**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

Reading Lions Club CIO (Revised edition 10th January 2023)

Reg Charity No. 1193075

**1. Policy**

1.1. The policy of Reading Lion Club regarding conflict of interest is in accordance with the ‘Objects and Code of Ethics’ established by Lions Clubs International in that Trustees and members of the Club should ‘serve their community without personal financial reward’. This policy means that members should not receive any benefit nor seek to influence Club decisions to provide benefit to family members or organisations associated with members.

1.2. Conflicts of interest create problems as they can:

1. Inhibit free discussion.
2. Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of Reading Lions Club (CIO) or with the wider Lions organisation and any supporting or benefiting party.
3. Risk the impression that Reading Lions Club (CIO), Lions Clubs International or an associated third party has acted improperly.

1.3. The aim of this policy is to protect both the Club, Directors and its Trustees and members from any occurrence or appearance of impropriety.

1.4. It is the policy of the Club that members must not, without prior knowledge and permission of the Trustees, be involved in managing or monitoring a contract / agreement in which they have an interest that could benefit themselves or a third party. Monitoring arrangements for such contracts will include provisions for an independent challenge of invoices, and termination of the contract / agreement if the relationship is unsatisfactory.

1.5.1 Information is also deemed to be an asset of value and potential conflict and as such, any information held or used physically or electronically or supported by a third party, such as social media content, is also included within this policy.

 **2. Definitions**

 2.1. Conflicts of interests arise where a member’s personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Reading Lions Club (CIO) or with the wider Lions organisation.

 **3. Implementation**

 3.1. Trustees, members, and volunteers must declare their interests in other organisations and any benefit received in connection with their role in Reading Lions Club (CIO) or with the wider Lions organisation. A declaration of interest form is provided for this purpose, listing the types of interest to be declared. Forms will be kept in a register and held by the Club Secretary.

3.2. To be effective, the declaration of interests is updated routinely and when any changes occur.

3.3. Members unsure what to declare, or whether/when declaration needs to be updated must seek Trustees advice if unsure. Trustees advice is confidential if requested.

3.4. Members or the carer of someone who uses Reading Lions Club (CIO) services, should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that the member, carer or the person cared for, receives.

3.5. Members should declare their interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion.

3.6. Members may, however, participate in discussions from which indirect benefit may be gained, for example where the benefits are universal to all users.

3.7. In the event of the Trustees having to decide upon a question in which a Trustee or Club member has an interest, the decision will be made by vote, with a simple majority. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate. Interested Board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests.

3.8. Any instance of a potential conflict of interest should be reported to The Secretary, who if deemed necessary will in turn report to the Trustees.

 **4. Responsibilities**

 4.1. The President or Vice President will chair any meeting associated with conflict of interest.

4.2. The Secretary will maintain the declaration of interest register.

4.3. Trustees and Club members are responsible for declarations of interest as required.

**Appendix 1: Declaration of Interest Form**

 