



Trustee Role description

Job title:

Trustee

Accountable to:

As the Board is responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of the charity, it is accountable in varying degrees to a variety of stakeholders, including:

- Members
- Beneficiaries
- Funders
- Staff
- The Charity Commission
- Other regulators, such as Companies House
- General Public

1.0 Role Summary

- The Board of Trustees is jointly and severally responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity, and financial health, probity of its activities, developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.
- All trustees should be aware of, and understand, their individual and collective responsibilities, and should not be overly reliant on one or more individual trustees in any particular aspect of the governance of the charity. For example, all trustees should be able to read the financial accounts to a level that they can ask questions and comprehend answers of a general nature.

2.0 Main responsibilities

- to ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, organisation law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- to ensure that the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document
- to ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives, i.e. the organisation must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objectives, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are
- to contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- to safeguard the good name and values of the organisation
- to represent the company at functions and meetings as appropriate
- to declare any conflict of interest while carrying out the duties of a trustee
- to be collectively responsible for the actions of the organisation and other trustees
- to ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation
- to abide by the equal opportunities policy
- to ensure the financial stability of the organisation
- to protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds
- to make sure the organisation is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities
- to appoint and support the employees and monitor their performance
- in addition to the above statutory duties of all trustees, each trustee should use any specific knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives, or other issues relevant to the area of, the organisation's work in which the trustee has special expertise
- to attend meetings, and to read papers in advance of meetings
- to attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate

- to participate in other tasks as arise from time to time, such as interviewing new staff, helping with fundraising
- to keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues which affect its work

3.0 Qualities of trustee

3.1 Essential qualities

- Integrity
- Commitment to the organisation and its objectives
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgment
- An ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak their mind
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team

3.2 Desirable skills and experience

- Experience setting targets, monitoring and evaluating performance and programmes in commercial and non-profit organisations
- Experience with financial management
- Experience in the type of work being done by the organisation
- Experience with legal matters
- Fundraising
- Recruitment and personnel management, including a knowledge of employment legislation
- Public relations
- Marketing
- Computers and information technology
- Campaigning
- Education and learning
- Understanding of Bristol's voluntary sector

4 Time commitment

- The Board meets at least 8 times a year and it is expected that trustees attend at least 7 times per year. Board meetings last 2 hours and currently take place on a Wednesday evening.
- Trustees should have time to dedicate to appropriate sub-groups & work streams outside of board meetings.
- In addition to Board Meetings, other contact – usually electronic or by telephone – will be necessary. Outside of board meetings there is a minimum time commitment of 4 hours per month.
- Attendance at AGM and up to two development days per year, usually on a Saturday.