

## **Fareham Philharmonic Choir Committee members – Conflict of Interest**

Committee members of the Fareham Philharmonic Choir need to ensure that they behave in accordance with all relevant charity law, and observe good practice. When new Committee members join, they should familiarise themselves with their legal duties, starting here;

[http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Committee members-staff-and-volunteers/Committee member-role/](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Committee%20members-staff-and-volunteers/Committee%20member-role/)

(web-link inserted Feb. 2017). The link on the page to ‘The Essential Committee member’ is also very useful.

The Committee member group is small and select, and most are Committee members because we are supporters of the practice; we may have learned from qualified members, or know them well. We have mostly arrived around the table through a personal association. Therefore, the possibility of a **Conflict of Interest** may arise, in that people we are connected to may be employed by the charity (it does not matter whether this is PAYE or freelance or some other form of contract).

As Committee members, we may not be paid by the charity, or receive other benefits, except in very limited circumstances which must be clearly documented. Committee members may not take any part in decisions which would benefit them financially – or in other ways. But this does not only apply to *us* as Committee members, it applies to those with whom we may have a family, business or financial connection;

“If someone is connected to a Committee member, they are usually referred to as a ‘connected person’. These can include:

- a spouse or partner
- siblings
- a brother- or sister-in-law
- parents
- business partner

If a connected person is to be paid or employed by the charity, the Committee member who they are connected to must not be involved in any part of the process. You will need permission from us if you want to pay or employ someone who is connected to a Committee member.” (source; Charity Commission web-site, Feb. 2017).

This is all outlined here in more detail;

[http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/detailed-guidance/money-and-accounts/Committee member-expenses-and-payments-cc11/](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/detailed-guidance/money-and-accounts/Committee%20member-expenses-and-payments-cc11/) (web-link inserted, Feb. 2017).

There are other potential **Conflicts of Interest** – and Committee members may find they have them by reading through the Charity Commission guidance. For example, we should probably deem it a conflict for a Committee member to comment on a bursary application made by someone they are connected to.

So here is a **Policy Statement on Conflicts of Interest**;

If you have a potential or existing Conflict of Interest, there are three things you **must do**;

1. Advise the Chair in writing of the potential or existing conflict in detail. The Chair will make a decision as to whether the Charity Commission need to be informed (this does not necessarily affect your ability to be a Committee member, but there is a statutory duty to report it in some instances)
2. Notify your conflict at the start of business of Committee member meetings, whether the Board, or any sub-committee. This will be recorded in the minutes using a straightforward statement.
3. Take no part in any decision in which your conflict of interest has an impact. You **may** be asked for factual information during a discussion by the Chair of the meeting. You should not chair a meeting where there is any discussion or decision relevant to your conflict of interest. There may be instances when it is appropriate for you to *leave the Committee member meeting* when a conflicting issue is discussed – this will be at the Chair's discretion.