

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR A CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Responsible to: the board of trustees as a whole, but usually line managed by the chairperson of trustees on behalf of the board.

Key responsibilities

1. To provide leadership to the charity and to be responsible for the management and administration of the charity within the strategic, policy and accountability frameworks laid down by the board of trustees
2. Together with the chairperson, to enable the board of trustees to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity and to ensure that the board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters

Duties and tasks to fulfil the key responsibilities

- 1. To provide leadership to the charity and to be responsible for the management and administration of the charity within the strategic and accountability frameworks laid down by the board of trustees.**

1.1. Leadership

- To lead, inspire and motivate staff and volunteers
- To assist the board in agreeing the values, ethos, vision and mission of the charity
- To lead the review and development of a medium- to long-term strategy for the charity within its objects, vision, and mission, and to obtain the approval of the board
- To develop the work of the charity in order to achieve the agreed strategic plan and its objects, vision and mission and thus to ensure that the charity is focused on achieving the strategic priorities
- To ensure that the charity's values, ethos and policies are relevant, fair and consistently implemented
- To develop an organisation that is constantly seeking ways to learn and to improve its performance
- To develop and maintain an environment that attracts and retains the best staff and volunteers

1.2. Management

- To be accountable to the board for the proper and effective management of the charity
- To run the charity efficiently and effectively by ensuring that the charity has an appropriate management structure and management systems in order to fulfil its strategic objectives and to carry out its work
- To ensure that all management policies and decisions support the agreed vision, mission, values, philosophy and strategic priorities of the charity

- To ensure that business, operational and annual plans to underpin the strategic plan are developed, agreed and implemented
- To identify appropriate methods for monitoring the performance of the charity and to report back to the trustees on the performance of the charity against its strategy, its business, operational and annual plans, and against the annual budget as approved by the board
- To ensure that the recruitment, management, training and development of staff reflect good employment practice and are directed towards achieving the charity's objectives
- To ensure that the charity is aware of best practice and that it constantly works to achieve this within the constraints laid down by the trustees and resources available

1.3. Finance and risk

- To be responsible overall for the financial health of the charity including developing, overseeing and monitoring an effective programme of income generation
- To ensure that the major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed regularly by the board and the executive team, systems have been established to mitigate these risks, and a risk analysis is automatically carried out when taking on new work or proposing new work to the board
- To ensure that there are effective mechanisms to ensure the robustness of external and internal controls (financial and non-financial)

1.4. External and internal relations

- To foster good communications throughout the charity and externally
- To develop, as appropriate, the charity's public profile and foster good relationships with government, statutory, voluntary and private bodies, and other external stakeholders
- To set up mechanisms for listening to the views of current and future beneficiaries on the performance of the charity, as well as on areas for future development
- To scan the external environment for changes that may affect the charity, to advise the trustees proactively and to take necessary action

1.5. Legal and regulatory compliance

- To ensure that the charity fulfils all its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities

2. Together with the chairperson, to enable the board of trustees to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity and to ensure that the board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters.

2.1. Strategy and planning

- In partnership with the chairperson, to ensure that the trustees set the values, ethos, vision, mission, strategic objectives and strategic priorities for the charity

2.2. Ensuring high-quality governance

- Draw the board's attention to matters that it should consider and decide
- To ensure that the board receives all necessary advice, guidance and information on matters relating to current performance, the short- and long-term future of the charity, regulatory and legal compliance, and other appropriate issues; and making sure that such advice, guidance and information are timely, honest, balanced and relevant
- To ensure that the staff understand and support the governance role of the board and that there is a positive and constructive working relationship between the board and the executive
- To ensure with the chairperson that the board of trustees reviews regularly the charity's governing instruments and governance structure, and to assist with the board's assessment of its own performance
- In partnership with the chairperson, to ensure that the board's delegated authority is recorded in writing and understood fully by staff and volunteers, and that all agreed reporting procedures are followed
- To work closely with the board to ensure that the board has on it the skills it requires to govern the charity well, and that the board has access to relevant external professional advice and expertise
- To assist the chairperson in ensuring that there is a systematic, open and fair procedure for the recruitment or co-option of trustees, future chairs of the board and future chief executives
- To work with the chairperson to ensure that all members of the board receive appropriate induction, advice, information and training (both individual and collective), thus getting the best thinking and involvement of each member of the board

2.3. Board meetings

- To ensure that the board is given the information it needs to perform its duties
- In partnership with the chairperson, to develop an annual programme of board and committee meetings and board away-days
- In partnership with the chairperson, to ensure that the right and appropriate items reach board agendas and that high-quality papers support each item on the agenda
- To assist the chairperson in ensuring that the board focuses on its governance role by making sure that the board agenda and papers do not draw the board away from governance and into unnecessary detail and management issues
- To report regularly to the board of trustees on the performance of the charity, progress towards the strategic priorities and the achievement of board policies
- To submit high-level policy proposals for the approval of the board or assist the board in the development of these policies, and to be responsible for the efficient and effective achievement of these policies
- To implement board decisions

2.4. Relationships with the chairperson of trustees

- To have regular one-to-one meetings with the chairperson at which the chairperson and chief executive can talk openly, discuss progress and problems, agree expectations of each other, plan the board's annual programme together and prepare together for meetings
- In close consultation with the chairperson, to agree respective roles in representing the charity and acting as spokesperson at public functions, public meetings and to the press/media

Taken from Good Governance: A practical guide for trustees, chairpersons and CEOs by Dorothy Dalton (NCVO, 2010)