

Approved by Management Committee on 26/08/21

Date Issued	May 2001
Last Review Date	August 2021
Department	Corporate
Title	Personal Relationships at Work
Objective	To describe our arrangements for dealing with personal relationships at work
Responsible	Chief Executive
Next Review Date	August 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We do not wish to interfere in the personal or domestic lives of our Management Committee or staff. We also recognise that strong personal relationships and friendships can start and grow from working relationships, and that many couples meet through their jobs, and the associated networks.
- 1.2 We have suitable policies and procedures for dealing with any potential problems.
- 1.3 This document summarises our policies and procedures.

2.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 We have a Code of Conduct for both our staff and Management Committee Member which all must adhere to. We also remind our Management Committee and staff that they must uphold our existing policies on Equal Opportunities, Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, and Dignity at Work.
- 2.2 We have an Entitlements Payment and Benefits Policy which relates to the Regulatory Standards. This policy describes the entitlements, payments or benefits that our people are able to receive. It also describes what is not permitted and the arrangements that we have in place to ensure that the requirements of this policy are observed.

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- 2.3 Staff or Management Committee members who find that their relationship may cast doubt on the objectivity of their decision making should advise the appropriate person i.e. Chair of Management Committee, Chief Executive or line manager. When to advise will be a matter of judgement for the individuals concerned. However, it should be before there is a likelihood of them leaving themselves open to the types of allegations suggested. (Individuals can discuss in confidence their own situation with our Employee Counselling Service, Rowan Consultancy on 01738 562005).
- 2.4 It will then be a matter of discussion between the parties involved, the Chair of the Management Committee and Chief Executive on how to avoid the potential for conflict of interest. This should also include where relationships have broken down, and both parties feel awkward, and working relationships may be adversely affected.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 We will expect Management Committee members who are in this position to withdraw from any committees or decisions where their 'partner' could be affected.
- 3.2 This would be expected to run for a period of at least 12 months after the relationship stops.
- 3.3 It could also result in the Management Committee member having to consider resignation because these difficulties are too great.
- 3.4 Management Committee and staff will be expected to maintain the highest standards of propriety.
- 3.4 Management Committee and Staff should also be aware how awkward demonstrations of close affection can be for their colleagues.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 All of this depends on the judgement of the individuals concerned, their managers and the Management Committee.
- 4.2 It is not our intention to prevent personal relationships that overlap with work relationships. But we must seek to maintain our policies and avoid allegations of impropriety which will distract us from our main aims.

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4.3 In summary, it is essential that Management Committee and staff recognise that:

- their behaviour should meet the requirements of our policies and Code of Conduct, to avoid allegations of breaching these policies
- if in a personal relationship which could lead to such allegations, appropriate steps are taken to make their manager, Chief Executive or Chair of the Management Committee aware of the situation. They should jointly try to devise ways of avoiding any possible allegations of favouritism or harassment
- the highest standards of behaviour are required at conferences and other events where they represent our organisation
- this policy has been agreed as a result of discussions between staff, staff representatives and the Management Committee. As with all our policies it will be monitored and reviewed to seek improvements in its effectiveness

5.0 POLICY REVIEW

5.1 The Chief Executive will ensure that this policy is reviewed at least every five years and that any amendments required are submitted to the Management Committee for approval.