

ICSA Model Job Description for Chair of the Board of Trustees

This ICSA Guidance Note has been updated in accordance with recommendations contained within the 'Code of Governance for the Voluntary and Community Sector', thereby providing charities with up to date information on introducing and improving governance arrangements. It is therefore advisable that charities read this Guidance Note in conjunction with the Governance Code, which can be downloaded from www.governancehub.org.uk.

In reading these documents it may transpire that this Guidance Note extends upon and consolidates the principles highlighted in the 'Code of Governance for the Voluntary and Community Sector'. In such situations, the Institute believes that the Guidance Note reflects current leading best practice in this area of charity governance, and therefore builds upon the governance code for those charities that are in a position to stretch their governance arrangements further.

Overall Purpose

To provide leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees, enabling them to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity. Developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

Where staff are employed, the chair will need to work in partnership with the Chief Executive to ensure that trustee decisions are acted upon and the charity is managed in an effective manner. It should be noted that new governance arrangements proposed by the Charities' Bill will separate governance and management, thereby reflecting best practice.

Main Responsibilities

- Leading the trustees and members of the senior management team to develop strategic plans for the charity.
- Providing support and leadership to the Chief Executive and ensuring that the charity is run in accordance with the decisions of the trustees and the charity's governing document.
- Liaising with the Secretary, and Chief Executive to draft agendas for trustee meetings and ensure that the business is covered efficiently and effectively in those meetings.¹
- Undertaking a leadership role in ensuring that the board of trustees fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the charity.
- Acting as the channel of communication between the trustees and staff, in situations where it does not undermine the charity's senior management team.

¹ For further information see the Charity Commission's publication *Charities and Meetings* CC48, May 2003

"The information given in this Guidance Note, is provided in good faith with the intention of furthering the understanding of the subject matter. Whilst we believe the information to be accurate at the time of publication, ICSA and its staff cannot however accept any liability for any loss or damage occasioned by any person or organisation acting or refraining from action as a result of any views expressed therein. If the reader has any specific doubts or concerns about the subject matter they are advised to seek legal advice based on the circumstances of their own situation."

Main Duties

- Planning, setting and chairing trustee meetings and AGMs.²
- Ensuring trustee decisions are acted upon.
- Supporting and appraising the work of the Chief Executive and other appropriate members of the senior management team.
- Leading disciplinary and appointment committees.³
- Representing the charity at functions, meetings and in the press and broadcasting media.
- Acting between full meetings of the board in authorising action to be taken *intra vires* and signing cheques and legal documents in accordance with relevant mandates.
- Ensuring that the performance of the Board and the trustees is reviewed on an annual basis.

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² See ICSA's *A Guide to Best Practice for Annual General Meetings* for further information on AGMs.

³ For further information on employment issues for charities please refer to *Managing People in Charities*, ICSA Publishing Ltd

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