



Board of Governance Conflict of Interest Policy

Approved/effective date	151020
Due for review	151023

Introduction

The Torquay Community House Board of Governance is committed to high standards of ethical conduct and therefore places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflicts of interest.

Objective

This policy has been developed to provide a framework for:

- all Board Members in declaring conflicts of interest; and
- the Board, when determining how to deal with situations of conflict.

Definitions

Conflict of interest occurs when a person who has a duty to act in the best interests of others, is presented with an opportunity or the potential to use that position in some way for their own personal benefit or for the benefit of relatives or another organisation.

A conflict of interest may occur if:

- A member of the House, including members of the Board of Management, or a member of staff, tutor or volunteer, or his or her family or business interest may gain financially from business dealings, programs or services of the Neighbourhood House.
- A member of the House, including members of the Board of Management, or members of staff, tutors or volunteers, offers a professional service to the Neighbourhood House.
- A member of the Board of Management may gain personally or professionally from information or knowledge by virtue of their position on the Board of Management if that

information or knowledge is used improperly for personal advantage.

- A member of the Board of Management holds a similar role with another organisation, where the activities of that other organisation may be in direct conflict or competition with the activities of the Neighbourhood House.
- A member of the Board of Management is related to a staff member of the House and is involved in decisions relating to that staff member's employment conditions.
- Two family members are nominated as signatories for the bank accounts of the House.

Policy

A conflict of interest may occur if a financial interest or a relationship influences or appears to influence the ability of a Board Member to exercise objectivity.

The Board places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflicts of interest. All such conflicts of interest shall be declared by the member concerned. All financial conflicts of interest, as defined by statute, shall be documented in the Board's minutes of the meeting.

Where a Board member has an actual or perceived financial conflict of interest, as defined by statute, that Board member shall not initiate or take part in any Board discussion on that topic (either in the meeting or with other Board members before or after the Board meetings), unless expressly invited to do so by unanimous agreement by all other members present.

Where a Board member has an actual or perceived financial conflict of interest, as defined by statute, that Board member shall not vote on that matter.

Where a Board member has an actual or perceived conflict of interest related to their relationship with an employee or volunteer of the organisation, or any other person having dealings with the organisation, that Board member shall not initiate or take part in any Board discussion on that topic (either in the meeting or with other Board members before or after the Board meetings), unless expressly authorised to do so by the Board.

Where a Board member has an actual or perceived conflict of interest related to their relationship with an employee or volunteer of the organisation, or any other person having dealings with the organisation, that Board member shall not vote on that matter, unless expressly authorised to do so by the Board.

The Board may further supplement the definition of conflict of interest from time to time if it so wishes and may specify the procedures to apply in such cases.

Board members are not barred from engaging in business dealings with the organisation, provided that these are negotiated at arm's length without the participation of the Board member concerned.

A Board member who believes another Board member has an undeclared conflict of interest should specify in writing to the Secretary the basis of this potential conflict.

When a suspected undeclared conflict of interest is reported in writing by another party, the person in question should be given the opportunity to respond. The Board will then determine and record how the issue will be handled, in accordance with this policy and procedures.

In order to improve transparency and accountability, TCH will maintain a Register of Interests, with all Board Members to declare any ongoing business interests and/or relevant memberships within eight weeks of being appointed to the Board. All Board Members to ensure that any changes to their personal/business interests are updated on the register within a timely manner.

Associated Documents

Board Charter

Conflict of Interest Register