

CODE OF CONDUCT

Local Skills Improvement Plan

1. Introduction and interpretation

(1) This Code applies to **you** as a member of the joint venture for the Greater London Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), your work in connection with the LSIP (or any subordinate body) and its business. This will also apply to Skills London, its senior team, nominated contractors, associated partners, and advisory group members.

(2) It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code, including as amended from time to time.

(3) In this Code—

- (a) “LSIP” means the Local Skills Improvement Plan;
- (b) “ERB” means an Employer Representative Body;
- (c) “Lead ERB” means BusinessLDN.

2. Standards in public life

As a person covered by this Code you must observe the seven principles of public life (‘the Nolan Principles’) set out below in your work on the LSIP representing the Department for Education, other ERBs, their subordinate bodies, or stakeholders.

- (1) **Selflessness** - ERBs should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- (2) **Integrity** - ERBs must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- (3) **Objectivity** - ERBs must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- (4) **Accountability** - ERBs are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- (5) **Openness** - ERBs should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- (6) **Honesty** - ERBs should be truthful.
- (7) **Leadership** - ERBs should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

3. Interests

Declaration of interests

- (1) As an ERB you are expected to notify BusinessLDN, the lead ERB, in writing of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. To do this, please complete and sign the 'Register of Interests/Conflict of Interests' Form and return to Mark Hilton, LSIP Lead at BusinessLDN, who will ensure that the relevant Monitoring Officer is notified of such declarations. Guidance on what constitutes a disclosable pecuniary interest is provided at Annex 1 below.
- (2) BusinessLDN will record and save the Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form securely and confidentially on the BusinessLDN system.

Pecuniary Interests

- (3) You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if it is of a description specified in Annex 1 below and either:
 - (a) it is an interest of yours, or
 - (b) it is an interest of:
 - (i) your spouse or civil partner;
 - (ii) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife, or
 - (iii) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners and you are aware that that other person has the interest.

Registration of pecuniary interests

- (4) You must, within 28 days of:
 - (a) this Code being adopted or applied by the Lead ERB; or
 - (b) your appointment,notify the Lead ERB in writing of any disclosable pecuniary interests you have at that time, and whether or not you consider that any of these interests should be treated as sensitive interests (as defined in paragraph 8 below).
- (5) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new pecuniary interest or any change to any pecuniary interest already notified to the Lead ERB, notify the Lead ERB in writing of that new pecuniary interest or change, and whether or not you consider that these should be treated as sensitive interests (as defined in paragraph 8 below).

Pecuniary interests in matters considered at meetings

- (6) In this Code, "meeting" means any meeting of any body in which you are in attendance by virtue of your appointment as member of an ERB.
- (7) If you attend a meeting and have and are aware that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered, or being considered, at that

meeting, you must - subject to paragraph 8 below (sensitive interests) - disclose that interest to the meeting, and may not – unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Lead ERB – (i) participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting; or (ii) participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting.

Sensitive interests

(8) Where you consider (and the Lead ERB agrees) that the nature of a disclosable pecuniary interest is such that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to intimidation or violence, it is a “sensitive interest” for the purposes of the Code, and the details of the sensitive interest do not need to be disclosed to a meeting, although the fact that you have a sensitive interest must be disclosed, in accordance with paragraph 7 above.

Other Interests

(9) The interests regime set out in paragraphs 1 to 8 above are based on statutory requirements for elected members of public office and therefore has the potential to be quite narrow in scope.

(10) In view of this, and the duty upon all ERBs to observe the highest standards of ethical conduct, we advise that all ERBs exercise their judgement as to whether or not, in view of their outside interests and the interests of others close to them, they should participate in discussions and/or decisions within the process.

(11) To this end, ERBs should consider how their participation in a discussion or decision would be viewed by the public. If a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard a ERB’s interest as so significant that it would be likely to prejudice the ERB’s judgement of the public interest; the ERB should not participate in the relevant discussion or decision.

