

Code of Conduct



1. Standards

Employees should strive to ensure courteous, respectful, efficient and impartial engagement with all groups and individuals with whom they come into contact in the course of their employment.

2. Open Government

Employees should be aware of the obligations placed on public bodies to provide information to the public and must not restrict anyone exercising a right to access information. Employees should be aware of what TfN information is open to the public and assist members of the public seeking to access information which is not subject to exemptions from disclosure.

3. Diversity and Dignity at Work

Employees must ensure that they adhere to TfN policies and comply with all legislation relating to diversity and equal opportunity. All members of the community, customers and colleagues have a right to be treated with fairness and equity. Employees should be familiar with and adhere to TfN's Dignity at Work Policy and Diversity Policy. Employees should be aware that breaches of the Dignity at Work Policy are likely to be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. Employees who become a victim of harassment at work should report it to their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity.

Additionally, all employees must make sure they are aware of the factors which result in black and ethnic minority people, disabled people, women, gay men and lesbians and others with a protected characteristic suffering inequality and oppression and undertake their duties so as to seek to redress this.

4. Appointments

Where employees are involved in appointments, they must make appointments only on the basis of merit and must comply with TfN's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Employees, who are in a line management or supervisory role, or in a more senior position with direct influence on that work area, should not normally be involved in any way in the recruitment, selection, or appointment of any applicant with whom they have a personal relationship (whether declared or not). See Section 16 for further details of what constitutes a personal relationship.

Where it is not practical to remove an employee from the recruitment process, all panel members should be made aware of the personal relationship and every panel decision should be justified as fair and equitable, without bias or conflict of interest. On such occasions the HR & Skills team should be approached to find a neutral, alternative panel member for the selection process.

5. Political Neutrality and Working with Elected Members

Mutual respect between employees and elected members of TfN is essential to good local government. Close personal familiarity can damage that relationship and prove embarrassing to both colleagues and Elected Members.

Employees must follow every lawfully expressed policy of TfN and not allow their personal or political opinions to interfere with their work. Where they are required to give advice to Elected Members and

colleagues, it should be done with impartiality and aligned to any relevant professional codes of practice.

6. Service Provision

Each employee should understand the law governing their service and inform their Line Manager or TfN's Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal Services) of any impropriety, breach of procedure, unlawfulness or maladministration.

7. TfN Property and Use of Facilities

The use of public funds is entrusted to employees in a responsible and lawful manner, ensuring value for money for the local community.

Employees must use TfN facilities and resources only for TfN business and must respect the intellectual property of TfN which must not be used for personal gain or benefit whether for themselves or others. Misuse of TfN resources could be an act of gross misconduct under TfN's Disciplinary Policy.

8. Information Technology and Data Security

Employees should ensure that they adhere to TfN's Acceptable Use policy for IT and follow any requirements relating to security procedures when using computers and when storing and managing data.

9. Confidentiality

Employees must observe the duty of confidentiality which exists in relation to information received from third parties either from the government under an obligation of confidentiality or from other third parties under a confidentiality agreement or where the circumstances give rise to an expectation of confidentiality.

Employees must be aware of the risks to TfN of confidential information being disclosed inappropriately and take all necessary steps to avoid inappropriate disclosure, including using the correct TfN Classifications for all reports, emails, letters and other items of correspondence.

Employees must observe the confidentiality of TfN's own information when that information has been identified as confidential.

10. Indemnification of Employees

Employees will be indemnified from personal legal action against them when acting in good faith in the discharge of their duties.

11. The Media

Unless required to do so in the course of their work an employee must not deal directly with the press or the media. All media enquiries and contact should be referred to TfN's Head of Stakeholder Engagement & Communications or email mediarelations@transportforthenorth.com.

12. Contracts and Contractors

An employee must not seek or accept any gift or personal inducement in connection with the procurement of works, goods or services.

Employees should inform their Line Manager about relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors or potential contractors. Employees should not be involved in a tendering process where they have a close personal or business relationship with one of the

tenderers. As soon as they are aware that this is the case they must notify their manager and asked to be replaced in the tendering process.

