

## Trustee/Director Recruitment

### Background

#### Introduction

The recent review of the Board's experience of and approach to governance resulted in a commitment to change which gave two long-standing trustees an opportunity to step down and prompted the recruitment of a new Trustee/Director. An unforeseen impact was a reconsideration by two newer trustees who subsequently felt that they too wished to step down from the Board. As a consequence of this, the Board, which now has the minimum number of trustees required by the Articles of Association, has identified an urgent need to recruit a number of new trustees. This is the first stage in a recruitment process which will include determination of the mix of skills and experience required by the Board and the appointment of a subgroup (currently Jo Beaumont and Liam Condron supported by Paula Bee) to oversee the recruitment process. (CC30 "Finding new trustees")

#### An appropriate mix of skills and experience

The current wide mix of experience in finance, health, social care, local authority and voluntary sector and associated skills are concentrated in a small number of Trustee/Directors, a number of whom may have concerns about their ability to commit to the charity for a sufficiently long term. It is therefore appropriate to identify a wide range of backgrounds from which to draw new Trustee/Directors without fear of duplication. Consequently, we should be looking for experience in the following areas:

- Social care, health and commissioning of services
- Financial management, investment and risk
- Law in relation to property and employment
- Communication

In addition, are Board Development discussions suggested that the Board should be open to including people who would make an effective contribution to governance but who are more representative of our community such as older people who are in receipt of services or their carers. The latter might also contribute longevity, continuity, an intergenerational element to discussions and an understanding of the perception of the wider community.

We should not forget that the Board development programme introduced a general profile for trustees which included:

- A profound commitment to the well-being of older people
- A willingness to work as a team with kindness, understanding and humour
- A willingness to challenge with trust and respect
- To be a leader who shares responsibility, is inclusive, supportive, clear and visible
- To be confident in debating and making decisions with the Board
- To be willing to read and check out the information required to make decisions
- To be confident in discussing finance and willing to ask questions
- To be willing and able to think strategically, beyond the everyday operations and willing to respond positively to a changing world

## **Finding Trustee/Directors**

While the informal approach to a known and trusted contact has the benefit of ensuring a smooth induction and predictably positive contribution, it can also limit the Board's exposure to different points of view and approaches which may be valuable in a changing environment. An open recruitment process should hold no concerns if the Board is confident that it knows the type of candidate that it is looking for. There is a range of channels that the Board can use to "market" trusteeship opportunities and these should be used.

This is a process which will require a clear Job Description for Trustees/Directors and an advert that is couched in language that is inclusive and will generate interest from people with a range of motivations from a desire simply to serve their community to an interest in personal development.

Candidates who express an interest in trusteeship should complete an application form. The form currently in use is appropriately simple and comprehensive.

No closing date for applications should be set until the Board is satisfied that it has a sufficient complement of trustees (number?) and a pipeline of interested candidates who may be willing to join in one or two years. The Board will need to have a means to ensure that the terms of all new Trustee/Directors are not completed at the same time and may wish to adopt an approach of choosing by lot those who will stand down after a shorter term.

Applicants should be shortlisted by the Trustee Recruitment subgroup who should establish an interview process which is fair and focused on recommending the most suitable candidates to the Board.

Preferred candidates should be invited to attend the Board and then appointed subject to Board approval, formal vetting and references.

Once appointed new Trustee/Directors should, in the normal way, confirm in writing that they understand the requirements of trusteeship and that there is no legal impediment to them serving on the Board. They should receive a copy of the Trustee Induction pack and a comprehensive induction process should be arranged.

Trustee/Directors, particularly in the first year of their appointment, should be given a number of opportunities to discuss their needs and check out the value of their contribution to the charity.