



Benchill South and Wythenshawe

Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board

Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose of this Policy

1.1 This policy explains how conflicts of interest will be identified, declared and managed for the Neighbourhood Board (“the Board”).

1.2 It aims to:

- make sure decisions are fair and in the best interests of the neighbourhood
- help Board members understand what to do if a conflict arises
- support openness, transparency and trust in the Board’s work and decision-making

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to:

- all members of the Neighbourhood Board;
- the Chair and any Vice-Chair;
- any deputies attending on behalf of Board members.

2.2 This Policy should be read alongside:

- the Board’s Terms of Reference;
- the Code of Conduct; and
- any relevant Manchester City Council policies or statutory requirements, where these apply through Manchester City Council’s role as Accountable Body.

3. What is a Conflict of Interest?

3.1 A conflict of interest arises where a Board member’s personal, professional, financial or organisational interests could, or could be seen to, influence their role on the Board.

3.2 Conflicts may be:

- actual – a direct conflict exists;
- potential – a conflict could arise in the future; or
- perceived – a reasonable person could believe a conflict exists, even if it does not.

3.3 Conflicts may include, but are not limited to:

- financial or commercial interests;
- employment or consultancy roles;
- positions held in community, voluntary or private organisations;
- involvement in project delivery funded by the Programme;

- receipt of gifts or hospitality related to Board business.
- Board members should seek to avoid situations that could give rise to conflicts of interest wherever reasonably possible.

4. Declaration

- 4.1 All Board members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including gifts and hospitality, in accordance with this Policy.
- 4.2 Board members must declare any conflicts:
- when they join the Board
 - when their circumstances change
 - at the start of a meeting where a conflict is relevant
- 4.3 All declared interests will be recorded in the minutes and the Register of Interests by the Secretariat (administrative support). Board members are responsible for ensuring their declared interests are accurate and kept up to date.
- 4.4 Board minutes and the Register of Interests will be made available in line with the transparency arrangements set out in the Terms of Reference.

5. Elected Members

- 5.1 Elected Members serving on the Board must also comply with:
- statutory requirements relating to interests; and
 - the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.
- 5.2 Where an Elected Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered, they must withdraw from the meeting for that item unless a dispensation has been granted by the Monitoring Officer.

6. Managing Conflicts During Meetings

- 6.1 If a conflict of interest relates to a specific item:
- the member must not take part in the discussion or decision
 - they may be asked to leave the meeting for that item
- 6.2 In some cases, the Chair may allow the member to stay to provide factual information only, but they must not take part in discussion or decisions. This should be managed transparently and without influencing the discussion or decision.

- 6.3 Where a member withdraws due to a conflict of interest, they will not be counted as present for quorum or voting purposes for that item, in line with the Terms of Reference.

7. Project Delivery and Dual Roles

- 7.1 Where a Board member is nominated as a lead officer, project sponsor, or is otherwise involved in the delivery of a project funded through the Programme, this must be declared as a conflict of interest. This is particularly important where Board members or organisations they are connected to may benefit from programme funding or delivery opportunities.
- 7.2 In such cases, the member may attend the Board meeting for the relevant item only to:
- present factual updates or information; and
 - answer questions of clarification.
- 7.3 The member must not:
- participate in deliberations;
 - influence recommendations; or
 - be present for any decision-making relating to that project.

8. Gifts and Hospitality

- 8.1 Board members must not accept gifts or hospitality that could influence, or be seen to influence, their role on the Board. Any such offers must be declared in line with this Policy

9. Breaches of this Policy

- 9.1 Failure to declare or appropriately manage a conflict of interest will be treated seriously.
- 9.2 Examples of a breach may include:
- not declaring a relevant interest
 - taking part in a discussion or decision where a conflict exists
 - attempting to influence a decision where there is a conflict
 - failing to withdraw from a meeting when required
- 9.3 Where a breach occurs, this may be addressed through:
- advice or guidance from the Chair
 - removal from the discussion or decision
 - referral to the Code of Conduct process
 - in serious or repeated cases, removal from the Board, and

- in line with the Board's governance arrangements and, where appropriate, in partnership with Manchester City Council.

9.5 All actions will be fair, proportionate and consistent with the Board's wider governance arrangements.

10. Review of the Policy

10.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly to make sure it remains clear, proportionate and fit for purpose.

Appendices

Appendices 1 - Register of Interests