



**Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Code of Conduct  
For Council Members, Committee Members  
and Candidates 2021**

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# Using the Code

The Shire of Wongan-Ballidu is responsible for providing effective and high-quality government for residents, ratepayers and visitors, as mandated in the *Local Government Act 1995* (LG Act). This Code of Conduct (Code) establishes the standards and principles that outline expected behaviour and relevant legal responsibilities for each appointed and prospective elected member, committee member and candidate. It facilitates the delivery of good governance by Council and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by supporting:

- Decision making processes that are responsible, inclusive, participatory and representative and deliver outcomes which are in the best interests of community and our stakeholders.
- Developing and strengthening public trust in the integrity of the Shire and local government.
- Strong, effective relationships between Councillors, committee members, candidates, the CEO, and employees of the Shire based on clear roles and responsibilities and shared principles.

This Code focuses on principles and gives general guidance, rather than detailed policies and procedures. It does not describe every requirement of legislation, policies, and procedures, or all rights and obligations that would ordinarily apply under law. It is to be read in conjunction with the LG Act and its subsidiary legislation.

It is your responsibility to seek information if you are unclear on any area of conduct. Misunderstanding or being unaware of laws does not relieve a person from the obligation to comply.

This Code is subsidiary to (and informed by) personal responsibilities and compliance obligations under legislation. The laws that apply to your conduct include, but is not limited to:

- *Local Government Act 1995*
  - *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007*
  - *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997*
  - *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996*
  - *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*
- *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*
- *Criminal Code*
  - Chapter XII - Corruption and abuse of office
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Industrial Relations Act 1979*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*
- *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*
- *State Records Act 2000*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1986*

# Our principles

## Accountability

As a Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Council Member, committee member, or candidate, I will –

- take personal responsibility for my decisions and actions.
- be open to scrutiny and understand the consequences that may occur from personal behaviour that does not align with the Code, and the actions that may be taken by the Shire should I breach the Code.
- fulfil my own and the Shire's statutory purposes and requirements
- manage Shire resources effectively, efficiently and respectfully to deliver clear benefits to the community and stakeholders.
- express any concerns to the CEO or other relevant authority about consultations, decisions or actions I believe may be contrary to the public duty of myself and the Shire.

## Personal integrity

As a Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Council Member, committee member, or candidate, I will –

- act reliably, professionally and ethically in conducting activities, decision making and in all dealings with others.
- actively learn and stay informed about:
  - the role and purpose of the statutory, regulatory and policy requirements that apply when carrying out public duties.
  - the political and social environment in which the Shire operates.
  - all relevant issues and activities affecting the Shire.
- exercise my powers and discharge my duties responsibly and in the best interests of the Shire.
- make decisions fairly, impartially and promptly and consider all available information, legislation, policies, procedures and advice.
- serve the community lawfully, with reasonable care and diligence and as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- diligently prepare for meetings by reading and considering papers circulated with the agenda.

## Effective working relationships with others

As a Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Council Member, committee member, or candidate, I will –

- treat members of the public, stakeholders, my fellow council members, committee members, candidates and the employees of the Shire with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness; having proper regard for their interests, rights, safety and welfare.
- maintain and contribute to a harmonious, safe and productive work environment and foster professional relationships

These principles are consistent with and complementary to the general principles prescribed by section 3 of the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007*.

# Living the Code

## 1. Personal conduct

### General conduct

As a current or prospective representative and leadership figure of the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, you are a role model and your behaviours shape the culture of what is acceptable and expected at the Shire. By acting in accordance with our principles, you can foster a positive culture in the Shire and provide effective leadership to the organisation and community.

Your conduct at meetings is particularly important in effective, democratic, and ethical decision making. It is a statutory obligation of an elected member to vote on every item of business considered at a Council meeting, except where prevented from doing so by the *Local Government Act 1995* due to a conflict of interest.

