

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

This policy applies to Hackney Council for Voluntary Service board members.

Purpose

All Board Members have an obligation to act in the best interests of Hackney Council for Voluntary Service (Hackney CVS), and in accordance with Hackney CVS's Memorandum of Association & Articles of Association. Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of HCVS.

Such conflicts may create problems; they can:

- Inhibit free discussion;
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of HCVS; and
- Risk the impression that HCVS has acted improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

The declaration of interests

Accordingly, we are asking Trustees to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role on the Executive Board. A declaration of interests form is provided for this purpose, listing the types of interest you should declare.

To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually, and also when any changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the Director of HCVS for confidential guidance. Interests will be recorded on the governing body's register of interests, which will be maintained by the Company Secretary.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only to ensure that Board Members act in the best interests of the Executive Committee. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

What to do if you face a conflict of interest

If you are a user of Hackney Council for Voluntary Service's services, or the carer of someone who uses HCVS's services, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that you, or the person you care for, receive(s). You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. The same applies if you face a conflict for any other reason. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

Decisions taken where a board member has an interest

In the event of the board having to decide upon a question in which a Board Member has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate.

Interested board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests. They must absent themselves from the discussion.

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded by the company secretary and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The report will record:

- The nature and extent of the conflict;
- An outline of the discussion;
- The actions taken to manage the conflict.

Managing contracts

If you have a conflict of interest, you must not be involved in managing or monitoring a contract in which you have an interest. Monitoring arrangements for such contracts will include provisions for an independent challenge of bills and invoices, and termination of the contract if the relationship is unsatisfactory.