<< ORGANISATION

LOGO >>

<< Organisation Name >>

Governance Handbook

<< You will need to search / check / amend this template to fit your requirements. Areas that must be amended are indicated in this manner. You may need to make additional amendments other than those suggested. Therefore, the ENTIRE document must be read and made suitable for your organisation. The resultant handbook should be ratified by the board prior to issue. >>

Date of board approval: << Date >>

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<< Don’t forget to update the table of contents once revisions are completed >>

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# Welcome from the Chair.

Dear colleague,

Welcome to the Board of << organisation >>.

<< Welcome text >>

Chair

# History of the organisation.

<< Your organisation’s history >>

# Mission, vision, and values

<< Your organisation’s mission, vision and values statement >>

# Introduction to governance

The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight, and assurance regarding the organisation’s performance.

All boards, no matter what type of organisation they govern, have three core functions:

* + 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
    2. Holding executive leaders to account for the performance of the organisation, and its staff
    3. Overseeing the overall performance of the organisation

Boards must be ambitious and infused with a passion and a commitment to continuous improvement that enables the best possible outcomes. Governance must be based on high-quality objective data and a full understanding of the views and needs of its stakeholders. It should be driven by inquisitive, independent minds and through conversations focussed on the key strategic issues which are conducted with humility, good judgement, resilience, and determination.

Effective governance is based on seven key features:

1. Integrity – Acting as guardians of the sport, recreation, activity, or area.
2. Defining and evaluating the role of your Board.
3. Setting vision, mission, and purpose.
4. Balanced, inclusive and skilled Board.
5. Standards, systems, and controls.
6. Accountability and transparency.
7. Understanding and engaging with and embracing the sporting landscape.

The Sport Wales Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales sets the following minimum standard for these areas.

1. Integrity – Acting as guardians of the sport, recreation, activity or area.

* Maintain high ethical standards treating everyone fairly and equally.
* Protect and promote the wellbeing of everyone involved with the organisation.
* Agree and implement Codes of Conduct.
* Comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
* Regularly review the organisation’s governing document (which sets the purpose and defines the organisation’s legal status).
* Equip the organisation to manage all safeguarding needs.
* Determine what fairness of competition means within the sport or activity and uphold it.

1. Defining and evaluating the role of your Board.

* Have a clear overview of the board’s role and the various functions it needs to fulfil.
* Make sure each board member has adequate time to dedicate to their role; not taking on too many roles or duties.
* Create clear role descriptions and divisions of responsibility for key positions on the board to make sure the organisation can be a thriving, resilient business (eg, legal, commercial, marketing).
* Run effective induction programmes for board members making sure they understand their personal legal responsibilities (if your organisation is constituted as a company or charity, your directors or trustees should be aware of company or charity law requirements).
* Make sure board members are familiar with the governing document (eg articles of association, trust deed etc) and abide by the boundaries it sets.
* Delegate operational issues to individuals with a remit to deliver the operational function (e.g. CEO or lead officer).

1. Setting vision, mission and purpose.

* Set and protect the organisation’s vision, mission, and values, as well as maintaining a positive reputation of the sport, recreation, activity, area and organisation.
* Put the participant at the core of the mission of the organisation.
* Create a strategic plan in consultation with participants, athletes, staff and members, which sets a vision of what the sport, recreation, activity, area or organisation aims to achieve.
* Establish and share strong values in the organisation which include inclusivity and diversity.
* Communicate strategic information in a clear manner to individuals with a remit to deliver the operational function (e.g. CEO, senior management team, lead officer).
* Make sure there are sufficient resources available to deliver the strategic plan.

1. Objectivity: Balanced, inclusive, and skilled Board.

* Put in place appropriate, open, and transparent recruitment practices for new board members.
* Recruit board members, staff and organisational ambassadors that have the skills to develop a resilient business; for example, understand their financial obligations and anticipate future regulation.
* Make sure board succession planning is proactively undertaken.
* Establish a board that is comprised of an appropriate number of people for effective decision making. Typically, this is between 8-12 people.
* Bring knowledge and experience from outside the sport or activity by having at least 25% independent, non-executive board members.
* Make certain that the voice of the participant (or member) is heard or represented by the board (i.e., through participant representation or by portfolio responsibility and through committee structures).
* Encourage challenging discussions in a controlled meeting environment, resolving conflict appropriately.

1. Standards, systems, and controls.

* Comply with regulatory and legal requirements for the organisation e.g. safeguarding, insurance and health and safety.
* Review the governing document on a regular basis to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the organisation.
* Make certain legal obligations, including those on use of personal data, are understood and implemented appropriately across the organisation.
* Implement appropriate financial controls with regular monitoring.
* Create a robust financial plan, trying not to be overly reliant on one source of income.
* Identify, discuss, document, and manage risk on a regular basis.
* Develop policies that consider up to date innovations and legislative changes (e.g., use of technology).

1. Accountability and transparency.

* Create appropriate mechanisms to allow athletes, participants, and members to put forward their views to shape the organisations development.
* Make certain that there is a conflict of interest policy in place and declarations of interest are updated at least once a year and then declared in board meetings when appropriate.
* Implement a sound decision-making and monitoring framework which makes sure processes and decisions are robust and transparent.
* Make certain board members have a clear understanding of what would be classed as a conflict of interest.

1. Understanding and engaging with the sporting landscape.

* Promote the wider value that the organisation provides to members and society.
* Understand that the needs of current customers and participants drive the organisation and ensure that they are placed at the centre of planning.
* Make sure there is a clear understanding of the brand and unique selling point (USP) which can be used to drive growth and diverse income streams.
* Understand what assets the organisation owns; these may be products, programmes, data, your brand, and facilities, etc.
* Conduct a SWOT or PESTLE analysis of the organisation to understand the current position.
* Understand key relationships with other bodies, for example, strategic investors or commercial partners.
* Define the relationship between the organisation and its clubs, members and participants and the responsibilities the sport has to each constituent.
* Work with like-minded organisations to set similar standards in order to minimise bureaucracy for participants.

# Conduct

Effective boards set out clearly what they expect of individuals, particularly when they first join. A code of conduct should be maintained and communicated to all prospective appointees to set clear expectations of their role and behaviour. Explicit agreement to the code of conduct will mean there is a common reference point should any difficulties arise in the future.

Boards should be mindful that, in exercising all their functions, they must act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of stakeholders; and be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.

Similarly, everyone involved in governance should be aware of and accept 'The 7 principles of public life', as set out by Lord Nolan and applying to anyone, locally and nationally, who is elected or appointed as a public office holder. They are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership, and are detailed below.

All boards should have a clear disciplinary process, for example for acting in a way that is contrary to the board’s ethos and for bringing or being likely to bring the organisation, the board, or their role into disrepute.

## The 7 principles of public life

Whilst not a public body as such, the following principles are a good basis on which to work.

## 1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

## 2. Integrity

Holders of public office 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

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence, and without discrimination or bias.

## 4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

## 5. Openness

Holders of public office 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

Holders of public office should be truthful.

## 7. Leadership

Holders of public office 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.

# Memorandum and Articles of Association

A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be provided to you as part of the induction programme.

If you wish to discuss anything in this document, please raise this with the Chair or Chief Executive.

# Induction programme.

We want to make your introduction to the organisation as smooth as possible, so have developed an induction programme, which we hope you will find useful.

The induction programme will enable you to spend time with your fellow Board members, to get to know the Chief Executive and to get a briefing on your role and accountabilities.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for a copy of the induction programme.

# Collective Board Responsibility

Directors are encouraged to contribute fully at board meetings and to express their views frankly and openly.

