



NCVCCO



governancehub

We exist to help children's charities do what they do best – help children.

We do this through providing real support for the activities members wish they had more time for in the course of their busy professional lives.

NCVCCO shares the values and aims of the children's voluntary sector in placing the well being of children at the heart of everything we do. We have a personal relationship that we value with every one of our individual members, but our unique strength is in the collective power, voice and influence we have to promote the children's voluntary sector and campaign for positive change on behalf of children and families. We are proud of our track record in keeping children and families high on the policy agenda and at the forefront of the minds of decision makers. We are equally proud of the contribution our members make to communities across England, transforming the lives of children and young people through the services they provide.

For further details about becoming a member please visit our website www.ncvcco.org

Governance Hub

The Governance Hub was a partnership of nine organisations that provide support to the voluntary and community sector. The Hub closed in March 2008 and its work is being taken forward in a new partnership headed by NCVO.

The Hub aimed to raise awareness of trusteeship with the public and of the need for good governance within the sector. It signposted to existing resources and services and commissioned new ones to help fill the gaps. Some resources and links are still available on the website.

For more information go to: www.governancehub.org.uk

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Governing for Children

**A beginner's guide to governance in the children,
young people and families' voluntary sector**

Annie Franklin

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY CHILD CARE ORGANISATIONS (NCVCCO)
helping charities help children

About this guide

This guide was funded with support from the Governance Hub small grants scheme, which aimed to bring about significant improvement in the quality of governance within the voluntary (or third) sector.

The guide aims to introduce and describe the key elements and essential role of all those who govern small charitable organisations.

It is part of a national NCVCCO project to develop the skills and governance capacity of voluntary and community organisations working with children, families, and young people.

I acknowledge assistance from the following people and organisations: Maggie Jones, Ian Vallender, Joe Levenson and Jordan Thompson from NCVCCO, Maggie Rowlands from Home-Start UK, Out of School Network in Sheffield, Gay Surrey, Attlee Youth and Community Centre. I thank them warmly for their contribution, while accepting that any errors are my responsibility and every effort will be made to correct them in future editions.

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Introduction



“It was hard at first... I nearly gave up, but other board members were great and really supported me. In the end it sort of fell into place. I finally feel like I know how to do this.” (New trustee)

Volunteers run the voluntary sector: people from all walks of life, with very different backgrounds and experiences, who give their time and effort to govern their organisations.

More and more small organisations employ staff and managers. But it is still volunteers who form the governing body which has responsibility for the overall direction and policies of the organisation.

Being a governor – we will use the word trustee throughout the rest of this booklet – is a really important task. An organisation’s success or failure may rely on how well trustees do their job. And if the trustees perform well, so usually will the organisation. So it is a role that needs support.

Crucially, trustees work as a team (the board). While individual trustees will bring particular skills, no trustee will have all the skills necessary to govern the organisation. Governance is very much a shared task and this should lighten the load on everyone.

No individual trustee should feel they have too much to do, or feel under undue stress by being part of the board. There are, however, things all trustees need to know in order to play a full role. This booklet aims to provide a starting point for trustees who are new to the role, or have little experience, and staff who support them. We hope you find it useful.

Remember – asking questions is the best way to learn. As a trustee, you should never feel afraid to say you don’t understand something. And you should never agree to anything you don’t understand.

Governance – what’s it all about?



“It’s about ensuring that the organisation delivers what it says it will, for those it says it is for and that it continues to do so.” (Chief Officer of a small organisation)

A formal definition of governance is: **“the systems and processes concerned with ensuring the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of an organisation.”** (Cornforth, Chris (Ed) 2003 ‘The Governance of Public and Non-profit organisations: What do Boards Do? London: Routledge.)

Trustees are the people who form the trustee board of a charitable organisation, whether it is called a:

- Board of Governors;
- Board of Directors;
- Management Committee; or
- anything else.

Trustees may be called Governors, Directors, Management Committee members, or something else, depending on whether the organisation is a company or not and how it is set up. The name doesn’t matter; how effective trustees are does.

But trustees do not work alone. They must co-operate with Chief Officers and staff (where appointed), volunteers, service users and members to make sure their organisation is run well to meet the needs for which it was set up.

Trustees are there to:

- safeguard and promote the values and mission of the organisation;
- determine the strategy and structure of the organisation;

- make sure the organisation operates in an effective, responsible and accountable way; and
- make certain the trustee board works well.

