

ANTI - BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION POLICY

1. Summarised Policy Statement

We at Riverside are committed to conducting our work in accordance with the highest standards of ethics. We will act fairly, honestly and openly and we will not tolerate any form of bribery or corruption. The reputation of the Group and of the sector depends on all of us acting in accordance with sound ethical principles, and we will do our utmost to ensure that this good reputation is protected.

2. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out our responsibilities, and of those working for us, in observing and upholding our position on bribery and corruption; and
- provide information and guidance to those working for us on how to recognise and deal with bribery and corruption issues.

It is a criminal offence to offer, promise, give, request, or accept a bribe. Individuals found guilty can be punished by up to ten years' imprisonment and/or a fine. As an employer if we fail to prevent bribery we can face an unlimited fine, exclusion from tendering for public contracts, and damage to our reputation. We therefore take our legal responsibilities very seriously.

In this policy, 'third party' means any individual or organisation who comes into contact with Riverside for business purposes, and includes people and organisations such as tenants, residents, applicants, customers, suppliers, joint venture partners, contractors, business contacts, agents, advisers, and government and public bodies, including their advisors, representatives and officials, politicians and political parties.

Any employee who breaches this policy will face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct. Any board or committee member or involved resident who breaches this policy may be removed from office.

We will not deal with prospective partners or other third parties where we suspect them of bribery or corruption, and we will seek to terminate arrangements in the event of unethical behaviour.

3. Description of the general issues surrounding the policy subject

Bribery is offering, promising, giving or accepting any financial or other advantage, to induce the recipient or any other person to act improperly in the performance of their functions, or to reward them for acting improperly, or where the recipient would act improperly by accepting the advantage.

An advantage includes money, gifts, loans, fees, hospitality, services, discounts, the award of a contract or anything else of value.

A person acts improperly where they act illegally, unethically, or contrary to an expectation of good faith or impartiality, or where they abuse a position of trust. The improper acts may be in relation to any business or professional activities, public functions, acts in the course of employment, or other activities by or on behalf of any organisation of any kind.

Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power or position for private gain.

4. Legal and regulatory context and framework, including relevance to Scotland

- Bribery Act 2010;
- Fraud Act 2006;
- Companies Acts 1985 and 2006;
- Value Added Tax Act 1994;
- Criminal Justice Act 1993;
- Customs and Excise Management Act 1979;
- Theft Acts 1968 & 1978;
- Criminal Law Act 1977;
- Prevention of Corruption Act 1906;
- Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889;
- Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities;
- Homes and Communities Agency's Regulatory Framework;
- National Housing Federation's "Excellence in governance" Code for members;
- National Housing Federation's "Code of conduct";
- Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework;
- SFHA's Interim Model Code of Conduct

5. Standards

The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. All those to whom this policy applies are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.

All those to whom this policy applies must ensure that they read, understand and comply with it

The Riverside Board & Committee Member Code of Conduct and the Employee Code of Conduct set out clear provisions relating to matters such as conflicts of interest, use of suppliers, gifts and hospitality, and donations.

It is not acceptable for those to whom this policy applies (or someone on their behalf) to:

give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality with the expectation or hope that a function will be performed improperly or an improper advantage will be received, or to reward an improper advantage already given;

- give or accept a gift or hospitality during any negotiations or tender process, if this could be perceived as intended or likely to influence the outcome;
- accept a payment, gift or hospitality from a third party that they know or suspect is offered with the expectation that they/we will provide an improper advantage for them or anyone else in return;
- accept hospitality from a third party that is unduly lavish or extravagant under the circumstances which might lead to a breach of this policy;

- threaten or retaliate against another worker who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy; or
- engage in any other activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

6. Performance reporting: standards and requirements

Those to whom this policy applies must declare all matters required under the applicable code of conduct in accordance with its requirements and make such declarations as and when they occur.

Riverside will seek to ensure that its consultants, contractors, suppliers, joint venture partners and agents have anti-bribery and corruption policies and procedures in place that are consistent with the Group's own.

Those to whom this policy applies must notify a manager as soon as possible if they believe or suspect that a conflict with this policy has occurred, or may occur in the future. They are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of bribery or corruption at the earliest possible stage.

Employees, contractors, board members, tenants and other persons connected with the Group may raise concerns in accordance through the Group's Whistleblowing procedure.

If they are offered a bribe, or are asked to make one, or if they believe or suspect that any bribery, corruption or other breach of this policy has occurred or may occur, they must notify their manager or report it in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy as soon as possible.

If they are unsure about whether a particular act constitutes bribery or corruption, they should raise it with their manager or the Riverside Director of Legal Services or the Director of Audit and Risk Management.

All potential instances of actual or attempted bribery must be reported and will be investigated. Any incidents of actual or attempted bribery and/or corruption are reported to the Group Audit Committee. They may result in disciplinary, civil or criminal action where substantiated. In the case of Riverside's consultants, contractors, suppliers, joint venture partners and agents, this may result in contracts being terminated and of organisations being prevented from working with the Group in the future.

The Corporate Audit Team maintains the register of fraud, losses and irregularities.

The Company Secretary maintains a register of interests and also registers of gifts and hospitality in respect of employees and board members

7. Implementation

Key measures designed to eliminate the risk of bribery include procurement, finance and recruitment measures as well as procedures to ensure fair access to services.

The Group's approach to anti-bribery and corruption follows the six principles set out in guidance from the Ministry of Justice.

- Proportionality. The Group's anti-bribery and corruption arrangements are focussed on those areas where the risk is greatest ie procurement and growth.
- Top level commitment. The Group is committed to conducting our work in accordance with the highest standards of ethics. The overall policy statement was approved by the Group Board.
- Risk assessment. Periodic assessments of the bribery risks faced by the Group will be carried out.

- Due diligence. The Group's procurement arrangements emphasise the importance of appropriate due diligence before engaging contractors or suppliers. Top management scrutiny is required before entering into any joint ventures, mergers or partnership arrangements.
- Communication. The initial rollout of the anti-bribery and corruption arrangements is supported by ongoing training.
- Monitoring and review. The Group's arrangements are subject to ongoing audit. Registers of gifts, hospitality and conflicts of interests are reviewed by the Group Chief Executive on a regular basis. Any incidents of actual or attempted bribery are reported to the Group Audit Committee and investigated.

Any allegation of fraud or bribery will be investigated under the procedures set out in the fraud response plan.

8. Impact Assessment

This policy has been equality impact assessed and has been judged to be fair and in line with Riverside's commitment to Equality and Diversity which states that Riverside is committed to equality and strives to be fair in its dealings with all people, communities and organisations with which it has relationships and take into account the diverse nature of their culture and backgrounds.

This policy complies with Riverside's commitment to ensuring that no person or group of people will be treated less favourably than another person or group of people and will develop and deliver services that actively take into account the;

- Nine Protected Characteristics of age, gender, transgender, disability, racial ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexuality, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy.
- social and economic factors leading to disadvantage or exclusion including but not exclusively such things as employment status, caring responsibilities, being HIV positive or having AIDS, having reading or writing difficulties, leaving care, having unrelated criminal convictions, being without English as a language and appearance.
- Human Rights Act