

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Introduction

York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (YNY LEP) would like to define as far as possible an approach to handling potential conflicts of interest.

This policy applies to all LEP employees, LEP board members, partners and stakeholders, involved in partnership work and delivery. This Conflict of Interest Policy does not only apply to decision-making meetings and will be applied to any activity or involvement of a board member in the work of the YNY LEP Where a Conflict of Interest has been identified the individual declaring the conflict will have no further influence on any of the work in respect of the Project to which the Conflict of Interest pertains.

Conflicts of Interest

- **In relation to YNY LEP** in order for a Conflict of Interest situation to arise there would have to be some personal financial interest for a board member, employee, partner or stakeholder or an historical connection to the beneficiary of a decision, to be sufficient to trigger the procedures.
- **The method of declaring an interest:** This will be a written declaration. Or in the case of gifts and hospitality a monthly record.
- **method of addressing the conflict:** Once a conflict of interest has been identified the person in question must absent themselves completely from all consideration, and discussion and will not participate in the decision save in circumstances where it is acknowledged that the Board Member has a particular area of expertise and the decision is that of developing strategies for the YNY LEP then the Board Member may participate in the discussion but shall not be allowed to participate in voting on the decision

Employees, board members, partners and stakeholders have an obligation to act in the best interests of YNY LEP and in accordance with its governing documents. Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of YNY LEP or the group or meeting that employees, board members, partners or stakeholders are attending.

Such conflicts may create problems; which can:

- Inhibit free discussion;
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of YNY LEP ; and
- Risk the impression that YNY LEP has acted improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

Declaration of interests

Accordingly, the YNY LEP requires board members, staff, partners and stakeholders to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in YNY LEP. A Register of Interests is provided for this purpose, listing the types of interest which must be declared.

The Register of Interests shall be updated at least annually and also when any changes occur.

In a situation in which a Board Member, employee, partner or stakeholder is unsure what to declare, or whether/when a declaration needs to be updated, they must err on the side of caution and notify the YNY LEP of their interest. Should an individual so affected wish to discuss this issue, they are to contact the Chief Operating Officer.

Decisions taken where a Board Member has an interest

In the event of the Board having to decide upon a question in which a Board Member has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision;

Interested Board Members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests. They must absent themselves from the discussion or they may participate in the discussion but not the decision-making process. If the matter which is under discussion at a meeting relates to an area of particular expertise pertaining to the Board Member and this expertise will be used in developing strategies for the benefit of the YNY LEP then the Board Member shall be allowed to participate in the discussion but not the decision – making process.

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded by the Board and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes will record:

- The nature and extent of the conflict;
- An outline of the discussion;
- The actions taken to manage the conflict.