



Lincoln Community Larder **Policies & Procedures**

Registered Charity Number 1175176

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Conflicts of Interest Policy

The Declaration of Interests

All Trustees, associates and volunteers are required to declare their interests and any payments received in connection with their role in Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) where such interests would, or might, conflict with, or otherwise influence their decision making in respect of the charity's activities.

What to do if you face a Conflict of Interest

If you have, or think you might have, a Conflict of Interest, as described in the section above you MUST inform the LCL Secretary and declare your Conflict of Interest or involvement at the earliest opportunity. If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when an earlier declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the LCL Secretary or the Chairman for confidential guidance. Remember: declaring a Conflict of Interest is NOT, per se, a declaration of any impropriety on your part or by anyone else. It's only FAILING TO DECLARE a Conflict of Interest which carries with it a significant risk of impropriety, particularly if the Conflict of Interest were to result in a failure to comply properly with charity law. If another LCL Trustee becomes aware that you have, or might have, a Conflict of Interest they are obliged to report it to the LCL Secretary or the Chairman even if you do not.

When a Conflict of Interest is declared.

All declarations of Conflicts of Interest will be treated with appropriate confidentiality. All declarations of Conflicts of Interest will be considered in the first instance by the LCL Secretary to assess the level of risk to the charity and what actions need to be put in place to eliminate or, at least, mitigate the risk.

Any Trustee who is implicated in a Conflict of Interest, whether directly or as a connected person, may be called upon by the LCL Secretary to provide further details or answer specific questions.

All declarations of Conflicts of Interest will be recorded in the LCL's Register of Conflicts of Interest, even if, having considered the declaration, the Trustees conclude that the declared Conflict of Interest presents no significant risk to the charity.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only to ensure that trustees, associates and volunteers act in the best interests of LCL. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

Decisions Taken Where a Trustee has an Interest

In the event of the Board of Trustees having to decide upon a question in which a Trustee 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; Any person, whether or not a Trustee will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate and may not vote on matters affecting their own interests.

All decisions where there is a Conflict of Interest will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The report will record:

- the persons involved;
- the nature and extent of the Conflict(s) of Interest;
- an outline of the discussion;
- the actions taken to manage the Conflict(s) of Interest.

Where it is determined that a Trustee with a Conflict of Interest may nevertheless legitimately benefit from the decision, this will be reported in the Annual Report and accounts in accordance with the current Charities SORP. All payments or benefits in kind to Trustees will be reported in LCL's Annual Report, with amounts for each Trustee listed for the year in question. Where a LCL Trustee is connected to a party involved in the supply of a service or product to the charity, this information will also be fully disclosed in the Trustees Annual Report. Independent external moderation will be used where conflicts cannot be resolved through the usual procedures.

Managing Contracts

If a LCL Trustee has a Conflict of Interest, they 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.

Register of Conflicts of Interest

LCL will maintain a Register of all reported Conflicts of Interest which will contain, as a minimum, the following information.

- a) The date on which the Conflict of Interest was first reported, supplemented where appropriate by the dates on which any changes to the Conflict of Interest were reported, including the date on which the Conflict of Interest ceased to be an issue.
- b) The name of the individual involved and, in the case of a Conflict of Interest involving one or more connected persons, the names of those connected persons and their relationships;
- c) The position/role/responsibilities within LCL of the individual involved;
- d) The type of Conflict of Interest (eg: personal benefits, family involvement, business involvement, other);
- e) Details of the Conflict of Interest, including its potential impact on LCL;
- f) Mitigation of the Conflict of Interest – ie: the steps taken by the Trustees to ensure that the Conflict of Interest does not adversely influence LCL's charitable activities.

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults from Abuse

The Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the service it offers and that all those involved with the LCL will be treated with respect. Normally the only contact between the LCL volunteers and clients is through the serving hatches and limited in nature. Nevertheless, the principles of safeguarding must be adhered to.

Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Procedure

The LCL has a responsibility for the protection of children and vulnerable adults within the community and as visitors to the LCL. The LCL Trustees have the responsibility to ensure that LCL volunteers are up to date with the 'Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy' and that the protection of children and vulnerable adults is achieved.

Children and vulnerable adults have the right to proper care and protection from all forms of abuse; therefore, the procedure of protection should be followed at all times within the LCL.

Abuse is viewed in different categories as listed below:

- Discriminatory abuse – when race, gender, age, sexuality, disability, culture or religion hinders opportunity to an individual.
- Physical abuse – the use of physical force that results in bodily harm.
- Sexual abuse – direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent.
- Psychological abuse – humiliation, threats, bullying or any other verbal conduct that can result in mental distress.
- Financial abuse – unauthorised or improper use of funds of the individual.
- Neglect – repeated deprivation of assistance or support to the individual. For example, food, hygiene, medical care etc.

