

GIFTS AND BENEFITS POLICY

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The intent of this policy is to ensure that council officials are not compromised in the performance of their duties through innocently or in good faith accepting gifts or benefits which may result in a feeling of obligation or could be construed as an attempt to influence.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This Official Council Policy deals with the obligations of staff and councillors in relation to Gifts and Benefits.

2. POLICY COVERAGE

This policy applies to all areas of Council’s operations and is applicable to all Councillors, all staff and anyone personally associated with them.

3. STRATEGIC PLAN LINK

Objective: 4.0 Wentworth is a caring, supportive and inclusive community that is informed and engaged in its future

Strategy: 4.1 Provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning, decision-making and service delivery

4. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term/Word	Definition
Code of Conduct	Council’s adopted Code of Conduct
Gift	A thing given willingly to someone without payment; a present.
Benefit	An advantage or profit gained from something
Reliansys	Internal Operational System holding various Registers

5. POLICY CONTENT

In relation to gifts and benefits all Councillors and staff are expected to abide by the requirements as defined in Part 4 of the Code of Conduct. Failure to abide by the requirements of this policy will be investigated in accordance with the Procedures for Administration of the Code of Conduct.

5.1 All offers of gifts and benefits must be declared

All offers of gifts and benefits must be declared, even if refused. Regardless of the value where a gift or benefit is offered it must be declared using the Gifts and Benefits declaration form.

5.2 Gifts and benefits of a token value

Gifts and benefits of a token value (as defined in the *Code of Conduct cl. 4.8*) can be accepted but must still be declared, using the Gifts and Benefits declaration form.

5.3 Gifts and benefits of more than a token value

Gifts and benefits of more than a token value (as defined in the *Code of Conduct cl. 4.10*) must not be accepted. Where you receive a gift or benefit of more than a token value that cannot be reasonably be refused or returned, the gift or benefit must be surrendered to the

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council, unless the nature of the gift or benefit makes this impractical (*Code of Conduct cl. 4.7*). Refer cl. 5.5 of this policy.

5.4 Cash-like gifts

Cash-like gifts must be declared using the Gifts and Benefits declaration form.

5.5 Surrender of the item and lodgment of Declaration forms

Completed declaration forms are to be provided to the Office of the General Manager as soon as practicable after the receipt of the item. Where an item has been accepted it must be surrendered. The General Manager will determine what is to happen with the item. Options for disposal of the item may include, but are not limited to:-

- Displaying the item in the council chambers
- Returning the item
- Allowing perishable items to be shared amongst all Councillors (or staff),
- Donation of promotional items to the stationery cupboard
- Donation of goods to a charity
- Allowing goods to be placed in a staff raffle or hamper

5.6 Gifts and Benefits Register

Gifts and Benefits declarations are to be entered in the Gifts and Benefits Register in Reliansys with the document attached and linked to Content Manager.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS & LEGISLATION

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulations 2021

Wentworth Shire Council Conflict of Interest Policy

7. ATTACHMENTS

Nil

8. DOCUMENT APPROVAL

This document is the latest version of the official policy of the Wentworth Shire Council, as adopted by Council on 31 January 2022. All previous versions of this policy are null and void.

This policy may be amended or revoked by Council at any time.

A PDF copy of the signed document can be accessed from Council's record management system and Reliansys.

Signed:


7 February 2022

General Manager Wentworth Shire Council

Date