Board of Management, staff and volunteer Code of Conduct

Background

The Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre (the Centre) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to providing the best possible service to our community. The Board of Management (BoM) has developed a Code of Conduct policy which applies to members of the BoM, members of the Centre, Centre staff (whether permanent, contract or casual) and volunteers. This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the Conflict of Interest policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure we maintain high standards in our behaviour and decision making by articulating and affirming the principles and practices of ethical conduct.

Policy

The BoM and staff/volunteers of the Centre have a legal and moral responsibility to manage the organisation in the best interests of the community. We will demonstrate ethical behaviour at all times – in our responsibilities to the organisation, our relationships with each other, and our service to the community.

Being ethical means that we:
- act in an honest and transparent manner
- treat each other and members of our community with respect and fairness
- ensure that our actions are not motivated by personal gain
- maintain confidentiality by complying with laws such as *The Information Privacy Act 2000* and *The Health Records Act 2001* and not disclosing information that is personal, sensitive or commercially confidential.

The BoM affirms these values as the basis of the Centre's Code of Conduct: Objectivity, Impartiality Professionalism and Transparency. Our values identify the behaviours consistent with ethical practice.

We demonstrate **objectivity** when we:
- act fairly and equitably at all times
- consult openly with all stakeholders.

We demonstrate **impartialiality** when we:
- understand and consider others' differences and viewpoints
- have the right amount of information for an impartial decision to be made.

We demonstrate **professionalism** when we:
- take responsibility and hold ourselves accountable for our actions
- strive for excellence by demonstrating competence, capability and enthusiasm
- model ethical behaviour
- manage risk responsibly.

We demonstrate transparency when we:
- ensure that honesty underlies all decisions

- develop trust by being open and consistent
- ensure that our processes are transparent
- undertake everyday actions with integrity.

Roles and responsibilities of members of the Board of Management

Members shall:
- commit to this Code of Conduct and its values of objectivity, impartiality, professionalism and transparency
- attend and prepare for each meeting to allow full participation in decision making
- respect the confidentiality of private information that comes before the BoM
- regularly monitor the performance of management and the organisation through appropriate reporting systems
- give the views of each BoM member due consideration and weight
- behave respectfully towards each other and to staff and volunteers
- provide stakeholders with an accurate and balanced view of the organisation's performance
- ensure meetings are conducted in a way that ensures fair and full participation of all
- make impartial decisions on the basis of complete and accurate information
- protect the Centre's assets with a suitable risk management strategy
- ensure that personal and financial interests do not conflict with their duty to the Centre
- declare potential conflicts of interest as required by the BoM's Conflict of Interest policy.

Roles and responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

Staff and Volunteers shall:
- commit to this Code of Conduct and to the values of objectivity, impartiality, professionalism and transparency
- be honest, objective and impartial
- behave respectfully towards each other, community members and to members of the BoM
- treat all stakeholders with fairness and impartiality and according to their rights under the BoM's Access and Equity Policy
- act in a safe, responsible and transparent manner at all times
- carry out their duties in a lawful manner
- ensure all transactions, agreements and records are accurately and openly recorded in the Centre's books and records
- make and communicate all decisions in an open and transparent way
- ensure that personal and financial interests do not conflict with their duty to the Centre
- declare potential conflicts of interest as required by the BoM's Conflict of Interest
- policy respect the confidentiality of private information the Centre collects and stores by:
    - clearing computer screens from a previous enquiry
    - not taking sensitive/private information to counters
    - not showing confidential or sensitive files to SHNC members or members of the public

        o not leaving sensitive information where it may be seen by others.
- deal with unethical behaviour appropriately which may mean:
  - discussing the matter with the manager to raise questions and to seek advice
  - discussing the matter with the BoM Chairperson if the staff member/volunteer is unclear, uncertain or uncomfortable about approaching management.

All leaders within the Centre have a responsibility to:
- promote this Code of Conduct
- be strong role models for staff and volunteers
- encourage and recognise ethical behaviour and decision-making
- ensure all new staff, volunteers and new BoM members are given the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policies as part of their induction
  - be prepared to answer any questions about ethics and ethical behaviour
  - be approachable to all staff and volunteers.

Related Documents

Conflict of Interest Policy
Occupational Health and Safety Policies
Privacy Policy
Risk Management Policy

Date for review: March 2017

Source document: SHNC Code of Ethics Policy
                         City of Boroondara Code of Ethics