



# CEN CODE OF CONDUCT

## Preamble

Communities Empowerment Network (**CEN**) is a charity whose objects, as set out in its constitution (**Objects**), are as follows:-

*‘ to advance the educational environment in England and Wales for the benefit of the public and to eliminate discrimination; and promote equality of opportunity within our education system for students who may suffer discrimination for whatever reason including under the Equalities Act 2010; by providing information, advice, support, representation, advocacy and training for such students and their families experiencing mistreatment and disadvantage in education, including in respect of, but not limited to, school admissions, special education needs and school exclusions.*

CEN’s constitution (attached hereto as Appendix 1) requires that the functions and duties of its Charity Trustees are to follow best practice in making decisions as set out in the Charity Governance Code for Smaller Charities (see <file:///C:/Users/Utilisateur/Downloads/CGC-for-smaller-charities.pdf>). and upon which this code of conduct is based and as set out in the Seven Principles as follows (**Code**).

## 1. Organisational purpose

The Charity Trustees are clear about CEN’s Objects and ensure that these are being delivered effectively and sustainably. Their core role is to focus on strategy, performance and assurance, to ensure that CEN is effective in achieving its charitable purposes.

The Charity Trustees recognise their broader responsibilities towards communities, stakeholders, wider society and the environment, and act on them in a manner consistent with CEN’s purposes, values, and available resources.

## 2. Leadership

The Charity Trustees provide strategic leadership in line with CEN’s aims and values. The Charity Trustees, as a whole, and trustees individually, accept collective responsibility for ensuring that CEN has a clear and relevant set of aims and an appropriate strategy for achieving them. The Charity Trustees ensure that CEN staff are properly appointed, supervised, supported and appraised, and which are set out in the CEN HR Policies and Practices (attached to this code as Appendix 2 and which are updated annually. Those same policies and principles provide for the recruitment, support and supervision of CEN volunteer advocates.

All Charity Trustees give sufficient time to CEN to carry out their responsibilities effectively. This includes preparing for meetings and sitting on board committees and other governance bodies where needed. The expected time commitment is made clear to Charity Trustees before their appointment and again on acceptance of their appointment. All new Charity Trustees are required to read, understand and agree to follow this Code.



### **3. Integrity**

The Charity Trustees are required to act with integrity, adopting values and creating a culture which help achieve CEN's charitable purposes. They are aware of the importance of the public's confidence and trust in charities, and they undertake their duties accordingly. The Charity Trustees adopt values, applies ethical principles to decisions and create a welcoming and supportive culture which helps achieve CEN's Objects.

The Charity Trustees ensure that CEN follows the law. They also follow non-binding rules, codes and standards, such as the Nolan Principles and follow guidance and recommendations of the Charity Commissioners. CEN's policy for accepting donations is attached at Appendix 4.

### **4. Decision-making, risk and control**

The Charity Trustees make sure that their decision-making processes are informed, rigorous and timely and that effective delegation, control and risk assessment and management systems are set up and monitored. Appendix 2 to this Code sets out the policies for decision making and related issues for the Charity Trustees.

### **5. Board effectiveness**

The Charity Trustees work as an effective team, using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds and knowledge to make informed decisions. The Constitution requires that when selecting individuals for appointment as a Charity Trustee, the Charity Trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of CEN including but not limited to people with the following capabilities: -

- a. Financial and accounting disciplines.
- b. Fundraising experience.
- c. Legal capabilities and expertise.
- d. Educational expertise.
- e. Special educational needs (SEN) expertise.
- f. Lobbying capabilities.
- g. Parents and students who have experienced problems within the education system, including previous clients of CEN.

The Constitution requires that the Chairperson of CEN must provide leadership to the Chairty Trustees with prime responsibility for ensuring the agreed priorities of CEN, appropriate structures, and processes.

### **6. Equality, diversity and inclusion**

The Charity Trustees' approach to diversity supports their effectiveness, leadership and decision-making. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in CEN's HR Policies and Practices and help to deliver CEN's public benefit.



## **7. Openness and accountability**

The Charity Trustees ensure that CEN is transparent and accountable at all times to its users and the public and that CEN's employees and volunteers are guided by the values, ethics and culture put in place by the Charity Trustees.