

Managing Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of interest for Committee Members are inevitable due to our lives outside of our committee roles. The key is to ensure that these roles do not benefit an individual Committee Member, their relatives, or friends.

Effective management of conflicts of interest is crucial. Proper management minimises embarrassment or criticism of the Committee or the individual. Identifying potential conflicts is essential. A conflict may arise due to:

1. Personal interests, especially when there is personal gain or potential for gain.
2. Organizational interests, particularly if a member must consider the same matter in a different organisational context.
3. Other commitments or arrangements within and outside our Club or sport.
4. Family interests.

For instance, if a Committee Member works for a company being considered for a contract by the club, it's important that the member does not influence the decision-making process in favor of that company.

Often, a committee member may have a pre-existing conflict and only realize it when the matter is raised during or after a meeting. This is acceptable as long as the member informs the Chair immediately if in a meeting, or as soon as practical otherwise.

Our guiding principle is to manage not only actual conflicts of interest but also the perception of such conflicts.

To this end, Committee members are encouraged to raise issues of conflict of interest at any time. Including a conflict of interest item early in the meeting agenda is recommended.

Sometimes, simply declaring a conflict is sufficient. For example, "I have a connection to this matter."

Specific Measures the Committee May Adopt:

Process 1:

The Chair offers all members the opportunity at the start of each meeting to declare any conflict or raise concerns regarding potential conflicts related to the meeting's agenda.

Process 2:

Upon being informed of a potential conflict, the Chair, with the Committee's advice, decides whether:

1. A substantial conflict exists.
2. The member should step out from the discussion, or if their input is beneficial.
3. Any other necessary actions.

Options may include allowing the conflicted member to stay in the meeting but not vote, or to remain in the room, speak on the issue, but not vote. The conflict must be declared, recorded, and the person may abstain from speaking or voting on the matter. Any action taken must be documented clearly and transparently.

Process 3:

For ongoing conflicts, the Chair must arrange appropriate measures with the member and others to ensure the conflict does not impact proceedings.

These arrangements are recorded in the minutes each time. If the Chair is involved in the conflict, a Temporary Chair will be appointed by the Committee to manage the discussion.