Statement of Business Ethics

Policy Number: **SVC-EXE-Stm-021-01**

Aim

Snowy Valleys Council is committed to the standards contained in this Statement of Business Ethics.

Council aims to promote integrity, ethical conduct and accountability through its operations to maintain trust, engagement and responsiveness to our community.

Both Councillors and staff work to a written Code of Conduct and are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical conduct consistent with the positions of public trust they hold and Council expects no less of the service providers and contractors that undertake work for us, so as to maintain our excellent reputation.

Responsible Business Practice

Council is committed to the principles of responsible business practice being:

Financial Sustainability

To operate our business in an economically sustainable manner.

Value for Money

Value is determined by considering all factors that a relevant to a particular acquisition. Quality, reliability, timeliness, service, initial and ongoing costs are all factors that can make an impact on cost and benefit. Value does not necessarily mean 'lowest price', however the lowest price might offer best value if it meets other essential criteria such as quality, reliability and certain particular criteria particular to the item.

Stakeholders and Community

To actively engage with our community and other stakeholders.

Workplace fairness

To provide a workplace that supports workers and employees wellbeing and inclusiveness, so as to be aware of social diversity, professional development and work/life balance whilst providing full entitlement to employment rights.

Supply Chain

To promote responsible business practices that are open and transparent throughout the supply chain.

Environment

To minimise the impact of our business activities on the environment.

Ethical Governance

To ensure transparency, risk management, due diligence and effective code of conduct across the organisation.

Expectations from Snowy Valleys Council Councillors and staff:

Council will ensure that all its policies, procedures and practices relating to tendering, contracting and purchase and provision of goods and services are consistent with industry best practice and the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Councillors and staff are bound by the adopted Local Government Code of Conduct and when doing business with the private sector they are accountable for their actions and are expected to:

- Respect and follow Council's policies and procedures;
- Council staff will ensure that prospective contractors and suppliers are afforded equal opportunity to tender/quote for all goods and services;
- Council staff are not to disclose a competitor's price to any prospective supplier;
- Use public resources effectively and efficiently;
- Deal fairly, honestly and ethically with all individuals and organisations;
- Avoid any conflict of interest, whether real or perceived;
- Treat all Council information confidential unless otherwise indicated;
- Be accountable and act in the public interest;
- Council staff must not by virtue of their position accept or acquire for a personal advantage any gift, gratuities or hospitality except that which is permitted under Council's Code of Conduct or in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993;
- Promote fair and open competitions while seeking best value for money;
- Respond promptly to reasonable requests for advice and information; and
- Assess applications objectively, considering all relevant and material factors.

The Policies/Code of Conduct will be documented and available to all by visiting www.snowyvalleys.nsw.gov.au

Expectations from Tenderers, Suppliers, Consultants and Contractors:

Council requires all private sector providers of goods and services to observe the following:

- Respect the conditions and requirements stated in documents supplied by Council;
- Abstain from collusive practices and not act secretly or fraudulently
- Present information concisely;
- Declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of them;
- Comply with Council's tendering and practice requirements;
- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Council;
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent the disclosure of confidential Council information;
- Not engage in any corrupt conduct or practice designed to improperly influence the outcome of any decision;
- Respect the obligation of Council staff to comply with council's procurement policy;
- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information to Council when required;
- Do not discuss Council dealings with the media without Council consent;

- Not make any public comment or statement that would lead a member of the public to believe you are expressing the views or policies of Council.
- Refrain from offering Council employees or Councillors any financial or other inducement; which may lead to a position of unfair advantage in dealings with Council;

Conflicts of Interest

Councillors and staff conduct their activities through a Code of Conduct and in the case of Meetings through a Code of Meeting Practice. Both these codes require a declaration and non-involvement on a matter if a staff member or Councillors believes they may have either pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest. The Local Government Act 1993 within chapter 12 provides the requirements for both staff and Councillors with respect to conflict of interest.

Amongst other matters Councillors and Designated persons within the organisation are also required to submit an annual disclosure of interest return. Conflicts of Interest can involve spouses, family members and friends.

Pecuniary

An interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated. Defied by section 442 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Non-Pecuniary

A private or personal interest – a non-pecuniary interest could be a friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature.

Any complaints or alleged breaches of Conflict of Interest can be investigated by the General Manager who can refer such matters to the Pecuniary Interest Tribunal, which has the authority to hand down sever penalties.

Confidential and Personal Information

You must take care to maintain the security of any confidential or personal information you become aware of in your work with Council.

You must abide by privacy legislation governing the collection, storage, use, amendment, disclosure or transfer of personal information obtained through your dealings with Council.

Personal information is any information about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained form that information.

No one should access, use or remove form Council premises any Council information or personal information, unless they need it for their work with Council and have authorisation to use or disclose the information.

Any breach of the security or misuse of Council confidential or personal information must be reported to Council's Privacy Officer.

Council Resources

Council resources including materials, equipment, vehicles, documents, records, data and information, may only be used to do work for Council with Council's approval.

Alcohol & Drugs

No one should come to work for Council, or return to work, under the influence of alcohol or other drugs that could impair their ability to carry out their job or cause danger to the safety of themselves or others.

Gifts

Gifts or benefits must not be offered to a Council official, which is designed to gain an advantage for yourself or your organisation, or which the public could reasonably see as likely to cause that Council official to depart from his or her proper course of duty.

Council officials should not accept any gift in relation to their work at Council, which could influence, or be seen to influence, their impartiality in relation to the work or services that you are providing to Council. Cash must never, in any circumstances, be offered to a Council official.

