Trustee Conflicts of Interest Policy

Guidelines for Haslemere Players

Introduction

Haslemere Players often relies on its Trustees to govern their activities and ensure compliance with applicable regulations. Trustees play a critical role in safeguarding the interests of the society and the wider community. However, conflicts of interest can arise in these roles, potentially compromising the society's operations, reputation, and charitable mission. This policy outlines procedures to identify, manage, and mitigate conflicts of interest among trustees, ensuring that the society operates transparently and ethically.

Scope

This policy applies to all Trustees of Haslemere Players, whether acting in an official capacity or informally representing the society. It extends to any potential conflicts involving family members, close associates, or external organisations with which trustees have affiliations.

What is a Conflict of Interest?

A conflict of interest occurs when a trustee's personal interests, affiliations, or relationships have the potential to interfere with their duty to act in the best interest of the society. Such conflicts may be financial, non-financial, or reputational in nature. Examples include:

- Contracting with a company owned by a trustee or their close relative.
- Accepting sponsorship or donations from entities with personal ties to trustees.
- Making decisions that benefit trustees or their networks over the society's interests.
- Competing commitments, such as trustees serving on committees of similar organisations.

Purpose of the Policy

The Trustee Conflicts of Interest Policy is intended to:

- Ensure trustees act in the society's best interests.
- Promote transparency and accountability in decision-making.
- Protect the society’s reputation and charitable status.
- Provide a systematic approach to identifying and managing conflicts.

Procedures for Managing Conflicts

1. Disclosure

Trustees must disclose any potential conflicts of interest at the earliest opportunity. This includes:

- Declaring personal interests that may overlap with the society's operations.

- Identifying relationships or connections that could influence their judgment.
- Providing updates if new conflicts arise over time.

Disclosures should be recorded in the society's Register of Interests, which is reviewed annually or as needed.

2. Assessment

The governing board, or a designated conflicts committee, shall assess disclosed interests to determine whether they constitute a conflict. This assessment will consider:

- The nature and extent of the trustee's interest.
- Potential impact on the society's objectives, finances, or reputation.
- Whether the conflict can be managed or mitigated.

3. Managing Conflicts

If a conflict is identified, the following steps may be taken:

- *Recusal*: The trustee in question may be excluded from discussions and votes related to the matter.
- *Independent Approval*: Decisions may require approval from an impartial third party or trustee group.
- *Alternatives*: Explore other options that avoid the conflict altogether.

The chosen resolution must be documented in official meeting minutes.

Trustee Responsibilities

Trustees are expected to:

- Act with integrity and in alignment with the society's mission.
- Avoid situations that could lead to bias or partiality.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding society matters.

Failure to adhere to these responsibilities may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including removal from the Committee.

Governance and Oversight

The governing Committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy. Duties include:

- Maintaining the Register of Interests.
- Reviewing disclosures and assessing conflicts.
- Updating the policy in response to new regulations or organisational changes.

A designated trustee, or an external advisor, may be appointed to ensure compliance with this policy.

Training and Awareness

Trustees will receive training on conflicts of interest upon appointment and periodically thereafter. Topics include:

- Understanding the nature of conflicts in charitable organisations.
- Recognising potential conflicts of interest.
- Implementing best practices for transparency and accountability.

Monitoring and Reporting

The Committee shall monitor adherence to this policy and report any significant breaches to relevant regulatory bodies. Trustees are encouraged to report concerns or breaches confidentially, without fear of retaliation. Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance and identify areas for improvement.

Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when significant changes occur within the society. Trustees will be invited to provide feedback to enhance its clarity and effectiveness. Amendments must be approved by the governing Committee and disseminated to all trustees.

Conclusion

This Trustee Conflicts of Interest Policy is essential for maintaining the integrity and success of Haslemere Players. By ensuring that trustees act transparently and objectively, the society can continue delivering its mission to foster creativity, community, and cultural enrichment.

Published 19 April 2026