This booklet aims to introduce these ideas and explain where to find out more about them.

The role of trustees



All trustees must make decisions in the best interests of the organisation.

The way trustees run the organisation can be divided into the following 12 areas:

- 1. Ensuring compliance with the governing document**
Knowing what it says and what it means – and sticking to it
- 2. Setting and maintaining vision, mission and values**
Knowing what you want to do and why you think it is important
- 3. Developing strategy**
Planning how to get there
- 4. Establishing and monitoring policies**
Being clear about how you will work and reviewing it regularly
- 5. Setting up employment procedures (where there are staff)**
Stating how staff will be recruited and treated and complying with regulations such as criminal records checks
- 6. Respecting the role of staff and volunteers**
Having clear job descriptions and then allowing people enough room to do their jobs

7. Selecting, managing and supporting the most senior member of staff (the Chief Officer)

Offering supervision, appraisal and support regularly

8. Ensuring accountability

Answering to others

9. Ensure compliance with the law

Knowing which laws affect you and working within them

10. Watching over the money and how it is used

Ensuring there is enough money and it is spent well

11. Performing well as a trustee board

Getting on together and working effectively

12. Promoting the organisation

Spreading the word

Great, so there are 12 key areas, but what does it all mean in practice? We have divided the 12 areas into three sections, to discuss them further. These are:

- **Vision and planning** (Points 1 – 4 in the list above)
- **Working with staff and volunteers** (Points 5 – 7)
- **Taking responsibility and being accountable** (Points 8 to 12)



Vision & planning



1 Ensuring compliance with the governing document

Your governing document may be called a Constitution, Trust Deed or Articles and Memorandum of Association, depending on how your organisation is set up.

Why do we need a governing document? Because while individuals may do whatever they like within the law, organisations may only do those things set out in the governing document. So it is very important that everyone in an organisation understands what the document says about why the organisation exists and whom it wants to help.

“I found the constitution particularly hard to understand, frightening almost, then someone explained that it just sets out what we are here to do and how we will organise ourselves to do it; then it made sense.” (Trustee, small organisation)

Most people find these documents – which are often written in very old fashioned, legalistic language – off-putting, but they are hugely important. They set out:

- the organisation’s name and purpose (charitable objects);
- who it intends to help (its beneficiaries) and where;
- how the charity’s resources may be used;
- arrangements for the Annual General Meeting (and other formal meetings);
- arrangements for appointment of the trustee board;
- what powers the trustee board has;
- rules for membership (where relevant); and
- what happens in the event that the organisation closes.

All trustees should have a copy of their organisation's governing document and understand what the organisation was set up to do and the extent of their powers. The board is responsible for ensuring that everything the organisation does complies with what is written in the document.

Out of School Network in Sheffield took the trouble to put their constitution into plain English while they were amending it to bring it up to date. Elaine Davies, the Chief Officer, says the whole board now understands the document much better and they are more confident in referring to it.

2 Setting and maintaining vision, mission and values

Once you know what your governing document says, the trustees, together as a board, must think about what it means.

The trustee board needs to be clear about the values and vision of the organisation: what it is there to do, for whom and in what way.

Children's Information Service (CIS) turned down an offer to be part of a large European Social Fund project because the focus of the work was training people for work and this did not form part of the organisation's Forward Plan. The trustees felt that taking part would divert the organisation from their mission. This was a risky strategy, as their major statutory partner promoted the project, but the outcome was positive and CIS maintained their focus on providing information to parents.

Relations with the local authority department were strained for a brief time, but were re-established positively because CIS could evidence that the work did not fit their mission or plan, which had been shared with the local authority.

All those who have an interest in the organisation (including key members of staff, volunteers, service users and main funders/partners) should agree a plan for what services you will deliver over a two to five year period. This plan needs to be written up and used as a tool to ensure the work of the organisation keeps on track. This document may be called a forward plan, a strategic plan or a business plan.

3 Developing strategy

The plan needs to set out the aims for the organisation over the agreed period. These need to be in keeping with the overall charitable objects. It should also set out objectives for each aim (these are achievable targets that will help deliver the aims).

For example, if one of your broad aims is to reduce child poverty in a district, some objectives might be:

- to offer advice to 100 local parents on maximising benefits, or to assist them in finding work;
- to offer information on free or cheap activities for children to 500 local families; and
- to provide courses in managing money for 50 parents.



