



Galway United Friends Co-Op Committee (The Committee)

Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy

June 2022.

This policy aims to ensure that everyone is treated fairly, and with respect, and that the Committee is equally accessible to and inclusive of all members (and potential members). We the Committee are responsible for setting standards and values that apply throughout the Co-Op at every level. The Committee will not tolerate discrimination of any type, which for the purpose of this policy and the actions and sanction applicable, is regarded as harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of an individual or individuals. The implementation of the policy has been agreed and is fully supported by the Committee.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of the Code:

- To establish an agreed set of ethical principles to which all members of the Committee will adhere.
- To promote and maintain confidence and trust in Committee.
- To encourage and promote the development of good, ethical practices.
- To prevent the development or acceptance of unethical practices.
- To ensure that all potential conflicts of interest are disclosed and handled in accordance with the procedures as laid down in this document.

Meetings

Committee members must use all reasonable endeavours to attend all meetings and any subcommittees of which they are a member. There may be circumstances in which members are unable to attend a meeting, in which case they should send their apologies as soon as possible to the Committee Secretary or to the relevant sub-committee secretary. Where a member is unable to fulfil their role over a prolonged period, they will be asked to discuss their position with the Committee chair. Members attendance will form part of the members annual performance review and particular consideration will be given to meetings where a member has not attended and has not given notice of their absence.

Members are expected to:

- Ensure that they fully understand the role of the committee and their role.
- Prepare well for meetings, read all papers in advance of meetings and seek advice or support from the Secretary where necessary.
- Actively and constructively participate in discussions and decisions observing standing orders and meeting ground rules.
- Contribute positively to the discussions contributing in a considered and constructive way, listening carefully, challenging sensitively and avoiding conflict.
- Participate fully in the meeting by listening and remaining open to the discussion.
- Make objective decisions based on the Co-Op interest and based on the merits of the issues presented.
- Ensure that the committee conducts its business fairly.
- Fulfil any responsibilities/actions assigned to you at the meeting and be prepared to report back on your progress at the next meeting.
- Declare any perceived conflict of interest in advance of any agenda item at meetings.
- Behave with courtesy and respect towards fellow members.
- Adhere to the standing orders and terms of reference for the Co-Op and its committee.
- Act in the Co-ops interest.
- Discourage 'side' conversations. Always have the best interests of the Co-Op in mind.
- Any matters discussed at a meeting are confidential and not meant for public distribution. Please ensure discretion is used if asked about a matter that has been discussed in a meeting. Do not hesitate to inform the enquirer that information will be made accessible to the general membership at the appropriate time.

Communication and Social Media Guidelines

- Respect GDPR in relation to any enquires about individual's membership. Do not share/publish/post any personal details or any information which may identify specific individual/individuals.
- When using platforms such as *Whatsapp* as communication relating to the Co-op please think before you type. Texts can be misinterpreted if not clear.
- When using Social Media platforms with any topic in relation to Committee, members are expected to respect the principles and abide by the procedures set out in this policy. Please review your written posts and responses to ensure that you've conveyed exactly what you intended,
- be aware that some posts may be offensive or deemed inappropriate behaviour.
- Failure to adhere to our policies may result in disciplinary action.

Governance

- Complaints, or allegations of misconduct against any member of the Committee will only be considered by the Committee if lodged in writing to the Committee.
- The Committee shall appoint a three person sub-committee to investigate any conduct matters. Having conducted the investigation with due diligence and in a timely fashion, the sub-committee shall report its findings to the Committee. The sub-committee may recommend one of the following actions:

a) dismissal of the complaint

b) upholding the complaint and the implementation one of the following sanctions:

1) a written warning as to future conduct

2) suspension from the Coop for a limited time

3) suspension from the Coop for an indefinite period

or c) referral back to the Committee if the allegations warrant reporting to an outside agency e.g. An Garda Siochana or HSE.

- The parties involved shall be informed in writing of findings of the subcommittee. The decision of the sub-committee may be appealed to the Committee for consideration. No person involved in the allegations may act on the appointed sub-committee, or attend at the meeting of the Committee where the matter is being discussed, unless invited to do so by the Committee. The decision of the Committee in this matter shall be final.

Guidelines for Participation in Online Meetings

Digital wellbeing is a key element of today's society. As technology dominates many parts of our lives it is important that we use it ethically and protect the wellbeing of all users. Since within the online environment, there is an absence of visual and auditory clues, it is harder to determine the full meaning and intent of a communication. To ensure we provide a safe space for our members to contribute, it is important to develop a community that is respectful and ethically aware. Here are some guidelines:

Examples of POSITIVE WAYS to help maintain and build a safe online community include:

- Listening and learning, and being respectful of differing opinions, viewpoints, and experiences.
- Respecting the online space for the intended engagement, and experience objectives for all attendees.
- Demonstrating empathy and kindness toward other people
- Accepting responsibility and apologizing to those affected by our mistakes, and learning from the experience

Examples of UNACCEPTABLE behaviour include:

- Trolling, insulting or derogatory comments, and personal or political attacks
- Public or private harassment, or bullying
- Publishing others' private information, such as a physical or email address, or photos without their explicit permission
- The use of sexualized language or imagery
- The possession and/or use of any alcoholic beverages, tobacco, illicit drugs, or narcotics displayed in an online community
- Other conduct which could reasonably be considered inappropriate in a professional setting including the use of inappropriate screen/user names

I _____ agree to adhere to the rules of this policy.

Date: _____