

Mutual Respect Charter

November 2023

Ensuring we are fair, efficient and kind

Strathbogie Shire Council is strongly committed to ensuring all interactions with our community are fair, efficient, and kind.

Our goal is also to ensure occupational health and safety standards and duty of care obligations are always adhered to.

Working with our community, and including their knowledge, thoughts and feedback into our decision-making process is a priority for Council. In doing this we acknowledge there will be times when there are opposing views.

This Mutual Respect Charter has been developed to promote the highest levels of integrity, inclusiveness and good governance. This includes appropriate, respectful behaviour that supports our values of providing a safe and respectful workplace.

In considering the broad diversity of interests and needs of the Strathbogie community, the Charter outlines the rights and responsibilities of the community, Councillors, and Council officers in all our interactions.

The community has the right and responsibility to:

- Be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect
- Treat officers and Councillors with dignity and respect
- Be given reasons that explain decisions affecting them
- A fair and impartial assessment based on the facts and merits of the matter
- A timely response
- Express their opinions in ways that are respectful and concise
- Respectfully communicate concerns and views without fear of reprisal
- Access Council's complaints process
- Be informed about the actions taken and outcome of any complaint.

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Councillors have the right and responsibility to:

- Be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect
- A safe and healthy working environment
- Expect honesty, cooperation and reasonable assistance from the community
- **Zero tolerance to any verbal/written abuse, offensive, threatening and/or bullying behaviour from any member of the community**
- Be inclusive of and actively engage with the municipal community to gain input from a broad cross section of people, groups and bodies
- Actively listen to what others have to say without making judgement or interrupting them and for this to be reciprocated
- Modify, curtail or decline service in response to unacceptable behaviour which because of its nature or frequency raises health, safety, or equity issues.

Council officers have the right and responsibility to:

- Be treated with courtesy, objectivity, fairness, and respect
- A healthy and safe workplace that is free from any verbal abuse, intimidation, or undermining bullying behaviour from any officer, councillors and/or community
- Respectfully communicate information, professional advice, and seek direction without fear of reprisal
- Provide reasons for decisions that are consistent and in line with Council policies and relevant legislation
- Be clear on how the matter will be handled, including compliance to statutory and/or legislative processes.

“Strathbogie Shire Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace, promoting wellbeing, dignity and respect for all.”