

CLYDESDALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Policy: Personal Relationships at Work

Date: 28/09/22

Lead Officer: Chief Executive

Review Date: 24/09/25

Regulatory Standards: Standard 5
The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.

Guidance

- 5.1 The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity and, through the actions of the governing body and staff, upholds the good reputation of the RSL and the sector.
- 5.2 The RSL upholds and promotes the standards of behaviour and conduct it expects of governing body members and staff through an appropriate code of conduct. It manages governing body members' performance, ensures compliance and has a robust system to deal with any breach of the code.
- 5.3 The RSL pays due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and human rights, and foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics in all areas of its work, including its governance arrangements.
- 5.4 Governing body members and staff declare and manage openly and appropriately any conflicts of interest and ensure they do not benefit improperly from their position.
- 5.5 The governing body is responsible for the management, support, remuneration and appraisal of the RSL's senior officer and obtains independent, professional advice on matters where it would be inappropriate for the senior officer to provide advice.
- 5.6 There are clear procedures for employees and governing body members to raise concerns or whistleblow if they believe there has been fraud, corruption or other wrongdoing within the RSL.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We recognise that employees may form friendships and sometimes personal relationships with colleagues or those connected with their work. While we do not wish to interfere with these relationships, Clydesdale Housing Association (CHA) is duty bound to ensure that all staff behave appropriately, adhere to our standards of conduct set out in our policies and, avoid behaviours which could lead to allegations of impropriety.
- 1.2 This policy sets out CHA's expected standards regarding personal relationships connected to work. We ask that you speak to your line manager if you are unsure of the standards expected of you. If the expected standards set out below are not met, we will manage any breaches following our disciplinary procedure.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all staff, workers and volunteers within CHA. The policy and procedure are non-contractual. CHA may change it at any time as is appropriate. Should changes be made, we will communicate these to you a minimum of four weeks before they take effect.
- 1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with CHA's:
 - Code of Conduct for Staff;
 - Entitlements, Benefits and Payments Policy;
 - Disclosure of Interests Policy;
 - Standing Orders;
 - Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 For the purposes of this policy, the term personal relationships is defined as any relationship, from friendship through to two people 'being in a relationship together.'

3. Policy Aims

- 3.1 To be clear on our standards and expectations concerning personal relationships at work.
- 3.2 To manage any situations out with the expected standards in accordance with this policy.
- 3.3 To manage situations that may arise in a fair, consistent and appropriate way, and comply with all relevant discriminatory legislation.

4. We expect you will:

- 4.1 Not allow any close personal relationships with a colleague, contractor, client, customer or supplier to influence your conduct, judgement or decisions while at work.

- 4.2 Declare a close personal relationship with a colleague or any other person connected to your employment to your line manager. If the relationship is between a manager/supervisor, we expect this to be declared to a more senior manager and the Chief Executive.
- 4.3 Respect your surroundings, your colleagues and our organisation.
- 4.4 Not behave inappropriately during working hours, nor outwith working hours with any matters connected or associated with your employment
- 4.5 Be aware of your behaviour in any social media interaction connected to personal relationships at work
- 4.6 Follow the highest standards of behaviour at conferences and all other internal or external events where you are there in connection with CHA.

5. You can expect CHA:

- 5.1 To treat any information concerning a personal relationship connected to your work in the strictest of confidence. This will also be recorded on the personal files of both employees if both of you are staff or volunteers of CHA.
- 5.2 To discuss the situation with those involved, this will be done by an appropriate senior manager. We may move one or both employees to another job in another department/section/team or, consider other working arrangements in line with the needs of the organisation. In these circumstances, the organisation will discuss options with both employees and seek to reach an agreement regarding the transfer of one or both employees.
- 5.3 If appropriate measures or working arrangements cannot be put in place, the organisation may terminate the employment of one or both as a last resort.
- 5.4 To apply similar principles to an employee who is in a close personal relationship with a client, customer, contractor or supplier, in particular where the employee's job has the authority or a close connection with the individual. We expect the relationship to be declared to the employee's line manager. In these circumstances, CHA may move the employee to another job in another department/section/team or, consider other working arrangements in line with the needs of the organisation or, as a last resort may terminate the contract of employment with the employee.
- 5.5 In situations where a close personal relationship with a Governing Body Member or, another volunteer, a client, customer, contractor or supplier, the Governing Body Member/volunteer will be excluded from any discussions connected to the person they have a personal relationship with. If this is not possible or appropriate, the Governing Body member may be required to step down from their position.

6. Termination

6.1 If termination of employment is the last and final consideration available after other avenues have been explored, the following fair process will be followed:

- 6.1.1 The employee will be invited by the employer to put forward suggestions for a suitable alternative working arrangement that meets the needs of our business.
- 6.1.2 The Chief Executive will take all suggestions and consider them.
- 6.1.3 The Chief Executive will produce a comprehensive and succinct report outlining the business reasons why it is not appropriate to continue with the employment relationship.
- 6.1.4 The employee will be invited to a formal meeting in writing. Along with the invitation letter, the employee will also receive the Chief Executive's report and any other information the panel will have available to them.
- 6.1.5 At the meeting, they will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague, and both parties (the employer and employee) will be given the opportunity to put forward their case.
- 6.1.6 The meeting will be conducted by those with authority to dismiss – a panel of Committee Members selected by the Staffing Sub-Committee.
- 6.1.7 The panel will deliberate (in private) over the information put before them before making a decision.
- 6.1.8 The decision of the panel will be communicated in writing to the employee within two working days of the decision being made; this letter will also provide details of how to appeal.
- 6.1.9 The employee will be paid all accrued annual leave and TOIL not yet taken to the date of termination. As well as any payment in lieu of notice as set out in their contract of employment if a decision to dismiss is made.

7. Policy Review

- 7.1 This policy has been implemented as a result of discussions between staff and appropriate managers.
- 7.2 This policy will be monitored and reviewed as appropriate. The next review date is September 2025.