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute a **breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 1.1. As a council member or committee member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
  - a. not be impaired by alcohol or drugs in the performance of my official duties.
  - b. comply with all policies, procedures and resolutions of the Shire.
  - c. act in the best interests of the community, with reasonable care and diligence and with honesty, integrity and transparency, having regard to relevant and factually correct information.
- 1.2. As a council member or committee member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, when attending a committee meeting, I must –
  - a. not act in an abusive or threatening manner towards another person.
  - b. not make a statement that the member or candidate knows, or could reasonably be expected to know, is false or misleading.
  - c. not repeatedly disrupt the meeting.
  - d. comply with any requirements of a local law of the local government relating to the procedures and conduct of council or committee meetings.
  - e. comply with any reasonable direction given by the person presiding at the meeting.
  - f. immediately cease to engage in any conduct that has been ruled out of order by the person presiding at the meeting.

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community.</li><li>• I do not engage in any fraudulent, corrupt or illegal behaviour, and I report any information about actual or potentially fraudulent, corrupt, or illegal activities to the CEO or, if necessary, the Corruption and Crime Commission where I suspect the conduct may meet the definition of serious misconduct under the <i>Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003</i>.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acting in accordance with the letter and intent of legislation such as the <i>Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003</i>, <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003</i>, and <i>Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007</i>.</li><li>• Understanding the different types of breaches and misconduct findings and sanctions that may be made against me should I fail to comply with applicable legislation and the Code.</li></ul>

- I endeavour to foster a culture of good governance, risk awareness, health and safety, and equal opportunity within the Shire and the community.
- I act honestly and avoid statements (whether oral or in writing) or actions that will or are likely to mislead or deceive a person.
- I understand that ethical behaviour is an integral part of responsible, effective and accountable government.
- I am committed to ensuring that elections conducted by the Shire are conducted fairly and democratically and in accordance with the highest standards of governance.
- Taking all reasonable steps to become familiar with policies and protocols and participate in any reviews of these documents.
- Acting professionally, democratically, and respectfully at all meetings, briefings, forums, workshops, and training sessions.
- Using a good governance and risk management focused approach when making decisions and in all other official duties.

### Diversity and inclusion

The Shire aims to foster within the community and the workplace an environment of trust, mutual respect and appreciation where everyone is treated fairly, with respect and can realise their full potential.

All individuals have a right to feel confident that the diversity of their experiences will be valued and supported, regardless of their gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, ability, religious belief, identification as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer (LGBTIQ), education, work and life experiences, socio-economic background, opinions, job function, geographical location, marital status and family.

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I recognise and embrace the diversity each person brings to the Shire, and value and consider diversity in decision-making, program and policy development.</li> <li>• I recognise that there is no place for unlawful discrimination, harassment (sexual or otherwise), racial and religious vilification and victimisation of any individual.</li> <li>• I am committed to treating all people with dignity and respect, and have due regard to the opinions, identities, beliefs, rights and experiences of other elected members, Shire staff and other persons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting in accordance with the letter and intent of legislation such as the <i>Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1984</i> and other anti-discrimination legislation.</li> <li>• Identifying my own needs and the needs of my colleagues to undertake training or activities to further develop awareness and understanding.</li> <li>• Valuing diversity and considering diversity in decision making, program and policy development.</li> <li>• Recognising the characteristics of the whole person and treating all individuals with fairness and respect.</li> </ul>

## Bullying and harassment

Harassment occurs when someone engages in conduct that would make a reasonable person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated because of their age, race, religion, gender or gender expression, sexual orientation or some other attribute specified under anti-discrimination legislation. Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an individual or group of individuals that creates a risk to health and safety.

There is no place for bullying or harassment at the Shire, and it will not be tolerated. It is unlawful, breaches our policies, and goes against our values.

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute **a breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 1.3. As a council member, committee member or candidate for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
  - a. not bully or harass another person in any way.
  - b. not use offensive or derogatory language when referring to another person.

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I uphold the Shire's obligations to support a safe workplace and will not engage in unreasonable behaviour toward another Council member, committee member, the general public, the CEO or any Shire employee that creates a risk to the health and safety of that person.</li><li>• I report harassment and bullying, and do not behave in a manner that may be perceived as intimidating, offensive, or inappropriate.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking responsibility for personal health and safety and the health and safety of others and fulfilling my obligations under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984</i> and <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i>.</li></ul>

## 2. Communications and leadership

### Involvement in administration

As an elected member, your prescribed role includes providing leadership and guidance to the community. The *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* prohibits your involvement in the administration of the Shire. This separation of duties between the representative decision makers (council and committee members) and the administrators responsible for implementing those decisions (local government employees) is a fundamental good governance principle.