Objectives should always be clear **and** measurable.

The plan should also record potential external changes in the field in which you are working and the factors that may affect your work; how the organisation intends to deliver its plan and the resources it will need to do this. It should include a section on the trustee board and any changes, training or other support needed to strengthen it.

The plan should be the start of an Annual Planning Cycle (see p12) that builds planning activity throughout the organisation.

See Planning in the Resources section p26 for guidance on how to prepare strategic plans.

Once written, your business plan becomes an incredibly useful tool, which the trustees can use to measure how well the organisation is doing in meeting its targets and explains to others what you are doing and why.

Example of an Annual Planning Cycle

(for an organisation with a 1st April to 31st March Financial Year)

Oct/ Nov	Board, staff and stakeholders hold Strategic/Business Planning Meeting	To review this year's work and to plan and think ahead
Nov/ Dec	Plan drafted (by Chief Officer, Board member or consultant)	Someone with knowledge of the organisation, the skills and the time
Dec/ Jan	Wider group of stakeholders consulted (e.g. service users, funders, partners)	To ensure ownership of, and support for, plan and to check for omissions
Jan	Plan finalised Board approves	Board approval reinforces importance of process
Feb	Annual work plan written to explain how Strategic /Business Plan will be translated into work priorities. The Board will also receive the work plan.	Each team – if more than one – may write their own. Chief Officer co-ordinates. Board receives.
Feb/ Mar	Annual appraisals conducted for all staff. Each one recognises the individual's contribution to achieving this year's goals (or reasons for not achieving them) and plans specific responsibilities for targets in next year's work plan.	The appraisal process enables individuals at every level of the organisation to understand how their own day-to-day work contributes to achieving the organisation's Strategic/Business Plan.
Apr	New financial year starts with clear goals for all	For those whose financial year runs April-March
Apr- Oct	Work reviewed regularly by board and Chief Officer	An ongoing process of monitoring

If your financial year runs on a different cycle, you will need to amend the timing of the plan, but the order should be the same.

4

Establishing and monitoring policies and procedures

One of the trustee board's key tasks is establishing and reviewing policies. Where the organisation employs staff, the task of drafting policies may be delegated, but the job of approving and adopting policy and checking it is still current – generally every two years, or more frequently if there is a major change in legislation or the environment for your work – must be done by the trustee board.

All organisations, however small, need a range of policies, which the trustee board must formally agree and adopt, including:

Equality and diversity (formerly Equal Opportunities)

- To state how the organisation will ensure equal treatment and equality of access to its services and how it will reflect society and the community it serves and promote inclusion.

Contract of employment and conditions of service for staff

- To set out the terms on which it employs staff and the conditions they can expect to receive. This is a legal requirement.

Health and safety

- To state a commitment to ensuring health and safety – legal requirement.

Investments and reserves

- To show that money is being used and saved properly and comply with Charity Commission requirements.

Risk management

- To ensure that risks have been considered and where possible reduced or managed and to comply with Charity Commission requirements.

Safeguarding children

- To ensure good practice in working with children and young people and responding to allegations of abuse. This is a legal requirement.

Complaints and grievances

- To ensure good practice in dealing with complaints by 'service users' or staff/volunteer grievances.

Data protection

- To ensure good practice in handling personal information and to comply with the law.

You can find examples of these policies using the Internet or via infrastructure organisations, but whatever model you use you need to check it is right for your organisation. Remember, if it is to work a policy needs careful thought, not only about what it says, but also about what it means for your organisation and how you will put it into practice.

“Some of the policy work can be a bit dull, but when things go wrong you see why you need a policy, so it is worth the effort. We review our policies regularly, but not all together – on what our manager calls ‘a rolling programme’ – which makes it a bit easier.” (Trustee of a small organisation)

Equality and diversity

The trustee board should implement its equality and diversity policy through:

- fair practice in identifying and assessing which needs to meet and how;
- the fair allocation of resources, making of grants or provision of services;
- representative membership of the board and any sub-committees;
- staff and volunteer recruitment, selection, training and conditions of service;
- communication with stakeholders and the public;
- accessibility of meetings and communications; and
- the buying of goods and services.

The Attlee Youth & Community Centre (AYCC) has developed two representative forums for children and young people – a play council for 5-13 year-olds and a youth council for 14+ year-olds, which together form The Attlee Council – to ensure children and young people are consulted about services and other matters. Two elected representatives from each forum attend full board meetings and participate in general discussions (where appropriate) especially those about provision. The representatives then feedback to the broader membership via the play and youth councils, with the support of staff, if necessary.

