

## Committee member roles and responsibility

### Committee members, also known as; directors, board members, governors or trustees

The management committee is made up of committee member roles. Committee members are legally required to be volunteer roles, meaning they will not be paid or incentivised for the role in any way. This will ensure to the public and funders that the organisation is being steered in the direction of its core purpose and to be beneficiary focussed, not in a way that is selfishly motivated for the benefit of directors. As such any documentation involved will need to be carefully worded to reflect voluntary roles and agreements rather than employment and contract.

#### Committee members individually participate in the role to:

- Understand and uphold the organisation values and objectives as set out in the governing document.
- Understand how following the organisation aims and objectives will benefit the public.
- Give adequate skill, time and energy as a trustee.
- Act with integrity while avoiding personal conflicts of interest.

The committee will make joint decisions and share responsibility for those decisions, even in their absence.

#### The committee has responsibility to manage the organisation on behalf of the members. The responsibilities are:

- To develop and manage external relationships.
- Develop policies and procedures.
- Plan future directions.
- Carry out recommendations of members.
- Regularly communicate with members and respond to feedback.
- Obtain resources to support knowledge and ability to uphold the role in the ever-changing sector.
- Ensure that all legal and financial matters are managed properly.
- Evaluate performance of the employees, officials, sub-committees and the committee itself. The Governance Self Assessment supports committees in performance evaluation.
- Plan succession and conduct induction for newly elected committee members.
- Ensure that all members of the committee act as leadership role models.
- Make decisions that are in the best interest of the organisation and not for individual gain.
- To ensure compliance with both the governing document and any other laws that apply to the organisation.

Most community groups have a set of rules known as a constitution. The constitution will define but not limit to: how often the management committee should meet, what size the committee should be, also how the officers may be elected.

#### Duties that committee members oversee include but are not limited to:

- Chairing meetings.
- Managing finances and ensuring accountability.
- Reporting.
- Health and safety.
- Adhering to responsibilities of registered charities.
- Minute taking.
- Administration and general organisation.
- Project planning.
- Legal liability.

#### Overall responsibility:

**Trustee** - For a charity the overall responsibility lies with the trustee to ensure aims and objectives are being followed. A trustee may also be known as board member, director, committee member or governor. The trustee will therefore supervise, assist and delegate the above-mentioned duties within a team of honorary officers.

It is extremely rare but not impossible for a trustee to be held personally liable. This will happen if a trustee has acted improperly resulting in financial loss to the organisation, or a third party has a legal claim against the

organisation to which the organisation can not meet. It is possible to protect yourself as trustee to a higher standard if the organisation becomes incorporated e.g. becoming a CIO.

**Some of the officer roles are as follows:**

**Chair person** – To ensure the management committee is functioning properly, to provide leadership, to ensure the organisation is managed effectively, to offer support to the chief officer and senior team and to represent the organisation as a figurehead.

**Treasurer** – To oversee the organisation finances and ensure the process is constitutional, legal and within acceptable accounting practice. To ensure all proper records are kept and effective financial procedures are in place. To monitor and report on the financial situation of the organisation. To oversee the production of necessary financial accounts and reports.

**Secretary** – To ensure meetings are well prepared and minutes are taken. Do general administration and maintain effective records. Where relevant uphold legal requirements of governing documents, company law and charity law. Also will be a source of communication and correspondence.

**Public Officer** – Appointed by the committee and not elected by members this role is to act as liaison between organisation and consumer affairs.

As well as management committees there may be other committee's set up as sub groups to your board such as Health and Safety, Human Resources and Safeguarding. These groups should feedback to the overall management committee on a regular basis.

**Useful contact information:**

Charity trustees: what's involved: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved>

Guidance to be a competent trustee: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do>

Governing with intent: <http://www.tesseakpeki.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/governingwithIntent.pdf>