Alerting

In a situation where either a child or a vulnerable adult discloses information of any form of abuse to a LCL volunteer, or a volunteer has concerns of abuse or neglect, they should act immediately. At this stage the volunteer is the 'Alerter' and therefore has the duty to share information and inform the LCL Secretary who is responsible for referring. Any information disclosed by an individual should **not** be discussed with anyone else within the LCL.

When acting as the 'Alerter', you should:

- Take all concerns seriously.
- Avoid making comments other than to comfort or be sympathetic.
- Ensure immediate safety of the individual involved.
- Report the concerns immediately to the Secretary.

Making a Referral

The maximum timescale for a referral is within 24 hours of the information being received.

As the '*Referrer*', the Secretary should:

- Consider the immediate health and safety of the individual.
- Consider whether emergency services are required.
- Consider whether a regulatory body should be informed of the situation.
- Gather information and clarify facts.
- Ensure the '*Alerter*' and the individual are fully supported.
- Keep detailed records ensuring the separation of fact and opinion, evidence from hearsay etc.
- Make a decision whether or not a referral is necessary.

If the decision is made that there is an allegation of abuse, the Secretary will inform the relevant regulatory body.

Decision not to make a referral

If the decision not to make a referral is made, full documentation showing why that decision was made is still required. Not making a decision to refer does not mean that the incident should be discarded and consideration should be given as to whether the complaints process, relevant training or disciplinary action is necessary.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks Policy

Following consultations with the relevant authorities the Trustees have decided that volunteers at the Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) do not require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for the following reasons:

- (a) The only contact to be made with the clients is through the serving hatch.
- (b) Volunteers do not engage in any assessment of the clients or their needs. This is the responsibility of their referring organisation.
- (c) No personal questions are to be asked of the client.
- (d) The only acceptable direct questions are:
 - relevant direct choice questions, such as tea or coffee, pasta or rice etc.
 - those regarding types of food required, such as any allergies, ages of any children and whether the client has cooking and freezing facilities.
- (e) All other questions are to be passed to the referring organisation.

All LCL volunteers must adhere to these rules at all times.

Health and Safety Policy

The Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) is an independent local charity run by volunteers.

The Trustees of LCL are responsible for ensuring that the premises used are safe for all volunteers and comply with all relevant current legislation.

In particular, the Trustees will ensure that:

- a. the premises are kept clean and tidy.
- b. the storage of food and other items is done in a safe and secure manner in accordance with current agreed guidelines and legislation.
- c. no perishable food is distributed to clients if it has passed its "use by" date. Tins up to 6 months past their BBE date may be given out unless otherwise damaged or likely to pose any risk to the recipient. Anything older than this can be put out for clients to take - if they want them.
- d. all volunteers receive induction and training from the Volunteer Organiser or nominated delegate, before becoming regular volunteers.
- e. sufficient information, instructions, supervision and handling is provided to enable all volunteers to identify and manage safety hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work. All personnel are expected to accept some responsibility for their own safety.
- f. an Accident Book is provided.
- g. supervisors report all accidents or potential accidents to the Volunteer Organiser immediately and all relevant parts of the Accident Book are completed.
- h. risk assessments are conducted when appropriate or required.

The Volunteer Organiser* will aim to ensure that at least two volunteers are on duty when the LCL is open to clients.

Any breaches of this policy should be reported to the Volunteer Organiser in the first instance and to the Chairman if no satisfactory solution is reached.

Volunteers must abide by this policy.

*Joan Bennett - [01522 804991](tel:01522804991) mob [07724051012](tel:07724051012), email: joanbennett@ntlworld.com.

Data Protection Policy

Introduction

Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) handles the personal data of its Trustees for Charity Commission registration purposes and the names, addresses, telephone numbers and NI numbers of its clients, obtained from information contained in the referral voucher/form.

Objective

LCL is committed to ensuring that its Trustees and volunteers protect all personal data, whether kept in paper form or on computers. The objective is to keep data stored safely, securely and to ensure that it is used in the appropriate manner for which it is provided.

Implementation

1. Personal data will only be processed and used in a lawful manner in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
2. The LCL will only obtain the personal data required to carry out its lawful duties.
3. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the personal data is accurate and kept up to date.
4. All personal data shall be retained only as long as necessary.
5. Paper based data is to be secured at all times and access limited to those who require access to carry out their duties.
6. Electronic data is to remain within the LCL computer network.
7. All access to electronic data is to be through password protected files with access control limited to those who need it in order to carry out their duties.
8. No personal data is to be transferred to anyone outside the LCL except to satisfy the requirements of contracts that the party is assigned to.

Access Control

Paper Data

Paper based data is to be secured in lockable cabinets provided for this use. Documents containing personal data are not to be left on desktops or other areas where unauthorised personnel can access them.

Electronic Data

All documents and files containing personal data are to be stored securely within the database folder on the LCL computer network. Access rights to that folder are set by the LCL Co-ordinator and users are to use file level passwords to secure documents.

Removable Drives

Removable drives affect data in two ways:

1. The introduction of viruses.
2. The possibility of theft/loss of the drive.

All files on removable drives are to be virus checked before use.

Data stored temporarily on a removable drive must be password protected at the file level and where possible encryption shall be used to further protect the documents.

Data shall not be stored solely on a removable drive but securely stored on the network.

Data backup is made weekly and one copy is to remain off premises as part of our disaster recovery procedures. The holder of the backup, the LCL Co-ordinator, is to ensure that it is stored in a secure manner.

Disciplinary and Grievance Policy

The Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) is an independent local charity run by volunteers. The LCL Trustees are responsible for recruiting, selecting, training and supervising all volunteers.

1. LCL does not employ paid staff. If paid staff are employed in the future, this policy will be revised before any contracts of employment are entered into.
2. LCL relies on volunteers, including Trustees, to source, organise and deliver the food parcel service. Volunteers will receive induction and training from the Volunteer Organiser, or nominated delegate, before becoming regular volunteers at the LCL premises. The induction and training will cover LCL policies and procedures, including the equal opportunities policy.

Any breaches of policy that subsequently occur will be dealt with under the following procedure.

- a. Whenever possible, breaches of LCL policy and procedures will be dealt with at the time they occur either by a Trustee or by the senior volunteer on duty at the LCL. The incident is to be reported to the Secretary as soon as possible for record keeping. The Secretary will then inform the Chairman and other Trustees.
- b. Where a complaint is received about a volunteer at LCL, or where a breach of policy or procedures cannot be satisfactorily dealt with at Stage a. above, the LCL Chairman (or the Secretary if the Chairman is the subject of the complaint or is unavailable) will investigate the complaint and make a written recording of the investigation. The Chairman may decide either that no action is necessary, may give a warning to the volunteer concerned or may ask the volunteer to cease volunteering with LCL.
- c. The written record of any investigation will be reported to the LCL Trustees who will consider whether any further action is necessary and whether any LCL policies or procedures need to be revised in the light of the incident or investigation.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Lincoln Community Larder (LCL) strives to be an equal opportunity organisation and aims to treat all volunteers and service users equally.

LCL welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds and abilities and there will be no discrimination in respect of marital status, gender, sexuality, disability, age, colour, race, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins. However, individuals named on LCL vouchers may not act as active volunteers or trustees of the LCL whilst clients.

LCL's service is available to all residents of the Lincoln area who meet LCL's agreed criteria of need. There will be no discrimination on any of the above grounds and LCL will do its best to ensure that none of its procedures, including referral procedures, opening hours or the accessibility of its premises, prevent those in need from accessing its service.

The LCL Trustees will ensure that equal opportunities awareness training is provided as part of the induction for volunteers and new trustees.

Any complaints about the Charity's equal opportunities practice should be made to the Chairman at the address below.

YMCA Annexe, Rosemary Lane, Lincoln LN2 5AR
lincolncommunitylarder@hotmail.co.uk

Reserves Policy

Designated Funds are charity monies which have been put aside to meet a specific purpose - usually at some time in the future. A fundamental principle of charity law is that money given for charitable purposes should be spent on the charitable purposes for which they were given, so charities should not be hoarding funds.

However, it is recognised that it is not prudent for a charity to run on a “hand-to-mouth” existence but should always have a modest reserve of funds to cover the eventuality of an unexpected shortfall in income which would otherwise leave the charity insolvent. The charity should therefore have a proper reserves policy in place (and declared in its annual report).

The LCL Trustees seek to maintain adequate reserves so as to ensure that all reasonable day-to-day running costs can be met as and when they fall due, recognising the basic financial principle that the Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that solvency is maintained. 'Adequate Reserves' is deemed to be sufficient funding for six months of normal expenditure.

General Guidelines for Volunteers

Volunteer Organiser

Please respect the authority of the Volunteer Organiser. If you can't make your scheduled slot please let the Organiser* know. Equally, if you're not supposed to be on duty, please don't pitch up. There's one thing worse than too few helpers and that's too many as we have limited space.

