

St Boswells Village Hall CODE OF CONDUCT

A code of conduct for Board Members (Trustees) ensures high standards and makes it clear how potential conflicting interests are to be identified, raised and dealt with.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various area of public life. This code is based on a similar framework and adapts the Nolan Committee's 'Seven Principles of Public Life'.

1. Standards

Selflessness

Trustees have a general duty to act in the best interest of the organisation as a whole. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, their friends or the organisations they come from or represent.

Integrity

Trustees:

- ◆ should not place themselves under financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their role;
- ◆ as well as avoiding actual impropriety, should avoid any appearance of improper behaviour;
- ◆ should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgement.

Objectivity

In carrying out their role, including making appointments (including trustee appointments), awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits or transacting other business, trustees should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit.

Accountability

Trustees:

- ◆ have a duty to comply with the law on all occasions in accordance with the trust placed in them and in such a way as to preserve public confidence in the organisation.
- ◆ Are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public, funders and service users. They must submit themselves to what scrutiny is appropriate to their role.

Openness

Trustees:

- ◆ Should ensure that confidential material, including material about individuals, is handled in accordance with due care;
- ◆ Should be as open as possible about their decisions and action that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Trustees:

- ◆ Have a duty to declare any interests relating to their trustee role and to take steps to resolve any conflicts that may arise. Where private interests of a trustee conflicts with their trustee duties, he/she must resolve this conflict in favour of the trustee role;
- ◆ Must make relevant declarations of interest in the different circumstances and roles they play both within and outside the organisation.

Leadership

Trustees:

- ◆ Should promote and support the principles of leadership by example;
- ◆ There will be circumstances under which trustees will be working directly with staff, volunteers and engaged practitioners. Guidelines for such working relationships must be clear to all parties.

Commitment

Trustees

- ◆ Should attend all meetings of the Board unless they have acceptable reasons for absence.
- ◆ Will be required to resign if they fail to attend three successive meetings of the organisation without due cause.

2. Conflicts of Interest

- ◆ Any trustee who has a financial interest in a matter under discussion, should declare the nature of his/her interest and withdraw from the room, unless he/she has a dispensation to remain and speak on the matter if invited.
- ◆ If a trustee has any interest in the matter under discussion which creates a real danger of bias, that is, the interest affects him/her, or a member of his/her household, more than the generality affected by the decision: he/she should declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the room, unless he/she has a dispensation to remain and speak if invited.

- ◆ If a trustee has any other interest which does not create a real danger of bias, but which might reasonably cause others to think it could influence their decision, he/she should declare the nature of the interest, but may remain in the room, participate in the discussion, and vote if he/she wishes.
- ◆ If in any doubt about the application of these rules, he/she should consult with the Chairman.
- ◆ It is recommended that trustee's interests are listed in a register.