

The Role of Trustees

Trustees take ultimate responsibility for the work that Neighbourhood Watch Scotland (NWS) does, and the way in which it spends money given by funders and sponsors, to achieve its aims. It is a big responsibility, focussing on the strategic direction of NWS, agreeing plans and budgets, and holding the staff to account for the delivery of the plans.

It has a legal dimension too, with Trustees legally responsible for ensuring that NWS operates to standards set by parliament and OSCR.

Commitment

It is a task that takes time to do properly; we estimate the equivalent of a half day per month dedicated to NWS.

As well as board meetings, there may be sub-committees, with authority delegated to them by the board, meeting at other intervals; and staff may seek to consult with you on your particular expertise. You may be asked to represent NWS at outside meetings with potential funders or influencers, or work alongside staff at events and receptions.

Key Responsibilities

With other Trustees to hold Neighbourhood Watch Scotland 'in trust' by:

- Ensuring that NWS has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction, and is focused on achieving these
- Being responsible for the performance of NWS and for its 'corporate' behaviour
- Ensuring that NWS complies with all legal and regulatory requirements
- Acting as guardians of NWS's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment and proper application
- Ensuring that NWS's governance is of the highest possible standard
- Working in partnership with other trustees, the National Development Officer and other staff

Duties

- To agree the vision, mission and strategic plan for Neighbourhood Watch Scotland
- To ensure that the business plan and budget reflect the agreed strategic direction and are appropriate
- To agree the indicators for objectively monitoring the progress of the charity towards its strategic outcomes
- To monitor the outcomes of NWS against the indicators from the business plan and budget
- To appoint staff, to set their terms and conditions and to ensure that NWS and the appointee invests in ongoing professional development, and considers succession planning
- To hold the National Development Officer accountable for the achievement of NWS's outcomes, and provide her/him with regular, constructive feedback on both management and overall achievement
- To agree NWS's policies and ensure that they will assist in the achievement of the strategic and operational plans
- To ensure that NWS has satisfactory financial control systems and procedures, and to review the level of risk annually
- To safeguard NWS's reputation, and other intangible assets
- To reflect annually on the Board's performance and your own performance as a trustee.

Tasks

- To participate in annual business planning and other strategic activities
- To attend board meetings, read relevant papers and be prepared to make a contribution
- To support the staff when requested, sharing expertise, as a member of a working group or in other appropriate ways
- To be prepared to act as a spokesperson for NWS when asked by the National Development Officer, and to work within an agreed brief
- To attend events as an ambassador for Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, to network and promote the work of NWS
- To assist with fundraising by speaking, networking and otherwise seeking funding in conjunction with staff and volunteers as appropriate

Office bearers

The Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Constitution requires the appointment of office bearers from amongst the Trustees as follows:

68 The charity trustees must elect (from among themselves) a chair, a treasurer and a secretary.

69 In addition to the office-bearers required under clause 68, the charity trustees may elect (from among themselves) further office-bearers if they consider that appropriate.

Specific duties fall to each of the specified office bearers as follows:

CHAIRPERSON

Role description & person specification

The Chairperson has a strategic role to play in representing the vision and purpose of NWS. The Chairperson ensures that the board functions properly, that there is full participation at meetings, all relevant matters are discussed and that effective decisions are made and carried out.

Ensure the management committee functions properly.

- To plan and run meetings in accordance to the governing document.
- To ensure matters are dealt with in an orderly, efficient manner.
- To bring impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision-making.
- To facilitate change and address conflict within the board.
- To review governance performance and skills, acting to improve these where appropriate.
- To plan for recruitment and renewal of the board

Ensure that Neighbourhood Watch Scotland is managed effectively.

- To liaise with the National Development Officer, as appropriate, to keep an overview of NWS's affairs.
- To co-ordinate the committee to ensure responsibilities for particular aspects of management (e.g. personnel matters, financial control etc) are met and specialist expertise is employed as required.
- To facilitate change and address conflict within NWS, liaising with the Vice Chair and National Development Officer to achieve this.

Provide support and supervision to staff.

- To directly line manage the senior staff member of NWS.
- To sit on appointment and final appeal grievance panels, as appropriate.

Represent NWS.

- To communicate effectively the vision and purpose of NWS.
- To advocate for and represent NWS at external meetings and events.
- To be aware of current issues that might affect NWS.

Qualities and Skills Required.

- Good leadership skills.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- Ability to ensure decisions are taken and followed-up.
- Good time-keeping.
- Tact and diplomacy.
- Understanding of the roles/responsibilities of the board.
- Experience of organisational and people management.

Time Commitment: The role of Chair requires an estimated commitment of 14 hours on average per month.

VICE CHAIRPERSON

The Vice-Chairperson acts for the Chairperson when the Chairperson is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson will assume the responsibility of the Chairperson during absence. The Vice-Chairperson role may be viewed as a developmental step towards becoming Chairperson in the future. The Vice Chairperson requires support from the Chairperson in order to become familiar with the role and work of the Chairperson.

TREASURER - Role description & person specification

The overall role of the treasurer is to maintain an overview of NWS's financial affairs, ensuring its viability and ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

General financial oversight.

- To oversee and present budgets, accounts and financial statements.
- To liaise with designated staff about financial matters.
- To ensure that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation.
- To ensure any recommendations of the auditors are implemented.
- To ensure accounts meet the conditions of contractual agreements with external agencies such as funders and statutory bodies.

Financial planning and reporting.

- To present financial reports to the board.
- To make a presentation of the accounts at the annual general meeting (AGM).
- To advise on NWS's reserves policy and investment policy.
- To advise on the financial implications of NWS's strategic and operational plans.
- To advise on the fundraising strategy of NWS.
- To ensure that there is no conflict between any investment held and the aims and objects of the charity.

Other.

- To sit on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Qualities and Skills Preferred.

- Experience of financial control and budgeting.
- Experience of fundraising and pension schemes.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- A willingness to be contacted on an ad hoc basis.
- Ability to ensure decisions are taken and followed-up.
- Good time-keeping.

Time Commitment: The role of the Treasurer requires an estimated commitment of 10 hours per month.

SECRETARY - Role description & person specification

The role of the secretary is to support the chair in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Board.

The Secretary's tasks include:

Ensure responsible administration.

- To prepare agendas in consultation with the Chair (and National Development Officer).
- To check that quorum is present at meetings.
- To check that committee members and staff have carried out action(s) agreed.
- To ensure up-to-date records are kept of committee membership.

Other duties:

- To sit on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.
- To respond to complaints received about the Chair of NWS.

Qualities and Skills Required.

- Organisational ability.
- Experience of committee work and procedures.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- Approachable and sensitive to the feelings of others.
- Well organised and an eye for detail.
- Ability to work well with the Chair.
- Good time-keeping.

Time Commitment: The role of Secretary requires an estimated commitment of 5 hours per month.