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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES; IDENTIFYING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

- Committee Members' Roles And Responsibilities
- Team Working
- Key Skills Checklist For Committee Members
- Training Needs Analysis

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Checklist

Duties Of All Committee Members

Management committee members have overall responsibility for meeting an organisation's legal duties, ensuring it is properly managed, and for promoting good practice in all its activities.

Legal Duties

These include:

- Ensuring the organisation meets its objectives as set out in the constitution
- Ensuring the organisation complies with the rules set out in its constitution and acts legally in all its activities (getting advice when necessary)
- Acting in the interests of the organisation and its beneficiaries, not for personal benefit
- Informing meetings of any interest in a contract which could lead to conflict of interest
- Providing proper accounts of the organisation's activities to its members, funders (and the Charity Commission, Companies House and other regulatory bodies as appropriate); producing annual reports and directors' reports as required by law; and ensuring that accounts, annual returns and other required information is filed on time
- Seeking professional advice where relevant
- Ensuring resources and assets are well managed and used to pursue its objects

- Keeping up to date with activities to ensure informed decision making at all times
- As far as is reasonable, keeping abreast of legislation that may affect the organisation's work and direction
- Ensuring that the organisation has effective health and safety policies and procedures covering all its activities and that they are effectively monitored
- Ensuring that necessary insurance policies are taken out and periodically reviewed
- Ensuring the organisation meets its contractual and other obligations, including employment contracts, premises agreements, funding contracts and equipment licences
- Ensuring the organisation does not discriminate in employment or service provision
- Regularly attending management committee meetings and working with other members

Managerial Tasks

These include:

- Setting overall policy and short, medium and long-term objectives
- Identifying and discussing new areas of work
- Ensuring there are systems for regularly monitoring and evaluating the organisation's work
- Being a good employer

- Supervising and supporting senior staff and ensuring other employees and volunteers are properly supported
- Ensuring the organisation's equal opportunities policy is implemented and monitored promoting the organisation

The Role Of Individual Committee Members

The Chairperson

The tasks of a chair can be divided into five key areas, some of which could be delegated to a vice-chair.

1 : Acting As A Spokesperson

This could include:

- Representing the organisation at external events
- Liaising with the press on behalf of the organisation (this could be delegated to a press officer)
- Taking an active role in fundraising campaigns

2 : Dealing With Matters Relating To Membership, Other Officers And Users

This could involve:

- Ensuring members' rights as stated in the constitution are met
- Helping to deal with disciplinary action against members and other officers
- Helping to deal with disputes between members, users and the organisation

3 : Planning And Running The Organisation's Meetings

These include the AGM, any other members' meetings and committee meetings.

Planning meetings involves:

- Ensuring the organisation holds the meetings required by its constitution
- Ensuring compliance with the procedures for giving notice of meetings
- Helping to plan the agendas for each meeting, checking the minutes of previous meetings and ensuring that these and any background papers are distributed beforehand
- Being briefed about each item on the agenda
- Ensuring outstanding matters are followed up

Running meetings involves:

- Ensuring the meeting is quorate
- Gaining agreement of the minutes of the previous meeting and then signing them
- Making sure all relevant items on the agenda are discussed
- Ensuring all participants have the opportunity to make a contribution
- Making sure voting procedures are complied with
- Clarifying key decisions that are made
- Ensuring proper minutes are taken

4 : Supervising Senior Staff

The chair is generally responsible for supervising and supporting the work of the senior member of staff.

5 : Helping With The Management Of The Organisation

This could include:

- Making decisions and taking action between committee meetings (taking chair's action) if this is allowed by the constitution or has been authorised by the committee
- Acting as a sounding board for senior staff, signing cheques and liaising with the treasurer
- Helping to deal with any staff problems and involvement in staff recruitment

The Company Secretary

Directors of companies limited by guarantee must appoint a company secretary, whose post requires meeting certain legal obligations under company law. Some of the tasks may be delegated to paid staff (and a member of staff can be the company secretary).

