

POLICY TITLE CORRUPTION PREVENTION

VERSION I: Adopted 18 October 2005

Last reviewed: -

OBJECTIVE

Dungog Shire Council is committed to build and sustain an ethical, efficient and effective culture where opportunities for fraud, corruption and maladministration are minimised. It will change organisational features that are likely to allow corruption to occur and possibly go unnoticed or unreported.

BACKGROUND

Council recognises that its staff and Councillors understand what good conduct is and are committed to the highest standards of probity in management and operation of the Council. This plan aims to support Councillors and staff in achieving these standards.

Council will therefore implement a comprehensive Corruption Prevention System which will aim to ensure public confidence and trust in the work of Dungog Shire Council.

Specifically, the Corruption Prevention System will:

- Ensure that all Councillors, staff, contractors and suppliers to Council are aware of the standards of ethical behaviour required of them.
- Provide a mechanism for any party (internal or external to Council) to advise of potential ethical conflicts relating to Council's function.
- Provide systems to identify and manage risks within the organisation.

POLICY

1. Risk Assessment

Dungog Shire Council operates in an environment of extensive contracting of goods and services, devolution of management control and authority, increased decision making powers of many staff, and provision of increasing access to confidential information through computer technology.

It is therefore essential that Council regularly identifies potential risks created by this environment, and ensures that the organisation's existing procedures, systems and controls are good enough to counter the corruption risks identified.

The General Manager shall be responsible for initiating a risk assessment a minimum of once every two years to consider:

- What may go wrong
- The areas in the Council that may be most vulnerable to corruption
- The likelihood of corruption occurring and the possible impact if it does

It is recognised that it is not cost effective to endeavour to cover every possible risk of corruption.

However, the risk assessment will identify priority areas for the allocation of resources to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to obviate foreseeable corruption risks.

This risk assessment may be carried out in conjunction with Council's Internal Audit process.

2. Corruption Prevention Strategies

Dungog Shire Council will provide assistance and guidance to all Councillors, Staff, Contractors and public with regard to appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour. Strategies to achieve this will be determined through the on-going review of policies and procedures to manage significant risks identified through the bi-annual Risk assessment. These strategies will focus on improving systems and procedures, changing the attitudes of individuals, and improving the overall integrity and performance of the organisation.

As a minimum, the relevant Corruption Prevention features of Dungog Shire Council will include the following policies and procedures:

- Code of Conduct
- Protected Disclosures
- Internal Reporting
- Staff training
- Community and Contractors/supplier awareness
- Reporting to external authorities
- Internal Audit
- Internal investigation
- Complaint/grievance management
- HR policies and procedures

All strategies and policies/procedures developed will be needs-based, cost effective and integrated into the Council's overall corruption prevention plan.

3. Responsibilities for Corruption Prevention

3.1 All Councillors, Staff and Contractors

Each individual has a responsibility to:

- Adhere to ethical standards in their respective area and provide their colleagues with guidance and support as required.
- Observe and support the requirements of the relevant Council policies and procedures.

- Report all suspected corruption and inappropriate behaviour to a relevant Council Officer

3.2 All Managers and Supervisors

All individuals with managerial or supervisory responsibilities, must ensure in their area of responsibility that:

- Decisions or conduct are lawful
- Decisions or conduct are consistent with Council policies and Code of Conduct
- Outcomes for employees, colleagues, Council and the community will be equitable
- Outcomes do not raise a conflict of interest or lead to private gain at expense of Council or any individual
- Decisions or conduct can be justified in terms of the public interest
- Decisions or conduct would withstand public scrutiny.

3.3 The General Manager

shall be responsible to ensure:

- That appropriate corruption prevention strategies are in place
- That resources are allocated as necessary to minimise any risk of corruption that may be identified
- That ethical standards are set and communicated throughout the area of the Council's operations
- Reported corruption is investigated promptly, dealt with appropriately, and that policies or procedures are reviewed to prevent recurrence where necessary
- All corruption prevention initiatives are implemented within the Council
- That regular risk assessments are undertaken to identify corruption prevention needs within all areas of Council's operations.

4. Access to Corruption Prevention Information and Policies

Council will ensure that it raises awareness amongst staff, contractors and the public about:

- It's standards of conduct and service and those it expects of others; and
- How people can air their concerns, make complaints or report wrongdoing.

This will be achieved by:

Staff

- Induction training programme
- Regular updates through staff newsletters
- Information sessions

Public

- Open access to Council policies and procedures
- Inclusion of relevant information in Annual Reports and website
- Display of ICAC notices in public buildings.

Contractors

- Inclusion of requirements in tendering documentation.
- Ongoing reviews of contractor performance and adherence with Council policies and procedures

5. Breaches of this Corruption Prevention Plan

Dungog Shire Council shall ensure that consistent disciplinary procedures exist for breaches of any element of strategies or procedures developed and implemented in accordance with this plan. These disciplinary procedures will ensure a clear message that those who engage in corrupt conduct will suffer the associated consequences.

Appropriate disciplinary procedures are detailed in associated policies, however, as a guideline, sanctions may include:

Councillors

- Report to the Conduct Committee
- Censure the Councillor for misbehaviour
- Make public the findings of inappropriate behaviour
- Refer the matter to an appropriate investigative body if the matter is serious (Department of Local Government, ICAC, NSW Police, Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal).
- Disqualification from holding a public office for a period of up to five years.

Staff

- Disciplinary procedures pursuant to the relevant industrial award or employment contract.
- Sanctions up to and including dismissal.
- Reports to the NSW Police, ICAC or other external body as appropriate

Contractors

- Reports to the NSW Police, ICAC or other external body as appropriate
- Cancellation of all contract/supply agreements with Council

Date Policy Adopted	Minute No	Authority
18 October 2005	32797	Council Resolution