

Conflicts of Interest Policy

This policy is primarily concerned with conflicts of interest in relation to Trustees but it is recognised that the guidance may also be applicable to Church officers and employees.

In order for decisions to be made that are safe and fair and in the best interests of the Church and its community, this framework sets out how conflicts of interest will be identified, disclosed and managed.

Conflicts of interest include situations of perceived, potential or actual risk that the judgement, decision-making or commitment of those with responsibility for the operation of the Church are affected by secondary issues. Trustees have a legal duty to make decisions that are in the best interests of the Church and to uphold the ethical standards known as the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#) (honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, selflessness, openness and leadership). Failure to recognise or mitigate conflicts of interest can damage trust in the Church and its operations and undermine its reputation.

Identifying Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest may arise due to competing interests from:

- Professional, social or familial connections;
- Through membership of another closely linked organisation;
- Personal financial benefit or benefit to a business interest;
- Any concern that inhibits free discussion and decision-taking.

Managing Conflicts of Interest

All Trustees are required to declare any potential conflicts of interest before discussion and decision-taking. To this end, Trustees are asked to notify the Secretary of the PCC of potential conflicts of interest when they join the PCC or at any stage in their service where a new potential conflict arises. A form is available for recording declarations of interest. They should remind the Secretary of the PCC in advance of any meeting where the discussion might give rise to a conflict of interest for them and the Secretary will record this in the Minutes of the Meeting.

It is at the discretion of the majority of those present as to how a conflict of interest is managed. Where a person might have some direct benefit, they will not participate in the discussion or decision-taking on the matter concerned and will normally absent themselves from the room for that item of business. Where a person may benefit indirectly, the Chair may permit them to take part in the discussion and / or decision-taking.

Record of a Conflict of Interest

The Minutes of the Meeting will record the conflict of interest:

- What sort of conflict of interest arose;
- Which Trustee(s) was/were affected;
- When it was declared;
- How it was managed.

The management of conflicts of interest is related to maintaining a strong culture of openness, integrity and accountability. Please use this policy to sense check any issues that you think might give rise to the need to declare a conflict of interest and seek further advice where necessary.

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