The following rules of conduct as prescribed by the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* apply to this area of conduct. Failure to comply with these rules may constitute a **minor breach** and dealt with by the Local Government Standards Panel.

- Regulation 9 – ‘Prohibition against involvement in administration’

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I accept that my role is to provide leadership, and not to interfere or involve myself in administrative matters.</li><li>• I respect the role that each elected member, committee member and employee plays to achieve the Shire's objectives and deliver effective service to the community and our stakeholders.</li><li>• I do not approach staff directly about matters unless given authority to do so, or make vexatious or inappropriate queries to the administration, as I understand and value the time spent by Shire employees in responding to requests and questions from elected and committee members.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adhering to the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> and the Shire's Communication Protocol, and fulfilling my prescribed role and responsibilities without seeking to involve myself in the responsibilities of others.</li><li>• Not undertaking tasks that contribute to the administration of the Shire.</li><li>• Not directing (except as part of an established council or committee meeting process) or attempting to influence a local government employee in their capacity as a local government employee.</li></ul>

## Relations with council members, committee members, the CEO and Shire administration

Effective working relationships based on clear roles and responsibilities are crucial to the ability of the Shire to effectively serve the community and its stakeholders.

Given the open nature of local government and the absence of party-based political structures, elected members and committee members must work together to achieve outcomes. It is also critical to good governance to maintain an appropriate relationship between council members, committee members, the CEO and Shire administration. Working relationships should be characterized by mutual respect and an acknowledgement that, while all parties may not agree on all issues, they are all doing important, and often challenging work, and each have a clear role to play in serving the community.

The following rules of conduct as prescribed by the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* apply to this area of conduct. Failure to comply with these rules may constitute a **minor breach** and dealt with by the Local Government Standards Panel.

- Regulation 10 – ‘Relations with local government employees’

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute a **breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 2.1. As a council member, committee member or candidate for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu I must –
- a. not disparage the character of another council member, committee member or candidate or a local government employee.
  - b. not impute dishonest or unethical motives to another council member, committee member, or candidate or local government employee in connection with the performance of their official duties.
  - c. direct to the CEO any request for a query or complaint to be dealt with, or other work or action to be undertaken, by a local government employee.

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I communicate with my fellow council and committee members openly, equitably and without bias or favouritism.</li><li>• I work constructively with my fellow council, committee members, candidates, the CEO and the Shire’s employees and respect their perspectives and input.</li><li>• I do not seek to restrict or place undue influence on the ability of employees to give professional advice to Council.</li><li>• I act according to legal requirements, policies and all other lawful directives regarding communication with my fellow council members, committee members, and candidates, the CEO, employees of the Shire, media, and community.</li><li>• I express my disagreements with others in ways that are not personal attacks and do not cause detriment to individuals.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Following all procedures and protocols which set out interaction between council members, committee members, candidates, the CEO and the Shire administration.</li><li>• Ensuring I have effective working relationships with other council members, committee members, the CEO, and Shire employees to succeed individually and collectively.</li><li>• Treating others with respect and courtesy.</li><li>• Allowing others to freely express their opinions, and swiftly resolving any conflicts that may rise.</li></ul>

## Communications

As an appointed or prospective council or committee member, you are seen to be representing the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu in your interactions with the community and our stakeholders.

These expectations are applicable whenever you are speaking or communicating on behalf of the Shire, and when using channels such as:

- social media
- websites
- electronic direct mail (EDM)
- publications, such as local newspapers (print and electronic)
- advertising (print, electronic and digital)
- media communications and releases
- promotional items
- displays and exhibitions promotional items.

