

# Selsey Community Forum



## Code of Conduct for Trustees

### **Policy Statement**

Trustees are an integral part of all charities. Without their enthusiastic, dedicated and philanthropic contributions no Charity whatever its size could exist. The Trustees of a Charity are the group of volunteers who have the ultimate responsibility for running and managing the Charity for the Public Benefit in accordance with its governing document and in compliance with Charity Law.

By reading this Policy and accepting the role of a Selsey Community Forum Trustee, a Trustee agrees to the following responsibilities.

### **General Conduct**

- Trustees are required to act with honesty and integrity and exercise good judgement which may include seeking professional advice on appropriate matters on which Trustees do not have relevant expertise.
- Trustees are required to act in a manner that does not undermine or damage the reputation of the Selsey Community Forum or its employees and volunteers.
- Trustees are required to act in the best interests of the Selsey Community Forum at all times.

### **Independence**

- Trustees are required to act independently, particularly in relation to assets, property, legal and regulatory obligations.
- Trustees should conduct themselves with integrity and in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the Charity or its volunteers and employees. Trustees:
  - should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their duties;
  - must avoid actual impropriety and any appearance of improper behaviour.
- Trustees must not act to gain financial or other benefits for themselves or for any persons connected to them such as their family, their friends, or any organisation that they own, manage or work for.
- Trustees should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence them in carrying out their role as a Trustee. Any gifts or hospitality received in any connection to Selsey Community Forum should be declared to the Board.

### **Trustee Roles**

Trustees should:

- Understand and perform their roles and responsibilities to the best of their abilities at all times.
- Be prepared to provide adequate time and commitment as required to fulfil the role of a Trustee, adequately preparing for meetings and participating in committees and special events when required.

### **Trustee Meetings**

Trustees should:

- Aim to attend all meetings, contribute appropriately and effectively, and avoid dominating the contributions of others.
- Always respect the authority of the Chair of the meeting.
- Bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions of the meeting, maintain a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treating different views with respect, and ensuring that all decisions are made in the best interests of the Selsey Community Forum.
- Bring a genuinely independent perspective to enhance decision-making, given that Trustees share responsibility for Board decisions.

- Ensure their contributions are informed and impartial when presenting views on topics in meetings while listening to and respecting the input and experience of other Trustees.

## **Volunteers and Employees**

Trustees should:

- Aim to support volunteers and employees in carrying out their duties and always, in terms of their conduct, serve as an example of how everyone in the Charity should conduct themselves in order to reflect the values of the Selsey Community Forum.
- Work considerately and fairly with everyone in a way that respects diversity, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.
- Accept and respect the difference in roles between the Board on the one hand and volunteers and any employees on the other, ensuring that the Board, volunteers and any employees work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the Charity and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship by:
  - respecting management arrangements and avoiding any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
  - not interfering in the performance by volunteers or employees of duties delegated to them within the Charity while ensuring that volunteers and any employees working for the Charity are held to account through the manager as appropriate.

## **Legal Requirements and Policies**

All Trustees are equally responsible for the proper management of the Charity in accordance with its charitable objects and charity law. Therefore, the majority decision of the Trustees is legally binding on ALL Trustees, even if they voted against the decision or were not present at the meeting at which the decision was taken.

All Trustees must understand how real and perceived conflicts of interests and conflicts of loyalty can affect a Charity's performance and reputation. The Board should consider how the Charity is seen by the people and organisations who are involved in its work and by the wider public.

All Trustees must disclose any actual or potential conflicts to the Board and deal with these in line with the Charity's governing document. A Register of Interests, hospitality and gifts must be kept in line with the Charity's agreed policy on disclosure.

Trustees must:

- Act in accordance with the Charity's governing document and ensure that the Selsey Community Forum complies with all applicable laws including charity law, company law, health and safety law, data protection law and employment law. They will also follow non-binding rules, codes and standards, such as regulatory guidance, the 'Nolan Principles' and the Charity Ethical Principles and other good practice initiatives that promote confidence in Charities and create a supportive environment.
- Promote and preserve the obligations of confidentiality about sensitive board matters. However, the requirement for confidentiality may not apply if it becomes necessary for the Trustee to inform the Charities Commission or any other statutory body about any matter, which could threaten the future of the Forum or could represent a breach of any law with which the Charity is required to comply.
- Abide by all the Charity's policies and procedures.
- Ensure that claims for out of pocket expenses are made in accordance with agreed procedures.

Where a Trustee is found to be in breach of the standards outlined by the Board of Trustees in its Code of Conduct they will be asked to meet with the Chair of the Board of Trustees to assess their suitability for the role. Consistent breach of the Code of Conduct by a Trustee may result in the Trustee's tenure being terminated.

## **Other Matters**

Anyone thinking of becoming a Trustee should read the document 'Being a Trustee for Selsey

Community Forum’.

This policy is applicable to all the activities in which Selsey Community Forum is or becomes involved; it is to be reviewed and updated as necessary at least annually.

Reviewed and Approved by Trustees: November 2024

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Mike Nicholls, Chair, Selsey Community Forum