

Trustees Training Handout

As a trustee you should:

- Be clear about the role & responsibilities of a trustee and the board. This is a governance not a management role.
- Understand the organisation: its governing document, vision, values, strategy, finances, assets, risk register and policies and be supportive of it.
- Attend and prepare well for all meetings and follow through promptly on any actions.
- Pray regularly for the organisation and its people.
- Ask questions and be willing to challenge robustly but graciously.
- Together with other trustees:
 - Set, monitor and review the charity's strategic aims, objectives & direction.
 - Take ultimate responsibility for ensuring the charity is solvent and well run.

The main duties of trustees (as stated by the Charity Commission) are:

1. Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
2. Comply with the charity's governing document and the law
3. Act in the charity's best interests
4. Manage the charity's resources responsibly
5. Act with reasonable care and skill
6. Ensure the charity is accountable

The key documents to refer to are:

- The governing document (Constitution, Memorandum & Articles of Association or Trust Deed)
- Strategic plan including vision, mission and values
- Annual report and financial statements (accounts)
- Risk register

The Governing Document

This is the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Constitution or Trust Deed. Whilst the chair and company secretary should take the lead in ensuring that all practice follows the governing document, all trustees should be aware of the following key points:

- What the charity can do & how it can use its income & property (**objects & powers**)
- Limitation of Benefits
- The **liability** of members
- **Indemnity** of trustees and officers
- **Chair** responsibilities and appointment
- **Delegation & committees**
- **Directors meetings & decisions:** notice; quorum; conflicts of interest
- **Directors & appointment** (ie trustees) minimum & maximum number of trustees, duration of trustee term & maximum number of terms
- **Members of the charity** if they exist as a separate group from trustees
- **General meetings & resolutions**
- **Communication**
- **Minutes, accounts, winding up & other points**

It may be helpful for subsequent reference to write the relevant article numbers on this list or to highlight these sections on your own paper or electronic copy of the governing document