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute **a breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 2.2. As a council member, committee member or candidate for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
- a. ensure that my use of social media and other forms of communication complies with this code; and
  - b. only publish material that is factually correct.
  - c. deal with the media in a positive, informative and appropriate manner and in accordance with any relevant policy of the local government.
- 2.3. As a council member or committee member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
- a. clearly preface any personal opinions or views I express publicly as my own and not the Shire's, including when using social media.
  - b. not make any adverse reflection on council members, committee members, the CEO, employees, or decisions of Council and committees, **including when publicly expressing my own personal opinions or views.**

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I abide by the Communications Protocol.</li> <li>• I understand that the Shire President is the authorised spokesperson for the Shire, and do not make unauthorised public representations about the Shire, its activities or its views.</li> <li>• I only make public comment or representation on behalf of the Shire with appropriate prior approval.</li> <li>• Any comments or representations I make publicly will be factually correct and not cause detriment to my fellow Council members, committee members, candidates, the CEO, the Shire administration, the Shire as an entity, or any other person.</li> <li>• When expressing my personal views and opinions, I clearly identify them as my own and not the Shire's.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting in accordance with the Communications Protocol, and respecting that the Shire President is the authorised spokesperson for the Shire.</li> <li>• Respecting decisions of Council and committees by not criticising or actively undermining any decisions which have been made.</li> <li>• Not bringing the Shire into disrepute through any of my words or actions</li> <li>• Not speaking on behalf of the Shire without prior approval.</li> <li>• Ensuring any personal opinions or views I express publicly are identified as my own and not the Shire's.</li> <li>• Ensuring any communications I make are not offensive, derogatory, insulting or otherwise damage the reputation of Council.</li> </ul>

### 3. Improper use of office

#### Personal advantage or disadvantaging others

The position of council member or committee member is inherently a position of power. The community rightfully expects you to use your office to fairly and faithfully represent and act in their best interests, and properly dispel your duties. If you improperly use your office to gain a personal advantage for yourself or another person or to cause detriment to the Shire or any other person, community trust in the Shire and local government broadly is damaged.

Improperly using your office to gain a personal advantage for yourself or another person, or to cause detriment to the Shire or another person, may constitute corruption if it meets the definition of serious misconduct under the *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.

The following rules of conduct as prescribed by the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* apply to this area of conduct. Failure to comply with these rules may constitute a **minor breach** and dealt with by the Local Government Standards Panel.

- Regulation 7 – ‘Securing personal advantage or disadvantaging others’

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute a **breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 3.1. As a council member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
- a. only use my Shire President or councillor title when fulfilling the official functions of my office.

#### Expectations

- I honour the trust placed in me by the community and our stakeholders to serve fairly and transparently, and do not seek to gain advantage directly or indirectly for myself or any other person.
- I act equitably, without seeking to cause detriment to the Shire or any other person.
- I do not make improper use of information obtained in the course of my official duties, or use it for direct or indirect, personal or commercial gain, or to do harm to others.
- As a sitting council member, during an election period:
  - I will abide by the requirements of the applicable legislation and policies.
  - whether or not I am standing for re-election, I will always act respectfully towards all candidates for the election.

#### Responsibilities

- Not making improper use of my position as a council or committee member to directly or indirectly gain an advantage for myself or any other person.
- Not making improper use of my position as a council or committee member to cause detriment to the Shire or any other person.

## Use of Shire resources

You have a responsibility to the community to ensure the Shire operates efficiently and effectively. This extends to your own behaviours, which means that you are expected to act only in the public interest, and without self-interest, and to use the Shire's resources carefully and transparently.

The following rules of conduct as prescribed by the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* apply to this area of conduct. Failure to comply with these rules may constitute **a minor breach** and dealt with by the Local Government Standards Panel.

- Regulation 8 – ‘Misuse of local government resources’

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute **a breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 3.2. As a council member or committee member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
- a. not use Shire resources (including services and equipment) for purposes which are, or may be perceived to be, for election related purposes.

### Expectations

- I use Shire resources, facilities, funds and equipment (including employee time) effectively and economically, and only for official duties.
- I use these resources in the accordance with public interest, and not for personal gain.
- I report any damage or loss of property or equipment immediately to the Shire.
- I ensure requests by an external party, such as charitable organisations, to use Shire facilities are referred to the Shire for approval.
- I ensure the Shire's resources are to be utilised only for authorised activities.

