

Board Member Agreement

Code of Conduct: Healthwatch Darlington

As a Board member of Healthwatch Darlington I undertake to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all activities of this organisation and act in accordance with Healthwatch Darlington Code of Conduct.

Our values

Healthwatch Darlington values its reputation as an open, fair, independent corporate body operating as a social enterprise with a high standard of integrity and commitment to its aims and objectives. This reputation is dependent on the conduct of its representatives as they carry out their agreed duties and responsibilities.

Healthwatch Darlington representatives are expected to uphold the Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Additionally, I agree to the following points.

Law, mission, policies

I will act within the governing documents of Healthwatch Darlington and abide by the policies and procedures of the organisation.

I will not break the law or go against charity regulations in any aspect of my role of Board member.

I will support the objects and mission of Healthwatch Darlington and act as their guardian and champion.

I will develop and maintain an up-to-date knowledge of Healthwatch Darlington and its environment.

Conflicts of interest

I will always strive to act in the best interests of the organisation and not as a representative of any other group to which I might belong, considering what is best for Healthwatch Darlington.

I will declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises, and act in accordance with the **Conflict of Interest Policy**.

I will submit to the judgment of the board and do as it requires regarding potential conflicts of interest.

Person to person

I will not break the law, go against **charity regulations** or act in disregard of organisational policies in my relationships with fellow board members, staff, volunteers, members, service users, contractors or anyone I meet in my role as board member.

I will strive to establish respectful, collaborative and courteous relationships.

Where I also volunteer with Healthwatch Darlington, I will maintain the separation of my role as a board member and as a volunteer.

Protecting the organisation's reputation

I will not make public comments about Healthwatch Darlington unless authorised to do so.

Any public comments I make about Healthwatch Darlington will be considered and in line with organisational policy, whether I make them as an individual or as a Board member.

When I am speaking as a Board member of Healthwatch Darlington, my comments will reflect current organisational policy even when these do not agree with my personal views.

When speaking as a private citizen I will uphold the reputation of Healthwatch Darlington and those who work in it.

I will respect organisational, board and individual confidentiality.

Personal gain

I will not personally gain materially or financially from my role as Board member, unless specifically authorised to do so, nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.

I will use organisational resources responsibly. I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to procedure.

I will not accept gifts or hospitality without the prior consent of the chair.

Board meetings

I will strive to embody the principles of leadership in all my actions and live up to the trust placed in me by Healthwatch Darlington.

I accept my responsibility to ensure that Healthwatch Darlington is well run and will raise issues and questions in an appropriate and sensitive way to ensure that this is the case.

I will abide by board governance procedures and practices.

I will strive to attend all board meetings, giving apologies ahead of time to the chair if unable to attend.

I will study the agenda and other information sent me in good time prior to the meeting and be prepared to debate and vote on agenda items during the meeting.

I will honour the authority of the chair and respect their role as meeting leader, and in return expect to be treated with respect.

I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.

I will accept a majority board vote on an issue as decisive and final.

I will maintain confidentiality about what goes on in the boardroom unless authorised by the chair or board to speak of it.

I will be proactive in my role and will develop my knowledge and skills in order to continually participate as an active Board member which will enhance my position on the Board.

Enhancing governance

I will participate in induction, training and development activities for Board members.

I will continually seek ways to improve board governance practice.

I will strive to identify good candidates for Board membership and appoint new Board members based on merit.

I will support the chair in their efforts to improve their leadership skills.

I will support the chief executive officer in their executive role and, with my associate board members, seek development opportunities for them.

Leaving the board

I understand that substantial breach of any part of this code may result in my removal from the Board member board.

Should procedures be put in motion that may result in my being asked to resign from the board, I will be given the opportunity to be heard in line with governance arrangements. If I am asked to resign from the board, I will accept the majority decision of the board and resign at the earliest opportunity.

Throughout my tenure I will participate in succession planning where appropriate and support any handover upon my resignation or end of my term of service on the board.

Should I resign from the board I will inform the chair in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning. Additionally, I will participate in an exit interview.

Signed:

Name:

Date: