

ROLE DESCRIPTION – CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES

Role Title:	Chair of Trustees (A voluntary role).
Direct Report:	Paid staff – Three part-time employees
Background:	A general background in strategy, governance, finance, HR, fundraising would be useful. Previous experience as a Chair or trustee would be welcomed.

Role Summary

To provide leadership and direction to the board of Trustees of Keeping Abreast, enabling the Board to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity.

To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document, charity law, company law and other relevant legislation/regulations.

To support the employees, helping them achieve the aims of the organisation; and to optimise the relationship between the board of Trustees and the staff.

To facilitate the board of trustees in stimulating excellent, well-rounded and carefully considered strategic decision-making.

Main Responsibilities of the Chair

In relation to the Board

- Formulate strategic plans and regular review of long-term strategic aims of the charity.
- Develop organisational policies, define goals, targets and evaluate performance against agreed targets.
- Approve the annual cycle of the board meetings, meeting agendas, chair and facilitate meetings, monitor decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented.
- Prepare the Chairs Annual Report for submission to Companies House and The Charity Commission and present the report to the AGM.
- Liaise 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.
- Lead and mentor other Board members to fulfil their responsibilities and enable access to training/coaching/information to enhance the overall contribution of the board.
- Annually review the Board structure, role, staff relationships and ensure implementation of agreed changes/developments are carried out.
- Encourage team working among Board members and encourage them to identify and recruit new trustees as required.
- Create a strong, profitable and fulfilling working relationship with trustees through review and self-reflective evaluation of contributions and effectiveness of the board.

In relation to the staff

- Monitor staff performance through routine meetings and correspondence and carry out annual performance appraisals.
- Monitor hours worked on a monthly basis and keep track of any overtime incurred.

In relation to the community and code of conduct

- Represent the organisation as a spokesperson at appropriate events, meetings or functions.
- Protect and manage the property of the organisation.
- Lead the Board in fostering relations with potential clients and potential funders/donors.
- Act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.
- Facilitate change and address conflict within the Board of Trustees, within the organisation.
- Undertake review of external complaints as defined by the organisation's complaints procedure.
- Ensuring adherence and compliance around key policies and in all decisions and discussions of the Board and its sub-committees.
- Attend and be a member of other committees or working groups when appropriate in role as Chair.

Qualities of a Chair

Essential

- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship and adhering to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Commitment to the charity's objects, aims and values and willingness to devote time to carry out responsibilities.
- Strategic and forward looking vision in relation to the charity's objects and aims.
- Good, independent judgement, political impartiality and the ability to think creatively in the context of the organisation and external environment.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to respect the confidences of colleagues.
- Balancing tact and diplomacy with willingness to challenge and constructively criticise.

Desirable

- Prior experience of committee/trustee work.
- Knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation.
- A wider involvement with the voluntary sector.
- Experience of chairing meetings, committee work, some experience of charity finance, charity fundraising.
- Leadership skills exercised through a period change.

Time Commitment

- The Board of Trustees meet at least 6 times a year. There are also major fund raisers and sub-committee meetings from time to time. Most routine business is completed via email or telephone.
- Monitoring staff and dealing with day to day issues is approximately 3 hours a week.
- It is important that the Chair is able to visit the office in Norwich and be available to staff members on a regular basis.
- It is sometimes necessary to travel within the UK to visit other Support Groups.