



## Organisation Self Health Check

### Does my organisation follow governance correctly?

This document is designed to allow your VCSE organisation to perform a free, quick and easy health check on the governance you have in place.

Please tick one answer A - C for each of the following options.

#### 1. In regard to information governance at my organisation:

A – Colleagues are asked at interview if they understand confidentiality. People are only offered the post if they have sufficient knowledge to perform the role. As such no further training or assessment is needed as the colleague has proven competence. The building is secure and doors are key access only meaning information is secure. We store all personal data securely including information that may be of use in the future.

B – At the start of an appointed role the new colleague is asked to undertake information governance training as part of their induction. They must complete the training before they access confidential information which is relevant to their role. Computers are password protected and filing cabinets are lockable to ensure information is secure. Colleagues inform contacted people how their information is being used and also if a telephone call is being recorded.

C – The policy and procedure of our organisation includes detailed implementation strategies to ensure compliance to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All colleagues are made fully aware of all policies and procedures at induction and again annually or at any policy review stage. Failure to comply with policies and procedures will lead to immediate investigation and any necessary action taken.

#### 2. To ensure reporting and transparency is appropriate to our organisation:

A – It is the role of the member of staff taking action to report on any concerns arising, be it financial or service provision. We expect all our staff to keep full and accurate records of processes being undertaken on behalf of our organisation.

B – Our board of Trustees are responsible for reporting the organisation affairs and finances to governing bodies. Our accounts are made transparent and we annually go through a full year end process. We have a constitution and follow reporting guides therein.

C – As an organisation we are fully compliant with guidance provided by the Direct Government. We regularly monitor and review the aims, processes, finances and structure of our organisation to ensure the correct governing bodies are being informed appropriately. Where structure of our organisation does change our governing document is updated to reflect any new processes required. The governing document is fully transparent.

### 3. Compliance is very important to the effectiveness of our organisation as a whole:

- A – To ensure all staff and volunteers are performing in a way fit for purpose our organisation has a general understanding of procedure which everyone is expected to follow. Anyone who is not sure of procedure may ask the line manager for support.
- B – We have a written policy and procedure document to which all staff and volunteers have access. On writing the policy and procedure we did ensure all secular laws were encompassed and not breached.
- C – Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed within our organisation to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and our governing document. All active processes under our organisation are monitored to ensure policy and procedures are being followed. Any issues raised are fully investigated and required action taken.

### 4. Finances are logged and accounted. The system we have in place is as follows:

- A – Our organisation has a finance department. Where asset or monetary values are concerned our finance department administer processes. Other staff and volunteers are not authorised to action any accounting transaction and as such receive no financial training.
- B – Our organisation has a Treasurer who is responsible for all organisation financial concerns. Financial liabilities are stated in the governing document and we have a full financial policy in place which all staff and volunteers are required to read. It is the role of the Finance Team to ensure all invoices and receipts are logged.
- C – A Treasurer oversees our financial team. All transactions and assets are monitored and receipts are retained for no less than six years. We do quarterly stock takes and annual audits to ensure records are accurate. Though in our policy staff and volunteers are responsible for handing in and logging all receipts on time it is the Treasurer who is responsible for ensuring an accurate annual report is submitted to governing bodies.

### 5. Insurance cover within our organisation:

- A – The insurance our organisation has in place covers both the staff and assets against damage, injury and loss. The insurance forms are kept on site in a lockable filing cabinet for security. Insurance is reviewed annually. We have annual safety inspections to help prevent incident happening in the first place.
- B – We have a number of insurance policies in place; which are overseen by the Management Committee. These include building, content, public liability and employers liability. Our insurance premiums are kept up to date and we have annual reviews to ensure the correct insurance is in place. We own up immediately where fault is with our organisation, we do not wish to cause further undue stress to those affected.
- C – Our Trustees ensure we have full insurance cover and premiums are paid up to date. We have building, content, public liability, employers liability and indemnity in place, insurance is annually reviewed to ensure adequacy. We have two copies of insurance held; one kept onsite and the other in an offsite location to protect against damage or loss. As an organisation we will not admit to any blame, no matter how apparent, until legal advice is sought.

### 6. Complaint process for our group:

- A – As an organisation we take complaints very seriously. Any situation that needs to be reported may be discussed with the reporting person's line manager in confidence. If the line manager has just cause to take action to resolve a situation this will happen as soon as possible. Complainants are made aware of their right to contact the Ombudsman.
- B – Our organisation holds a complaints policy. Informal discussions can occur in private, however if a formal or serious complaint is to be made this must be done in writing. A line manager will receive all complaints and there will be a response given in less than ten working days explaining what will happen next. Any action decided upon will be implemented with effect 5-10 days after the decision made.



C – Either a Line Manager or HR may address complaints as set in our policy, witness may be present. This may be an informal chat or a formal letter or discussion. A complaint will be recorded within a staff personal file, or in the case a member of the general public complains a separate file will be kept. All complaints are investigated immediately after notification is received and a formal letter provided within 10 working days to show the complaint is received and being investigated. Action required will be implemented 5-10 days after decision though there will be fully informed right to appeal.