### Responsibilities

- Understand and comply with the Shire's provisions for the reimbursement of expenses, including travel and accommodation.
- Ensuring the responsible and efficient expenditure of ratepayer funds.
- Using Council resources, which may include equipment, information, email address, premises, staff resources, property of any kind and other assets, which have been provided to me only for the purposes of my duties as a Councillor and not for private purposes unless properly authorised to do so.
- Maintaining adequate security over Council property, facilities and resources in my possession or control.
- Ensuring that any claim for expenses that I may make is in accordance with all legislative obligations and Council policies.

## 4. Disclosure and management of information

### Record keeping

All public officers, including council members and committee members, are responsible under the *State Records Act 2000* for creating and managing government records appropriately. Correspondence and documents created or received in the course of official business are official records.

The State Records Commission requires that records of council member communications and transactions which constitute evidence affecting the accountability of the Council and the discharge of its business be created and retained, regardless of the record's format or where it was received. This includes messages sent via text or applications such as WhatsApp, Messenger, or WeChat.

Making and maintaining proper records assists with accountability and transparency by demonstrating the basis for decisions and the process used to make them. Documentation enables decisions to be reviewed, including by an independent person or authority. The *Freedom of Information Act 1992* gives members of the public the right to access the Shire's documents, subject to some limitations. All documents created by council members and the administration can be subject to a Freedom of Information request.

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute **a breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 4.1 As a council member or committee member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I must –
- a. Where information technology facilities are provided by the Shire, use those facilities for any matter relating to the business of the Shire or the performance of the duties or my office or appointment.

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I follow meeting procedures and disclosure processes to facilitate the accurate recording of decision-making practices (including motions and questions), events, and activities.</li> <li>• I ensure information and records within my control are kept in a secure place.</li> <li>• I diligently handle Shire records and secure sensitive documents.</li> <li>• I dispose of duplicate copies of records and confidential waste in accordance with record keeping and archive procedures.</li> <li>• I do not falsify, destroy, alter or damage any public records or back-date information or remove information from files.</li> <li>• I respect and facilitate the rights of the public to gain access to documents and to check personal information in documents.</li> <li>• I allow prompt access and ensure personal information held is accurate, complete, up to date and not misleading.</li> <li>• I record salient facts in documents.</li> <li>• I avoid recording inappropriately disparaging remarks and unsubstantiated personal opinions about individuals on official documents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complying with the letter and intent of the <i>State Records Act 2000</i>, <i>Freedom of Information Act 1992</i>, and the Shire's Recordkeeping Plan and practices.</li> <li>• Ensuring records are properly organised and securely stored.</li> <li>• Understanding and fulfilling my record keeping obligations, including by only using approved Shire systems to discuss official Council business and decision-making.</li> <li>• Ensuring that records I create or receive that relate to official Shire business be captured in the Shire's record keeping systems in accordance with the Shire's Recordkeeping Plan.</li> </ul>

## Disclosure of information

Council and committee members are privy to confidential and highly sensitive information such as information relating to commercial matters and legal issues, notably when considering meeting items deemed to be confidential under the *Local Government Act 1995*. The confidentiality of information must be maintained unless determined otherwise.

It is important that you do not inappropriately or unlawfully disclose information acquired in the course of your official duties or for personal, commercial, or political gain for yourself or others, or to the detriment of others. You should be particularly cautious when information to which you are privy could be seen to involve any conflict of interest you may have.

The following rules of conduct as prescribed by the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* apply to this area of conduct. Failure to comply with these rules may constitute a **minor breach** and be dealt with by the Local Government Standards Panel.

- Regulation 6 – ‘Use of Information’

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I avoid discussing confidential matters in public places where there is a likelihood of being overheard.</li><li>• I maintain and respect confidentiality and don't divulge information deemed confidential or sensitive, other than as required by law or where proper authorisation is given.</li><li>• I don't make improper use of information obtained in the course of my official duties, or use for direct or indirect personal or commercial gain, or to do harm to others.</li><li>• I respect the privacy of individuals, and the security of personal information.</li><li>• I protect intellectual property.</li><li>• I raise concerns of improper communications or use of information with the CEO or relevant authority.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I will comply with any legislative provisions and Council policies concerning my access to, use of, or disclosure of Council information, whether confidential or otherwise.</li></ul>

## 5. Conflicts and Disclosures

Decisions can arise that an elected member or committee member has an actual or perceived interest in a matter.

