staff may like and share on their personal page but should not comment on City of Whittlesea social media posts, with the exception of LinkedIn where staff may comment on City of Whittlesea posts. Staff may share workplace announcements and awards on LinkedIn once the City of Whittlesea has posted.

City of Whittlesea