



## Culture Bridge North East

### Conflict of Interest protocol

Whilst not a formally constituted public body, members of Culture Bridge North East's advisory board should at all times follow the Nolan principles:

- **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office 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 official duties.
- **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The advisory board consists of individuals from a wide range of backgrounds from across the North east of England. For most, aspects of their core role will overlap with their role as a member of the CBNE Board. This could lead to potential conflict of interest and overlap of interest. To ensure these are managed properly, in the interests of fairness and transparency, the following protocols are proposed:

**Conflict of interest:** is any situation where an advisory board members personal interest, or interest they owe to another body, could influence or affect decisions they may make as a board member

Notification of conflicts of interest will be called for at the start of a Board meeting, based on the agenda, or notified as they arise at the meeting. In the event that a potential conflict is identified the Board will decide whether to ask the relevant board member to step out of the room during the matter under discussion. The potential conflict and decision will be minuted.

Given the interconnectedness of the Board to the region and the work of CBNE, there will be occasions when a Board member, in a potentially conflicted situation, may be able to use their position for mutual benefit. For example, a Board member works for a large organisation, and a colleague from that organisation is undertaking evaluation work as an aspect of CBNEs programme. At Board it is made clear that the evaluation is not going well, and that CBNE proposes to end the contract early. However, the Board member feels that the evaluator may be willing to correct things if approached in a different way. In this sense they have an overlap of interest between CBNE and their own organisation. In these cases the following protocol should be observed:

1. If the situation arises in a meeting the member should apprise the rest of the Board, who should then decide how to proceed. This could involve the board member talking to their colleague, or agreeing to be bound to board confidentiality, with the relevant details being minuted.
2. If it should arise outside of a board meeting the matter should be referred to the CBNE team/chair as appropriate. The potential action should be agreed as at 1, and noted.

This protocol will protect a Board member from accusations of acting inappropriately should the intended intervention not succeed, or (if they have been required not to take further action) demonstrate that they were prevented from discussing the matter further with the parties concerned.

WBG/MWC – 14/1/19