
E40. Ethical Charter - Sustainability

Title: Ethical Charter - Sustainability Policy

Policy No: E40

Keywords: Ethical, Sustainability, Earth Charter

Responsible Officer: Executive Manager, Corporate Services

1. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The objective of this policy is to set out and facilitate the attainment of Council's ethical charter with respect to sustainability.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to supporting the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) as defined in the *Local Government Act 1993* and ethical business practices. To that end, Council has adopted the ethical charter with respect to sustainability set out in this policy.

3. PRINCIPLES

Council has resolved to adopt the following ethical charter, enshrining the various several principles set out below, in order to declare Council's commitment to and promotion of the values of sustainability.

Manly's Ethical Charter – Sustainability

Council is committed to supporting the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) as defined in the *Local Government Act 1993* and ethical business practices.

Council believes that sustainability must be the guiding principle of our business, requiring policies that meet the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the opportunity of future generations to fulfil their needs and aspirations. Council also supports the *Earth Charter* and recognise that it sets the grounding principles for sustainability.

We support and will act on the following principles in our services:

Equity and justice – We will act fairly, seeking to ensure equity, tolerance and removal of discrimination and support democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful.

Respect – We will treat other people and the environment with respect and acknowledge and support the values of indigenous peoples and minorities.

Sustaining the environment – We will act with care and caution towards the environment, protecting the biosphere, its biodiversity, and using its resources sustainably for present and future generations.

Creating and sharing sustainable prosperity – We will seek to create and share prosperity in a way that helps sustain our business, the community and the environment, and support locally based businesses who share these ethics where possible.

Responsibility – We will take all responsibility for our actions and for any harm or good we cause. We will account for our actions, evaluating our progress in implementing these principles, and seek to continually improve. We also commit to combat corruption in all its forms, and the obstacles to good governance. We will not associate with organisations who act in direct contradiction to these principles.

This Ethical Charter places a requirement on Council to give significant consideration to the effects our business and operations may have on local and global sustainability. It will be integrated into Council's key policies to guarantee implementation.

(P & S meeting 14.2.05 Res. ##)

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council officials, including Councillors, Council staff, and contractors engaged by Council, as respects the making of decisions, and the taking of action, of all kinds.

5. DEFINITIONS

"Principles of ecologically sustainable development" means the following statements of principle:

Ecologically sustainable development requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes. Ecologically sustainable development can be achieved through the implementation of the following principles and programs:

(a) the precautionary principle-namely, that if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation. In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by:

- (i) careful evaluation to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment, and
- (ii) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options,

(b) inter-generational equity-namely, that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations,

(c) conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity-namely, that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration,

(d) improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms-namely, that environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services, such as:

- (i) polluter pays-that is, those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement,
- (ii) the users of goods and services should pay prices based on the full life cycle of costs of providing goods and services, including the use of natural resources and assets and the ultimate disposal of any waste,
- (iii) environmental goals, having been established, should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures, including market mechanisms, that enable those best placed to maximise benefits or minimise costs to develop their own solutions and responses to environmental problems.

(Source: Dictionary, *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW))

6. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented without delay once adopted by Council. Upon adoption this policy will be entered into Council's policy register, made available online and provided to all staff and any other people directly affected by this policy.

Council and/or the General Manager may, during a civil emergency only, set aside any policy terms to ensure public safety.

7. MONITORING AND BREACHES

Regular monitoring of compliance with this policy, relevant legislation and Manly policies and procedures will be undertaken and documented by the responsible officer for this policy.

Breaches of this policy are considered to be breaches of Manly Council's Code of Conduct and therefore invoke the relevant sanctions outlined in that Code. Persons in breach of any legislation may be subject to relevant criminal action.

8. REPORTING

No specific reporting is required by this policy.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is subject to regular review at a maximum interval of two (2) years.

For the purposes of carrying out and giving effect to this policy, the General Manager may from time to time prepare, adopt or vary, and otherwise issue to Council staff, guidelines and directions relating to any aspect of this policy.

Any recognised change to relevant legislation; or directives or guidelines issued by agencies including the NSW Ombudsman and the Division of Local Government; or to Manly Council's related guidelines and procedures will activate an immediate review of this policy to ensure it remains current and aligned to best practice policies.

10. RELEVANT REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The Earth Charter. See: <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/pages/Read-the-Charter.html>

11. RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

Nil.

12. REVISION SCHEDULE

Minute No	Date of Issue	Action	Author	Checked by
PS53/11	2 May 2011	Periodic Review	Secretariat, Corporate Services	Manager, Administration
	June 2013	Comprehensive Review		General Counsel
PS16/14	3 March 2014	Periodic Review	OM CSS	Manager Governance