All views and those who express them should be treated with respect and courtesy.

It is essential the board has a united front outside of board meetings and speaks with one voice if it is to have credibility. This is the case with boards and committees of all respected organisations. Hence, once an issue has been fully debated and a decision reached in the boardroom, directors are required to act and speak outside the boardroom in a united manner.

Should a director be personally opposed to a decision made by the majority that they cannot, in all conscience, accept, or promote its position, then the proper course is for the director concerned to resign from the board. The director would, of course, still be bound by the Confidentiality Agreement regarding previous board discussions but, other than this, they would then naturally be at liberty to campaign if they wished for the particular cause in question provided no breach of previous confidentiality was involved.

# Appointment process for Board members and terms of office.

The effectiveness of a board depends on the quality and diversity of its people and how they work together and with executive leaders. The organisation is fully committed to following the principles outlined in the Governance and Leadership framework for Wales.

This section looks at how boards can build an effective team of the right kind of people.

## Building an effective team

1. All boards should be tightly focused and no larger than they need to be to have all the necessary skills to carry out their functions effectively, with everyone actively contributing relevant skills and experience.
2. The need for boards to establish committees, or panels, for exclusions or disciplinary matters, does not necessitate a large board. Committees or panels can be established specifically for these purposes, to which people who are not on the board may be appointed, and/or a committee may be established as a joint committee with another organisation.
3. Anyone appointed to the board should have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the organisation. The organisation will aim to identify and fill any skills gaps through recruitment or training.
4. The membership of the board should therefore focus on skills, and the primary consideration in appointment decisions should be acquiring the skills and experience the board needs to be effective. The organisation recognises and embraces the benefits of having a diverse Board and sees increasing diversity at Board level as key to the development of the organisation. A truly diverse Board will include and make good use of differences in the skills, geographical and business experiences, background, race, gender, and other distinctions between Directors. These differences that create diversity will be considered in determining the ideal composition of the organisation Board and when possible, the Board will be balanced appropriately, also ensuring the board composition adequately reflects the community served by THE ORGANISATION and the diversity of society. All Board appointments will be made on merit, in the context of the skills, experience, independence and knowledge which the Board as a whole requires to be effective.
5. Where a vacancy needs filling, the organisation will move to fill the vacancy as soon as possible to prevent it impacting on the board’s effectiveness. In filling vacancies, the organisation will make use of all available channels to identify suitable people.

## The skills boards need

* 1. Boards must have a keen understanding of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they need to deliver effective governance. The specific skills that a board needs to meet its challenges will vary. The board must be satisfied that the people they appoint possess the required knowledge, skills, and behaviours. Relevant skills may include important personal attributes, qualities, and capabilities, such as the ability and willingness to learn and develop new skills.
  2. Boards should take these knowledge, skills, and behaviours into account in making their appointments.
  3. In summary, everyone on the board needs a strong commitment to the role; the inquisitiveness to question and analyse; and the willingness to learn. They need good inter-personal skills, appropriate levels of literacy in English (unless a board is prepared to make special arrangements), and sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data.
  4. Effective boards seek to secure or develop, within their membership as a whole, expertise and experience in analysing performance data, in budgeting and driving financial efficiency, and in performance management and employment issues, including grievances. They seek to recruit and/or develop people with the skills to work constructively in committees, chair meetings and to lead the board.

## Appointments

1. It is for an appointments panel, working to a terms of reference, to be confident that any board candidate has the necessary skills, including the willingness and ability to learn and develop. To make an informed decision on the matter an interview or detailed discussion will need to take place with each prospective candidate, with references (oral or written) taken as necessary, together with other recruitment tools such as psychometric testing as appropriate.
2. It is essential that boards recruit and develop people with the skills to deliver their core functions effectively. However, it is equally important to emphasise that the skills required are those to oversee the success of the organisation, not to do a job in the organisation. For example, a person with financial expertise should use their skills to scrutinise the organisation’s accounts, not to help prepare them.
3. The organisation will make appointments in line with the Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales

## Training and development

1. All boards are responsible for identifying the induction and other ongoing training and development they need – including for those with specific responsibilities such as the lead on safeguarding. They should set aside a budget for this purpose.
2. As part of induction and continuous development, effective boards encourage everyone involved in governance, especially those new to their role, to make the most of the resources, guidance and training available to develop their knowledge and skills.
3. The organisation code of conduct sets an ethos of professionalism and high expectations of everyone involved in governance, including an expectation that they undertake whatever training or development activity is needed to fill any gaps in the skills they have to contribute to effective governance. Importantly, this includes their ability to understand and interpret performance data. Everyone on the board should be able to engage fully with discussions on the performance of the organisation and, if they cannot, they should undertake appropriate training or development to enable them to do so.

## Terms of office

<< Articles based terms and reference >>

# Conflicts of Interest

## Introduction

There is no right or wrong approach to handling potential conflicts of interest. Ultimately, the issue is about the application of common sense. It is recognised and accepted that, occasionally, potential conflicts may arise. This is in order provided they are properly declared and managed.

Key considerations to take into account are:

* **Define a conflict of interest for the organisation.** Would there have to be some personal financial interest for a board member/official for a conflict of interest to be considered, or would historical connection to the beneficiary of a decision be sufficient to trigger the procedures?
* **Consider the future likelihood of such conflicts.** Is the conflict of interest likely to be exceptional in which case the person’s role may be unproblematic, or would it be so frequent that it might be best to consider an alternative role, or no role at all?
* **Agree the method of declaring an interest:** This may be a written declaration completed annually. Alternatively, it may be a declaration at or before the meeting at which the decision in question will be considered.
* **Agree the method of addressing the conflict:** Again, there are numerous ways of addressing a conflict of interest. The person in question might absent themselves completely from all consideration, or they may participate in the discussion, but not the decision.

## Why have such a policy?

1. Members of the organisation Board, and other officials, have an obligation to act in the best interests of the organisation, and in accordance with the organisation’s aims and objectives. Other volunteers have similar obligations. Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual’s personal, family or business interests and/or loyalties conflict with the objectives of the organisation.
2. Such conflicts may create problems and can:

* Inhibit free discussion;
* Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of the organisation; and
* Risk the impression that the organisation has acted improperly.

1. The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can damage the reputation of the organisation.

## Conflicts of interest may come in a number of different forms, which will generally include:

* direct financial gain or benefit to the interested party, such as a payment for services provided to the organisation, or
* the award of a contract to another organisation in which the interested party has interest or involvement and from which there is an opportunity for financial gain.
* Preferential treatment of the organisation in which the interested party has involvement, in regards to services offered or work done by the organisation.

## The Declaration of Interests

1. To address the above, board members and other officials must declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in the organisation. A declaration of interest form is provided by the organisation for this purpose (Appendix 2).
2. The declaration of interests needs to be reviewed or updated at least annually and also when any changes occur.
3. If anyone is not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If anyone would like to discuss this issue, please contact the organisation Chair for confidential guidance.
4. Interests will be recorded on the organisation’s register of interests, which will be maintained by the person nominated by the Chief Executive. The register will be accessible by Directors and the organisation Chair only.
5. Where it is subsequently discovered that one or more persons involved in a decision had not declared their conflict of interest to the meeting, the board will decide whether the matter needs to be reconsidered and may so direct.

## What to do if you face a conflict of interest?

1. You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.
2. If you fail to declare an interest that is known to the organisation Chair, he/she will declare that interest for you.

