



Healesville Community Renewable Energy Inc Governance09 – Conflict of Interest

Policy Id	Governance09	Version	1.0
Policy Type	Governance	Subject	Conflict of Interest
Approved	August 2020	Scheduled review	August 2023

1 Introduction

Healesville CoRE is committed to high standards of ethical conduct and accordingly places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest are an inevitable fact of organisational life and they may create risks which should be identified and managed. When these risks are not appropriately addressed, organisational performance and reputation can be seriously compromised, and the effects can be significant for the individuals concerned.

Conflicts of Interest arise in circumstances where a decision maker's topic discussion and decision is influenced, or can be seen to be influenced, by a private interest.

Private interests include both financial and non-financial interests and can include the interests of family members and close friends or associates. They can be positive or negative interests—personal enmity towards someone can be just as relevant as loyalty to them.

Proper management of conflicts of interest is required to maintain charitable fundraising licences and to comply with Corporations law and funding body requirements.

2 Purpose

This policy has been developed to provide a framework for all Central Committee members in declaring conflicts of interest.

The objective of this policy is to ensure that actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest are identified and managed effectively. This supports Healesville CoRE's policy of Transparency and Accountability.

3 Policy

Any reference to 'Member' below, includes all Central Committee office bearers as well as any other member who is working with the Central Committee as an advisor or helper for any activity or investigation that will need decision making. This decision making may be financial or labour related.

The Central Committee places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflicts of interest.

The Healesville CoRE Governance Officer must ensure that all Central Committee members are aware of the ACNC governance standards, particularly governance standard 5, and that they disclose any actual or perceived material conflicts of interests as required by governance standard 5.

The Central Committee is responsible for maintaining a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest within the organisation.

Members shall declare any conflicts of interest either at the start of the Central Committee meeting concerned or when a relevant issue arises. The nature of this conflict of interest must be documented in the **Conflict of Interests Register**. The details recorded in the Conflict of Interests Register are:

- Date conflict reported
- Date of meeting
- Name of member
- Issue of Conflict
- Recorded Response
- Recorded By

Members can report a conflict of interest at any time by advising this to the Secretary by email or electronic message. This could happen if necessary activity, which may be perceived as a conflict of interest, needs to occur before the next Central Committee meeting. The Secretary will record this in the Conflicts of Interest Register and table it at the next Central Committee meeting.

A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and may be financial or non-financial.

Once the conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the Central Committee (excluding the member who has made the disclosure, as well as any other conflicted Member) must decide whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented. The Central Committee must decide whether or not those conflicted Members should:

- be present in the room during the debate and the voting,
- be allowed to clarify any query or any area of misinformation,
- participate in any debate, and/or
- vote on the matter.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of at least a majority of the Central Committee (excluding any conflicted Central Committee member/s) who are present and voting at the meeting.

The action and result of the voting will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

As part of Healesville CoRE's approach to Transparency and Accountability, any Member should not offer or accept gifts or hospitality that are, or are perceived to be, anything other than minor in nature and in keeping with general business practices. These gifts and hospitality should not be anything that could be reasonably viewed as an improper inducement.

- Minor is defined as inexpensive and occasional gifts, invitations to charity events and invitations to coffee/meals by third parties. As such, determining minor is a judgement call but it is to be exercised within an "if in doubt, report" approach.
- Any gift or hospitality that is not minor should be declared and added to the Conflict of Interests register. Whilst they should not be accepted, they should still be recorded as offered, as Healesville CoRE would like to avoid any appearance or concern that gifts or hospitality are being used for undue influence or to influence decision making. Details of the proposed gift or hospitality must be sent to the Healesville CoRE Secretary for recording in the register.

If the Central Committee has a reason to believe that a person subject to the policy has failed to comply with it, it will investigate the circumstances. The Central Committee may take action against them. This may include seeking to terminate their relationship with Healesville CoRE.

4 Related Documents

Governance07 - Transparency and Accountability

Governance08 - Conduct of Meetings

Management01 - Central Committee Structure

Management03 - RACI Matrix

Person06 - Privacy