AYCC also involve young people in recruitment of staff. Up to five young people interview candidates, in addition to the formal interview. They receive training to help them understand what details they are looking for and then use happy-sad face scoring. In the final assessment 50-50 weighting is given to scores from each interview. So far, AYCC report this has worked well and the two interviews have produced similar scores.



Safeguarding children (protecting children and promoting their well being)

Together, the board of a children's organisation (and any staff and volunteers) will need to pay special attention to the question of safeguarding children and young people. They will need clear policies and procedures for how they will do this, setting out:

- how day-to-day practice will minimise the risk of any harm to the children and young people involved and provide routes for them to speak out if need be.
- how care will be taken at every stage of the recruitment process to eliminate candidates who are unsuitable to work with children. This may include checking for any unexplained gaps in employment history, checking references carefully, taking great care in the preparation of the person specification to ensure key requirements are tested; fulfilling Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks (although not relying on them), and not offering a post until all checks have been completed satisfactorily.

- procedures for compliance with the vetting and barring regulations being developed by the ISA (see below) for potential trustees, employees and volunteers to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, to children (and vulnerable adults).



Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

Created under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the ISA will decide who is unsuitable to work or volunteer with vulnerable groups. The ISA scheme will replace the current barring arrangements under List 99, PoCA, PoVA and Disqualification Orders regimes. It will form its decisions by pulling together information held by various bodies, government departments the CRB, and employers.

Once the scheme is fully rolled out, beginning in October 2009, it will be illegal to hire someone in “regulated activity” who is not registered, and has therefore not been checked by the ISA. Regulated activity includes any activity that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently, intensively or overnight. In addition, trustees of children’s charities will need to be vetted. The new scheme is expected to directly affect some 11.3 million people.

To register for updates from ISA, or obtain further guidance and information on how the scheme works, go to www.isa-gov.org.uk

Risk management

The Charity Commission requires all governing bodies to:

- Assess the risks faced by their organisations in conducting its business and in planning new work.
- Take steps to reduce the effects of risk and maintain the charity’s reputation.
- Understand the risks to the organisation and how they can be lessened and managed (these are not health & safety risks, but those that might damage the organisation’s reputation or operations). Staff also need to be clear about risk and inform the trustees if their work increases the organisation’s risk in any way.

Gay Surrey’s trustees and volunteers come into regular contact with children and young people through the day-to-day work of the groups set up by the organisation, e.g. a Gay Parents Social Group, YGS Crossroads, a group supporting HIV positive and negative young people in Surrey. Gay Surrey realised the inherent risk in having no means of assuring the protection of either children or trustees or volunteers.

A Child Protection Officer (CPO) was designated, who then devised a detailed Child Protection Plan (from other plans found on the Internet and from attending a Child Protection Workshop within Surrey), which has now been implemented. This has meant that the CPO has complete confidence that those who work on behalf of the charity perform their tasks with a fuller appreciation of child protection issues.

The Charity Commission provides clear guidance on how assessment of risk should be conducted and recorded. For more details see the Charity Commission website (*listed at the end of this section p26*).

Managing risk not only minimises damage to the organisation’s reputation, it reduces trustees potential for liability and provides safety and security for all in the organisation.

For more help with vision and planning, see the Resources section, p26.

Working with staff & volunteers



5 Setting up employment procedures

Once an organisation employs staff, the board becomes the employer and is responsible for agreeing clear procedures for the employment of staff, although trustees need not necessarily appoint staff, other than the organisation's Chief Officer.

The procedures should set out a format for job descriptions and person specifications and rules for the shortlisting of candidates, the conduct of interviews, seeking references and CRB checks. These procedures should ensure respect for equality and diversity and the safeguarding of children.

Once staff are recruited, trustees will want to be happy that a good induction process is in place, which – as well as good practice in safeguarding children – includes the introduction of the governing document and business plan and an understanding of the role of the trustee board.

6 Respecting the role of staff and volunteers

It is important that the staff understand the trustees' role and function, but equally important that the trustees respect the role of the organisation's staff and give them room to get on with their jobs without interfering in day-to-day decisions and work.