## Decisions taken where a board member, other official or member of staff, has an interest

1. In the event of the board having to decide upon a question in which a board member, other official or member of staff, has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision, excluding those interested parties.
2. Interested board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests. They must absent themselves from the discussion or, at the discretion of the Chair, participate in the discussion, but not the decision-making process.
3. All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded by the organisation Business Support Officer and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The report will record:
4. The nature and extent of the conflict;
5. An outline of the discussion;
6. The actions taken to manage the conflict.

## Managing contracts

1. No interested party must not be involved in managing or monitoring a contract in which they have an interest. Monitoring arrangements for such contracts will include provisions for an independent challenge of bills and invoices, and termination of the contract if the relationship is unsatisfactory.
2. All contracts will be internally audited and, from time to time, may be externally audited.

# Confidentiality and non-competition

All directors are required to observe appropriate levels of confidentiality and not to engage in competition with the organisation as per the terms of the agreement which all directors are required to sign (please refer to Appendix 3). These agreements shall be stored by the person appointed by the Chief Executive.

# Budgets/financial statements.

A copy of the current budget/financial statement is available upon request from the Chair and management accounts are submitted by the CEO for every full meeting of the board of directors.

# Financial Signing Limits

The Organisation has limits for signing off expenditure. These can be seen in Appendix 4.

# Delegated Purchase Authority Levels

The organisation has a system of delegated authority for purchasing. These can be seen in Appendix 5.

# Liability

The board is legally responsible for the conduct of the organisation. However, individuals are generally protected from personal liability. Provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith, any liability will fall on the board, even if it exceeds its powers, rather than on individuals.

# Pay

Board members of the Organisation act in a voluntary capacity.

Please refer to the Expenses Policy for further information on what can be claimed.

# Organisational Structure

## Board

The board provides leadership and strategic direction to the organisation, as informed by our members. It is made up of the Chair, And up to 9 other directors. All directors, those that are appointed and elected must be considered for appointment based on the skill requirements of the board required to oversee the management of the company and support the delivery of the organisation’s strategy.

The recruitment and remuneration panel, made up of selected Directors, will have the remit to identify required skill sets and potential Directors who can provide these skills. The panel will then make its recommendations to the board and, in doing so, ensure there is a diverse and varied skill set on the board to lead the direction of the business through a process of evolution and modernisation.

## Staff

The diagram below shows the staff structure.

<< Organisation Chart >>

# The role of Chair, and Board bios

## The Chair

The Chair is responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the board and has a vital role in setting the highest of expectations for professional standards of governance. It is the Chair’s role to give the board clear leadership and direction, keeping it focused on its core functions. Chairs should encourage the board to work together as an effective team, building their skills, knowledge, and experience. They need to ensure that everyone is actively contributing relevant skills and experience, participating constructively in meetings, and actively involved in the work of any committees. It is their role to make sure everyone understands what is expected of them and receives appropriate induction, training and development. It is for the Chair to have honest conversations, as necessary, if anyone appears not to be committed or is ineffective in their role.

The Chair must not exercise as an individual any of the functions of the board except where this has been sanctioned by the board. However, the Chair is permitted to act in cases of urgency where a delay in making a decision would be likely to be seriously detrimental to the interests of the organisation.

A copy of all current Board bios is available here: << web link>>

# Chief Executive Bio

## A copy of the Chief Executive’s bio can be found here:

<< Link to CEOs bio >>

# Schedule of meetings/events for the year

Each year, a schedule of meetings will be approved for the following year. In this schedule will also be any specific events which the Board has decided to organise.

Calendar of events can be found on the organisation’s website

# Standard Board Agenda

Meetings are expected to last up to << n >> hours. Whilst timings are of course flexible, and additional time as necessary will be made available for important issues, every effort should be made to adhere to the timings as far as possible, so as to ensure an efficient meeting. Agenda items are allotted time allocations for discussion, the time allowed for specific topics will depend on the estimated depth of the discussion.

Standard agenda items:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declaration of interests
4. Financial Report
5. Minutes from the last meeting:
   1. Matters arising
   2. Approval

Strategic agenda items

Topic based reports presented in line with strategic objectives

<< List any regular strategic items >>

Rest of standard agenda items

1. Review of risk register
2. Any other business

# Board meeting attendance policy

Board members are expected to attend each meeting. Reasonable absence for sickness or holidays should be reported to the Chair beforehand.

# Contact Details of Board and Staff Members

Please refer to Appendix 6 for contact details for other Board members and senior staff.

# Safeguarding –

The Organisation must ensure it has effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place that take into account risk.

The NSPCC runs online safeguarding training to help organisations recruit staff or volunteers. Further details are available on the NSPCC website. There is a charge for this service.

The Board must ensure that all staff understand, and their procedures make clear, that all allegations should be reported straight away, normally to the Chief Executive. The procedures should also identify the person, often the Chair, to whom reports should be made in the absence of the Chief Executive, or in cases where the Chief Executive themselves are the subject of the allegation or concern.

Please see Appendix 7 for our safeguarding policies

# Funding

Funding for the running cost of the organisation comes from an annual grant from Sport Wales, its membership fees and other commercial activity to ensure it continues to strive to achieve the position of reduced reliance on the public purse.

# Financial accountability

Board members have responsibility to ensure the Organisation’s assets and funds are used only in accordance with legislation, their articles of association and funding agreements.

Board members have wide discretion over their use of funds and are responsible for the proper stewardship of those funds by exercising reasonable discretion and ensuring value for money, regularity and propriety on all transactions and in all decision-making.

The Board must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover in compliance with their legal obligations. Board should inform their insurer promptly of any potential risk.

The organisation will clearly identify where restricted funds exist and how they are spent.

## Procurement

All the organisation’s officers and budget holders are responsible for obtaining best value for money for goods and services, wherever possible.

Any expenditure over £<< Specify >> should be subject to quotations with the following criteria being considered:

* Value for money
* Quality of goods/service provided
* Reputation of supplier
* Delivery or completion date

## Maintenance, repair or support facilities

Where approved commercial partners are used wno quotation procedure is required.

# Collection of Money

In the interest of security and accounting, money collected or received by officers or employees should not be held for longer than two working days.

Amounts over £<< Specify >> should be banked within 2 working days.

Amounts over £<< Specify >> must be banked immediately.

Cash payments of over £<< Specify >> should not be accepted.

Payments from unknown sources should only be accepted on production of evidence of ID and copy ID documentation retained. In case of concern or doubt, queries should be referred to the Finance Director.

# Expenses

Board members may claim for out-of-pocket expenses to cover costs such as travel or childcare, which they have incurred because of serving on the board. This does not include payments to cover loss of earnings for attending meetings.

In general, travel arrangements for board members will be made for them by the organisation’s staff. The exception to this will be mileage.

## Private car

Travel expenses will be equal to the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) approved mileage rates, which are reviewed annually and are on HMRC website. Other expenses should be paid on provision of a receipt (at a rate set out in the scheme) and be limited to the amount shown on the receipt.

Board members are encouraged to car share whenever possible. In such cases, the driver can claim an additional << 5p >> per mile for journeys with a fellow director or employee as a passenger.

The organisation accepts no responsibility for fines incurred whilst driving, e.g., Speeding fines.

## By Taxi

You are expected to use taxis only when strictly necessary and where it is cost effective to do so. You should always obtain a receipt and tips will not be reimbursed.

## Car Parking

Parking costs incurred in the course of business travel may be claimed.

# Gifts and Hospitality

It is an offence under the Bribery Act 2010 for you to corruptly accept any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or refraining from doing, anything in your official capacity, or showing favour or disfavour to any person in your official capacity. Furthermore, under the Prevention of Corruption Act, any money, gift or consideration received by you from a person or organisation holding, or seeking to obtain, a contract with the organisation, will be deemed to have been received corruptly unless you prove to the contrary. It is, therefore, essential for you to declare any gifts or considerations received to the Chief Executive and to obtain written approval for the retention of the gift.