1 : Maintaining And Updating The Registers

This involves:

- Maintaining a register of members and a register of directors and company secretaries
- Notifying the Registrar of Companies within 14 days of any changes of directors, and any changes in directors' home addresses, other companies of which they are directors, or any of the other information company directors are required to provide
- If the company has a seal, keeping the sealing register - the list of documents on which the company seal has been used
- Where relevant, maintaining a register of charges i.e. loans made to the company where the bank has a form of security, such as a mortgage

2 : Ensuring Meetings Are Called And Recorded

This involves:

- Ensuring that an AGM is held within 18 months of incorporation and then at least every 15 months; ensuring that 21 days' written notice is given to members and auditors and that business is transacted in accordance with the constitution
- Calling other general meetings as required by the constitution, ensuring that 14 days' written notice is given and business transacted accordingly
- Ensuring minute books are kept for general meetings and directors' meetings

3 : Administration Of Annual Returns And Accounts

This involves:

- Ensuring an income and expenditure account and balance sheet are prepared or submitted for a compilation report and where necessary properly audited
- Circulating audited or examined accounts to members at least 21 days before the AGM
- Submitting accounts to the Charity Commission within ten months of the end of the financial year
- Submitting the income and expenditure account, balance sheet and directors' report to the Registrar of Companies within ten months of the end of the organisation's financial year
- Submitting an annual return to the Registrar of Companies by the due date
- Keeping copies of all annual returns and accounts for at least six years

4 : Supervising Legal Agreements

Ensuring all legal agreements or contracts are properly discussed, recorded and agreed by the directors.

5 : Meeting Other Registration Requirements

This involves:

- Notifying the Registrar of Companies of changes to the organisation's registered address within 14 days
- Ensuring the organisation's stationery includes its registered name and address, the fact that it is a registered company and its registration number (and where relevant the fact that it is a registered charity)
- If the organisation is registered for VAT, ensuring the VAT number is printed on its invoices
- Having custody of the company seal, if there is one, and ensuring it is properly used

The Secretary

'Company Secretary' is a legal position, required under company law. Unless required by the constitution there is no obligation to have an elected secretary, and the relevant tasks can be undertaken by staff (if any).

1 : Companies

In a company the elected secretary might help the company secretary to prepare for and administer meetings and with other administration.

2 : Unincorporated Associations

In unincorporated associations, the secretary takes on responsibilities similar to those of the company secretary - specifically in relation to meetings, membership lists,

management committee names and addresses and ensuring annual reports and accounts are submitted to the relevant agencies.

3 : Preparing For Meetings

This could involve:

- Sending notices of all meetings to members
- Making arrangements for meetings e.g. organising refreshments, booking rooms and ensuring appropriate facilities for participants with disabilities or other special needs
- Preparing the agenda, in consultation with the chair, and distributing the agenda with any background papers
- Checking that members have carried out tasks agreed at the previous meeting

4 : Helping In Meetings

This could involve:

- Making sure the meeting agrees the minutes of the previous meeting and they are signed by the chair
- Taking and producing minutes of the meetings, recording names of those attending and apologies, major decisions, any votes taken and agreed further action

5 : Other Administration

This could involve:

- Keeping records of outgoing correspondence
- Keeping records of membership subscriptions
- Ensuring members are provided with the organisation's constitution, annual report and policies
- Sending out publicity about the organisation

The Honorary Treasurer

In an organisation with staff, the role of treasurer is usually taken by the manager or by finance staff. However it is still good to have an 'honorary treasurer' able to play a series of roles.

1 : Financial Oversight

The honorary treasurer's main duty is to ensure that funds are spent in accordance with the organisation's aims and following the organisation's procedures. This may include examining individual project budgets and accounts to make sure it is being spent as the funder requires.

2 : Financial Procedures And Audit

The treasurer should ensure the organisation's procedures for spending and controlling money are effective and being used. The treasurer needs to check that records are being kept and that assets are being controlled and can be accounted for. The organisation needs good financial policies and decisions will need to be made between meetings. Someone needs oversight of negotiations with banks and funders and tendering and procurement within the organisation. The treasurer needs to check financial information before it is presented to the board and ensure that information kept is easily auditable.

3 : Fundraising And Budgeting

The treasurer's main role is to ensure financial planning and budgeting take place. They will need to be able to track spending in relation to budgets and work with staff or other board members to decide spending priorities. The treasurer will need to approve funding bids being made and be involved in the drawing up of contracts or service level agreements when funding is won.

4 : Presenting Financial Information

It's the board's job to make decisions relating to finance and funding. The treasurer needs to ensure that financial information is presented properly and in time for the board to make decisions. A key task is to ensure that the board understands the finances of the organisation and that information is presented in ways that funders and members at the AGM can easily understand.