Referrers

If you take a call from a new agency asking to be added to our list of referrers, please request they write in on letterhead explaining who they are and what they do AND enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

Sainsbury's Delivery

If you receive a delivery from Sainsbury's please empty the red boxes as soon as possible so the driver can get on his way. If necessary, put everything on the table and transfer to the shelves once he has left.

Sainsbury's have very politely asked if the drop off time can be reduced if possible. The blue bread boxes are to be taken back by the driver.

Stacking shelves

Never stack tins directly onto tins, (except for tuna). This is inviting accidents. Always put a cardboard tray between layers.

Tin Openers/Toiletries/Toilet Rolls

Please don't ask every single person if they need these items. It is a sad fact that many of our clients will take them, even if they don't need them - and then maybe sell on. Just give if you're asked.

Out of date tins

We have amended our policy and now give out tins up to 6 months past their BBE date. Anything older than this can be put out for clients to take - if they want them.

Choices

The list of food to give has a **C** beside which items you should be offering a choice on. There is no need to give a choice on every single item unless the client points out that they don't like a particular flavour.

Pies

The tinned pies, (Fray Bentos style) is the meat choice for two or more people, and not to be given in addition to meatballs, curry etc.

Box for people with no cooking facilities

When unpacking donations, please keep an eye out for anything suitable for this box, eg cereal bars, breakfast biscuits, corned beef, spam, peanut butter, Marmite, small cartons of milk, small tins or plastic pots of fruit and rice puddings - and anything else you can think of. Plastic jars of fruit with screw top lids are also useful particularly for people who are homeless and have to carry everything with them.

Empty boxes

If they're worth keeping, please flatten them. There's a knife in the sink drawer. Otherwise please flatten and then throw out. All the Branston potato boxes must be kept, they are just the right size and very strong.

Accident Book

If you have any sort of accident, please enter it in the Accident Book which is in the white wall cabinet. Supervisors must report all accidents or potential accidents to the LCL Organiser immediately and ensure all relevant parts of the Accident Book are completed.

Floor

Please feel free to vacuum the floor at any time. The broom attachment is in the corner by the hatches.

Front door

The front door has a Yale lock, so you can easily lock yourself out, so be sure to fix the lock back as soon as you unlock. Don't forget to undo it when closing up. If you do get locked out there are spare keys at YMCA reception you can borrow. If you have already accessed these to gain entry in the first place, well you've got a problem.....!

Gates

In order to give our clients a measure of privacy the gates should be propped up in a nearly closed position. One gate can be closed and the other semi closed with sufficient room to get in but not enough to give passers by a clear view of people queuing or standing at the hatches.

Before you go

Have you deleted answer phone messages that have been dealt with?

Are the fridge and freezer doors properly closed?

*Joan Bennett - [01522 804991](tel:01522804991) mob [07724051012](tel:07724051012), email: joanbennett@ntlworld.com.

Reimbursement of Expenses & Purchases

Scope

Trustees and volunteers are entitled to be reimbursed by LCL for all travelling and other expenses actually, necessarily, reasonably and incidentally incurred by them in carrying out their duties, on submission of an appropriately authorised claim form and relevant supporting point-of-sale receipts.

“Actually” means that the claimant actually incurred the claimed expenditure. eg: the bus fare for a journey cannot be claimed if the claimant had decided to leave earlier and walk the journey instead;

“Necessary” means that the charitable activity could not have been undertaken efficiently and effectively without incurring the expenditure;

“Reasonable” means that the cost of the expense must be commensurate with prudent, value-for-money use of LCL’s funds to promote and deliver its charitable purposes. Thus, the cost incurred must be similar to the costs of alternatives of similar quality and suitability-for-purpose. However, this does NOT mean that the cheapest goods/services must always be purchased. Where the additional benefits to the charitable activity being promoted/delivered demonstrably outweigh the additional cost of more expensive goods/service they can be chosen in preference to the cheaper alternatives. However, the claimant must always be ready and able to give a credible justification for their choice if challenged.

“Incidental” means that the expense(s) must not have been determined by considerations unrelated to the charity activity being promoted/delivered. For example: the claimant had attended a meeting the venue for which had been chosen specifically because it also enabled the claimant to visit a nearby friend. In such a scenario, even though the costs of attending the meeting in that venue would otherwise have been necessary and reasonable, they would not also have been incidental and, therefore would not be eligible for reimbursement.

