



Conflicts of Interest Policy

January 2022

Last Reviewed: January 2022

Purpose

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for all actions carried out by trustees, committees, volunteers and any staff throughout Holywood Shared Town's (HST) activities. The board of trustees has a legal obligation to act in the best interests of HST and in accordance with HST's governing document.

Conflicts of interest may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties to some other individual or group conflicts with those of HST. Such conflicts may create problems. They can:

- inhibit free discussion
- result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of HST
- risk the impression that HST has acted improperly.

The purpose of this policy is to protect both HST and its Trustees from any appearance of impropriety.

Scope

- This policy applies to anyone working in any capacity (voluntary or employed) on behalf of HST including the board of trustees, any paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Policy

To manage any potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest that may arise, HST asks Trustees to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in HST. All trustees have a personal responsibility to declare conflicts of interest in order to fulfil their legal duty to act only in the best interests of the charity.

A trustee should make it known where their interests may conflict with the interests of HST, by email or by declaration at any meeting.

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 state any interest which may be of note.

If any further information about conflicts of interest is required by any trustee, they should contact the Chair or the Board Secretary in confidence for guidance. Interests will be recorded on HST's register of interests, which will be maintained by the Secretary. The register will be accessible by Trustees.

Procedure

Recording decisions

Decisions taken where a Trustee has an interest:

In the event of the Board having to decide upon a question in which a Trustee 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 Trustees may not vote on matters affecting their own interests.

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded and reported in the minutes of the meeting.

Data Protection - The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be GDPR compliant. Data will be processed only to ensure that Trustees act in the best interests of HST. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

What to do if you face a conflict of interest

All conflicts of interest, whether actual or potential, should be declared promptly at the earliest possible opportunity, these interests will be listed in a Conflicts of Interests Register.

Any Trustee who becomes aware of any interest in a matter listed on a meeting agenda, or under discussion, which creates a suggestion of, or opportunity for, bias (that is, the interest affects the organisation which they represent, they work for, are a member of, or a member of their household) or which might reasonably cause others to believe the interest would influence their decision, they should declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the room/discussion, unless they have dispensation to speak.

If a Trustee fails to declare an interest that is known to HST or the chairperson, the chairperson will declare that interest.

Signed: John Woods

Chair/Trustee Holywood Shared Town

Date: 4 January 2022

Review date: January 2025