You must not, either directly or indirectly, accept any gift, reward or benefit from any member of the public or organisation with whom you have been brought into contact with by reason of your official duties. The only exceptions to this rule are as follows:

* isolated gifts of a trivial character or inexpensive seasonal gifts (such as calendars)
* conventional hospitality provided it is normal and reasonable in the circumstances
* all such items should be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register held on the organisation shared file

# Responsibility for Financial Administration

The Finance Director shall make arrangements for the proper administration of the Association’s financial affairs including, as appropriate, the following: all relevant spreadsheets and finance software packages.

# Managing Risk

It is the policy of the organisation to assess and manage risks to the Association. A Risk Register is maintained and will be managed by the Audit and Risk committee made up of directors of the board plus an independent member. The Chair of Audit and Risk will be independent to the Board of Directors

# Performance management

The board must approve disciplinary, capability, grievance, and under-performance procedures for staff. It must also provide a procedure to enable staff to appeal against a decision to dismiss them.

The Board should be mindful of their obligations under employment law and take into account the ACAS Code of Practice.

The main staffing functions of the board are for the appointment, development, conduct, suspension, and dismissal of the Chief Executive.

In addition to their responsibilities under employment law, the board also has responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. This sets out that employers must not discriminate against employees on any protected grounds (e.g., race or sex) in relation to pay, conditions, opportunities, promotion, training or dismissals. Advice for employers on their responsibilities is available on the ACAS website.

The board may delegate all of its functions relating to staff employment with the exception of:

* + 1. establishing a selection panel to appoint a Chief Executive
    2. making sure that the Chief Executive benefits from any statutory entitlements
    3. responding to any report that raises serious concerns about the performance of the Chief Executive;
    4. establishing procedures for the regulation of conduct and discipline of staff, and making sure that safe recruitment procedures are applied.

# Recruitment Policy and Procedures

## Purpose

The organisation recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. The organisation therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential to do this.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon the principles outlined below, which also meet the requirements of the organisation’s Equality and Diversity Policy and all other relevant employment legislation. It does not apply to the renewal of existing contracts/appointments where the board is satisfied with performance.

## Scope

This policy and procedure cover all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. It is applicable to all staff recruitment. In order for the policy and procedure to be effective, it is essential that any employee who is involved in any aspect of the recruitment and/or selection of staff is aware of this document and follows it.

## Core Principles

* The organisation has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment.
* The organisation will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job.
* The organisation wishes to encourage the recruitment of staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment process and, as required, in order for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the role.
* The organisation will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.
* The organisation will provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities in order to meet this core principle. Any member of staff involved in the selection of staff should satisfy him or herself that he/she is appropriately knowledgeable and can comply with the requirements of this policy and procedure.
* Recruitment and selection is a key public relations exercise and should enhance the reputation of the company. The organisation will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
* The organisation will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is cost effective.
* If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual’s application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
* All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA). Applicants will have the right to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

## Recruitment & Selection Procedure

There are a number of key stages in recruiting and selecting for a post. This procedure outlines the key stages.

## Preparation Stage

The recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role against the strategic plans and budget has been completed.

A job description and person specification must be produced or updated for any vacant post that is to be filled. The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post. The person specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge and experience for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when writing the person specification to ensure that criteria used do not indirectly discriminate against certain groups of applicants.

## Advertising

As a minimum, all positions will normally be advertised upon the organisation Website and the Sport Wales website, as well as dedicated recruitment websites. This will help maximise equality of opportunity and provide staff with opportunities for career development, thus maintaining the skills and expertise of existing staff. In exceptional circumstances, the Chair may waive the need to advertise. This is likely to include the following circumstances:

* positions requiring specialised expertise where it can be demonstrated a nominated individual is the most suitable person for the position or;
* where the work is required for a specific purpose of no greater than six months duration.

Applicants should be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision regarding their suitability for the role.

Staff who have been in an acting position that subsequently becomes vacant will have to apply for the position when it is advertised.

Applicants are asked to provide equal opportunities information when making their application, to enable a robust means of monitoring the success of the recruitment process in relation to our diversity aims. This information is separate from the job application and applicants are free to indicate that they do not want to provide these details.

* + - The organisation has a legal obligation to comply fully with the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
  + All adverts must be placed through the Chief Executive.
  + All advertising must be cost-effective.

## Selection of Candidates

### Shortlisting

For senior appointments, shortlisting may involve the whole panel, but must be carried out by a minimum of two people to avoid any possibility of bias, one of whom would normally be the intended direct line manager.

Notes of the shortlisting decisions for each candidate should be recorded by each member of the panel on the shortlisting decision form. The form should be returned to the Chief Executive once the shortlisted candidates for interview have been selected.

Shortlisted candidates should be provided with details of the selection process, including any tests, in writing, giving as much prior notice as possible and a minimum of five working days before the interview. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, they should also be asked to advise if there are any particular arrangements or reasonable adjustments that could be made so that they can participate fully in the selection process.

All candidates (internal and external) should be assessed objectively against the selection criteria set out in the personal specification and only candidates who meet all the essential criteria should be short-listed. Assumptions about the qualities of internal candidates should not be made.

## Selection & Interview

All redeployment candidates who meet the essential criteria for the post (as set out in the personal specification) will be offered an interview.

The interview should normally be carried out by a minimum of three people, for senior appointments, one of whom should be the Chair. If practicable, there should be an independent appointee included. With other posts, the interviews should be carried out by at least << two >> people.

Selection is a two-way process: Those involved in recruitment should consider how best to convey a positive image.

Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification.

Notes recording the salient points of the interview should be taken, so that these can be referred back to. Notes of the interview and any other notes on the candidate taken during the recruitment and selection process should be passed back to the Chief Executive following the selection process and will be kept for a minimum of six months following the selection process.

In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process, this should be arranged by the Chair of the panel, although he or she may delegate this to another member of the panel, where appropriate.

Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courteously and sensitively and will, as a minimum, receive telephone or written notification of the outcome of the selection process.

## Referees

Information sought from referees should be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description should be provided. It should be noted that many organisations have a policy of not providing personal references and therefore references provided may only confirm details of current appointment. In such circumstances candidates should not be prejudiced.

Referees should not be contacted without the candidate’s consent and the information provided should be treated as confidential by the panel members.

## Making the Appointment

It is recognised that in many cases it is desirable to make a verbal offer very shortly after the selection process. In such cases, the verbal offer will normally be made by the Chair of the selection panel, although he or she has the discretion to delegate this responsibility, if felt appropriate.

Offers of employment are normally subject to satisfactory references, checks of qualifications and any other checks as appropriate, such as Asylum and Immigration checks, Disclosure and Barring checks and others, if relevant.

## Appointing a Chief Executive

Appointing a Chief Executive is a big decision in an organisation’s life. It is crucial that a board has the skills it needs to carry out a thorough and effective selection process. Boards may need to seek help or training, for example, on good interviewing techniques, or on how to secure meaningful and accurate references.

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## What is Sports Equality?

* Sports Equality is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognizing inequalities and taking steps to address them.
* Sports Equality is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to all members of society.
* Sports Equality is about making sure that all our people can realise their talent and fulfil their potential.
* Sports Equality is about individuals’ responsibility to challenge discriminatory practice and promote inclusion.

