

### **3. Background information about the role of a trustee**

Charity trustees make up the people with legal responsibility for the overall management and decision making in a charity. They are responsible for the direction and performance of their charity and provide management and monitoring of staff activities. The role of a trustee is voluntary.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Have ultimate responsibility for the work of the charity
- Must act in the best interest of the charity
- Take decisions about the future of the charity
- Ensure the organisation remains sustainable
- Consider likely future challenges and prepare the charity to face them
- Ensure the charity is working within the law
- Be accountable for the organisation
- Support the head of staff
- Monitor to ensure the charity is meeting objectives
- Ensure the board is working effectively and efficiently

#### **What are the qualities needed to be a trustee?**

Boards need a wide variety of skills to be able to function effectively. This will include 'hard skills' such as legal, accounting, business management etc. These skills will be required in order that the board can understand the issues and meet their legal and financial obligations as trustees.

Equally important are the 'soft skills' such as encouraging team working, problem solving, facilitating decision making, maintaining good working relationships and keeping the trustees in touch with the membership of the group.