Whenever an employee is involved in the tendering process, they should follow TfN's tendering procedure's, ensuring that the process is fair and equitable and observing the rules relating to separation of roles during tendering.

13. Sponsorship

Where TfN wishes to sponsor an event, employees must ensure that they, their partner, or relative, do not benefit in any way from such sponsorship without full disclosure to their manager and the TfN Monitoring Officer.

14. Gifts and Hospitality

Employees must adhere to TfN's adopted Gifts and Hospitality Policy. Invitations to social or sporting events should be accepted only where TfN's Monitoring Officer has agreed that TfN should be seen to be represented at the event.

All offers of gifts and hospitality of more than nominal value must be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality whether or not they are accepted. If an employee accepts any hospitality, they should be mindful of all the circumstances of the offer and of the nature of the hospitality. They should get advanced authority from TfN's Monitoring Officer and the event must be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. Employees should not accept personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers. Any gift other than of a purely nominal value should be returned.

TfN's Monitoring Officer may give further guidance on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality and may dispense with the requirement to obtain prior agreement in relation to items of gifts and hospitality below a financial limit to be determined by him or her from time to time.

15. Personal Interests: Financial and Non-Financial

An employee must declare any financial interests which could conflict with TfN's interests to their manager or to TfN's Monitoring Officer.

Non-financial interests that it could be considered could bring about conflict with TfN's interests should also be declared e.g. membership of outside bodies in a personal capacity.

Employees should be mindful not to place themselves in a situation where involvement in outside bodies could compromise their continuing professional duty to the interests of TfN.

When serving on outside bodes as a TfN appointee, an employee will be expected to represent and promote TfN's interests and policies as the circumstance dictate.

Employees should declare membership of any organisation which is not open to the public, has no formal membership, requires a commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about its rules, membership, or conduct.

16. Relationships at Work

Employees must not allow a personal relationship with a colleague, supplier, member or stakeholder to influence their conduct at work.

Employees are expected to declare any personal relationships at work to HR & Skills Team that may fall under any of the categories described below:

- Family relationships e.g., brother, sister, daughter, son, mother, father and also being related by marriage or civil partnership e.g., brother-in law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in law, stepchildren or parents etc.
- Married partners, co-habiting partners and civil union partnerships
- A business/commercial/financial relationship

Employees will be individually responsible for ensuring that any personal relationship at work does not interfere with their daily duties and responsibilities in the workplace and does not give rise to a conflict of interest, abuse of power or more / less favorable treatment.

Employees are asked to work positively with TfN to accommodate any reasonable changes to their work arrangements that are considered necessary in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest through personal relationships at work.

Personal relationships at work involving a line management or a senior position with direct influence on that work area.

In order to avoid any actual or potential conflict of interest, abuse of power or favouritism, employees who are in a line management role, or in a more senior position with direct influence on that work area, should not be involved in:

- the appraisal, promotion or discipline or any other management activity or process (such as approval of time off) involving an employee with whom they have a personal relationship (whether declared or not)
- the authorisation of any financial payments/decisions relating to financial matters e.g. timesheets, fees payments, expense claims, salary changes or allocation of external funding for an employee with whom they have a personal relationship (whether declared or not). However, if the person is the budget holder then they should see the financial transaction but have additional independent authorisation.

When a personal relationship between a manager and their subordinate is deemed as conflict of interest, reasonable adjustments may be proposed, including an amendment to the reporting line if considered appropriate. In this event, both employees will be consulted by the manager's line manager and HR & Skills Representative and a transparent process will follow.

Where alterations that would mitigate the risk of a conflict of interest, favouritism or an abuse of power cannot be reasonably/practically implemented, the employees involved in the personal relationship will be advised in writing that should any proven favouritism, disadvantage, abuse of power or bias result from the personal relationship, either between the parties to the personal relationship or with other staff, the matter will be considered to be very serious by TfN and the disciplinary procedure may be invoked.

Employees are reminded where there is a change in their personal circumstances (e.g. promotion, transfer, etc.) to consider if these new

working arrangements would render it necessary to declare any emerging potential conflict of interest in accordance with the above.



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