## Statement of Intent

* The organisation wishes to act as an exemplar for equality and diversity within its sphere of influence. In doing so, the organisation commits to promoting good equitable practice within the organisation and with partners.
* The organisation is committed to ensuring that the membership of its Board reflects its commitment to equality and diversity.
* The organisation will ensure that responsibility and accountability for equality and diversity is placed firmly at the most senior levels within the organisation.
* The organisation will deliver on this policy by building equality and diversity into all aspects of its work. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that its Board, employees, volunteers, and member associations are committed to this policy.
* The organisation will ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or member or other receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
* The organisation will work to ensure that all involved with it are treated fairly and equally.
* The organisation is committed to ensuring that its employees, volunteers members and others are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation and that the organisation’s position in this is made clear to everyone.

## Legislative Guidance

* In order to fulfil its legal obligations, the organisation’s Equality and Diversity Policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”) and any other relevant legislation.

## Employment

The organisation is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee or volunteer receives unlawful, less favourable treatment, on the grounds of age, gender, colour, disability, ethnicity, parental or marital status, nationality, religion or belief, social status and sexual preference.

## Legal requirements

The organisation is required by law not to discriminate against its employees or members and recognises its legal obligations.

**Equality** is a concept of being fair, unbiased, and just. It involves ensuring that everyone has access to the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential - recognising barriers that get in the way of equality and taking steps to address these, therefore redressing existing imbalances.

**Diversity** aims to recognise, respect and value people’s differences. It is focused on engaging everyone and making effective use of the differences and similarities between us. By using the talents of all, we can achieve better results as an organisation, sporting community and proud nation.

## Types of discrimination – definitions

**Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

**Discrimination by association**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

**Perception discrimination**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, disability, and gender reassignment.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is neutral on the face of it, but its impact particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Harassment**

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. People will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. They are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

**Harassment by others**

Applies to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It also includes the failure of an employer to take reasonable steps to protect an employee from persistent (three occasions or more) third party harassment.

**Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. They are not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

A complainant will not need to compare their treatment with that of a person who has not made or supported a claim under the Act.

## Protected characteristics

**Age**

The Act protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can justify it, ie. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. Age is the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination.

**Disability**

The Act has made it easier for a person to show that they are disabled and protected from disability discrimination. Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, which would include things like using a telephone, reading a book, or using public transport.

The Act includes protection from discrimination arising from disability. This states that it is discrimination to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (e.g., a tendency to make spelling mistakes arising from dyslexia).

Additionally, indirect discrimination covers disabled people. This means that a job applicant or employee could claim that a particular rule or requirement you have in place disadvantages people with the same disability.

The Act also includes a provision which makes it unlawful, except in certain circumstances, for employers to ask about a candidate’s health before offering them work.

**Gender**

Both men and women are protected under the Act.

**Gender reassignment**

The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts, or has completed a process to change his or her gender.

It is discrimination to treat transsexual people less favourably for being absent from work because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

**Marriage and Civil Partnership**

The Act protects people who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.

**Pregnancy and maternity**

A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. During this period, pregnancy and maternity discrimination cannot be treated as sex discrimination.

**Race/ethnicity**

For the purposes of the Act, ‘race’ includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

**Religion or Belief**

In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.

Discrimination because of religion or belief can occur even where both the discriminator and recipient are of the same religion or belief.

**Sexual orientation**

The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.

## Implementation

**The organisation will**:

* Foster and promote partnerships with key equality organisations at all levels.
* Agree actions as part of our annual plan within which specific roles, responsibilities and resources are allocated and targets set.
* Make available a copy of this document to all staff, members and volunteers of the organisation and this will also form part of any recruitment and subsequent induction process.
* Ensure that all employees, volunteers and agents have responsibilities to respect, act in accordance with, and thereby support and promote, the spirit and intentions of the policy.
* Take measures to ensure that our employment practices are non-discriminatory.
* Ensure that no job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job, or which constitute unfair discrimination.
* Adopt a planned approach to eliminate barriers which discriminate.
* The organisation will ensure that consultants and/or agents and advisors are appointed fairly and equally. Consultants used by the organisation must demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.
* Take full account of this policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to its activities.
* Collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in sport and outdoor pursuits and take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality.
* Provide access to training for board members, staff and key volunteers to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities.
* The organisation will work with its members to encourage them to adopt policies and procedures that support equality of opportunity for all their members, staff and volunteers.
* promote positive images and text relating to diverse groups across a wide range of publications and formats.
* where appropriate, meet the information needs of all individuals and communities.
* publish and disseminate information on sports/outdoor pursuits programmes promoting equality and diversity.
* establish links with appropriate partners to target specific audiences, and
* promote the use of female, ethnic minority and disabled role models in sport/outdoor pursuits, where appropriate.

## Positive action

The organisation may take positive action or introduce special measures for any group which is currently under-represented in any aspect of the work done by the organisation.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The organisation will regularly monitor and evaluate the policy, practices, procedures and operations on an ongoing basis, and will inform employees and members of the impact of this Equality and Diversity Policy.

The Board will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equality and Diversity Policy.

## Policy and Procedure.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates this Equality and Diversity Policy.

# Customer Charter and Complaints

## << Read and amend this section as appropriate >>

## Our commitment

The organisation is committed to providing a first-class level of customer service to our members and others. We endeavour to maintain this with regular reviews, staff training and by encouraging feedback.

This Customer Charter outlines our commitment and the standards of service a customer can expect from us, how to obtain the information a customer may need, and it explains how they can help us to continue to maintain high standards of service through their feedback.

We regard all who have dealings with us as “customers”, whether they are the organisation members, partners, stakeholders, members of the public or others.

We are committed to:

* Providing a professional, cheerful, courteous and efficient service and treating all our customers with respect, fairness and honesty.
* Behaving ethically at all times.
* Respecting and encouraging diversity.
* Providing clear and accurate information on the services we offer.
* Endeavouring to ensure that our services represent best current practice.
* Endeavouring to ensure that our services continue to be relevant, useful and helpful to our members and further the cause of sport and outdoor pursuits.
* Endeavouring to ensure that we accurately represent the views of our members when conducting advocacy work.
* Conducting regular training to ensure we maintain a high level of proficiency.
* Continually striving to improve services and learning from customer feedback. All comments and suggestions are reviewed upon receipt and improvements are made as necessary.
* Complying with all relevant legislation.
* Supporting the use of the Welsh language.
* Ensuring we communicate effectively.
* Reducing our carbon footprint.

## Making a complaint

If a customer finds that they are dissatisfied with the quality of service received, we encourage them to register a complaint by telephone, email, or a letter. Details of contact name, business address, email and phone number can be found on the organisation website.

## Managing complaints

All complaints received are taken very seriously and will be dealt with immediately, where possible. If a complaint cannot be resolved by a staff member in 7 working days , then it will be forwarded to the Chair, or, if more appropriate, to another Director, who will provide an initial response within working seven days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

When investigating a complaint, we will:

* Gather and analyse all relevant information, clarifying any confusion that may have occurred.
* Decide on any appropriate action to resolve the complaint.
* If necessary, discuss the issue face to face.
* When necessary, provide regular updates on the progress of an investigation until the matter is fully resolved.
* Aim to resolve all complaints within 28 days, wherever possible. The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the complaint.

## Appeals

Anyone not happy with the outcome of the complaint may appeal. Any appeal must be made in writing, setting out clearly the reasons for the appeal. The request must be received by the Chair of the board within 5 working days of the date on which the written outcome from the complaint is received.

The Chair will arrange for someone to deal with the appeal, and this could be someone from outside the organisation.