When decisions are made and there is the perception of a conflict of interest the community may doubt the integrity of the decision. The validity of decisions made with an actual or perceived conflict can be challenged. To ensure conflicts do not undermine public trust, it is important to transparently disclose them and leave meetings when required.

Sections 5.65 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires elected members and committee members to disclose financial and proximity interests of themselves and people they are closely associated with. Council members must complete primary and annual returns in accordance with the requirements of Division 6 of Part 5 of the *Local Government Act 1995*

The *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* requires the disclosure of any interest which could, or could reasonably be perceived to, adversely affect the impartiality of the elected member.

The following rules of conduct as prescribed by the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* apply to this area of conduct. Failure to comply with these rules may constitute a **minor breach** and dealt with by the Local Government Standards Panel.

- Regulation 11 – ‘Disclosure of interest’

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I carefully identify and appropriately manage potential conflicts and keep my private commercial or political interests separate from my role.</li> <li>• I openly and transparently disclose interests in matters before Council or committee in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i>.</li> <li>• I ensure there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest between my personal interests and the impartial fulfilment of my public duties and functions.</li> <li>• I ensure the details and extent of my interests and any conflicts are fully and faithfully recorded in any disclosures I make.</li> <li>• I diligently review meeting agendas and papers to identify and disclose any conflicts prior to meetings.</li> <li>• I understand that conflict and bias can arise from my personal and professional relationships, and this can potentially lead or be seen to lead to decisions I make as a Councillor being made for reasons other than the public interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disclosing interests in accordance with legislation at meetings and providing a written disclosure of interests to the CEO.</li> <li>• Ensuring I do not participate, even informally, in decisions where I have any interest unless my interest has been disclosed and my participation is authorised.</li> <li>• Wholly completing and lodging primary and annual returns and related party disclosures in a timely fashion and in accordance with legislation.</li> <li>• Familiarising myself with the different types of interests under legislation and the disclosure requirements that apply to them.</li> <li>• Seeking assistance if I am unsure about a possible conflict of interest.</li> </ul>

## 6. Gifts

Elected members may be offered gifts from organisations and individuals as a result of their role. Gifts can include items such as goods, discounts, hospitality, attendance at events or contributions to travel.

The full definition of a gift is included under section 5.57 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Whenever an elected member accepts (or in some instances, is offered) a gift, there is a risk of real or perceived influence arising. Even though this might not be your intention, or the intention of the donor, impressions and perceptions are important.

Sections 5.87A and 5.87C of the *Local Government Act 1995* require declaration of any gift received in a **person's capacity as an elected member** where the value of the gift (or the cumulative value of gifts from the same donor in a 12-month period) is over \$300. Gifts must be declared within ten days of receipt to the CEO.

Interests can arise from accepting a gift. This may require a disclosure of interest and affect voting.

The following are the enforceable provisions under this Code, and failure to act accordingly may constitute **a breach** and be responded to appropriately by the local government.

- 6.1. As a council member or committee member for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu I must –
- a. In addition to my obligations to declare gifts in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*, declare in full **any gift** that I receive from any person who entity who -
    - i. is a Shire of Wongan-Ballidu council member, committee member or employee;
    - ii. requires, or who it is reasonable to believe may require, a decision from the local government; and or
    - iii. has, or who it is reasonable to believe may have, directly or indirectly, commercial dealings or a commercial relationship with the Shire.

Expectations	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I strive to build and maintain public trust and understand that accepting gifts can give the impression that decisions could be influenced by the gift.</li> <li>• I openly and transparently declare gifts received and meet the requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i>.</li> <li>• I do not expect or seek gifts and benefits.</li> <li>• I consider the appropriateness of the gift, including its potential impact on future decision making and community perception before accepting.</li> <li>• I consider whether there is a benefit to the Shire when accepting a gift.</li> <li>• I commit to compliance with my statutory obligations in relation to gifts, benefits and hospitality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refusing offers of gifts that could reasonably be perceived as influencing me or undermining the integrity of the Shire or myself.</li> <li>• Declaring relevant gifts within 10 days of receipt to the Chief Executive Officer.</li> <li>• When relevant gifts under \$300 are received either:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ declaring relevant gifts under the threshold when received.</li> <li>○ keeping personal records and declaring when the threshold is reached.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Complying with the relevant provisions of the <i>Local Government 1995</i>, <i>Local Government (Election) Regulations 1996</i>, <i>Criminal Code</i>, <i>State Records Act 2000</i> and <i>Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003</i>.</li> </ul>