Authorisation Expenses may only be incurred, and subsequently reimbursed by the Charity, in respect of activities which are part of the Charity’s agreed and budgeted programme of charitable activities (ie: by prior agreement with the relevant budget-holder). Likewise, goods and/or services may only be purchased on behalf of the Charity, and subsequently reimbursed, in respect of activities which are part of the Charity’s agreed and budgeted programme of charitable activities

Gifts in Kind (Waived or Unclaimed Expenses/Purchases)

Some Trustees or volunteers may choose to waive, or not to claim, a reimbursement of expenses and/or purchases to which they would otherwise be entitled. LCL greatly appreciates the generosity of all who choose to act in this way.

However not claiming reimbursement of legitimate expenses/purchases can have some side effects. For example:

1. It causes the real costs of LCL’s activities (ie: including those costs which are subsidised by supporters) to be under-recorded and, therefore, under-reported (eg: in the Annual Report);

2. It can undermine effective budgeting if a volunteer who has hitherto not claimed their expenses is unable to continue to do so, or is replaced by someone else who is unwilling to do so;
3. It hides the true generosity of the Charity's supporters, particularly their financial generosity which goes unrecorded and, therefore, unreported;
4. It means that the effective gift of their expenses is not eligible for supplementation by Gift Aid;
5. Under-reporting the Charity's costs and the generosity of its supporters can hamper the making of effective appeals and applications for further funds for the Charity.

Accordingly, LCL encourages all those who can legitimately claim reimbursement of their expenses to do so. This includes those supporters who are minded to waive or not claim their reimbursement as a personal gift to the Charity. Rather they should claim the reimbursement to which they are entitled and then back-donate it to the Charity, thereby making it eligible for Gift Aid.

Submitting Claims for Reimbursement of Expenses & Purchases

1. Claims for the reimbursement of expenses must be submitted on LCL's approved claims form;
2. Claims for the reimbursement of expenses must be accompanied by documentary evidence of the expense (eg: point-of-sale receipt, travel ticket, etc). Where such evidence is not available the claimant must provide a written explanation to the Treasurer for approval;
3. The Charity reserves the right to decline to reimburse expenses for which reasonable documentary evidence has not been provided;
4. Volunteers' completed expenses claim forms must be authorised by the Treasurer.
5. Trustees' expenses must be authorised by the Chairman or Treasurer;
6. All expenses claims should be submitted within 30 days of the relevant activity.

Travel Expenses

1. Public transport should be used wherever possible.
2. When it is not practical to use public transport, or where more than one Trustee or volunteer is travelling the same journey, travel by private vehicle is allowed and a mileage allowance will be paid.
3. Private cars can only be used in connection with LCL business if, at the time of each journey, it has a valid:
 - certificate of insurance for the kind of journey involved;
 - road tax (if required);
 - MOT certificate (if more than 3 years old).
4. Parking costs incurred when on charity business away will be reimbursed.

5. Taxis (preferably pre-booked mini-cabs rather than “on demand” hire) may be used where either no public transport is available or the journey time by public transport is unreasonably long (particularly where the journey involves multiple changes).

Other Types of Expenses

The above examples of expenses claims are illustrative, not definitive. Expenses not detailed above will only be paid if authorised (in advance whenever possible) by the Treasurer or, if not available, a person appointed by the Trustees to act on his/her behalf.

Frequently Asked Questions

When is it appropriate to refer?

We appreciate that there are a diverse range of reasons and situations that may mean a referral is appropriate, and as a result we do not have a set of formal criteria that referrers must adhere to.

However, to guide you when considering whether someone is eligible for a food parcel, here are some of the most common reasons we find people visit us:

- Benefit Changes/Delays/Sanctions (please ask them if they've spoken to the Job Centre about a hardship fund before issuing a voucher)
- Child Holiday Meals (hardship for families during school holidays)
- Debt
- Delayed Wages
- Domestic Violence
- Homelessness
- Low Income
- Refused Short Term Benefit Advance
- Sickness
- Unemployment/Redundancy
- Unexpected expenditure/bill

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but some examples. If you're uncertain about whether someone is eligible for a parcel, please contact the office on 01522 569291.

How many times can I refer someone?

The LCL service is a short-term emergency food provider which discourages dependency on the service. We trust that you will use your discretion when making a referral, but if your client has a long-term situation, we ask that you consider signposting them to an agency or group that can provide assistance in overcoming their circumstances. LCL endeavours not to limit the number of referrals per client.

When and where are the distribution centres open?

Please see the Lincoln Community Larder website for a list of distribution centres and opening times when food can be collected.

Do you ever ban anyone?

Yes. Fraudulent or abusive behaviour towards our volunteers can lead to a minimum six-month ban from both the LCL and the Foodbank.

Do you offer any services other than food?

Yes, we also have some basic toiletries available.