The appeal will consist of a further meeting at which the complainant will be able to explain why they believe the outcome from their complaint is inappropriate.

The complainant will be required to take all reasonable steps to attend the appeal meeting.

The person hearing the appeal will decide whether or not to uphold the original decision. Their decision, together with the reasons for their decision, will be confirmed to the complainant in writing and will be final and binding.

## Vexatious and persistent complaints

Complaints deemed to be vexatious or persistent complaints will be dealt with in line with our Vexatious and Persistent Complainants Policy.

**Feedback**

We value feedback about experience of our service. We would encourage all customers to provide feedback at any time. All such feedback will be treated with the utmost respect and seriousness.

Comments should be sent in the first instance to our Chief Executive or, if felt more appropriate, to our Chair.

## Telephone Service

Our staff members are the initial point of contact for enquiries. They will endeavour to respond promptly and helpfully and always in a professional manner. Where a staff member is unable to respond to a face-to-face enquiry directly, they will refer the enquiry to the relevant person. With regard to telephone contacts, all phone messages will be responded to at the first available opportunity.

## Letter and Email Correspondence

We will endeavour to acknowledge receipt of all emails within three working days, except in unusual circumstances. Where possible, a full response to the email enquiry will be supplied within 10 working days. Where possible, we will respond to all letter correspondence within 10 working days of receipt. In the event that an answer can’t be sought within the 10-day period, contact will be made to inform the customer of this, and frequent updates will be given until the enquiry has been resolved.

At times it may be deemed more appropriate to respond to a written enquiry over the telephone e.g., if staff member needs to obtain further information.

## What we expect

To ensure that we are able to provide the best possible service, we expect our members to meet the following expectations:

* Treat all staff members in a polite and courteous manner.
* Respect the safety, privacy and needs of all other users.
* Refrain from using any abusive or aggressive form of language when communicating with a member of staff.
* Continue to provide feedback as above.

# Persistent and vexatious complaint policy

## << Read and amend this section as appropriate >>

## Introduction

A very small minority of customers make or pursue complaints in a persistent or vexatious way which can either slow down the investigation of their complaint or can have significant resource issues for us. This policy is to ensure unreasonable and unreasonably persistent complainants are dealt with fairly. It sets out clearly for staff and complainants what is expected of them, what they can do, and who can authorise actions. It will help us assess and monitor how we deal with and respond to unreasonable and unreasonably persistent complainants.

In considering when to use this policy it is critical that we firstly consider and ensure we understand a customer’s circumstance, how and why they feel as they do and what it is that would resolve the matter for them. We must be sure that we have given them the right opportunity to express their views and opinions and that we have listened and given appropriate thought and effort to resolving and explaining the position and our actions.

If a customer’s behaviour adversely affects the organisation’s ability to do its work and provide services to others, such behaviour may need to be addressed by restricting contact with the organisation.

The final decision to restrict a customer’s access to our offices and officers can only be taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair. Before deciding whether the policy should be applied the Chief Executive and/or Chair should be satisfied that:

* the complaint is being or has been investigated properly;
* any decision reached has been reviewed and is found to be appropriate;
* communications with the complainant have been adequate; and
* the complainant is not now providing any significant new information that might affect our view on the complaint.

## Persistent and vexatious complaint policy

A vexatious complainant is someone who contentiously raises a complaint, **without grounds**, in order to cause annoyance or disruption.

A persistent complainant is someone who contacts the organisation and raises the same complaint or similar complaints many times. Many times is defined as **more than three separate occasions**. This could be regardless of whether the complaint has been dealt with.

Examples of persistent and vexatious behaviour are as follows:

* Persistently approaching the organisation through different routes about the same issue.
* Persistently seeking an outcome which we have already explained is unrealistic for policy, legal or other valid reasons.
* Complaining about or challenging an issue based on a historic and/or irreversible decision or incident.
* Making an unreasonable number of contacts with the organisation, by any means, in relation to a specific complaint or complaints.
* Making persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of the organisation staff and/or the complaint process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a complainant who insists on immediate responses to numerous, frequent and/or complex letters, faxes, telephone calls or emails).
* Adopting an excessively ‘scattergun’ approach, for instance, pursuing a complaint or complaints not only with the organisation but at the same time with a Member of Parliament or the member of the Welsh Assembly Government, other National Governing Bodies, or Sport Wales.
* Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint despite offers of assistance.
* Refusing to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
* Refusing to accept that issues are not within the remit of the complaints policy and procedure despite having been provided with information about the scope of the policy and procedure.
* Refusing to accept that issues are not within the power of the organisation to investigate, change or influence (examples could be a complaint about a NGB);
* Insisting on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints policy and procedure or with good practice (e.g., insisting that there must not be any written record of the complaint).
* Refusing to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome and /or denying that an adequate response has been given.
* Making the same complaint repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded and insisting that the minor differences make these ‘new complaints’ which should be put through the full complaints procedure.
* Combinations of some or all the above features.

Some individuals that staff may consider to be vexatious or persistent complainants may be behaving as such because of a specific circumstance or difficulty such as mental health problem. Where this is indicated any concerns that staff may have about a customer’s vulnerability must be raised immediately with the Chief Executive in line with any policies relating to this. If the complainant has special needs, an advocate might be helpful to both parties.

Based on the circumstances and behaviour of the customer and their complaint, restrictive actions will be tailored accordingly.

Actions that could be taken to restrict access and contact:

* Requesting contact in a particular form only (e.g., letters only).
* Placing restrictions on telephone calls to specific times and days of the week.
* Requesting that the customer enters into a contact agreement for their future contact with the organisation.
* Placing restrictions on the amount of time staff will spend investigating their complaints.
* Where relationships have broken down, requesting that the customer uses an appropriate advocate to act and contact the organisation on their behalf.
* Banning the complainant from sending emails to some or all the organisation’s staff and insisting they only correspond by letter or a designated email contact.
* § Banning the complainant from using any of the organisation’s services.
* Banning the complainant from visiting any of the organisation’s buildings except by appointment.
* Requiring contact to take place with one named member of staff only.
* Restricting telephone calls to specified days/times/duration (this may also include installing call recording software to record conversations, with the customer being made aware of this).
* Requiring any face-to-face contact to take place in the presence of an appropriate witness.
* § Letting the complainant know that the organisation will not reply to or acknowledge any further contact from them on the specific topic of that complaint.

In some circumstances, the organisation may decide that it is appropriate to severely reduce or completely stop responding to a particular customer.

The decision to restrict or stop a customer’s access to the organisation’s offices and staff can only be taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with Chair.

The person receiving the complaint will contact the Chief Executive to discuss why the complainant’s behaviour is causing a concern, giving clearly documented evidence to support this and outlining how the behaviour needs to change.

The Chief Executive will send a letter to the customer, outlining this policy and procedure. The letter will clearly explain to the customer the actions that the organisation may take if their behaviour does not change.

If the behaviour continues, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, will make a decision as to the action to take. A letter will then be sent to a customer outlining this decision. All letters will include:

* Why we have taken the decision we have.
* What specific action we are taking.
* The duration of that action.
* The date of the three month review.
* The customer’s right to appeal against the decision to apply this policy.

All customers have the right of appeal. All appeals will be heard by the Chair.

All decisions will be reviewed after three months. A letter will be sent to a customer after the review, outlining the decisions from the review.

The Chief Executive will keep a record of all customers who have had this policy applied to them. Decisions taken under this policy are subject to the Data Protection Act principles and the Human Rights Act.

The Chief Executive will provide an annual report to the Board highlighting key information about customers who have been classed as vexatious/persistent as per this policy. This report will also include any lessons learned.