For this mutual respect to be achieved, the board must ensure that:

- job descriptions are clear;
- there is a good induction process (for both trustees, staff and volunteers);
- all individuals understand the boundaries of their role;
- decision making responsibility and lines of accountability are clear and understood; and
- staff and trustees know how poor performance or misconduct will be managed.

Home-Start UK has a customised induction process for everyone involved in the organisation – whether paid or unpaid. Staff follow a four-stage induction, which includes: 1) induction in workplace; 2) time with Homestart-UK Regional Consultant; 3) a residential element; 4) a follow up with the Regional Consultant. Home-visiting volunteers attend a 40 hour Preparation Course before visiting families in their own homes. The four-stage induction process allows all staff to become familiar with their own role, the organisation as a whole and the work of colleagues. Key to this is an introduction to working practices and how the organisation is governed – including an opportunity to meet with trustees. In 2005 Home-Start produced a Trustees Recruitment and Induction Pack for all 345 Home-Start Schemes in the UK. The Induction Pack includes an Induction Checklist that lists essential information and documentation for trustees and a sample Induction Programme. It also gives details of the Home-Start Trustee Buddy system and gives guidance on where trustees can receive training and guidance on their trustee role, individually or collectively with co-trustees.

7 Selecting, managing and supporting the Chief Officer

The process for recruiting the Chief Officer should comply with the organisation's Equalities policies and the board should be involved in the selection of the best candidate. Some boards bring in expertise from other organisations or their funders to help them make the best choice.

The board must arrange for the ongoing supervision, appraisal and development of the Chief Officer (CO). The Chair or another designated trustee usually takes on this responsibility.

The board should have a clear written agreement with the CO about the responsibilities they are delegating to her/him, the limits of the CO's decision-making powers on behalf of the board and what level of reporting they expect.

The trustee board needs to set the Chief Officer's salary at an appropriate level to attract suitable candidates when recruiting and to make sure that the post holder has the proper level of skills and experience to provide good management and continuity for the organisation.

The board should have a relationship with other key staff in the organisation (if any) and should encourage clear lines of communication for important

information, while retaining the responsibility for decisions. For instance, staff who identify a high level of risk in their activities should alert the board through appropriate channels. Staff should also inform the board about their ongoing work through regular reports (which may be collated by the CO).

For more help with working with staff and volunteers see the Resources section p26.

Taking responsibility & being accountable



8 Ensuring accountability

It is important to make sure that accountability is built into the way the organisation works. Information that may have a bearing on potential risk and the future operation of the organisation needs to be shared with the board, staff and volunteers, through clear reporting mechanisms to support good decision-making.

Trustee boards have legal duties to account for the work of the charity through the annual report and accounts and by filing annual returns with the Charity Commission and Companies House (where the organisation is a limited company).

The Charity Commission has a Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) which gives information on how best to prepare the reports and accounts needed. *See Resources p26.* Revenue and Customs rules must also be met in relation to Corporation Tax and VAT, where these apply. (Ask the advice of your auditors.)

Trustees are required to declare if they have any financial interest in any decision taken by the board and to withdraw from any discussion or voting on any such decisions, so that they can be seen not to have influenced the outcome for personal gain. This is an important element of openness and accountability, even if it sometimes feel uncomfortable for the individual trustee.

“Some of the jargon is hard to get your head round, I have to admit, but when I think that without the parents on the board our kids’ club wouldn’t exist, I reckon it’s worth the effort.”

(Service user trustee)

9 Ensuring compliance with the law

The board needs to be aware of their duties as charitable trustees and (where appropriate) company directors. The Charity Commission and Companies House both produce guidance booklets for trustees/directors on their role and responsibilities. In addition, trustees need to monitor all the legislation and statutory regulation and guidance that affect the organisation and make sure they are alerted to any changes so that they can take the appropriate actions. All organisations should be on the mailing list of their local council for voluntary service/Voluntary Action and the national bodies for their field of work, such as the National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, or National Council of Voluntary Organisations. They provide alerts about important changes or developments through newsletters and briefings. **It is important to read these mailings!**

Where staff are employed the Chief Officer will often take the lead in pointing out requirements to the board.

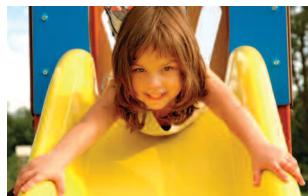
10 Watching over the money and how it is used

One of the trustee board’s key functions is looking after the money. This means making sure that there is enough money to deliver the plan; that money doesn’t go missing; and that the organisation’s resources are only used to achieve its objects as set out in the governing document.

