



Hale Community and Youth Centre

2026/27 Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose of this Policy

At Hale Community and Youth Centre, we work in a spirit of openness, trust and shared responsibility. People come to us because they believe in what we do, and it is important that our decisions are always made in the best interests of the community we serve. Conflicts of interest can arise in any organisation, and they are not a sign of wrongdoing. What matters is how openly and responsibly we handle them.

This policy explains what a conflict of interest is, how to recognise one and what to do if you think a conflict may exist. It applies to trustees, staff, consultants, contractors and volunteers.

2. Our Commitment to Transparency

We believe that honesty and transparency strengthen our organisation. Declaring a conflict of interest is an act of integrity — it helps us protect the Centre's reputation, maintain public trust and ensure that decisions are fair and unbiased. We encourage everyone to speak openly about situations where personal interests, relationships or loyalties could influence, or appear to influence, their work.

3. What is a Conflict of Interest?

A conflict of interest happens when your personal interests, or the interests of someone close to you, could affect your decisions or actions at the Centre. Conflicts may be:

- **Actual** — the conflict is happening now
- **Potential** — the conflict could arise in the future
- **Perceived** — others might reasonably think a conflict exists

Conflicts can be financial, personal, relational or organisational. They can arise in everyday situations, which is why openness is so important.

4. Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts can take many forms. Some common examples include:

- A close friend or family member applying for a job, contract or volunteer role at the Centre
- Personal relationships with service users that could affect professional judgement

- Being involved in decisions about a supplier where you, or someone close to you, has a financial interest
- Working or volunteering for another organisation that provides similar services
- Receiving gifts or hospitality that could influence your decisions
- Using information gained through your role for personal advantage

These examples are not exhaustive. If something feels like it *might* be a conflict, it is always best to declare it.

5. Your Responsibilities

Everyone representing the Centre is expected to act in its best interests. This means being open about any situation where personal interests could influence your work. You should declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest as soon as you become aware of it, and follow any guidance given by the Centre Manager or Board. In some cases, you may be asked to step back from discussions or decisions to ensure fairness and transparency.

6. How to Declare a Conflict of Interest

If you think you may have a conflict of interest, you should:

- **Inform the Centre Manager** (or the Chair of Trustees if you are a trustee) as soon as possible
- **Explain the situation clearly**, including who is involved and how it may affect your role
- **Follow the guidance given**, which may include stepping back from certain decisions or activities

All declared conflicts will be recorded in the Centre's Conflict of Interest Register.

7. How Conflicts Will Be Managed

The Centre Manager (or the Board, where appropriate) will consider the situation and decide how best to manage the conflict. This may involve allowing you to continue your role with no restrictions, asking you to withdraw from certain discussions or decisions, assigning the matter to someone else, or putting additional oversight in place. In rare cases, you may be asked to step back from a particular activity or responsibility. Decisions will always be fair, proportionate and based on the best interests of the Centre.

8. Confidentiality and Respect

We recognise that conflicts of interest can feel personal. All declarations will be handled sensitively and confidentially, and everyone involved will be treated with respect. Our aim is always to support openness, not to judge or blame.

9. Failure to Declare a Conflict

Failing to declare a conflict of interest can undermine trust and may be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Centre will always seek to resolve issues constructively, but serious or repeated failures may lead to further action.

10. Creating a Culture of Openness

We want everyone at Hale Community and Youth Centre to feel comfortable raising concerns and asking questions. If you are unsure whether something counts as a conflict of interest, please speak to the Centre Manager. It is always better to ask. By being open and transparent, we protect the integrity of our work and the trust of the community.

11. Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains clear, relevant and aligned with best practice.

DISCLAIMER: This policy is non-contractual and may be amended, replaced, or withdrawn by the Charity at any time. It reflects the law and best practice at the time of publication. If there is any conflict between this policy and current employment legislation, the legislation will take precedence.