



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Purpose:

To clarify the Conflict of Interest procedures of the Altona Junior Football Club (AJFC; the **Club**), and to ensure transparency, confidentiality, and integrity in all Club administration and communication matters.

This Policy addresses how Conflicts of Interest (in particular, involving individuals in positions of authority within the Club) are to be identified and, when present, guidance on how such situations are to be addressed. It is the intention of this Policy to ensure that, where a Conflict of Interest situation arises, appropriate actions are taken to identify and avoid any such conflicts from affecting the Members of the Club.

Scope:

This policy applies to all Members that hold an official or registered position with the Club, including (but not limited to): Committee Members, Trainers, Team Managers, Runners, Umpires and other Officials of the Club. This Policy complements the *Complaints & Conflict Resolution Policy*.

Definitions:

- **Conflict of Interest:** A *situation* in which an individual in a Position of Authority has competing interests or loyalties.
- **Personal Relationship:** Any relationship between individuals who are related by blood, marriage, domestic partnership or close personal relationships which may affect, or may be perceived by a neutral observer to potentially affect, the judgement of the individual in a Position of Authority.
- **Associated Clubs:** Other Clubs within the WFNL with which the Club has formal or informal relationships.
- **Positions of Authority:** Any position within the Club that requires election or registration, or other position of authority within a Committee, Sub-Committee, Team, or other Group within the Club. This can include (but is not limited to): Committee Members, Coaches, Trainers, Team Managers, Runners, Umpires, Event Managers or Canteen Managers.

Guiding Philosophy:

It is recognised by the Committee that situations will arise in any organisation where an individual has competing interests or loyalties that could potentially influence their

decision making. In particular, and with reference to individuals that hold an official or registered position within the Club, personal interests can clash with obligations required by their position within the Club.

It is also recognised that Conflicts of Interest are *situational* – personal and/or professional relationships are common in Community Organisations such as the Club; however, relationships are only to be considered or disclosed where an *actual* Conflict of Interest situation is identified.

Policy:

1. Identification of Conflicts:

- All individuals covered by this Policy must be alive to the possibility of a Conflict of Interest arising *at all times* when acting in an Official Capacity:
 - “Official Capacity” refers to any situation where the individual is representing the Club and can include, as examples: attending a Committee Meeting; approaching a potential sponsor; negotiating with another Club of the WFNL or other Association body; attending an official WFNL event; coaching a team of the Club; acting as or assisting a Designated Person under the *Complaints & Conflict Resolution Policy*; or acting as a Trainer, Runner or Umpire;
- All individuals covered by this Policy must consider whether their personal relationships, professional relationships and/or personal business interests may impact their decision making when acting in an Official Capacity, **especially** in contentious situations involving two or more parties (such as those set out in the *Complaints & Conflict Resolution Policy*);
- Conflict of Interest disclosures **must** be made to the Club President, Vice President, Administrator or relevant decision maker as soon as practical after the potential Conflict of Interest situation is identified;
 - Disclosures may be made in writing (such as by email) or verbally (such as during a Committee Meeting). Where a verbal disclosure is made, this **must** be recorded in writing (which may include in the minutes of a Committee Meeting, or other memorandum).

2. Management of Conflicts:

- Upon disclosure, the Club President, Vice President or Administrator will assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action.
- Actions may include, but are not limited to, recusal from decision-making processes, reassignment of duties, or other measures to mitigate the conflict.

- Where a Conflict of Interest has been positively identified and any action is taken to mitigate this conflict, the details of the situation **must** be recorded in the Register established under the *Complaints & Conflict Resolution Policy*.

3. Confidentiality:

- All disclosures and discussions regarding Conflicts of Interest will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Information will only be shared with Committee Members and any other individual(s) who need such information in order to manage the conflict appropriately.

4. Transparency and Integrity:

- The Club will maintain a register of identified Conflicts of Interest as governed by the *Complaints & Conflict Resolution Policy*.
- The Committee will ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of all Members of the Club, free from undue influence or bias.

5. Enforcement:

- This Policy should be provided to all individuals of the Club to whom it may apply or at least referred to in the Club Handbook.
- It is at the discretion of the Committee as to whether individuals to whom this Policy applies are required to provide any undertakings with regarding to abidance of, or acknowledgement of, this Policy.

Review and Compliance:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the committee to ensure its effectiveness.

Non-compliance with this policy may result in appropriate action, up to and including removal of an individual from the Position of Authority within the Club.

Appendix A: Examples of Potential Conflicts of Interests:

To illustrate relations that *may* result in a Conflict of Interest arising (depending on the situation), the following non-limiting examples are provided. These should **not** be considered prescriptive or complete but are provided as guidance only.

1. Family Relationships:

- A Coach or Team Manager has a child playing on the team they are coaching or managing. This could lead to perceptions of favouritism or unfair treatment of other players during training or games.
- Committee members who are married to other Club members of authority.

2. Previous Complaint or Conflict:

- Parties that have been recorded in the *Complaints and Conflicts Register* (as defined in the *Complaints & Conflict Resolution Policy*) as being previously in dispute.

3. Dual Roles:

- An individual who holds multiple roles within the Club, such as for example being both a Committee Member and a Coach. This could lead to Conflicts of Interest when decisions made in one role affect the responsibilities or interests of the other role.

4. Business Interests:

- A Committee Member owns a business that supplies equipment and/or services to the Club. This could lead to biased decisions favouring their business over others with respect to supply contracts or the like.

5. Relationships with Other Clubs:

- A Committee Member has a personal relationship with someone from an associated Club within the Western Region Football Netball League (WRFNL). This could lead to conflicts when making decisions that affect both Clubs.

6. Sponsorships and Donations:

- A Committee Member is involved with a company that sponsors the Club. This could lead to conflicts when negotiating sponsorship deals or allocating funds.

7. Umpiring:

- An Umpire has a vested interest in one of the teams playing, such as having a family member on the team or being employed by the Club. This could lead to biased officiating.

8. Personal Bias:

- A Coach or Committee Member has a personal bias against a particular player or family, which could influence their decisions regarding team selection or disciplinary actions.