Selsey Community Forum
Code of Conduct for Trustees

Policy Statement

Trustees have collective responsibility for the governance, management and administration of Selsey Community Forum and must act in accordance with the Charity's governing document, applicable charity law and regulatory requirements. The Trustees of a Charity are the group of volunteers who have the ultimate responsibility for running and managing the Charity for the Public Benefit in accordance with its governing document and in compliance with Charity Law.

By reading this Policy and accepting the role of a Selsey Community Forum Trustee, a Trustee agrees to the following responsibilities.

General Conduct

- Trustees are required to act with honesty and integrity, exercise reasonable care and skill, and seek appropriate professional advice where they do not have the relevant knowledge or expertise.
- Trustees are required to act in a manner that does not undermine or damage the reputation of the Selsey Community Forum or its employees and volunteers.
- Trustees are required to act in the best interests of the Selsey Community Forum at all times.

Independence

- Trustees are required to act independently, particularly in relation to assets, property, legal and regulatory obligations.
- Trustees should conduct themselves with integrity and in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the Charity or its volunteers and employees. Trustees:
  - 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 duties;
  - must avoid actual impropriety and any appearance of improper behaviour.
- Trustees must not receive any unauthorised financial or other benefit from the Charity, either personally or through a connected person or organisation. Any payment or benefit must be properly authorised under the Charity's governing document, applicable law or Charity Commission authority, and any related conflict of interest must be managed appropriately.
- Trustees should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence them in carrying out their role as a Trustee. Any gifts or hospitality received in any connection to Selsey Community Forum should be declared to the Board. Any gift or hospitality that is accepted or declined where there could reasonably be a perception of influence should be recorded in accordance with the Charity's Gifts and Hospitality arrangements.

Trustee Roles

Trustees should:

- Understand and perform their roles and responsibilities to the best of their abilities at all times.
- Be prepared to provide adequate time and commitment as required to fulfil the role of a Trustee, adequately preparing for meetings and participating in committees and special events when required.

Trustee Meetings

Trustees should:

- Aim to attend all meetings, contribute appropriately and effectively, and avoid dominating the contributions of others.

- Respect the role of the Chair in facilitating meetings and decision-making, while recognising that all Trustees share collective responsibility for Board decisions.
- Bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions of the meeting, maintain a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treat different views with respect, and ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of the Selsey Community Forum.
- Bring a genuinely independent perspective to enhance decision-making, given that Trustees share responsibility for Board decisions.
- Ensure their contributions are informed and impartial when presenting views on topics in meetings while listening to and respecting the input and experience of other Trustees.

Volunteers and Employees

Trustees should:

- Aim to support volunteers and employees in carrying out their duties and always, in terms of their conduct, serve as an example of how everyone in the Charity should conduct themselves in order to reflect the values of the Selsey Community Forum.
- Work considerately and fairly with everyone in a way that respects diversity, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.
- Accept and respect the difference in roles between the Board on the one hand and volunteers and any employees on the other, ensuring that the Board, volunteers and any employees work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the Charity and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship by:
  - respecting management arrangements and avoiding any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
  - not interfering in the performance by volunteers or employees of duties delegated to them within the Charity while ensuring that volunteers and any employees working for the Charity are held to account through the manager as appropriate. Trustees should avoid giving individual instructions to employees or volunteers outside agreed management and governance arrangements unless specifically authorised to do so.

Respectful Conduct

Trustees are expected to treat fellow Trustees, employees, volunteers, service users and others with dignity and respect. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, victimisation or other inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.

Trustees should challenge ideas and decisions constructively and avoid personal criticism or behaviour that may undermine effective working relationships or the proper governance of the Charity.

Trustees are expected to promote a culture in which safeguarding concerns, whistleblowing concerns and other serious risks can be raised openly and appropriately, without fear of retaliation.

Legal Requirements and Policies

All Trustees are equally responsible for the proper management of the Charity in accordance with its charitable objects and charity law. Trustees are collectively responsible for properly made Board decisions. Once a decision has been reached in accordance with the Charity's governing document, Trustees are expected to respect and support that decision, even where they personally disagreed with it, subject to their individual legal and regulatory duties.

All Trustees must understand how real and perceived conflicts of interests and conflicts of loyalty can affect a Charity's performance and reputation. The Board should consider how the Charity is seen by the people and organisations who are involved in its work and by the wider public.

All Trustees must identify and declare any actual or potential conflict of interest or conflict of loyalty as soon as it arises. Conflicts must be managed in accordance with the Charity's governing document and any applicable Conflicts of Interest Policy. Where appropriate, a conflicted Trustee may be required to withdraw from the relevant discussion, not take part in the decision or vote, and not be counted in the quorum. The conflict and the action taken must be appropriately recorded.

A Register of Interests, gifts and hospitality must be maintained in accordance with the Charity's agreed arrangements. Trustees must:

- Act in accordance with the Charity's governing document and ensure that Selsey Community Forum complies with all applicable laws including charity law, company law, health and safety law, data protection law and employment law. Trustees will also have regard to relevant non-binding governance standards and good-practice guidance, including the Nolan Principles and the Charity Governance Code, where appropriate.

- Maintain appropriate confidentiality in relation to sensitive Board, employee, volunteer, service-user and organisational information. Confidentiality must not be used to prevent a Trustee from raising a genuine safeguarding, whistleblowing, legal or regulatory concern with an appropriate person, regulator or statutory authority.
- Abide by all the Charity's policies and procedures.
- Ensure that claims for out of pocket expenses are made in accordance with agreed procedures.

Where concerns arise that a Trustee may have breached this Code, the matter should be considered fairly and in accordance with the Charity's governing document and any applicable governance procedures. This may include a meeting with the Chair or another appropriate Trustee, depending on the circumstances.
Where concerns are serious or persistent, the Board may consider whether formal action is appropriate. Any decision to remove a Trustee must be taken strictly in accordance with the Charity's governing document and applicable legal requirements.

Other Matters

Anyone thinking of becoming a Trustee should read the document 'Being a Trustee for Selsey Community Forum'.

This Code will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a significant change in the Charity's governance arrangements, governing document, Charity Commission guidance or relevant legislation.

Version Control

Version Number	Date of Update	Amendments
1.0	October 2025	Annual review
2.0	October 2026	Reviewed and updated in line with current guidance