## Elections

- All electoral candidates must comply with the *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997* in disclosing electoral donations or 'gifts'. A candidate must disclose to the CEO information about any electoral or related gift with a value of \$200 or more that is promised or received within 6 months before election day.
- Requirements relating to the disclosure of electoral gifts are set out in the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997*, particularly Part 5A.

# Enforcing the Code

## Breaches

You are encouraged to refer any suspected breaches of the Code or rules of conduct to the CEO in writing – this is your code, and you have a role in upholding it and ensuring others adhere to it.

### Breaches of the Code

If you or any other person has reason to believe a council member, committee member or candidate has breached the enforceable provisions of this Code, the matter is to be referred to the CEO and will be dealt with by, on behalf of, the local government.

### Breaches of the rules of conduct

Failure to act in accordance with the prescribed rules of conduct under the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 1996* may constitute a minor breach under the *Local Government Act 1995*.

If you or any other person has reason to believe a minor breach has occurred, the matter may be referred to the CEO by completing a minor breach form with all supporting evidence. Complaints of this nature may be forwarded to the Local Government Standards Panel (Standards Panel) for determination.

# Commitment to the Code

I, as an elected representative of the community charged with decision making for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, am committed to undertaking the duties and responsibilities of my office by working together with my fellow Councillors in a respectful and constructive manner to achieve the goals and vision for our Shire.

I recognise the importance of acting in the highest standards of governance, and that it is essential to honest, accountable and effective government. My behaviour towards my colleagues, the community and the Shire's administration is critical to the teamwork required to be a successful and highly functioning public authority.

I acknowledge that I have been elected by the community to a position of significant responsibility with the expectation that I will act in accordance with accepted values of our society.

I also acknowledge that Council is committed to our principles of accountability, personal integrity, and effective relationships with others. These principles and associated obligations are set out in this Code. The Code is supported by specified protocols, policies and procedures which underpin the values and provide guidance for the implementation and management of elected member conduct.

As an elected representative of the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, I agree to:

- act in accordance with the principles of good governance and respectful conduct and associated obligations set out in the Code and legislation;
- provide civic leadership and contribute effectively to the interests and advancement of Council and its community;
- contribute to the strategic vision for Council;
- uphold the public trust in the office of Councillor by refraining from any action or behaviour that would bring Council into disrepute; and
- act in accordance with all my obligations to the best of my skill and judgment.

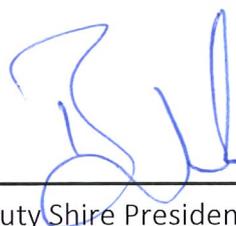
This Code sets out my commitment to my fellow elected members and the community to govern the Shire in a manner which accords with the expressed behaviours, standards and values.

This Code will be reviewed in accordance with relevant legislative obligations. Additionally, at least once every two years elected members will review this Code to ensure that it meets and continues to meet community standards and expectations.

By signing below, I declare to my fellow elected members and to the community that I have read, understood and will abide by this Code of Conduct.



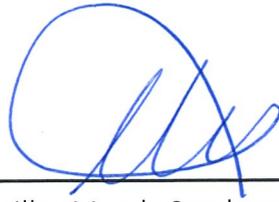
Shire President



Deputy Shire President



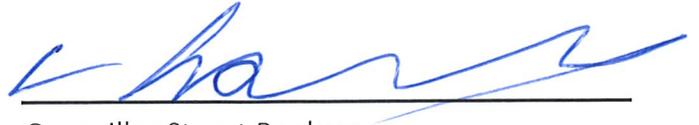
Councillor Sue Falconer



Councillor Mandy Stephenson



Councillor Eion Ganzer



Councillor Stuart Boekeman



Councillor Andrew Tunstill



Councillor Brad West



**Witnessed by:**  
Chief Executive Officer, Stuart Taylor