

PART 6B

OFFICERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The aim of this code is to lay down guidelines for all officers employed by or providing support to the Authority and it is intended that this will help maintain and improve standards and also protect officers from criticism.
- 1.2 Officers are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty in carrying out all their duties and must provide the highest possible standards of service to the public and the Authority. Officers should at all times act in such a manner so as to avoid impropriety or any allegations of misconduct. Improper behaviour covers a wide range of activities from the disclosure of confidential information, to accepting gifts or hospitality that could be seen as an inducement to some course of action.
- 1.3 This Code offers guidelines only and if officers have any queries they should seek the advice of either their line manager (where relevant) or the Principal Solicitor and Secretary to the SYPTTE / Monitoring Officer.
- 1.4 Where officers are subject to other codes of conduct - whether the code of a professional body or an officer's employing Local Authority - those other codes will be read in conjunction with this code and the higher of the two standards will apply to their conduct.
- 1.5 For the avoidance of doubt the term 'officer' in this code includes all officers of the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority, officers employed by other local authorities providing support to the Authority (in whatever capacity and whatever the status of their employing local authority) and any other agent (such as a consultant or secondee) properly considered to be an officer who is under an obligation to behave in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

2 STANDARDS

- 2.1 Officers are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to Members and fellow officers with impartiality. Officers will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service. Officers must report to the Principal Solicitor and Secretary to the SYPTTE / Monitoring Officer or their Line Manager any impropriety or breach of procedure and abide by the Authority's Whistleblowing Policy.

3 PRIVATE INTERESTS

- 3.1 No contract must be let to an officer employed by the Authority or to any partnership of which they, their spouse or immediate family, are members. (Except for a corporation in which they, their spouse or immediate family, hold less than 5% of the issued share or loan capital and take no part in the management) unless the Combined Authority has given permission for the letting of the contract to proceed. In such case the officer must disclose in writing the full measure of their, or their family's interest in the Contract, in the register provided by the Principal Solicitor and Secretary to the Authority/Monitoring Officer.
- 3.2 No officer shall accept a directorship, except as a nominee of the Authority, in any company holding a contract with the Authority without the express permission of the Authority.
- 3.3 Any officer who comes into contact with any matter concerning a business organisation in which they have an interest must disclose their interest to the Authority in the register of interests provided and ask that some other officer may deal with the matter.
- 3.4 A register is to be maintained by the Principal Solicitor and Secretary to the Authority / Monitoring Officer in which Members and officers are to record details of who has made offers to them, the nature of the offers made and the response made by them to the offer.

4 GIFTS AND REWARDS

- 4.1 Contracts entered into by the Authority prohibit a contractor from offering or making a gift or other consideration of any kind as an inducement to some action.
- 4.2 The Bribery Act 2010 makes it an offence to offer, promise, or give a bribe (Section 1 of the Act). It also makes it an offence to request, agree to receive, or accept a bribe (Section 2). Section 6 of the Act creates a separate offence of bribing a foreign public official with the intention of obtaining or retaining business, or an advantage in the conduct of business. Section 7 relates to a corporate offence of failure by a commercial organisation to prevent bribery that is intended to obtain or retain business, or an advantage in the conduct of business, for the organisation.
- 4.3 If any such offer, gift or irregular suggestion is made to an officer, either in connection with a contract or with the object of obtaining preferential treatment prior to the acceptance of a contract, the facts must be reported immediately to the Principal Solicitor and Secretary to the Authority / Monitoring Officer and

recorded immediately in an official register, of gifts and hospitality offered, received or given. No such offer should ever be accepted.

- 4.4 All trips, free travel, holidays, accommodation (including payment of bills) or use of company cars/jets at the expense of the contractor, organisation, firm or individual is totally unacceptable.
- 4.5 The Authority's Standing Orders provide that it may cancel a contract where the contractor has made a gift or carried out some kind of favour for an Officer in relation to it.
- 4.6 Where an officer is presented with a souvenir or small gift these may be accepted where the value is minimal. Where any doubt arises over whether such items are acceptable the officer's Line Manager should be consulted and, if considered necessary, a record should be made in the register provided of the offer and any action taken.

5 HOSPITALITY

- 5.1 Officers must only accept offers of hospitality for a genuine business reason, e.g. to represent the Authority or convey information. In all cases the arrangements should be in the interests of the Authority. It will not always be possible, or even desirable, to reject offers of hospitality on a modest scale. The decision whether to accept or not must depend on the circumstances in each case, bearing in mind the need to act discreetly at all times. Where it is clearly evident that the work of the Authority would be facilitated, invitations to attend functions, receptions, events, luncheons, dinners and the like may be accepted. Where possible, specific prior notification should be given to the officer's Line Manager.
- 5.2 With regard to officers' attendance at sporting, cultural or arts events, such should only be accepted if the purpose is to assist the Authority in building and maintaining good working relationships or networking with organisations which will assist the Authority in carrying out its policies. Specific ***prior*** approval of the officer's Line Manager must also be obtained.
- 5.3 A record of the offer of hospitality, whether accepted or not, should be recorded on the appropriate hospitality form and an entry made in the register provided/maintained.

6 HOSPITALITY PROVIDED BY THE AUTHORITY

- 6.1 As some of the operations of the Authority are of a commercial nature it is recognised that business is conducted where the provision of hospitality is acceptable. Accordingly, officers must therefore act in the best interests of the Authority, having regard to their public accountability and provide hospitality on

a modest scale within the allocated budget. Approval of the line manager should, where possible, be obtained to the provision of hospitality.

7 DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

- 7.1 Officers must not utilise any information obtained during their course of employment with the Authority that may result in their own personal gain or allow information to be passed to others who may make use of such information for their or their organisation's benefit.

8 MEDIA RELATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHY

- 8.1 If any officer (below Chief Officer) receives an enquiry from the media, this should be referred to the Authority's Corporate Affairs Team. Officers should not disclose any information to the media without the prior knowledge of the Corporate Affairs Team.
- 8.2 Officers who are required to take photographs, videos or webcam footage of clearly identifiable people must ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act / General Data Protection Regulations. The Authority's Information Governance and Privacy policies must be adhered to at all times by officers who are involved in any photography activities.

9 USE OF SERVICES OF AUTHORITY CONTRACTORS

- 9.1 No officer involved in letting and managing contracts may purchase goods from, or use the service of, a contractor on preferential terms for private purposes if these terms are given either directly or indirectly because of the contractual or other official business relationship either potential or actual between the contractor and the Authority. In other words, no such officer should use their position to secure any personal advantage.
- 9.2 These requirements also apply where the interest in the partnership/company is held by the spouse, partner or other close relative of the officer.
- 9.3 Officers who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs of external contractors must not in any circumstances disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation, in particular, to any other external contractor or tenderers.
- 9.4 Officers must ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former officers or their partners, close relatives or associates.

10 APPOINTMENT/EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

- 10.1 Officers involved in the appointment of new Authority employees should ensure that such appointments are made on the basis of merit and the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of that particular position. Officers who are related to or have a close personal relationship to the applicant should not be involved in the selection procedure and they should notify in writing this relationship to the Head of Human Resources and Communications.

- 10.2 Similarly, decisions as to promotion, pay, discipline or other employment related matters should not involve officers who are related or have a close personal relationship.