

Management Committee Member of St Nicolas & St Mary's PTA

The Committee's roles

Note: Although the legal role of the committee is to govern (1), many small organisations expect the committee to do much more. If you have no staff then the committee must do everything. You may as well be explicit about what else is required of the committee (2, 3, and 4). But bear in mind that not all members of the committee may want to do all of these roles. Only 1 is required of all the committee.

For Everyone:

- 1 To govern i.e. directing and controlling the organisation through collective decision making. This is a mandatory requirement of everyone on the committee.

To be agreed when joining the committee:

- 2 To be a pool of expertise and advice i.e. making advice and expertise available to the committee, staff and volunteers.
- 3 To manage one or more volunteers or projects (for instance organising and running the cake sale, or managing the production of the newsletter).
- 4 To do work (answering correspondence, filling out grant applications, changing, working with your year group and year group reps to support and or organise fundraising event).

The Governance role

Note: This is the most important part of the document. Take time to choose the language that best suits your organisation and bear in mind that there many ways of expressing these five key ideas.

Together the Management Committee Members must fulfil the 5 Core Governance Functions:

- Determine Mission and Strategy – setting the organisation's direction and determining how it will get there.
- Accountability – being held to account for the actions of the organisation and holding those who carry out the work (staff and/or volunteers) to account.
- Look after the committee – ensuring committee renewal (recruitment, induction and retirement), effective decision making and information sharing processes, positive group dynamics, and reflection, learning and development for the committee as necessary.
- Safeguard assets - acting as custodian of the assets, tangible (money, property etc) and intangible (organisation's reputation and name), ensuring that assets are used appropriately and constitutionally. Ensuring that there are sufficient assets for the organisations survival.
- Act as 'boundary-spanner' – linking the organisation to its stakeholders, such as members, the community, funders etc.

Conduct (legal)

Note: These are Charity Commission requirements but it would be prudent for all voluntary or community organisation to abide by them.

Management Committee Members must:

- Be active – you cannot be a dormant or 'sleeping' management committee member, you are still liable for the decisions the others make in your absence.
- Act jointly – an individual has no powers on their own unless they have been specifically given them by the committee (minuted at a proper meeting).

- Act constitutionally (and within the law) – make sure that you act within the powers and objects (remit) set out in your constitution. Including following the constitution on how meetings are run and how the committee is recruited.
- Act in the interests of the beneficiaries – put yourself in the beneficiaries’ position and make decisions that are best for them.
- Act reasonably and honestly – remembering to minute discussions and debates so that your reasonableness can be demonstrated.
- Have a duty of care – act prudently and reasonably.
- Not delegate control – everything can be delegated except the power of delegation but the management committee remains responsible and accountable.
- Not benefit personally – unless allowed specifically in the constitution or by law.
- Avoid conflict of interest – manage actual conflicts of interest through a written process/policy and elsewhere avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest.

Conduct (practical)

Note: Some organisations have a separate Code of Conduct and some of these are quite extensive running to several pages. If you want to use a short code it may be worth including it here.

Management Committee Members should:

- Strive to attend meetings, sending apologies to the chair for necessary absences.
- Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda, papers and emails before the meeting.
- Talk to the chair or other core committee member before the meeting if you need to clarify anything.
- Arrive on time. Stay to the end.
- Participate fully in the meeting;
 - Listen to what others have to say and keep an open mind.
 - Contribute positively to the discussions.
 - Try to be concise and avoid soliloquies/speeches.
- Help others concentrate on the meeting. Discourage side conversations.
- Have the best interests of the organisation/beneficiaries in mind at all times.
- Draw attention to any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting.
- Fulfil any responsibilities assigned to you at the meeting and be prepared to report back on your progress at the next meeting.

Conduct (best practice)

Note: If you feel you need more on conduct then it is probably worth having a separate Code of Conduct. See ‘Governance Codes’ in the Governance Pages FAQ for more information.

Ideal Qualities

Note: Job descriptions for staff usually also come with a ‘person specification’ which is an idealised profile of the sort of qualities the post holder should have. It can be difficult to draw up a realistic profile for a committee member - particularly if your aim is to involve a very wide spectrum of people on the committee – all contributing in different ways.

Management Committee Members should:

- Have a commitment to the organisation and its aims.
- Have a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Possess good judgement and independence of mind.
- Show a willingness to work collectively as part of a group.
- Seek constructive debate and dialogue over confrontation.