

Role Description

Title: Chair of Trustees/Management Committee, Lancaster District Community and Voluntary Solutions [LDVCVS].

Direct Report: Chief Officer.

Who we're looking for:

Our Chair of Trustees needs to be someone who understands the VCFS sector in our district, and wider developments in the Third Sector. You'll be managing the Chief Officer and leading the Trustees, so we'd expect you to have significant experience as a manager of people, and to have held a professional position in management, strategy, governance, finance, HR, fundraising or related field. You'll need to be able to give time to the Chief Officer and other staff members, and will have an empathetic and supportive style. A background involving mentoring, coaching and/or facilitation would be an asset. Previous experience as a trustee is essential, and experience in the role of Chair would be an advantage.

The role, in a nutshell:

You will be providing leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees, enabling fellow trustees to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation, ensuring that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document, charity law, company law and other relevant legislation/regulations. You will support the Board to make well-rounded and carefully considered strategic decisions that respond to the challenges and opportunities presented in the wider context of LDCVS operations. You will work with the Chief Officer and Senior Administrative Officer to optimise the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the staff.

The current Board has a good range of skills and we'll be happy to help someone develop into the role of Chair – a willingness to work collaboratively is a key aspect of the role. The Chair is expected to uphold the Core Values of LDCVS (see attached document). We anticipate a time commitment of at least two days a month.

Main Responsibilities of the Chair - In relation to the Board

- Supporting the formulation of strategic plans and ensuring regular reviews of the long-term strategic aims of the charity.
- Overseeing the development and review of organisational policies, working with other Board members to define goals and targets and evaluate performance against agreed targets.
- Approving the annual cycle of Board meetings, collaborating on setting meeting agendas, and periodically chairing meetings (noting that the current Board membership is willing to rotate chairing of meetings).
- Monitoring decisions taken at meetings and ensuring they are implemented.
- Liaising regularly with the Treasurer to maintain a clear grasp of the charity's financial position

and to ensure full and timely financial transparency and information disclosure to the Board.

- Leading, and where appropriate, mentoring other Board members to fulfil their responsibilities. Enabling access to training/coaching/information to enhance the overall contribution of the Board.
- Annually reviewing the Board structure, role, staff relationships and ensuring implementation of agreed changes/developments are carried out.
- Encouraging team working among Board members and encouraging them to identify and recruit new trustees as required.
- Creating a strong and fulfilling working relationship with trustees and the Chief Officer through review and self-reflective evaluation of contributions and the effectiveness of the board.
- In the longer term, leading the Board in fostering relations with potential clients and potential funders/donors.
- Acting as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required, in accordance with LDCVS policies.
- Facilitating change and addressing any conflict within the Board of Trustees and within the organisation more generally. Liaising with the Chief Officer to achieve this.

In relation to the Chief Officer (CO)

- Taking on the role of manager of the CO of LDCVS, including leading the process of appraising and constructively guiding the performance of the CO. If a vacancy arises for the CO post, this would include leading the Board in recruiting the CO.
- There is an expectation of monthly supervision sessions as a minimum (noting that other trustees may be able to assist with supervision), and regular consultation with the CO on matters of strategy, governance, finance and HR.
- Working with the CO to ensure the implementation of the Board's strategy and policies.
- Receiving regular progress reports on the organisation's work and financial performance through the CO.

In relation to LDCVS and our stakeholders

- Representing the organisation as a spokesperson at appropriate events, meetings or functions, and build networks.
- Working with the CO to maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the organisation.
- Undertaking review of external complaints where they cannot be addressed by the CO, as defined by the organisation's complaints policy and procedure.

- Ensuring adherence and compliance around key policies, such as Equality and Diversity, Health & Safety and Dignity at Work, in all decisions and discussions of the Board and its sub-committees and working groups.
- Attending and being a member of external committees or working groups when appropriate in role as Chair or Board member.

Person Specification.

Essential

- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship, including selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Previous experience as a Trustee of a charity, ideally in a similar field, and a familiarity with the principles of good governance. Has, or is prepared to develop, a sound understanding of the responsibilities of a Trustee Board and the distinction between delegation of tasks to trustees and delegation to staff – and is prepared to develop this understanding in the context of LDCVS.
- Commitment to LDCVS's aims and values, and a willingness and ability to devote time to carry out the responsibilities of the role.
- Strategic and forward-looking in relation to LDCVS's charitable objects and aims. Genuinely curious about the skills and potential of the organisation, its staff and its volunteers.
- Experience as a manager of people, including involvement in recruitment, supervision and appraisal
- Good, independent judgement, political impartiality and the ability to think creatively in the context of the organisation and the external environment.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to respect the confidences of colleagues.
- An ability to balance tact and diplomacy with a willingness to challenge colleagues and to offer constructive criticism.

Desirable

- Prior experience as Chair of a Board of Trustees.
- Knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation and its partner organisations.

- A wider involvement with the voluntary sector.
- Experience of charity finance and/or charity fundraising.
- Demonstrable leadership skills that have been exercised through a period of change.
- Experience of chairing meetings and committee work.

Time Commitment

- The Board meets at least 6 times a year, with the function of chairing meetings currently being rotated through board members. The Chair is expected to be available for booked meetings on other occasions.
- It is important that the Chair is able to visit the organisation's office(s) and be available to the Chief Officer on a regular basis.
- In addition to Board meetings, other contact with Trustees – usually digital or by telephone – will be necessary, at least weekly.
- We anticipate a time commitment of at least two days a month.