



Trustee Code of Conduct

This code of conduct provides trustees with guidelines as to the standards and behaviours that The Fire Fighters Charity expects from the board of trustees, individually and collectively, when acting on behalf of, or representing, the Charity.

The board of The Fire Fighters Charity has ultimate responsibility for all actions carried out by employees and volunteers throughout the Charity's activities. This responsibility includes the stewardship of charitable resources and the provision of services.

The board of trustees must ensure that they inspire confidence and trust amongst beneficiaries, members, employees, volunteers, partners, supporters, funders and suppliers by demonstrating integrity and avoiding any potential or real situations of undue bias or influence in the decision making of the Charity and in dealings with all stakeholders.

The governing document of The Fire Fighters Charity makes provision for the appointment of trustees, practice and procedure of trustee decision making, tenure of office and ultimately the removal of trustees. This code of conduct complements the Charity's governing document.

Appointment

The board of trustees comprises elected, and from time to time, co-opted individuals. The term of office for trustees is set down in the Charity's governing document. A trustee must not be disqualified from acting as such and must agree to be a member of the Charity in order to stand for election or appointment. The board of trustees should represent the interests of all the Charity's beneficiaries, members and stakeholders. Trustees are duty bound to the Charity and not to any individual or organisation.

For trustees to be effective in performing their legal duties and responsibilities, it is essential that individual trustees, and the board as a whole, are aware of the nature of the work of the Charity and its operating environment.

Role and Function of Trustees

Trustees must act in accordance with the law and regulations affecting the Charity, and must have regard to their legal duties, namely:

- ensure they are eligible to serve as a trustee;
- ensure that the Charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit;
- comply with the Charity's governing document and the law;
- act in the Charity's best interests;
- manage the Charity's resources responsibly; and
- act with reasonable care and skill.

Trustees are provided with role descriptions that outline specific roles and responsibilities. In fulfilling their general roles and responsibilities individual trustees must:

- adhere to the Charity's rules and policies, including the governing document, and support its charitable objects;

- act in the best interests of the Charity at all times, taking professional advice where necessary;
- contribute to the work of the board of trustees to fulfil its role and functions as defined in the governing document and legislation;
- recognise that their role is a collective one and that any task or function delegated to an individual trustee or trustee sub-committee does not relieve the other trustees of the responsibility for that task or function; and
- support and assist the Chief Executive, where applicable.

Conflicts of Interest

The board of trustees has a legal obligation to act in the best interests of The Fire Fighters Charity and in accordance with the Charity's governing document, and to avoid situations where there may be a potential, real or perceived conflict of interest. Trustees should not exert any influence to gain any preferential treatment for themselves or their family, or other connected persons or organisations. Trustees should be aware of, and act in accordance with, the Charity's policy on identifying and managing conflicts of interest.

Upon appointment, and at least annually, trustees are required to complete a declaration of interest form. This document must be updated when a material change occurs. A register of interests will be maintained by the company secretary and will be made available to the Charity's auditors, in line with the Charity's conflicts of interest policy. Failure by a trustee to declare an interest, real or perceived, could result in the complaints process being instigated by the Charity. Depending on the circumstances and severity of the conflict, this may result in the trustee being removed from office.

Standards of Conduct

Trustees are required to adhere to the highest standards of conduct in the performance of their duties. This code of conduct respects and endorses the seven principles of public life set out by the Nolan Committee and all trustees are expected to perform their duties in accordance with them. The seven principles are:

- selflessness;
- integrity;
- objectivity;
- accountability;
- openness;
- honesty; and
- leadership.

In addition, the Charity requires trustees to perform their duties in accordance with the values of the organisation.

Trust

Integrity - we are truthful and honest and extend trust to all.

Respect - we demonstrate respect for all and the contribution that we each make to the organisation.

Openness - we are approachable, genuine and authentic. We seek and encourage engagement and feedback.

Kindness

Supportive we support each other and all our stakeholders.

Care we create a positive environment for all.

Appreciative we recognise the value of every individual.

