

# **Conflict within Management Committees**

Every management committee/board will face periods of conflict. But remember, conflict is not inherently unhealthy.

Healthy conflict, in which conflicting viewpoints are debated, can be of significant benefit to an organisation, if it is effectively managed. However unhealthy conflict can divert energy, demoralise staff and volunteers, and prevent the organisation from fulfilling its mission.

Voluntary organisations are strongly value-based and may experience intense conflicts about directions and policies. Others have difficulty due to conflicting roles or personal differences.

## **Measuring the cost**

Although there may be no immediate financial risk, the drain on support and on people's time may be expensive and the public image of the organisation may be damaged. This can adversely affect fund-raising potential.

Members and managers frequently act to manage these problems, or to limit the damage caused, but this is not possible in every situation.

Some of this material draws on [NCVO's online guidance](#) for trustees in England and Wales. It has been adapted for use here with their kind permission.

Disputes can prove costly in terms of:

- Time delays
- Uncertainty of outcome
- Member and staff time
- Damaging publicity
- Charges of breach of trust
- Relationships and morale
- Stress
- Hampering the work of an organisation
- Legal fees if litigation is involved

## **Help is at hand**

The advice and resources provided from these pages will help to equip you to: deal effectively with conflict as and when it arises; to take steps to avoid damaging conflict; and to identify appropriate sources of help and support. Use the links below:

Download: [Preventing Damaging Conflict](#)

Download: [Dealing with Damaging Conflict](#)

Download: [Dealing with Conflict: Toolkit](#)

Download: [Dealing with Conflict: What to do when...](#)

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has published guidance on [managing internal conflict in charities](#).