## Harassment and bullying

Persistent and vexatious complainant behaviour may amount to bullying or harassment. All staff have the right to be treated with respect and dignity in the workplace. Behaviour by third parties that bullies, harasses, or intimidates staff is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The organisation will take all reasonable steps to prevent such behaviour. Staff will be protected from victimisation after raising genuine complaints, whatever the outcome.

## Contact information

For more help or information, customers and staff can contact the organisation.

Email: << email address >>

Telephone: << telephone number >>

# Audit report

A copy of the last audit report can be obtained from the Chair.

# Insurance

The organisation retains a comprehensive insurance policy covering public liability and professional indemnity. If you wish to receive further information on this, please request this from the Chief Executive.

# Board Appraisal and Development

The organisation is committed to developing your skills and experience during the duration of your role. The Chair has a particular responsibility for ensuring the effective functioning of the board.

Good chairs lead by example and ask for regular feedback from their board to improve their own effectiveness. They will also have an annual conversation with each person to discuss the impact of their contribution to the work of the board and to identify any development that might help you in the year ahead.Thesemeetings will take place each April. As part of this process, consideration will be given to carrying out a 360-degree appraisal review from time to time. A copy of the annual Board Appraisal and Development form can be seen as Appendix 8.

Boards should carry out regular audits of the skills they possess in the light of the skills and competences they need, and actively seek to address any gaps they identify – through either recruitment or training. They should also reflect regularly on whether they have the right overall balance of people and skills.

# Succession Planning

Succession planning arrangements should be in place so that any change in the Chair does not impede the board’s effectiveness. Boards should consider carefully how many times they re-elect their Chair to a new term of office. In some circumstances, a change of Chair may be necessary for the board to remain invigorated and forward looking.

## Succession Planning Policy

It is the policy of the organisation to, as far as possible, ensure replacements for key job incumbents in staff, volunteer, consultant, and board positions in the organisation are available.

## Desired Outcomes

The desired outcomes of succession planning are to:

* Ensure the systematic and long-term development of individuals.
* Provide a continuous flow of talented people to meet the organisation’s needs.
* Meet the organisation’s need to exercise social responsibility by providing for the advancement of diversity inside the Association.

## Procedures

Each year, the Chief Executive will arrange a meeting with the Chair to review results from the previous year’s succession planning efforts and to plan for the present year’s process.

They will, together, conduct an analysis to pinpoint areas of the organisation in which predictable turnover, resulting from retirements or other changes, will lead to special needs for new talent.

The analysis will take account of diversity, bearing in mind at all times the organisation’s Equality and Diversity Policy.

The analysis will be presented to the board for discussion and any necessary actions at the next board meeting, following the end of January.

Throughout the year, the Chief Executive will monitor any actions as may have been agreed by the board.

A Skills Matrix will be maintained for each board member, with a view to informing recruitment and succession – see form at Appendix 9.

# Premises

The organisation is based << address details >>. Board meetings will tend to take place at this location but could be based at other locations in Wales.

# Welsh Language Policy

## << Read and amend this section as appropriate >>

## Introduction

We acknowledge the fact that, under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, 2011, the Welsh language has official status, and should be treated no less favourably than the English language.

We believe that it is good business practise to provide services in the language of choice of our customers. We also believe that it shows respect to our workforce to encourage and facilitate the use of their chosen language in the workplace.

We will ensure that we make constant progress towards achieving this ambition, and this Welsh Language Policy sets out our current commitments in relation to using Welsh and also, where appropriate, sets targets to help us develop our use of Welsh.

The scope of our commitments in this policy should be interpreted reasonably – they are limited to activities and services in Wales, or which are delivered to people living in Wales, and also limited to activities and services which we are able to control or influence. They are also limited to the extent of our available resources – both human and financial, though we will always meet our legal responsibilities in a positive manner.

Please direct any comments or complaints about this policy to the Chief Executive, or Chair, of the organisation. Our contact details may be found on our website.

## Public Image

**Signs**

We currently do not have any permanent or temporary signs. We do not anticipate developing any in the foreseeable future, but if we do, they shall be bilingual, where appropriate.

**Corporate Brand**

Our corporate brand is bilingual.

**Stationery**

Our stationery bears our bilingual corporate brand.

**Business Cards**

Our business cards are bilingual.

**Website**

Our website includes some Welsh. We will use more Welsh on our website as and when resources permit.

**Social Media**

Social media communication is currently only available in English. Given the immediate nature of the medium, the use of a translator is not practical. The Welsh language will only be applied if a member of staff is able to converse in the language.

**Recruitment advertising**

Our recruitment advertising is in English only as we do not have the availability of staff to interview in the medium of Welsh. Should this position change, then so will our policy.

**Printed Publications**

All external printed publications shall be bilingual, where appropriate, budgets permitting.

**Exhibition and Marketing Materials**

All appropriate materials will be produced bilingually, where appropriate, budgets permitting.

## Communications

**Record Keeping**

## Staff and the Workplace

**Assessing Language Skills Requirements when Recruiting**

We will record what level of Welsh language skills are required to perform certain positions within the organisation e.g. where there is direct contact with the public.

**Recording and Developing our Staff’s Language Skills**

We keep a record of the Welsh language skills of our employees.

**Internal Communication**

We expect staff to respect the linguistic preferences of their colleagues and customers. We will support and facilitate the use of Welsh and English in the workplace.

**Welsh language software**

We allow our staff to install a Welsh language interface for any software they use which has one available.

**Leadership**

We will ensure that this policy is supported at the highest level in our organisation. Our Chief Executive is responsible for implementing, championing and reviewing this policy.

**Awareness**

This policy will be provided to all of our staff.

**Review**

We will assess and revise this policy at least every three years.

**Services delivered on our behalf**

We will encourage every contractor or third party that delivers services on our behalf to comply with this policy.

# Disciplinary Procedure (Members)

## << Read and amend this section as appropriate >>

## Introduction

These Rules and Procedures relate to the organisation exercising its jurisdiction in relation to a disciplinary matter relating to its members. It does not apply to complaints against employees which has a separate process.

## Good conduct

The organisation’s Articles of Association enables the company to exclude from membership any members that bring it into disrepute and, hence, all members, including their nominated representatives, must so comply.

These procedures provide a process which the organisation will use in exercising its jurisdiction in cases where a breach is alleged.

## Complaints procedure

A complaint alleging a breach of the above may be lodged by any of the organisation’s members or board directors or customers of the organisation. It must be in writing and set out the details of the complaint.

It must be lodged with the Chief Executive of the organisation within 21 days of the event, or its coming to light, except in exceptional circumstances. The Chief Executive will investigate the matter or if appropriate appoint an investigating officer.

The Chief Executive or investigation officer will gather such information as is required.

The Chief Executive or Investigation Officer may dismiss the complaint if considered trivial or spurious, or if it is considered that insufficient information has been supplied to properly address a complaint.

If the complaint is not dismissed the Investigating Officer or the Chief Executive will fully investigate the complaint

Should there be any ongoing investigation by the Police, or any other body, then the matter may be delayed by the investigations officer pending the outcome of such investigation, if deemed appropriate.

The Chief Executive may suspend the membership of the member complained against (“Respondent”) during any investigation and may communicate the fact of such suspension to third parties, if considered appropriate.

Each party shall bear its own costs in connection with all matters related to these procedures.

## Publication of Decisions

The organisation may, under certain circumstances, publish details of any disciplinary action taken, including publication of any decision made by the Disciplinary Committee where a Complaint is upheld.

