

The Role of a Trustee

A trustee has three main responsibilities:

- 1 Fiduciary responsibility; holding the organisation in trust and ensuring public confidence
- 2 To determine the overall direction of the organisation
- 3 To provide leadership

Trustee job description

Job title: Trustee of Headway (West Midlands) Ltd

The duties of a trustee are:

- 1 To ensure that the charity complies with its governing document, charity law, company law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- 2 To ensure that the charity pursues its charitable objects as defined in the governing Document.
- 3 To ensure that the charity applies its resources exclusively in furtherance of its objects, ie the charity must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
- 4 To contribute actively to the board of trustees' role of giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- 5 To safeguard the good name and values of the charity.
- 6 To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the charity.
- 7 To ensure the financial stability of the charity.
- 8 To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- 9 To appoint and support the Chief Executive Officer and monitor his or her performance.
- 10 In addition to the above statutory duties of all trustees, each trustee should use any specific knowledge or experience he or she may 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 charity's work in which the trustee has special expertise.

Headway West Midlands

Person specification: Trustee of Headway (west Midlands) Ltd

The committee of standards in public life established in 1994 and under the chairmanship of Lord Nolan Committee concluded that all those in public life should adhere to the following seven principles:

- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- leadership

In addition, each trustee must have:

- ☞ a commitment to the charity.
- ☞ 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.
- ☞ the courage and willingness to speak their mind.
 - ☞ an ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Headway West Midlands

Proposed Job Descriptions for Honorary Officers

Job Description for Chair

The role of the Chair is to lead the board of trustees, ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the charity. When staff are employed, the Chair's role is also to work in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer, helping him or her achieve the aims of the charity, and to optimise the relationship between the board of trustees and the staff/volunteers.

The responsibilities of the Chair will include:

- providing leadership for the board of trustees in their role of setting the strategy and policy of the charity
- planning the annual cycle of board meetings
- setting agendas for board meetings
- chairing board meetings
- monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented
- representing the charity at functions and meetings and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- liaising with the Chief Executive Officer to keep an overview of the charity's affairs and providing support as appropriate
- leading the process of appraising the performance of the Chief Executive Officer
- sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels as appropriate

Person specification for Chair

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Chair should also possess the following:

- leadership
- experience of committee work
- ability to forge a consensus among the board
- tact and diplomacy
- good 'people' skills
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences

In most circumstances it would also be desirable for the Chair to have knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the charity and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks.

Headway West Midlands

Job Description for Secretary

The role of the Secretary is to support the Chair by ensuring the smooth functioning of the board. The responsibilities of the Secretary will include either doing the following tasks or delegating them to a member of staff and ensuring that they have been carried out:

- checking that a quorum is present
- ensuring that the minutes are signed by the Chair once they have been approved
- circulating the agendas and minutes of the annual general meeting and any special or extraordinary general meetings
- sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required
- **acting as Company Secretary where this role is not delegated to a member of staff**
 - Annual Return to Companies House
 - Notify Companies House of any changes arising from AGM
 - Return Annual Register check and copy of Accounts to Charity Commissioners
 - Submit Annual Report and Accounts to Companies House

Person specification for Secretary

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Secretary should also possess the following:

- organisational ability
- knowledge or experience of business and committee procedures
- minute-taking experience, if this is not being delegated to staff

Headway West Midlands

Job description for Treasurer

The overall role of a Treasurer is to maintain an overview of a charity's affairs, ensuring its financial viability and ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained. The responsibilities of the Treasurer will vary depending on the powers delegated to the Treasurer, but generally include:

- overseeing, approving and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements
- being assured that the financial resources of the charity meet its present and future needs
- ensuring that the charity has an appropriate reserves policy
- the preparation and presentation of financial reports to the board
- ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place
- liaising with any paid staff and volunteers about financial matters
- advising on the financial implications of the charity's strategic plan
- ensuring that the charity has an appropriate investment policy
- ensuring that there is no conflict between any investments held and the aims and objects of the charity
- monitoring the charity's investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the charity's policies and legal responsibilities
- **ensuring that the accounts are audited and prepared in accordance with company law, any auditors' recommendations are implemented, the accounts are included in the annual report and are submitted to the relevant statutory bodies, eg the Charity Commission and Registrar of Companies**
 - ⇒ keeping the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
 - ⇒ contributing to the fundraising strategy of the charity
 - ⇒ making a formal presentation of the accounts at the annual general meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way
 - ⇒ sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required

Person specification for Treasurer

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Treasurer should also possess the following:

- ⇒ financial experience and business planning skills
- ⇒ some experience of charity finance, fundraising and pension schemes
- ⇒ the skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
- ⇒ a preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board
- ⇒ a willingness to be available to give financial advice and answer enquiries from any staff or volunteers on an ad hoc basis