



WEALDEN VOLUNTEERING

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Charity number: 1206210

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Approved by the Board of Trustees: APRIL 2024

Review By: APRIL 2026

Chair signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. J.', written over a horizontal line.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

1. The Purpose of this Policy

This policy explains Wealden Volunteering's approach towards conflicts of interest. Our trustees, staff and volunteers bring with them a wealth of experience which Wealden Volunteering can benefit from. However, there will be occasions where the interests of Wealden Volunteering and those of the individual, or a person or organisation that they are connected with, are in conflict. Under those circumstances, trustees have a legal obligation to protect the interests of the charity.

2. Why Conflicts of Interest Occur.

This can be due to deliberate exploitation of the situation by one party (or parties) for their personal benefit. By "deliberate exploitation" it means that the party concerned knows (or, at least, suspects) that what they are doing is wrong/immoral/illegal but continues doing it anyway. Such deliberate exploitation is clearly totally unacceptable, is often illegal (particularly in a WV situation if charitable funds are being diverted away from the charitable activities for which they were donated) and must be stopped as soon as it is recognised, should this occur, and appropriate action taken.

More commonly, it can be as a result of being unaware of the legal environment in which they are operating and therefore act in an improper (perhaps even illegal) way under the misapprehension that they are doing the right thing, in the Charity's best interests.

3. Declaring Interests.

It is expected that all Volunteers and Trustees are "very honest and respectable" and therefore wouldn't act against the best interests of WV. The Charity Commission is not forgiving in the area related to Conflicts of Interest resulting in significant misuse of WV's funds or resources or its reputational damage.

It is therefore vitally important that all Volunteers, Staff and Trustees take a very open approach to declaring any interests that they think they might have which may result in a conflict; and are very accepting and supportive of the interests declared by others. A well-maintained Register of Conflicts of Interest is the best defence against suspicions or accusations of impropriety against individual Volunteers, Staff, or Trustees.

4. What is Conflict of Interest?

The following are examples of Conflicts of Interest:

- direct material gain or other benefit to the volunteer, staff member or trustee, such as:
 - payment to a volunteer or trustee for services provided to WV
 - the award of a contract or any other business gain to another organisation in which a volunteer or trustee has an interest and from which a volunteer or trustee will receive a benefit
- direct material gain or other benefit to a "connected person" (as defined in the Charities Act 2011 s118) such as:
 - A donor to the charity
 - A close relative of a volunteer, staff member, trustee, or major donor (ie spouse, civil partner, child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister)
 - A business partner of any of the above
 - An organisation controlled by any of the above or where any of the above has a substantial interest

- gaining an indirect benefit, such as accessing/using WV's data (also see WV Data Protection Policy), social media feeds, or other resources, to advantage another organisation/business
- where someone's actions will benefit one of their interests to the detriment of Wealden Volunteering

5. Dealing with Conflicts of Interest

When a matter arises that causes a trustee, volunteer, or member of staff to have a conflict of interests, that person must report to the CEO and chair of trustees at the first opportunity that a conflict has occurred and should recuse themselves from any further discussion or decisions on the matter until the trustees have been able to consider the nature of the conflict.

Trustees (not including any conflicted trustees) should discuss the nature of the conflict and decide what measures are required to safeguard Wealden Volunteering's interests in the matter. Trustees should take a reasonable and collaborative approach where possible to ensure that the conflict can be handled in a manner satisfactory to all parties.

Trustees have a legal duty to act in the charity's best interests at all times and should be especially careful to avoid taking on interests in other organisations that may conflict with this legal duty.

Failure to declare any conflict of interest is a serious matter and may be dealt with as an act of gross misconduct under the disciplinary policy. In serious cases, there may also be criminal and/or civil legal liabilities.

4. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the CEO. Implementation and adherence to this policy is the responsibility of all trustees, staff and volunteers within WV.

5. Review of Policy and Procedures

WV reserves the right to update this policy at any time and at least bi-annually and will provide access to a new policy when updates are completed (on the WV's website), following sign-off by the Board of Trustees.

Appendix A

Declaration of pecuniary and personal interest

Name:

I [Name], declare that I hold the following personal and/or pecuniary interest(s):

| Pecuniary interests | | Please provide details of the interest | | |
|---|------|--|--|------------------------|
| Current employment | | | | |
| Businesses (of which I am a partner or sole proprietor) | | | | |
| Company directorships – details of all companies of which I am a director | | | | |
| Charity trusteeships – details of all companies of which I am a trustee | | | | |
| Any other conflict | | | | |
| Personal interests | Name | Relationship to me | | Nature of the interest |
| Relationship with any other Trustee(s) | | | | |

To the best of my knowledge the information supplied above is correct and complete

I agree to review and update this declaration annually and give consent for the information provided to be used in accordance with Wealden Volunteering's constitution, policies, and best practice guidelines.

Signed:

Date:

Guidance notes

Conflict of Interests

Volunteer's personal and professional connections can bring benefits to the work of a charity and they often form part of the reason why an individual has been asked to join. However, they can give rise to conflicts of interest, to which the trustees must respond effectively. The existence of a conflict of interest does not reflect on the integrity of the affected person, so long as it is properly addressed.

Where decisions are made involving conflicts, the following should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting:

- The nature of the conflict;
- Who it relates to;
- Whether a declaration was made in advance of the meeting;
- A brief overview of what was discussed;
- Whether the conflicted person(s) withdrew from the meeting;
- How the decision was made in the best interests of Wealden Volunteering.