The organisation may at any time during the investigation process, notify any other relevant body of any details relating to the complaint as such body may need to know for the proper exercise of its functions.

The organization will:

1. send a copy of the complaint, together with the charge and evidence gathered against the Respondent, by recorded delivery post to the Respondent.
2. notify all parties of the composition of the Disciplinary Committee and of the date, place, and time of the hearing when the Disciplinary Committee is to consider the matter.
3. inform all parties that they must provide in writing to the investigation officer, within 21 days or such alternative time limit as the investigation officer shall decide, any information and copies of all documents relating to the complaint that either party wishes the Disciplinary Committee to consider in relation to the matter.
4. ask each party whether he/she wishes to make representations at the hearing (in which case he/she may be asked questions when the complaint is being considered) whether he will be represented or accompanied by a supporter, whether he/she wishes to call witnesses to give evidence, and who is intended to be present at the hearing. Each party shall provide his response within such time limit as the investigation officer shall decide.
5. inform the Respondent that, if no reply is received within the period of 21 days (or such alternative time limit imposed by the investigation officer) the Committee will consider the complaint in his/her absence, on the basis of the facts and statements in its possession:
   1. a summary of the complaint.
   2. the Disciplinary Committee’s decision in relation to the complaint and its reasons.
   3. the appropriate sanction (if any) to be imposed on the Respondent in accordance with above procedures.

Following the investigation, the Chief Executive or Investigating Officer may reject the complaint or, where the complaint is upheld, impose on behalf of the board such sanctions upon the Respondent as it thinks fit, including, without limitation:

1. a public warning in respect of the misconduct committed, including a requirement to correct any action or inaction within a specified period.
2. a suspension from membership.
3. expulsion from membership.

## Appeal of the Decision

The organisation’s Articles of Association outline the appeals procedure available.

# Data protection policy

The data protection policy can be found here:

<< Location of document >>

It is important that this document is read and understood

# Role Descriptions

## << Read and amend this section as appropriate >>

**Role: Board Director**

In becoming a director of the organisation, each individual accepts responsibility for the following collective board responsibilities. In addition, specific role responsibilities may also apply determined from time to time.

1. Determining the aims of the organisation and agreeing the strategy, plans, policies and the funding required to achieve those aims. Ensuring that the aims are clearly articulated and that everyone understands and supports them.
2. Monitoring the progress of the organisation in implementing the strategy, plans and policies against financial plans and budgets, supporting actions where appropriate.
3. Ensuring the organisation complies with all legal and regulatory requirements and statements of best practice and conducts its business in a transparent manner at all times.
4. Guarding and serving the interests of the organisation’s members and other stakeholders, including responsibilities to funding partners and staff.
5. Safeguarding the assets of the organisation.
6. Ensuring the organisation has appropriate leadership and vision.
7. Taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud, bribery and other irregularities.
8. Ensuring the Health and Safety of the organisation’s staff and volunteers.

**Role: Chair**

Responsible to: Board

Duties:

1. To chair board meetings
2. To annually review the Memorandum & Articles of Association and suggest any amendments to board
3. To liaise with administrator so as to ensure record-keeping of all governance and other important documentation, including minutes, the conflict of interest register, etc.
4. To prepare and have signed confidentiality agreements by the board, and to store these securely.
5. To provide leadership to the Association, and direction at board meetings, as required.
6. To act as principal liason with Sport Wales, Welsh Government, Other home nations Associations and any other appropriate bodies.
7. To ensure board members are clear about, and accept, their responsibilities as Directors.
8. To ensure Directors are up to date with information needed to perform their duties.
9. To ensure Directors carry out their duties, including any specific roles they may have agreed.
10. To act as line-manager for any the organisation’s Chief Executive.
11. To stay abreast of matters relating to external groups.

**Role: Finance Director**

Responsible to: Board

Duties:

* 1. Recommendation to the board annually the budget development and approval process.
  2. Oversee the preparation of the annual income and expenditure budget, based on the operational/business plan objectives of the organisation.
  3. Oversee the preparation and recommendation to the board of a rolling long term financial forecast.
  4. Development of the Association’s Financial Regulations, including the maintenance of detailed Financial Policies and Procedures.
  5. Ensuring that all the Association’s procedures and processes are compliant with legislation and generally accepted accounting principles.
  6. Oversee the preparation of the following management reports to clearly show the organisation financial position, to be presented and discussed as required by the board:
     1. Income and Expenditure budget v actual, with variance explanations
     2. Balance Sheet
     3. Cash flow forecast
     4. Debtor and creditor reports
  7. Preparation of the annual accounts in consultation with the organisation accountant, and submission to the board for approval.
  8. Ensuring that there is a financial risk assessment completed and reported to the board annually.
  9. Ensuring that a financial business continuity plan is tested every two years.
  10. Ensuring that policies and procedures have been communicated to, are understood by, and are followed by, relevant staff and volunteers.
  11. To consider other funding streams, as appropriate.

# Strategic Plan

A copy of the current Strategic Plan for the Organisation can be found on the organisation website or by clicking this link << web link >>

# Anti-Doping

<< anti-doping policy >>

# Whistle-Blowing Policy

## << Read and amend this section as appropriate >>

This Whistle-blowing Policy has been introduced in response to the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and provides a procedure which enables people to raise concerns about what is happening in the organisation, particularly where those concerns relate to unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or dangers to the public or the environment. The object of this policy is to ensure that concerns are raised and dealt with at an early stage and in an appropriate manner.

The organisation is committed to its Whistle-Blowing Policy. If you raise a genuine concern under this policy, you would not suffer any form of detriment as a result. As long as you are acting in good faith and in accordance with this Policy, it does not matter if you are mistaken.

The Whistle-Blowing Policy is primarily concerned with where the interests of others or the organisation itself are at risk. It may be difficult to decide whether a particular concern should be raised under the Whistle-Blowing Policy or under the Complaints Procedure, or under both. If you have any doubt as to the correct route to follow, please discuss this with the Chair or Chief Executive.

The organisation will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern under the Whistle-Blowing Policy. If you request your identity be protected, all possible steps will be taken to prevent your identity becoming known. If the situation arises where it is not possible to resolve the concern without revealing your identity (e.g. if your evidence is required in court), the best way to proceed with the matter will be discussed with you.

You should be aware that, by reporting matters anonymously, it will be more difficult for the organisation to investigate them. Accordingly, while the organisation will consider anonymous reports, this Policy does not cover matters raised anonymously.

## How the Matter Will Be Handled

Once you have informed the organisation of your concerns, they will be examined, and the organisation will assess what action should be taken. You would be told who is handling the matter, how they can be contacted and whether any further assistance will be needed. If you have any personal interest in the matter, this should be declared at the outset.

## How to Raise a Concern

If you have a concern about malpractice, please discuss it with the Chair or Chief Executive.

## Matters Raised Maliciously

Board members who maliciously raise a matter that they know to be untrue will be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure

# Appendix 1 – Induction Program

<< Copy of induction program >>

# Appendix 2 – Declaration of Interest Form

<< Copy of Declaration of Interest form >>

# Appendix 3 – Directors’ Agreement

<< Copy of directors’ agreement >>

# Appendix 4 – Financial Signing Limits

<< Table of limits >>

# Appendix 5 – Delegated Purchase Authority

<< List of authorities and limits >>

# Appendix 6 – Board and Staff Contact Details

<< Contact list >>

# Appendix 7 – Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

<< Copy of policy & Procedures >>

# Appendix 8 – Board Appraisal and Development form

<< Appraisal & Development Form >>

# Appendix 9 – Board Skills Matrix

<< Skills Matrix >>