



Role profile and person specification

Chair of Trustees

Role profile

The chair has overall responsibility for the strategy, governance and leadership of the organisation, and for ensuring that its objectives are promoted and that it operates effectively.

There are two key tasks:

- To chair meetings of the trustee board and at least one of the board sub-committees. The chair should take control of meetings, ensuring that everyone who wishes to has a reasonable chance to speak and take part. She or he should be able to listen to and understand a wide range of views, present information clearly and concisely and get clarification of relevant points, thus enabling the board to make effective decisions. The board must demonstrate its leadership of the organisation. It is the chair's role to enable the board to do that.
- To support and supervise the CEO.

More detailed duties and responsibilities

The overall responsibilities and the two key tasks break down into the following more detailed duties and responsibilities.

- Ensuring the organisation has a clear strategy, and leading the board in setting policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against these targets.
- Regularly reviewing the organisation's structure, policies and operation, to ensure that it operates effectively and that risks are identified and managed.
- Ensuring that board decisions and the deployment of resources are made within the remit of the governing document and the policies of Citizens Advice.
- Planning the annual cycle of board meetings, and chairing and facilitating these to ensure their smooth running.
- Planning the agenda for meetings with the CEO.
- Developing the membership of the trustee board to ensure that it contains the diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge needed to operate effectively, with due consideration for community representation.

- Ensuring that trustees receive induction and adequate training to enable them to fulfil their roles.
- Monitoring the calibre, level of commitment and attendance of all trustees.
- Ensuring that successors for key posts - treasurer, chair etc. - are identified and inducted in good time.
- Ensuring that the board reviews its own work and how effectively it operates; making sure to take any corrective action required.
- Checking that decisions taken at meetings are being implemented.
- Working closely with the CEO to keep an overview of the organisation's business.
- Providing the CEO with support and supervision, including annual appraisal.
- In conjunction with the treasurer, ensuring proper management, control and accountability of the organisation's finances.
- Representing the organisation in the community and at public events.
- Where appropriate, representing the organisation in relationships with funders and negotiating for funds for staffing, premises or equipment.
- Ensuring that the organisation plans for the recruitment and turnover of paid staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring that the organisation gets regular feedback on its performance from its clients, funders and partners and uses this to improve its effectiveness.

Person specification

The chair must have:

- some experience of voluntary organisations
- experience as a trustee
- a commitment to the organisation - a willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to the role
- the ability to think strategically and creatively
- good leadership skills
- the ability to chair meetings and manage committees effectively
- the ability to analyse issues, identify their strategic consequences, reach independent judgements and make concise recommendations
- strong facilitation skills, including the ability to listen to dissenting views
- the ability to be tactful, diplomatic and work co-operatively as part of a team
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- a willingness to accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship

- a commitment to the Nolan Committee's seven principles of public life - selflessness, Integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

It is desirable for the chair to have:

- some knowledge of the type of work undertaken by Citizens Advice
- some knowledge of Reading and its communities
- some understanding of charity finance
- experience of managing staff and volunteers.