

Code of conduct

All members of the Business Board are required to agree to a Code of Conduct when they begin their role.

Board Director Code of Conduct

You are a Board Member of the Leicester and Leicestershire Business Board and hence you shall have regard to the following principles – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership in your conduct at all times.

Accordingly, when acting in your capacity as a Board Member of Leicester and Leicestershire Business Board:

1. You must act in a manner consistent with the board equality and diversity strategy and treat your fellow Board Members, staff and others you come into contact with when working in their role with respect and courtesy at all times.
2. You must act solely in the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or act to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, a friend or close associate.
3. You must not place yourself under a financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might be reasonably regarded to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
4. When carrying out your Board duties you must make all choices, such as making appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, based on evidence.
5. You are accountable for your decisions, and you must co-operate fully with whatever scrutiny is appropriate to your position. You must be as open as possible about both your decisions and actions and the decisions and actions of the Business Board. In addition, you should be prepared to give reasons for those decisions and actions.
6. You must declare any private interests, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary, including Directorship of any Trade Union, political party or Local Authority that relates to your Business Board duties. Furthermore, you must take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest. This includes

registering and declaring interests in a manner conforming with the procedures set out in the section 'Registering and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests' in the Business Board conflict of interest policy.

7. You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your Board, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political or personal purposes (including party political purposes).

8. You must promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your post, in particular as characterised by the above requirements, by leadership and example.

9. If you are unable to attend a scheduled meeting or event, you must notify the appropriate parties in advance and provide a valid reason for your absence.

Missing scheduled meetings without a valid reason or prior notice may be viewed as a breach of the code of conduct.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

The Partnership is committed to ensuring that all Board Members act in line with the Nolan Principles of public life. This policy provides the detail of how Board Members should consider conflicts of interest and declare any interests in line with the Partnership's processes.

This policy explains the procedures through which the Partnership will seek to maintain its high ethical standards and protect its reputation against any allegations of conflict of interest. It is communicated to everyone involved in the Partnership to ensure their commitment to it and it applies to all staff and Board Members.

Board Members take personal responsibility for declaring their interests and avoiding perceptions of bias. To demonstrate this all Board Members produce and sign a register of interests and publication on the website which is reviewed every six months and updated regularly.

In addition, the partnership will ensure that the Conflict of Interest Policy is adhered to throughout its advisory processes. It is committed to applying this policy to all participants, regardless of whether a formal meeting is held.

Definition

A conflict of interest is any situation in which a Board Member's personal interests, or interests that they owe to another body, may (or may appear to) influence or affect their decision making.

Identifying conflicts of interest

Conflicts can inhibit open discussions and may result in irrelevant considerations being taken into account or decisions being taken that are not in the best interests of the partnership. Conflicts may arise, for instance, where a member's personal interests, for instance, as a shareholder in a company that is a potential beneficiary of support of funding, conflict with the interests of the partnership. There may be commercial, actual or potential conflicts of interests. This policy covers all three types of interests.

Registering and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

As a Board Member of the Business Board, you must:

- Within 28 days of taking office, notify the LLBSP any disclosable pecuniary interest, where the pecuniary interest is yours, your spouse's or civil partner's, or is the pecuniary interest of somebody with whom you are living with as a spouse, or as if you were civil partners.
- Within 28 days of taking office, notify the LLBSP of any non-pecuniary interest which your Business Board has decided should be included in the register or which you consider should be included if you are to fulfil your duty to act in conformity with the Seven Principles of Public Life. These non-pecuniary interests will necessarily include your Directorship of any Trade Union.

Review your individual register of interest before each Board meeting and advisory-making committee meeting and declare any relevant interest(s) at the start of the meeting.

If an interest has not been entered onto the LLBSP's register, then then you must disclose the interest at any meeting of the LLBSP where you are present, where you have a disclosable interest in any matter being considered and where the matter is not a 'sensitive interest'.

Following any disclosure of an interest not on the LLBSP register or the subject of pending notification, you must notify the LLBSP of the interest within 28 days beginning with the date of disclosure.

Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest. Additionally, you must observe the restrictions your LLBSP places on your involvement in matters where you have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest as defined by your LLBSP.

Categories of disclosable interest are stated in the LLBSP's register of interest.

Business Board Members should also familiarise themselves with the LLBSP's gifts and hospitality policy.

Procedure for managing conflicts

When an interest materially affects a Member's ability to vote without prejudice, this will be deemed to be non-trivial and a conflict of interest. In such circumstances the Member will withdraw from the meeting while the discussion and vote takes place. Upon the declaration of any conflicts of interest at a meeting of the Board, the non-conflicted Members will:

1. assess the nature of the conflict;
2. assess the risk or threat to Member decision-making;
3. decide whether the conflict is non-trivial (that is, it is material or has the potential to be detrimental to the conduct or decisions taken by the Members);
and
4. decide what steps to take to avoid or manage the conflict.

The conflicted Member must not take part in the discussion or decision and will not be counted when determining whether the Board meeting is quorate.

The non-conflicted Members will consider whether it is necessary to seek the advice of the LLBSP's legal adviser on whether the conflict is nontrivial and/or on how to manage the conflict declared.

Subject to the provisions set out in the Business Board Terms of Reference, if the non-conflicted Members consider that the declared conflict is trivial, they may agree that the conflicted Member may continue to participate in discussions and the decision-making process.

If the non-conflicted Members consider that the conflict is non-trivial, the non-conflicted Members will determine what action is appropriate in light of the nature and extent of the conflict. A number of steps can be taken to deal with the conflict, including:

1. excluding the conflicted Member from discussions in relation to the matter to avoid inadvertently influencing the non-conflicted Members;
2. excluding the conflicted Members from decision-making in relation to the matter while the conflict exists;
3. delegating the matter to a sub-committee of non-conflicted Members;
4. seeking independent advice to help with a decision;

5. appointing an alternative, non-conflicted Member;
6. resignation of the conflicted Member where the conflict is acute or pervasive;
and/or
7. applying to the court for directions.

The Chair of the Board will inform the conflicted Member of the non-conflicted Members' decision. The secretary to the Board will note in the minutes of the meeting the conflict declared, an outline of the discussion and the actions taken to manage the conflict.

If in the event that a Board Member is non-compliant with this policy the Chair of the Board and the LLBSP will formally investigate the compliance concern and make a recommendations to the Upper Tier Local Authorities, who will decide on the course on action.