

# code of conduct

## OBJECTIVE OF THIS POLICY

The objective of this policy is to specify how co-op members should behave within the co-op and, when engaged on co-op business, how co-op members should maintain a high standard of conduct, probity and business ethics.

## 1 GENERAL

- 1.1 The co-op will, from time to time, review the stated values of the co-op, and how those values are implemented in practice.
- 1.2 The co-op has signed up to the joint Confederation of Co-operative Housing / National Housing Federation Code of Governance for Housing Co-operatives. From time to time, the co-op will review how the co-op is implementing the principles within the Code of Governance.

## 2 BEHAVIOUR AT MEETINGS

- 2.1 Co-op members must ensure that their private and personal interests do not influence their decisions, and that they do not use positions of responsibility within the co-op to obtain personal gain of any sort that does not apply equitably to all members.
- 2.2 Co-op meetings are informal, but all members must recognise the role of the Chair throughout meetings. All questions, comments and points of view should be expressed through the Chair. Co-op members should respect other member's viewpoints and encourage all

members to express themselves.

- 2.3 Discussions not pertinent to the meeting should not take place during the meeting.
- 2.4 All members should abide by the co-op's Equal Opportunities policy at meetings and should ensure that no comments are made that could be deemed offensive.
- 2.5 Members should not resort to behaviour that could be considered aggressive (e.g. swearing, name calling, shouting, finger pointing). Members may challenge this sort of behaviour either at the time or subsequent to the meeting through the Chair.
- 2.6 Members should abide by the agenda prepared for the meeting. If members wish to raise issues not on the agenda, they should bring these up under 'Any Other Business'. Wherever possible, the Chair should be notified of such items before the meeting. Repairs must be reported through the usual channels and not at a meeting.
- 2.7 Members should not attend meetings under the influence of alcohol or non prescription drugs.

## 3 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 3.1 Members should keep confidential items deemed confidential by the chair of a co-op meeting. Members of the housing management, repairs and finance committees should keep all members' personal information strictly confidential to the relevant sub-committee or staff.

- 3.2 Sub-committees will ensure that members' personal information is reported anonymously at general or management committee meetings of the co-op.

## 4 DECLARING PERSONAL INTEREST

- 4.1 All co-op members should inform the secretary of the co-op of any interests that may lead to a potential conflict of interest, such as working for a building company that the co-op may employ as a contractor. The co-op will maintain a register of interests.
- 4.2 Co-op members should inform the Chair of any personal interest in an issue prior to the discussion of said issue on the agenda. Depending upon the nature of the personal interest they may be required to leave the meeting whilst the issue is discussed. Co-op members should not attempt to influence another co-op member on a issue for which they might have a potential conflict of interest.

## 5 HOSPITALITY & GIFTS

- 5.1 Co-op members should ensure that they are meticulous about receiving hospitality and gifts when engaged in co-op business to ensure that:
- personal gifts with a significant monetary value are not accepted
  - hospitality is not accepted if it could be seen as a way of exerting an improper influence over the co-op's decisions
  - gifts and hospitality are formally recorded in a register, apart from inexpensive items, such as working meals or free calendars.

- 5.2 The co-op will not offer hospitality or gifts to individuals or organisations with which it does business of a significant monetary value or where it could be seen that the hospitality or gifts are a way of exerting an improper influence over the decisions of another person or organisation.

## 6 BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

- 6.1 Where it is determined that a co-op member has breached this policy, the governing body of the co-op will determine what action will need to be taken. Members of the governing body party to a breach of this policy will usually be required to leave the meeting at which the breach is being discussed.
- 6.2 If a co-op member believes that the governing body of the co-op has breached this policy, they should follow the co-op's Complaints & Disputes Procedure. Where appropriate, a third party will be asked to adjudicate on the matter.