

Conflict of Interest Policy

Overview

Introduction

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

Why is this policy important?

The committee members acknowledge that it is inevitable that conflicts of interest may occur. They are committed to managing these potential conflicts in order to protect both the Orchestra and the committee members from any impropriety or appearance of impropriety.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all committee members of the City of Stoke-on-Trent Symphony Orchestra ("the Orchestra").

Statement of intent

The Orchestra is committed to ensuring its decisions and decision-making processes are, and are seen to be, free from personal bias and do not unfairly favour any individual connected with the Orchestra.

Policy

It is the policy of the Orchestra to:

1. Ensure that every committee member understands what constitutes a conflict of interest and that they have a responsibility to recognise and declare any conflicts that might arise for them;
2. Document the conflict and the action or actions taken to ensure that the conflict does not affect the decision-making of the committee.

Procedure

1. When a committee member identifies that they have a potential conflict of interest they must:
 - Declare it as soon as they become aware of it.
 - Ensure it is appropriately minuted.

- Not take part in any committee member 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.
2. In the interests of frank and open discussion a committee member affected by a conflict of interest must leave the room while related discussion or decision making is taking place, unless there is good reason for them to stay.
 3. The minutes should state:
 - The declared conflict.
 - That the committee member in question left the room, or the reason they were asked to stay.
 - That the committee member took no part in discussion or decision making on the matter.
 - That the meeting was quorate (not counting the affected committee member).
 - Any other actions taken to manage the conflict.
 4. If a committee member is unsure what to declare, they should err on the side of caution and discuss the matter with the Chair of the committee of the Orchestra for confidential guidance.

Policy availability and review

This policy will be made available to all the Orchestra's members and reviewed biennially by the Committee.

Last reviewed: 20.02.2026 Next review: 11.05.2028