

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

## Introduction & Corporate Strategy

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is about the way in which organisations meet their wider economic, social and environmental obligations, both to employees and to other interest groups including customers, suppliers, investors and local communities. It includes, but is not limited to, sustainable development practices, corporate citizenship, corporate governance and business ethics.

As a responsible company, Interface Financial Planning recognises that its activities (operations, products and services) have a wider impact on, and can therefore contribute to, the society in which it operates, and aims to take this into account by taking appropriate actions, as outlined in this policy, that are over and above compliance with legal minimum requirements.

The business benefits that can be obtained from applying a successful CSR policy include:

- Reduced costs and increased cost-efficiency e.g. reduction in utility bills
- Improved brand reputation and public relations as a result of making the CSR policy well known
- Customer and employee loyalty as a result of making the CSR policy well known
- Managing risk e.g. through corporate governance procedures
- Improved internal and external relationships e.g. through commitment to community services, staffing policies and customer services

The organisation aims for CSR to be an integral part of business practice. For this to happen there are key characteristics (based on the CSR Academy's Competency Framework) that must underpin our commitment to CSR. These are:

- Having a sound understanding of the roles in the society in which we operate e.g. the environment, the government, educational establishments, local labour market etc.
- Being open to new ideas and practices and ways of thinking, and challenging our existing methods where appropriate

- Building solid stakeholder relations, identifying stakeholders, engaging in consultation and balancing demands
- Valuing and harnessing diversity and adjusting our approach as appropriate
- Building the capacity of staff, suppliers etc. to help implement our CSR activities effectively

This policy should be considered in conjunction with, or with reference to, a variety of other internal policy and procedural documents, some of which may be mentioned below. These include various staffing policies and procedures, codes of conduct and regulatory and compliance frameworks - all of which can be found in the Operations Management System.

## Management of CSR

### 1. Environment

Sustainable development is concerned with issues such as pollution control, sustainable use of natural resources and energy conservation, to ensure that organisational development is within the limits of the planet's environment and not at the expense of limited resources. Interface Financial Planning Limited has a Reduce-Reuse-Recycle policy. This includes, but is not restricted to, energy and water consumption, waste materials and paper use.

Ways in which we can achieve this include the following:

#### Reduce

Reducing energy consumption by:

- Switching off lights, heating units, printers, PCs, screens etc. when not in use
- Using energy saving light bulbs exclusively
- Using screen savers
- Only boiling the required amount of water in kettles

Reducing water consumption by:

- Turning off taps fully
- Regularly checking for leaks in bathrooms and kitchens and fixing immediately



Reducing paper usage by:

- Cancelling junk mail and unwanted publications
- Photocopying and printing documents two-sided where possible
- Only printing the required pages of a document, not the whole document
- Sending electronic documents and emails instead of hard copies and memos where possible
- Avoiding overproduction of marketing and publicity materials by reviewing and updating distribution lists regularly
- Proof reading documents before going to print or copying them

Reducing waste and pollution by:

- Using solar-powered rather than battery-operated calculators
- Compacting waste (e.g. flattening cartons, cans, & plastic bottles) to reduce volume and collections

#### Re-use

- Using glasses, mugs, crockery and metal cutlery instead of disposable plastic or paper cups, plates, cutlery, etc.
- Considering all items for re-use where possible and passing on surplus items to others who can make of these items: e.g. card, paper and other items to local primary schools, paper to children of friends and clients for drawing and creative work
- Using recycled products or products with a high recycled or reconditioned content where possible i.e. office paper, toilet rolls etc.

Collecting items for recycling such as:

- Using recycling bins for paper, bottles, aluminium and steel cans, plastics, batteries, etc.
- Recycling toner and ink cartridges to HP or charitable organisations such as RNIB
- Donating redundant items such as computers and other equipment such as old office furniture to charities instead of disposing of them.
- Always consider who can use items and avoid disposal as much as possible – even if a cost is involved.

## 2. Marketplace & Workplace

Responsible business practices include pursuing high standards of governance, raising employment standards for employees, and doing business with other organisations that complement our CSR policies.

Ways in which we can achieve this include the following:

### Staffing policies and procedures

Interface Financial Planning no longer has contracted employees. All work is now outsourced. Details of which can be found in the 'The Company' document found in the operations manual.

If and when the business grows significantly to employ staff then we will consider the implementation of additional policies:

- Maternity and paternity provision
- Flexible working policy to ensure work-life balance
- Information and consultation arrangements to maximise employee involvement and empowerment
- Well-being Policy and Employee Counselling Service to minimise work-related stress in employees

### Trade Partnerships

- Use local community businesses where possible
- Purchase second-hand items where practical, such as furniture

### Corporate Governance

- Financial statements are prepared each year to comply with company law, and publicised in the Annual Accounts.
- A Whistleblowing Policy

## 3. Community

Key social and community issues for the organisation include enabling more disadvantaged members to have access to our qualifications and services, as well as considering how we can have a positive impact on our local social and business community. A key aim is to do all we can to promote professionalism and encourage others to do likewise.



Ways in which we can achieve this include the following:

- Contributing to business seminars and workshops
- Chairing business user groups e.g. Avelo user group
- Teaching other advisers the life planning approach with clients e.g. Kinder Institute mentoring
- Offering services to local groups and schools – giving talks or teaching financial planning

#### **4. Integration**

To achieve success with CSR initiatives it is critical to gain commitment at all levels from senior management, from stakeholders, from suppliers, from outsourced providers, and from internal functions that need to act in partnership to implement the initiatives. The following activities will aim to raise awareness of, and commitment to, these issues, to elicit and maintain a change in organisational attitudes and behaviour:

- Inclusion of CSR policy in the ISO 'Operations Management System' for all employees to have access to
- Inclusion of CSR in induction training