If a gift or benefit is offered to a Council official to influence the way they do their work, they must report it immediately. Council does, however have a gift register where Councillors and staff are required to register any incidental and unrelated gifts.

Meals

Councillors and staff are expected to pay for their own meals. Council discourages external parties from providing Councillors and Council staff with benefits such as social lunches except as otherwise stated in Council Policy.

Councillors and staff participation is allowed only if clear underlying business purpose exists and the value and frequency of such functions are not excessive.

Travel and Accommodation

The Council policies meet all approved business travel and accommodation for Councillors and staff. The Council or General Manager, not the individual who is affected, must agree to any variation to the policy guidelines. Public liability and insurance guidelines must also be considered.

Entertainment

Councillors or staff are generally not entitled to use Council funds to pay for entertainment. Likewise suppliers should not pay for any form of entertainment for Councillors and staff.

Sponsorship

The Council will not enter into any form of sponsorship that is not open or transparent.

Secondary Employment

Council within its policy has a requirement, for approval by the General Manager, for any staff member who seeks secondary employment. Any secondary employment

will not be approved if it has the potential either perceived or real to conflict with their Council employment.

Any person or organisation wishing to report any alleged breach of ethics needs to bring this to the attention of the General Manager.

Why Compliance is Important

You should be aware of the consequences of not complying with Council ethical requirements when doing business.

Demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct would lead to:

- Termination of contracts;
- Loss of future work;
- Loss of reputation;
- Matter being referred for investigation;
- Disqualification of tender; and
- Civil or criminal proceedings being brought.

When you comply with this Statement of Business Ethics, you will find that doing business with Council is easier and more effective. You can be sure that you are not disadvantaged because Council requires others who deal with Council to do the same. By doing business ethically, you will also find it easier to deal with other government bodies who have similar policies.

Snowy Valleys Council's Commitment

Snowy Valleys Council is committed to the standard sin this Statement of Business Ethics. They reflect the high standards expected by our community and you are expected to maintain these standards and principles when undertaking work for, or on behalf of our Council.

Should you have any questions regarding this statement or wish to provide information about suspect behaviour, please contact the General Manager of Snowy Valleys Council.

Our Vision

Our Values	
Do what is right	*Accountability, decision-making, equity and sustaining high ethical standards* ▪ taking responsibility for our own behaviour, productivity and quality of work ▪ making the best contribution we can to achieve the community's vision ▪ using resources wisely and delivering value for money ▪ learning about and working within Council policies ▪ being responsive and helpful to members of the community, and ▪ being ethical, respectful and treating everyone fairly.
Look out for each other	*Team spirit, organisational commitment and wellbeing at work* ▪ supporting the effectiveness and success of our teams ▪ creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace ▪ speaking up if we experience or observe unfair, disrespectful, discriminatory or bullying behaviour ▪ meeting and resolving work challenges as a team ▪ a willingness to go the extra mile when needed, and ▪ treating colleagues as valued individuals.
Work together	*Collaboration, teamwork and communication.* ▪ building positive and professional relationships in the organisation and community ▪ being an active listener ▪ respecting each other's skills and needs ▪ being willing to learn from each other ▪ finding out what is happening that might impact on the team ▪ being willing to lend a hand to a colleague, and ▪ sharing information that will enable the team to work effectively and be positive.
Get the job done	*Achievement, motivation and learning.* ▪ giving work our full attention and completing tasks on time and competently ▪ being solution focused ▪ taking responsibility for the development of our own knowledge and skills ▪ strengthening Council's capacity and responsiveness by being flexible and adaptable in how we work with each other ▪ being open about, and learning from, our mistakes, and ▪ looking for the enjoyment in our work and recognising how this can unlock creativity and energise the team.
Build pride	*Recognition, acknowledgement and valuing self, the team and the community.* ▪ valuing others who are approachable and believe in our abilities and aspirations ▪ giving work our best shot ▪ seeking feedback about our performance and behaviour and using it to improve ▪ acknowledging the contributions and achievements of our colleagues ▪ always speaking positively about the Council and the decisions it makes ▪ valuing community service, and ▪ taking the time to reflect on how our work has delivered community benefit.
Look to the future	*Being forward looking, working to anticipate and understand the needs of the community and focusing on organisational performance.* ▪ taking a proactive approach to understanding the community's needs and aspirations ▪ showing financial responsibility when performing Council work in acknowledgement of the importance of Council's financial sustainability ▪ seeking long-term solutions rather than reactive band aid responses, and a focus on excellence.

Responsibilities

Council – Elected members of Council

Elected members of Council are responsible for the adoption of this Council policy and the consideration of resources towards the implementation of this policy.

General Manager
The General Manager is generally responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Council's organisation and for ensuring the implementation, without undue delay, of decisions of the council.

Directors, Managers and Team Leaders
Are responsible for

- The implementation of the policy and procedures in their work area.
- The monitoring of implementation and compliance with the policy and associated Procedure.

Contact Officer: General Manager

Superseding Policy No. and Title:

Statement of Business Ethics GOV.16 – former Tumut Shire Council
Statement of Business Ethics TSC-EXE-Stm-007-01 – former Tumbarumba Shire Council

Policy prepared by: Governance Support Officer

History table:

Version Control No	Development /Amendment Date	Approval Date	Resolution Number	Activity log
0	2/08/2017			Prepared by Governance Support Officer
0		24/08/2017	M134/17	Adopted Ordinary Council Meeting for Public Exhibition