



Role Description for Trustees

Introduction:

The Board of Trustees are jointly and severally responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of Down's Syndrome Scotland, its financial health, probity of its activities, as well as developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with its articles, legal and regulatory requirements and guidance. All trustees should be aware of and understand their individual and collective responsibilities.

Principal Responsibilities:

- Promoting and developing the charity to the benefit of its members and the wider Down's syndrome community
- Ensuring the charity complies with legislative and regulatory requirements, and acts within the confines of its governing document and in furtherance of its charitable objects.
- Acting in the best interest of the charity, beneficiaries and future beneficiaries at all times.
- Maintaining sound financial management and control of the charity's resources, ensuring the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
- Ensuring a fully effective and appropriate system for the recruitment, appointment and monitoring of the work and activities of the chief executive officer and, where applicable, other members of the senior management team.
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the charity and its resources, striving for best practice in good governance.
- To maintain absolute confidentiality about all aspects of the trustees' business, bearing in mind the over-riding legal obligations placed upon trustees.
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To apply a duty of care to paid staff and volunteers.

In addition to the above, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focussing on key issues, supporting the senior team as appropriate, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Accountable to:

The Board are responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of the charity. They are accountable to a variety of stakeholders, including members, beneficiaries, funders, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and other regulators (e.g. Companies House). (As Down's Syndrome Scotland is a company limited by guarantee all Trustees are filed with Companies House as legal directors.)

Person Specification

Trustees should be:

- committed to the aims of the charity.
- willing and able to devote the necessary time and effort.
- able to think both strategically and creatively.
- willing to speak their mind.
- clear of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- able to work effectively and collaboratively as a team member.
- committed to the values of Nolan's seven principles of public life:

Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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