To do this the trustee board needs to:

- appoint a Treasurer to oversee the organisation’s finances and provide regular reports (at least quarterly) to the trustee board. (The Treasurer is important, but the board has collective responsibility for all decisions and must not leave everything to them.)

- ensure there is enough money to deliver the business plan;
- set financial procedures and standing orders for the organisation and ensure staff know about them;
- ensure insurance cover for potential liabilities;
- keep an eye on how resources are being used and raise questions if there are any doubts about cost effectiveness or appropriateness of spending; and
- appoint an Auditor (or independent inspector for very small charities) to check the annual accounts.



11 Performing well as a trustee board

The trustee board should organise its work to ensure that it makes the most effective use of the time, skills and knowledge of its members.

- The make up of the trustee board should reflect the community and membership of the organisation. Children and young people's organisations will, therefore, want to involve young people – *see Appendix p25*.
- It should meet regularly and ensure that its work is focused on delivering its strategic role and reviewing how well the organisation is achieving its goals.
- It should ensure that it has enough trustees to provide the skills and experience needed, without becoming so large that decision-making becomes unwieldy.
- It should ensure it receives the information and advice it needs to make good decisions.
- Papers for board meetings should be timely, well presented, circulated well in advance of the meetings and should make clear recommendations to the trustees.
- Trustees – between them – should have the diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge needed to run the organisation effectively and should demonstrate:
 - Leadership;
 - Knowledge of the organisation's field of work and of users' needs; and
 - Governance, finance, fundraising, business, human resources and management skills.
- Brief job descriptions should be in place for the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
 - The Chair's role should include leadership, responsibility for strategy,

chairing board meetings and ensuring the board has the right mix of skills and that each member can make a contribution.

- The Secretary's role is to take minutes at board meetings and draft correspondence for the Chair/board, make sure the board runs well and has the advice it needs and to file returns with Companies House and the Charity Commission (where appropriate) and ensure the necessary forms are completed when members join/resign.
- The Treasurer has oversight of the accounts and needs to ensure there is a workable budget, that regular reports are given to the board, that the organisation complies with financial rules and regulations and that there is an annual inspection/audit of financial affairs.
- The trustee board should ensure a healthy turnover of its membership and work at attracting new trustees through an open process that develops diversity and representation.
 - Recruiting trustees can be difficult but there are several ways of approaching the task. The process must be open to ensure equality of opportunity.
 - Ads can be placed in newspapers and/or voluntary sector newsletters and a recruitment process set up, with a clear job brief and interviews held.
 - Nominations may be sought in the usual way when AGM papers are distributed.
 - Where more open processes fail to find nominees, staff and board members can suggest names, or approach people they know, or think may be interested. Again the skills and experience needed by the board should be clear. Although this is not as open, it is often the only means of finding board members if more open processes fail, so long as they meet the brief, the board should be able to ensure diversity within its membership.
 - Trustees must take responsibility for their own training and development to help them govern the organisation well. This could include mentoring, buddying with trustees from other organisations, e-learning and joining trustee networks, as well as formal courses. They should also appraise their own performance periodically.
 - The National Occupational Standards for Trustees provides a good benchmark against which to measure the skills trustees need and those they already have.
 - Last, but not least, trustees must display the seven Nolan principles (*see p26*) and ask questions about things they don't understand – it's the best way to learn.

Promoting the organisation

All trustees should be ambassadors for the organisation and should, through their own conduct as a board, enhance the reputation of the organisation.

Trustees should also ensure that as part of the business plan, or linked to it, there is a practical plan to ensure that the organisation's work is communicated effectively to service users, partners, funding bodies and the wider community.

There are lots of resources on marketing and promotion and larger organisations may have a member of staff designated to lead on this area. Smaller groups, who have to share these tasks between staff and trustees, may find some of the links in the resources section useful.

"I love to tell others about our organisation and the great things we're doing for children. I see this as something I can contribute as a board member." (New Trustee)

For more help working with taking responsibility and being accountable see the Resources section p26.

Conclusion



Governing for children is a big, though also a very rewarding responsibility, which needs to be shared to be effective, across boards and the sector as a whole. We are fortunate that you, as a trustee, are part of an army of willing volunteers giving their time, energy and expertise to this task, each one of whom deserves support and respect for the job they do. With your support, alongside a combination of practical assistance and encouragement, governance within the children and young people's voluntary sector, will go from strength to strength. Thank you for volunteering as a trustee. We hope this guide makes the great job you do a little easier.

