



# Conflict of Interest Policy

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## Definition

A 'conflict of interest' arises when the best interests of an individual trustee are, or could be, different from the best interests of the charity itself.

This may be something that affects the trustee directly, or indirectly, through a family member or friend or business partner

## Statement of intent

RSPCA Milton Keynes and North Bucks is committed to ensuring its decisions and decision-making processes are, and seen to be, free from personal bias and do not unfairly favour any individual connected with the charity

## Policy

It is the policy of the RSPCA Milton Keynes and North Bucks Branch to:

- Ensure every trustee understands what constitutes a conflict of interest and that they have a responsibility to recognise and declare and conflicts that might arise for them
- Document the conflict and the action(s) taken to ensure that the conflict does not affect the decision making of the branch

## Procedure

When a trustee identifies that they have a potential conflict of interest they must:

- Declare it as soon as they become aware of it
- Ensure it is entered in the conflict of interest register (ongoing conflicts), and/or minuted in the appropriate board/meeting papers (one-off conflicts)
- Not take part in any board discussions relating to the matter
- Not take part in any decision making relating to the matter
- Not be counted in the quorum for decision making related to the matter

In the interest of frank and open discussion, a trustee affected by a conflict of interest must leave the room while related discussion/decision making is taking place, unless there is a good reason for them to stay

The minutes should state:

- The declared conflict
- That the trustee left the room, or the reason they were asked to stay
- That the trustee took no part in the discussion or decision making on the matter
- That the meeting was quorate (not counting the affected trustee)
- Any other actions taken to manage the conflict

If a trustee is unsure what to declare, they should err on the side of caution and discuss the matter the Branch Chair for confidential guidance.

Policy adopted on July 17<sup>th</sup> 2018, next date for review July 2019