

SUMMARY OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Anglia Care Trust (ACT) is a voluntary organisation which is registered as a charity and is a company with limited liability which does not have any share capital. The members of the company are the directors, who are not allowed to receive payment for what they do and who are called ‘the Trustees’.

The charitable objects of ACT are:- “the relief of poverty and sickness; the training, re-training and education of offenders, ex-offenders or those who might offend; the care, resettlement and support of offenders, ex-offenders, those who might offend and their families so that they can live independently and contribute to their communities; the prevention and reduction of crime, including the promotion of public safety and order by providing services of mediation, conciliation, arbitration and advocacy; the provision of advice and support to vulnerable individuals of whatever age, including those with disabilities, dependencies, mental or physical health problems; the provision of housing and related services to offenders, ex-offenders and those who might offend provided that nothing is done which would relieve local authorities or other bodies of their statutory duties; and the management, co-ordination of the functions of other corporations, bodies or institutions, including the management, training and supervision of their employees, agents or volunteers provided that those activities are connected with and are in furtherance of these object.”

DUTIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The first duty of Trustees is to the charity’s beneficiaries, which means that they must act in the interest of the charity as a whole. They must remain independent and not act under the influence of another organisation. Anything that might conflict or be perceived to conflict with their duty as Trustees should be managed using the charity’s Declaration of Interests Policy. This includes cases where a Trustee might stand to benefit personally or where a Trustee’s loyalties might be, or be perceived to be, divided.

The Trustees are responsible for controlling ACT’s activities and deciding on the best course it should adopt having regard to the interests of current and future service users. They delegate (within limits) the responsibility for ACT’s work to the Directors of Operations and Business Support. Put simply, the Trustees read the map and the Directors drive the car.

The Trustees are responsible for:-

- making sure that the Trust fulfils its charitable objectives, using appropriate methods
- setting ACT’s strategic direction and monitoring its performance
- appointing the Director of Operations and the Director of Business Support, agreeing their terms of employment, appraising their performance and managing them effectively

- managing ACT's financial affairs, its property portfolio, its investments and other assets and its budget, audit and risk management
- making sure that ACT complies with its employment, diversity, safeguarding and health and safety policies for its employees, volunteers and clients
- making sure that ACT treats service users, staff, volunteers, stakeholders and any others involved in its work with respect and dignity and for hearing any grievances alleging that this has not happened.

2. THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Trustees need to be a diverse group of people who

- understand, support, and are committed to ACT's charitable objectives
- represent a range of skills and experience, drawn from different walks of life, enabling them, as "critical friends" to take a close interest in ACT's work, to contribute ideas, to make judgments, to offer constructive criticism and to help ACT establish its vision.

The Trustees should ideally be representative of the community they exist to serve. They should include both men and women, ethnic minorities and a range of ages. They should include some with experience of the sort of services provided by ACT and some with current, or relatively recent, business/financial experience, one of whom will act as the Trust's treasurer. All the Trustees are subject to ACT's safeguarding procedures, including the obtaining of an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

At ACT's Annual General Meeting, a third of the Trustees retire, while being eligible for re-election. The Board elects its own chair, currently for a term limited usually to three years without renewal.

3. HOW THE BOARD WORKS

The Board of Trustees meets at least eight times a year. The dates and times of meetings are agreed by the Trustees. The effectiveness of the Board does depend upon Trustees committing themselves fully and attending meetings regularly.

The Directors attend all meetings of the Trustees apart from withdrawing in relation to any matter where there is a personal conflict of interest.

Trustees will also try to be present at some other meetings and events with ACT's staff and volunteers.

4. CARRYING OUT TRUSTEES' DUTIES

The Trustees rely on receiving high quality reports from ACT's Directors. Management matters are considered on a regular basis and programmed into the Board meetings: for example, strategic, operational and financial reviews, the setting of budgets for the following year, the agreement of accounts, pay reviews, employment policies etc.

Trustees are expected to have a readiness to develop an understanding of the particular nature of the organisation in order to develop a context for decision making. They should ensure they attend a minimum of 6 Board meetings a year. Those unable to maintain this may be asked to seek an agreement over their attendance and contribution or asked to stand down.

The Trustees may, from time to time, establish sub-groups. Currently there are Finance and Governance, People and Risk. In addition, named Trustees will be nominated to take specific interest in the fields of Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity. Those individuals will be expected to ensure individually and collectively that the Board of Directors understand and take responsibility for these areas relative to the organisation.

Planning is undertaken for Trustees to be fully informed about ACT on their appointment and for them to be offered training from time to time.

5. AVAILABILITY OF ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The Trust's Annual Report and Accounts are filed with Company House, as required by law and with the Charity Commission (from where they are available on line without charge). They are also published on the Trust's website, together with up to date information about the Trust's work.

6. CURRENT PRACTICE AND REVIEW

The Trustees seek to comply with good practice, as for example may be recommended by the Charity Commission and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations. A role description for the Trustees is available (revised in May 2016). The Trustees appraise their own work and performance regularly. This summary reflects the Trustees' current approach and will change according to circumstances.

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