Acting in STEP’s Interests

The majority of STEP Members serving our committees act completely appropriately, taking their roles and responsibilities seriously. However STEP acknowledges that instances of poor behaviour which remain unchallenged have a negative effect on both the workings of its Committees and the Society.

Members have a shared responsibility and accountability to STEP to demonstrate personal behaviour which pays attention to the values and attitudes required to act in STEP’s and the wider public’s interest.

Members are expected to show a commitment to the purpose of the Committee to which they are appointed, demonstrating probity and integrity during their tenure. In carrying out their role members are expected to show care, diligence and skill respecting those they interact with, whether Member or Secretariat.

Members should be able to listen to others, consider their views and show tolerance for their opinions. Debate and the challenging of others opinions is considered healthy and members should be able to accept challenges to their views with good grace. It is the role of the Chair of any meeting to ensure disagreements are managed appropriately within that environment, ensuring there is an opportunity to explore all sides to arguments.

Members are bound by a collective responsibility once the committee on which they serve has arrived at a majority decision. All Committee members are bound by that decision and must not seek to undermine or frustrate its implementation.

Individuals who repeatedly raise issues with little or no merit, which requires a disproportionate level of staff and committee time or causes stress to an individual, may be viewed as displaying vexatious behaviour. Should such a situation arise, we may consider such behaviour under our Habitual and Vexatious Policy.

Members, senior members of the Secretariat, and Committee Secretaries all have a responsibility to challenge attitudes, discourteous language and behaviour which could be perceived as underhand, manipulative or disruptive. At all times, the strategic direction of STEP should remain the focus on the work of committees, with conflicts of interest actively managed.

STEP’s governance arrangements are covered within our Articles of Association, Standing Orders, Committee Terms of Reference and Code of Best Practice. The Code places explicit expectations on members to show judgement, professionalism, maturity, courtesy and wisdom in their dealings with the Society and its members. Members must justify the confidence of members of the Society in the governance of the Society.

The Code describes the widely accepted seven principles of public life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In addition STEP expects Members to demonstrate respect and dignity towards others and value equality, diversity and inclusion.

Breaches of the Code can ultimately trigger a formal investigation under STEP’s disciplinary process. Further information can be detailed in ‘Handling concerns against Elected Members’.

Guidance
STEP Articles of Association
STEP Code of Best Practice for Council and Committee Members
STEP Disciplinary Rules
STEP Habitual and Vexatious Policy.