5 : Social Aims

Social enterprises are increasingly being expected to demonstrate the social value of their operations. One role for the treasurer could be to ensure that the organisation's assets and its financial transactions support the aims and objectives of the organisation. A further role could be in ensuring that financial information is presented to external funders and stakeholders in ways that emphasise the social value and impact of the organisation's spending.

Handy Tip

There are few better guides to managing a third sector organisation than *Just About Managing?: Effective Management for Voluntary Organisations* from the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

TEAM WORKING

We may have no or limited experience of team working. Or we may work in a group in ways that are inappropriate for a new project we are planning. We need a framework for working together and deciding things that can help team working no matter what the situation.

A useful framework used widely in the voluntary sector is **DECIDE**.

Define

Groups need to clearly define the situation and limit discussion to just that topic, without letting new issues or 'red herrings' muddy the waters. They need to control the process of definition and make sure everyone is 'signed up' to the process. They must also decide who needs to be involved in the process, how long it should take or be allowed to go on and what is needed for a good decision to be made.

Exploring

A good way to disrupt the unity of the group is for one person or a smaller group to define the problem and produce pre-prepared proposals or solutions that people aren't ready for. The group needs time and space to explore problems and solutions.

Clarifying

To remain engaged and to ensure that decisions - once made - get implemented properly, everyone needs the appropriate information and needs to understand it and the implications of what's been decided.

Ideas And Information

Rule ideas 'in' rather than ruling them out straight away; you never know. Give ideas to smaller groups to work on and test more intensively. Allow time for people to get information and keep a good record of all the ideas suggested, the discussions about each one and why they were either accepted and implemented or rejected.

Decisions

A decision supported by all is better than one imposed on the group or accepted only by a majority (or even a minority!). It's unlikely that all decisions will satisfy everyone, so be prepared to compromise from time to time. Ensure that people who don't support the decision will go along with it. Clarify who is doing what and that all tasks are properly defined.

Evaluate

Once a decision has been put into effect, how it has been implemented, whether the decision had the effect intended and its cost-effectiveness will need to be evaluated and reviewed.

KEY SKILLS CHECKLIST FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Please tick

The Sector	Existing Skill	Required Skill
Knowledge of other local social enterprises		
Ability to identify opportunities		
Knowledge of funding sources		
Experience of making funding bids		
Experience of assessing funding bids		

Legal Knowledge	Existing Skill	Required Skill
Legal responsibilities of committees		
How charities work		
Responsibilities when employing someone		
Leases and contracts		

Financial Skills	Existing Skill	Required Skill
How to read an income and expenditure account		
How to present financial information		
How to prepare a budget		
Preparing a cashflow forecast		
Preparing a profit and loss forecast		
How to keep simple accounts		
Doing the payroll		

Personal Skills	Existing Skill	Required Skill
Confident in your abilities		
Ability to understand complex issues		
Ability to see pros and cons of a proposal		
Willingness to question people's assumptions		
Ability to assess risk/understand implications		
Good at listening		
Able to say what you think		
Taking the lead/being a leader		
Dealing with authority		

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

To be done by each organisation member.

About You

List any training or experience relevant to your work, including short courses attended.

Rate Your Skills

Circle the number closest to your skill level.

5 = Good 4 = Above Average 3 = Average 2 = Below Average 1 = Poor

My publicity/marketing skills	1	2	3	4	5
Organisation's publicity/marketing skills	1	2	3	4	5
My financial skills	1	2	3	4	5
Organisation's financial skills	1	2	3	4	5
Your ability to deal with people	1	2	3	4	5
Organisation's ability to deal with people	1	2	3	4	5
Your ability to do your assigned job	1	2	3	4	5
Your ability to do the job you would like	1	2	3	4	5
Your ability to work with others	1	2	3	4	5
Organisation's ability to manage people	1	2	3	4	5

Do you have plans to take training over the next twelve months? **Yes / No**

If **yes**, please list:

List the areas you would like training in and assign some priorities where possible:

Follow up questionnaire to be done by the whole group.

What issues did the survey raise?

Prioritise three areas of training for the organisation over the next year:

Should you have a training program? If yes, how should it be organised?

In practice, how much time can the organisation invest in training?

Does the organisation have money for training? What budget should there be?

Does the organisation know who can provide required training?

Is it possible to raise money or get free training?

Discuss these findings/issues.

Who is going to follow up the discussion with some action?
