



## Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan Conflict of Interest Policy

### Policy statement

Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry will maintain principles of fairness, impartiality and transparency to avoid conflicts of interest in relation to the monitoring and implementation of the Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

### Purpose of the Policy

As the designated Employer Representative Body (ERB), Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry is committed to ensuring that any conflicts of interest are identified and managed effectively to prevent any issues that may give rise to a material risk or perception of bias either to Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry, its members or to its stakeholders.

### Who does the Policy apply to?

This policy applies specifically to the monitoring and implementation of the Essex LSIP, and includes the following categories of people whether paid or unpaid:

- Anyone working for the Essex Chambers of Commerce on the Essex LSIP
- Anyone who performs services for or on behalf of the Essex Chambers on the Essex LSIP
- Members of the Essex LSIP Strategic Board
- Anyone else directly undertaking work on or on behalf of the Essex LSIP.

### General principles

In the first instance, we will seek to ensure that all relevant conflicts of interests are avoided.

Where this is not possible, we will ensure that all individuals working for or on behalf of the Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry on the monitoring and implementation of the Essex LSIP:

- Understand and comply with this Conflict of Interest Policy
- Disclose any individual / business conflicts of interest
- Do not advance their own individual interests
- Do not act against the interests of the Essex LSIP
- Understand how to raise any matters of concern

This Policy is clear:

- Any conflicts of Interest should be avoided where possible
- Any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed

### What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest is any situation in which an individual's personal interests, or interests that they owe to another body, may / may appear to influence or affect their judgement, impartiality, and ability to make an independent decision.



**Register of Interests**

We require all individuals working for or on behalf of the Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry on the monitoring and implementation of the Essex LSIP to complete a Register of Interests Form within 60 days of taking office, and to update this immediately should there be any material changes. Furthermore, all relevant individuals should raise concerns or potential issues as they arise.

A Register of Interest will be maintained and published (alongside the Conflict of Interest Policy) on the Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry website.

**Dealing with conflicts of interest**

Whilst the Essex Chambers of Commerce & Industry will take all reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest, it is acknowledged that some will inevitably arise throughout engagement activities in monitoring and implementation-of the Essex LSIP. It is therefore essential that individuals declare conflicts of interest before any relevant discussion takes place in order that conflicts are recognised and managed effectively.

Whilst the LSIP Strategic Board does not have any financial decision making powers, nor will it be involved in commissioning provision, it has the ability to influence the project. Therefore, at the start of every LSIP Strategic Board meeting the Chair will request that all present declare if they have a specific conflict of interest (in addition to their Conflict of Interest Declaration Form) with any item on the agenda. Any identified conflicts will be considered by the remainder of the group in order that the appropriate action can be taken depending upon the level of risk. These actions will not necessarily exclude individuals from a discussion but could include:

- Requesting that conflicted members are excluded from specific agenda items
- Requesting that conflicted members are asked to leave the room (log out for virtual meetings) for specific agenda items

Sensitive and confidential items will be removed from publicised minutes.

**Raising concerns**

If an individual suspects that a conflict of interest exists that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy they must raise it with the LSIP Executive Director, Andy Sparks:

[andysparks@essexchambers.co.uk](mailto:andysparks@essexchambers.co.uk)

**Schedule of revisions**

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date	Content	Reason	Who by
07/12/2022	Version 1	First Draft	Andy Sparks
04/10/2023	Version 2	Updated for LSIP Stage 2	Andy Sparks