#### **7. Liabilities are a concern:**

A – Our group have no written set of rules in regard to who is liable for project debts and law suits. As a running concern liability falls to the named group, there is no reason why our staff or volunteers should hold any personal responsibility for group financial loss.

B – We have a written governing document for the group to follow. This document holds all rules for our organisation including liability, there are various types of liability such as for personal grievance or financial implications. The governing document shows details of where liability would be placed in each case.

C – Trustees are responsible for ensuring the place of liabilities for a group are made fully clear whether a governing document is in place or not. Though it is ideal to have the fall of liabilities in writing and followed, it must be understood that where no set of rules are in place and signed then full liability will fall to the acting individual and not the organisation by law.

#### **8. Working hours for our organisation are suitable because:**

A – Our group have both staff and volunteers who sign a contract. To keep costs down we only hire staff on a zero hours contract to fill gaps where enough volunteers are not available to keep the charity going. Volunteers are welcomed for as many hours as they are willing to give.

B – Our organisation has both staff and volunteers. Staff have a regular rota and work no more than 48 hours a week. Both volunteers and staff are entitled to a thirty-minute lunch break where a working day is 6 hours or longer. Working hours are part of our policies and procedures.

C – Staff on joining our organisation are asked to sign a contract whereby showing understanding of the work time directive and agreeing to attend for work for the hours specified within the contract. The Working Time Regulations 1998 are fully complied with in our organisation. Volunteers though a valuable resource are not protected by the same workers' rights of paid staff therefore receive no contract.

#### **9. Lone working procedures are:**

A – We have lone workers who regularly visit service users within their own homes. Before a visit occurs we ensure the service user is nonviolent by reading referral notes received. Our lone workers are Enhanced DBS checked with barred. This ensures a safe environment for both staff and service user. We have a dry white board where lone workers tick to say they have arrived back to the office safely every day.

B – Lone workers are fully aware of our lone working policy. At induction there is a full training program to ensure the lone worker understands how to ensure the safest working practice required for both themselves and the service user visited. An emergency telephone number is provided should there be any issues. Lone workers carry a mobile phone and may call for aid if needed.

C – We have a lone worker policy and full training scheme. If a lone visit is deemed unsafe before or during the session the worker is trained on how to avoid or leave the situation in the best way possible. However, in the event of emergency there are procedures to follow to allow for the safest possible outcome. Lone workers must keep to a check in schedule; which is logged at office, and ensure they use a safety code phrase if help is needed. In the event a check in cannot be made lone workers have a panic alarm that may be pressed.



## 10. Health and safety rules of our organisation:

- A – Within our organisation there is the potential for a hazard to be on site at the same time as those on duty. The best way for risks not to cause harm is for people to be vigilant and mindful of their own safety around these risks. On induction staff are shown all possible onsite hazards and told how to work in the safest way. We have a first aider who works full time should an accident happen.
- B – There are hazards on site. Where there is risk there are signs and symbols placed where appropriate. We have a health and safety policy in place, a Health and Safety Representative as well as First Aiders; to best reduce risks and any effect a risk may have on a person or assets. Accidents are recorded in an accident book.
- C – Health and safety is a key priority. We have annual health and safety inspections done by an independent service and our health and safety report is made fully transparent. Our organisation fully complies with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to ensure roles and responsibilities are made fully clear and acted upon. Our Trustee has implemented a policy to which all staff and volunteers have access and Line Managers are constantly vigilant to spot and resolve any unnecessary risks.

### Now add together all of your answers for each assigned letter A – C.

The answers you have provided indicate how well your organisations are complying to legislation as relevant in May 2018. Please read the following information:

**A** – Answers indicate support is required to help get the organisation on the right track. Support with governance is available from Voluntary Action Rotherham. Please email [triage@varotherham.org.uk](mailto:triage@varotherham.org.uk) with your full contact details and brief description of where you feel support is required; you may attach your completed self-assessment. An experienced member of our team will contact you directly.

**B** – Answers indicate a good understanding and compliance to governing law. Your process may not however be fully refined and a few pointers could help your organisation to have a stronger foundation. Please email [triage@varotherham.org.uk](mailto:triage@varotherham.org.uk) if you would like to access support from Voluntary Action Rotherham.

**C** - Answers indicate excellent understanding and compliance to governing laws. If your organisation wish to change legal structure or access support with anything form funding searches to administrative support please visit the Voluntary Action Rotherham website: <http://www.varotherham.org.uk/> or telephone 01709 829821 to direct your enquiry.

### Did you know?

Usually, you must register with the Charity Commission if your charity is based in England or Wales and has over £5,000 income per year, or is a CIO.

Here's the link to the Charity Commission website, for more information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-register-your-charity-cc21b#when-to-apply-to-register-your-charity>

If you have any queries, VAR may be able to assist you, please contact [triage@varotherham.org.uk](mailto:triage@varotherham.org.uk)

