Voluntary Action Islington

[Name of Organisation] – Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Introduction

This Conflict-of-Interest Policy sets out how **[Name of Organisation]** manages situations where the personal, professional, or financial interests of trustees, committee members, staff, or volunteers may conflict (or appear to conflict) with the interests of the organisation.

We are committed to maintaining high standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability in all our activities.

This policy applies to all trustees, committee members, employees, and volunteers.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect the integrity of the organisation's decision-making processes
- ensure transparency in governance and operations
- maintain public trust and confidence
- safeguard the reputation of the organisation and its representatives
- ensure compliance with good governance principles

This policy applies to both **actual conflicts of interest** and **perceived conflicts of interest**.

3. What is a Conflict of Interest?

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal, financial, or other interests could influence, or be seen to influence, their ability to act in the best interests of the organisation.

Conflicts may be:

- **Financial** (e.g. ownership of a business, paid consultancy work)
- **Personal** (e.g. family or close relationships)
- **Professional** (e.g. roles in other organisations)
- **Organisational** (e.g. involvement in competing organisations or funding decisions)

4. Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may include (but are not limited to):

1. A trustee or committee member who is also a service user and is involved in decisions about service charges or fees.
2. A trustee or committee member who is related to a member of staff and participates in decisions relating to recruitment, pay, or employment conditions.

3. A trustee or committee member who holds a position in another organisation that is applying for the same funding or contracts.
4. A trustee, committee member, or staff member who has a financial interest in a company that may be awarded a contract by the organisation.

5. Declaration of Interests

All trustees, committee members, staff, and relevant volunteers must complete a **Declaration of Interests form** upon appointment.

They must declare:

- employment or business interests
- trustee or voluntary roles in other organisations
- financial interests relevant to the organisation's work
- close personal or family relationships that may create a conflict

Declarations will be:

- recorded securely by the organisation
- reviewed at least annually
- updated promptly whenever circumstances change

Failure to declare a relevant interest may result in appropriate action being taken.

6. Managing Conflicts of Interest

At the beginning of each meeting, all attendees must declare any relevant interests relating to agenda items.

Where a conflict of interest is identified, the Chair (or designated decision-maker) will decide how it should be managed. This may include:

- allowing participation in discussion but not voting
- requiring the individual to leave the room during discussion and decision-making
- excluding the individual from both discussion and decision-making

The approach taken will depend on the seriousness and nature of the conflict.

7. Recording Conflicts of Interest

All declared conflicts of interest and actions taken to manage them must be:

- recorded in the minutes of meetings
- stored securely as part of organisational governance records
- available for audit or inspection where required

8. General Principles

This policy is designed to support good judgement and ethical behaviour. It does not cover every possible situation, and individuals are expected to act in the spirit of openness and integrity.

All trustees, committee members, staff, and volunteers must:

- act in the best interests of the organisation at all times
- avoid situations that could give rise to a conflict of interest
- declare any potential conflicts as soon as they arise

9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly (at least every 2–3 years) or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or organisational needs.

Conflict of Interest Declaration Form

[Name of Organisation]

1. Personal Details

- Full Name: ______________________________
- Role (Trustee / Staff / Volunteer / Committee Member): ______________________________
- Date of Appointment: ______________________________

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2. Declaration of Interests

Please list any interests that could conflict with your role in the organisation.

Employment / Business Interests

(Include paid work, self-employment, consultancy, directorships)

Other Organisations

(Trustee roles, committee roles, memberships, voluntary roles)

Financial Interests

(Any shares, investments, or financial benefit from organisations relevant to [Name of Organisation])

Personal Relationships

(Any close family or personal relationships that may present a conflict)

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3. Declaration

I confirm that the information provided above is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I agree to inform **[Name of Organisation]** of any changes to my interests as soon as they arise.

I understand that failure to declare relevant interests may result in appropriate governance action.

Signature: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________