

Age UK Waltham Forest: Trustee Recruitment Policy

Introduction

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity.

The Code of Governance for the Voluntary and Community Sector includes as part of its principles that 'trustees should have the diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge needed to run an organisation effectively' and that 'trustees should ensure that they receive the necessary induction, training and ongoing support they need to discharge their duties'.

In addition, SORP 2015 requires disclosure of the methods adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees and the policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees.

Diversity

Age UK Waltham Forest will ensure that it engages effectively with the community it serves, responds equitably to the needs of its users, and increases its own accountability and wider public confidence in its work by ensuring that the mix of trustees reflects the local area and includes people from varied minority groups.

If representation on the board does not reflect the areas of need, active recruitment to redress this balance will be carried out.

Role of the Board of Trustees

At its simplest, the role of the Board of Trustees is to receive assets from donors, safeguard them and apply them for the charitable purposes as declared in Age UK Waltham Forest's governing documents. The Board of Trustees must always act in the best interests of Age UK Waltham Forest, exercising the same duty of care that a prudent person of business would in looking after the affairs of someone for whom he or she had responsibility. The Board of Trustees must act as a group and not as individuals.

The Appointment of Trustees

Age UK Waltham Forest's governing documents specify that it is allowed a maximum of 11 trustees at any one time, and never less than three.

Trustees are elected at Annual General Meetings, and must seek re-election after three years' service.

Eligibility to become a Trustee

It is a criminal offence for an individual to serve as a trustee if disqualified from doing so. Rigorous checks will be carried out to ensure that all persons applying to become a trustee are eligible. These checks will include both references and screening by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Process for Appointment of Trustees

Trustees will be recruited through advertising in community centres, libraries, local newspapers, and similar outlets.

Those expressing an interest will be asked to apply using the Trustee application form. Subsequently,

(a) the Chair and another trustee will examine the applications against the most recent Board skills audit, produce a short list, and invite those on it to submit their references and then attend an interview;

(b) the Chair, another trustee and the Chief Executive will conduct the interviews, and make recommendations to the Board; and

(c) at its next meeting, the Board will review these recommendations, and either ratify or reject.

Successful applicants will be asked to:

- complete and sign the declaration of interest form, to be retained by the company secretary;
- sign a declaration that they are eligible to serve as a trustee; and
- agree and sign two copies of the code of conduct, one to be retained by the trustee and the other by Age UK Waltham Forest.

They will then become co-optees of the Board, and after one year will be eligible for full trustee status, to be determined by a vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Expectations of Trustees

Trustees are expected to work to the Trustee role description and a code of conduct; and attend all Board meetings. Board meetings are held bi-monthly or quarterly during the year. Each meeting lasts for up to 2 hours and is usually in the daytime, with papers being provided by e-mail or post at least five days before the meeting.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Trustees can claim reasonable out of pocket expenses in relation to travelling and refreshment. Under the terms of Age UK Waltham Forest's governing documents, trustees will not be paid for carrying out their duties on behalf of the organisation, although they may be paid for professional services if agreed by the Board.

Induction Pack and Training

All trustees will be supplied with an Induction Pack containing essential information about Age UK Waltham Forest and its policies; and encouraged to take part in further training, with opportunities publicised at Board meetings.

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