

Trustee Role Description

St Nicholas Hospice Care is an independent charity providing services for everyone to be informed, equipped and able to live with dying, death and grief.

The charity works mainly with the communities of West Suffolk and Thetford.

The work of the hospice is delivered by qualified employees, supported by a large team of volunteers and includes an Income Generation Department that manages a range of fundraising and retail activities.

Trustee Role

Salary: Unpaid. Expenses incurred whilst travelling to meetings

Hours: Generally, 8-10 Board meetings a year and 3-4 committee meetings per year.

Location: St Nicholas Hospice Care Bury St Edmunds and local venues

Charity Trustees

The Charities Act 2011 defines charity trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the Charity. The trustees must be at least 16 years old and are the directors of the charity and company and are known as the Board of Trustees.

Trustees:-

- are committed to the Hospice's mission and values and have joined its board because they want to help the Hospice deliver its purposes most effectively for public benefit
- recognise that meeting the Hospice's stated public benefit is an ongoing requirement
- understand their roles and legal responsibilities, and, in particular, have read and understand:
 - the Charity Commission's guidance [The Essential Trustee \(CC3\)](#)
 - the Hospice's governance
- are committed to good governance and want to contribute to the charity's continued improvement.

In addition to statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has particular expertise.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees comprises of between five and twelve trustees and includes a Chair and Treasurer. The Board adheres to the principle that its approach to diversity supports its effectiveness, leadership and collective decision making.

The Board has 3 Committees to oversee aspects of Hospice's activities, Finance and Income Generation, Clinical and Human Resources. Each Committee has at least 2 Trustees in attendance.

Role of the Board of Trustees

The role of the Board is to ensure the assets received are applied for the charitable purposes as declared in the objects of the Charity, acting prudently, and in the best interests of the Charity.

The Board works together as a team, using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, background and knowledge to make informed decisions, to ensure the charity is meeting its charitable objectives.

Duties of a Trustee

1. Ensure the Hospice complies with:-

- a. The Hospice's governing document
- b. Charity law requirements and other laws that apply to the charity

2. Act in the Hospice's best interests:-

- a. is clear about the charity's aims and ensures that these are being delivered effectively and sustainably
- b. make balanced and informed decisions, thinking about the long term as well as the short term
- c. avoid putting themselves in a position where their duty to the charity conflicts with their own interests or loyalty to any other person or body
- d. not receive any benefit from the charity unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in the charity's interest

3. Manage the Hospice's resources responsibly acting with a duty of prudence:-

- a. make sure the Hospice's assets are only used to support or carry out its purposes
- b. avoid exposing the charity's assets, beneficiaries or reputation to undue risk
- c. not over-commit the charity
- d. take special care when investing or borrowing and receive appropriate investment advice from investment professionals
- e. comply with any restrictions on spending funds or selling land

4. Act with reasonable care and skill:-

- a. make use of their skills and experience and take advice when necessary
- b. give enough time, thought and energy to their role, for example by preparing for, attending and actively participating in all trustees' meetings

- c. ensure the decision-making processes are informed, rigorous and timely and that risk assessment and appropriate management systems are set up and monitored.

5. Ensure the Hospice complies with statutory accounting and reporting requirements

- a. be able to demonstrate that the charity is complying with the law, well run and effective
- b. ensure appropriate accountability to members
- c. ensure accountability within the charity, particularly where you delegate responsibility for particular tasks or decisions to staff or volunteers

In addition trustees support and appoint the Chief Executive and monitor his/her performance and work collaboratively with the Chief Executive and Directors (Senior Management Team).

Time Commitment

Trustees are expected to attend:-

- An induction session
- Eight to ten Board meetings per year
- One Committee meeting 4 times a year
- Mandatory training

Board meetings are two and a half hours and one meeting a year is a whole day and is allocated to strategic planning and mandatory/statutory training. We expect Trustees to try to attend all meetings, but we are also aware that Trustees have busy lives.

Papers are circulated 5 working days ahead of the meetings.

Person Specification

Each Trustee must have:-

- A commitment to the mission of the hospice
- Ability to work as a member of a team
- A willingness to meet the requirements
- Integrity
- Good judgement
- Willingness to speak their mind
- Understanding and acceptance of their legal duties

The Board of Trustees collectively needs skills and experience in the following areas:-

- health and social care and clinical management
- fundraising, income generation and trading
- financial and data management
- human resource management
- volunteering
- collaborative partnerships
- social change

References:

The Charities Act 2011

Charity Governance Code

Trustee role and board – Gov.UK

Role Description updated: October 2022