Appendix



Involving children and young people in governance

Charity Law does not currently allow young people under the age of 18 to be formal members of boards. There are a growing number of guides on involving young people aged 18-25 as board members and supporting them in this role (see Resources section p26).

Boards may also wish to think of ways in which they can involve young people and children in supporting decision-making in the organisation. These can include:

- Having non-voting representatives attend the board meetings and offer views from a user perspective. This is probably only suitable for older children, who can understand what is going on, and they will need support to make a contribution that is meaningful.
- Setting up a consultative forum of children and young people to consider issues about the services offered and advise the board about their needs and preferences. Again such a group would need considerable support from staff and/or board members. This may be a time consuming activity but can be very rewarding and may be built into the day-to-day activities of the organisation.

A young children's centre (with an age range of 2 to 5 years) decided to involve their children in setting the budget. They devised a game where the children could choose the toys the centre bought for next year by explaining their value in terms of coloured bricks. They then gave the children the bricks and a catalogue which described the cost of the toys in terms of brick colour. They found that the children were happy to get involved, that the discussion was serious, and that the outcome was better than if staff had chosen the toys alone. One staff member said "We had to be creative but both the staff and the children enjoyed the game and learned lots from it."

(Chair of the organisation)

Resources



For all aspects of being a trustee:

- **Charity Commission** – The Charity Commission has a fantastic amount of essential information for boards www.charity-commission.gov.uk
- **CC3 – The Essential Trustee: What you need to know** www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc3.asp#c1
- **Governance Hub** – The Governance Hub provides a variety of useful resources, which may be accessed from the website: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk
- **Good Governance: A Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector** www.governancehub.org.uk/docs/Good%20Governance%20Code%20-%20Final.pdf
- **Trustees and Management Committee Members National Occupational Standards**, UK Workforce Hub, NCVO, 2006 Pbk, 55 pp, ISBN: 0 7199 1671 2
- **The National Council of Voluntary Organisations** has a Trustee Information Centre at www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/askncvo/TrusteeGovernance with links to all sorts of resources and publications
- **The A-Z of Good Governance** – Bill Crooks and Jackie Mouradian, NCVO, Oct 2006, 26pp, ISBN: 0 7199 1705 0, £5.00 or can be downloaded for free at www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications/publication.asp?id=3836

Trustee recruitment:

- **The Trustee Network** www.trusteenet.org.uk/resources/2048

To test your board:

- **Board Health Check**
How effective is your trustee board? Want to find out how effective it is and get help with the support available? Take the Board Health Check at www.govhc.org.uk

For principles of public life:

- **The Nolan Principles of Public Life** www.public-standards.gov.uk/about_us/the_seven_principles_of_life.aspx

Planning:

- Business/forward planning examples of how to approach planning can be found at NCVO's Sustainable Funding Project www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sfp/?id=2216 or www.internalbusinessplans.co.uk/nonprofit.htm

Managing risk:

- Charity Commission Guidance on Managing Risk www.charity-commission.gov.uk/investigations/charrisk.asp#9a

Marketing and publicity:

- VolResource has information for voluntary and community organisations www.volresource.org.uk/info/mediapr.htm
- Media Trust – Writing a PR or communications plan www.nicva.org/uploads/docs/r_writgPR_06022003.pdf

On young trustees:

- Governance Hub/British Youth Council Guide for Young Trustees www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications/publication.asp?id=3841
- Get on Board – A partnership initiative from Volunteering England, The Charity Commission, Governance Hub and Capacity Builders (Get on Board sets out to raise the profile of trusteeship, bringing in a new generation of trustees to fill the many vacancies on boards across the country) www.getonboard.org.uk
- Do-It.org.uk (national database of volunteering opportunities in the UK) will post vacancies for young trustees www.do-it.org.uk/magazine/features/trustees/youngtrustees

Vetting and barring unsuitable people to work with children:

- Government information on vetting and barring is available at: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/independentsafeguardingauthority

General management, including employment practice/procedure:

- Voluntary but not Amateur, Jacki Reason & Ruth Hayes, London Voluntary Service Council, ISBN 1 872582 32 X A4, 224 pages £25+VAT, 7th edition, 2004 (look out for a more recent edition).