4. Gifts and hospitality

(1) As a participating ERB in the LSIP process you are required to register any gifts or hospitality worth £50 or over that you receive in connection with your role in the process or any subordinate body.

Acceptance of gifts and hospitality

(2) For the purpose of this Code, gifts and hospitality are defined as:

(a) the free gift of any goods or services;

(b) the opportunity to acquire any goods or services at a discount or at terms not available to the general public;

- (c) the opportunity to obtain goods or services not available to the general public;
 - (d) the offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment, (except that which is provided by the Authority) or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event.
- (3) Under this Code, you are not required to declare:
- (a) gifts and hospitality, you receive that are not related to your position as an ERB or subordinate body;
 - (b) gifts that are insignificant in nature (e.g. calendars, diaries, office equipment of modest value) having an estimated value below **£50**;
 - (c) hospitality that is undoubtedly valued at less than **£50**;
 - (d) working meals including meals taken in the course of meetings or training schemes and meals provided by other organisations during fact finding, stakeholder, or information sharing events;
 - (e) facilities or hospitality provided to you by the Lead ERB or Department for Education;
 - (f) facilities or hospitality provided to you by any ERB, or any organisations that they represent;
 - (g) gifts given to additional ERBs that you accept formally on the their behalf and are retained by the ERB in question and not by you personally; or
- (4) Gifts, benefits and/or hospitality regardless of value should not usually be accepted in any situation where another ERB is potentially entering into a contractual arrangement or is in dispute with the provider. If a decision is taken to accept an offer in such circumstances the receipt should be declared and reasons for it clearly set out.

Registration of gifts and hospitality

- (5) The receipt of a gift, benefit or hospitality must be registered with the Lead ERB within 28 days of the date of receipt.
- (6) A summary list of all gifts and hospitality declared by ERBs may be published and/or included in the final LSIP report.

This Code may be amended from time to time and the Lead ERB will ensure you are provided with an up to date copy.

Annex 1

Guidance on the Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There are seven categories of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: Employment, Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, and Securities. These derive directly from the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, as do the specifics of what needs to be disclosed under each category.

The *Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests* form identifies what ERBs need to include under each category, but the following guidance tries to clarify anything that may be unclear.

Employment

You will need to include details of any employment, office, trade profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain by you and or your partner. These details should include the nature and title of the role, and name of any organisation for which the role is performed / which pays you or your partner for performing the role.

Partner means your spouse, civil partner, a person with whom you live as husband or wife, or a person with whom you live as if you were civil partners. This meaning is set out at the first footnote in the form, and has the same meaning throughout the form.

Sponsorship

This section on sponsorship is for ERBs only (not including additional partners nominated by ERBs).

Contracts

The following details need to be entered:

- the names of the parties to the contracts – so the Lead ERB, and either (i) your or your partner’s name, or (ii) the name of the firm or body corporate (of which you or your partner is a director, or in the securities of which you or your partner has a beneficial interest);
- the date on which the contract was entered into, and the duration of the contract;
- a brief description of the contract: the goods or services to be provided, or works to be executed.

The term “Director” is defined in the second footnote, should be interpreted to include member of a co-operative and community benefit society, and has the same meaning throughout the form.

The term “securities” is defined in the third footnote, and has the same meaning throughout the form.

Land

The following details need to be entered: what the interest is, whether it is your or your partner's interest, the postcode of the land, and the London borough in which it is situated.

By way of guidance, where:

- you or your partner own or own a percentage of the freehold or long-term leasehold of a property (whether or not subject to a mortgage);
- you or your partner lease land or property, on short-term tenancies (for example, an assured short-term tenancy); or
- land or property is owned by a trust in which you or your partner have an interest.

these details should be entered in this section of the form.

Licences

Details of the nature and length of the licence should be entered in this section, along with the postcode of the land, and the London borough in which it is situated.

Corporate tenancies

Details of the nature of and parties to the tenancy should be entered in this section, along with the full address of the property that is subject to the tenancy.

Securities

Details of the nature of the interest that you or your partner has should be entered in this section, along with the name and full address of the body in whose securities that interest is held.