Clarity

Purpose - we are united and clear in our vision and purpose. We know where we fit and all work towards our common goals.

Communication - we communicate in a relevant and appropriate way to keep all our stakeholders informed and engaged. We actively listen and hear to give everyone a voice.

Shared Values - we are clear what is expected of us and how we deliver. We live and uphold our shared values and behaviours.

Dynamism

Ambition - we motivate ourselves and each other to succeed and recognise success.

Future Orientated - we greet each day with purpose, founded on an understanding of our future direction.

Collaborative - we connect with teams and individuals, openly and frequently.

Professionalism

Proud - we take pride in who we are and everything we do.

Deliver - we strive for excellence in all things and at all levels, both in service to others and to ourselves.

Assured - we do the right thing, in the right way at the right time.

Equity

Fairness - we treat each other fairly and create a socially just organisation.

Inclusive - we create an environment where each individual can be their unique self.

Value - we value one another and ourselves.

Trustees are encouraged to:

- value fellow trustees, even when there are differences in opinion;
- treat the Charity's directors, other employees, volunteers and fellow trustees with respect and in accordance with the Charity's policies;
- be mindful of conduct which could be deemed to be unfair or discriminatory; and
- conduct themselves in a manner which reflects positively on the Charity when attending external meetings or any other events.

All trustees are expected to understand, agree and promote the Charity's Equal Opportunities Policy and Dignity at Work Policy in every area of their work. The board's activities should not prejudice any part of the fire services community on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.

Any actual or perceived prejudicial action, views or comments will be investigated and dealt with in line with the complaints procedure and could result in the trustee being removed from office.

Stakeholder Engagement

Trustees are accountable to a range of interested parties for their actions and as such, decision making and governance issues should be as transparent as possible, except for when confidentiality is required or there is likely to be a breach of the Charity's data protection policy.

Trustees are accountable to the membership. In order to demonstrate their accountability to the Charity's wider community and the Charity Commission, trustees may be requested by the Chair to attend events, to meet talk and listen to, the members, the fire services community and the public. Trustees should be fully aware of their representative functions

and should not become personally involved in those operational matters that should be handled by the appropriate employee. Trustees are advised to act as a conduit for forwarding public comments and concerns to the appropriate employee when presented with a complaint from a member, employee, volunteer, beneficiary or the general public.

Trustees are legally accountable to the Charity Commission, and other regulatory and statutory bodies, and their membership. In addition, good governance improves transparency and accountability to the wider public and potential funders.

Expenses

The position of trustee is unremunerated, though reasonable out-of-pocket expenses are paid. Trustees must not receive any financial or non-financial benefit that is not explicitly authorised by the governing document or the Charity Commission.

Meetings

Trustees have a responsibility to attend meetings of the board. When this is not possible, they should submit an apology to the Chair in advance of the meeting. Trustees are expected to attend for the duration of each meeting.

Repeated absence from the board of trustee meetings without good reason established to the satisfaction of the board could result in the individual trustee being removed from office, in accordance with the governing document.

Non-attendance of two consecutive board meetings, without permission and/or notice, and at the request of the majority of the other trustees, will result in the trustee being deemed to have resigned their position, unless the grounds for absence are regarded as satisfactory by the board of trustees.

Confidentiality

All trustees are required to respect the confidentiality of the information to which they are exposed as a result of their membership of the board of trustees. All trustees, when dealing with difficult and confidential issues, are required to act with discretion and care in the performance of their role. Trustees should only speak to the media with the express permission of the Chair or Chief Executive.

In situations concerning potential whistleblowing matters, trustees are encouraged to adhere to the Charity's whistleblowing policy to resolve the matter, in the first instance.

Ceasing to be a Trustee

Trustees must continue to comply with the qualifications required to hold a trustee position throughout their period of tenure, as defined in the willingness to serve declaration. Any changes that would render the trustee ineligible to serve must be forwarded to the company secretary.

Trustees may resign their office ahead of their period of tenure by writing to the Chair. The confidentiality requirements referred to above continue to apply after the trustee leaves office.