

**Chairperson for Citizens Advice Dacorum**

**Job description & person specification**

# Objective

The role of the Chair is to provide leadership and direction to the board of Trustees, and with the Board’s support, ultimately help the charity achieve its mission statement and comply with its legal and regulatory obligations.

The Chair's role is also to work in partnership with the Chief Executive and support the salaried employees and volunteers, helping them achieve the aims of the organisation; and to optimise the relationship between the board of Trustees and the staff.

The Chair will also support, and, where appropriate, challenge the Chief Executive and ensure that the Board functions as a unit and works closely with the entire Executive of the charity to achieve agreed objectives. He or she will also act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with the Chief Executive.

**Role Specification**

1. **In addition to the general responsibilities of a Trustee, the Chair has the following main responsibilities:**

* provide leadership for the board of Trustees in their role of setting the strategy and policy of the organisation
* plan the annual cycle of board meetings and set the agendas
* chair and facilitate the board meetings
* work with the Board to give direction on policy making
* ensure that decisions taken at board meetings are implemented
* represent the organisation at appropriate events, meetings or functions
* act as a spokesperson for the organisation where appropriate
* liaise with chief executive to keep an overview of the organisation’s affairs and to provide support as appropriate
* review and appraise the performance of the chief executive and the board
* sit on appointment panels as required
* act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required
* attend and be a member of other committees or working groups when appropriate in role as Chair
* ensure that there are the necessary skills and representation on the board and conduct regular appraisals of the board and Trustees including their own appraisal
* ensure that Trustees use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of Trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives or other issues relevant to the area of the organisation's work in which the Trustee has special expertise.

**2. Qualities and experience**

**Essential**

* integrity, strategic vision
* commitment to the organisation
* demonstrable leadership qualities
* willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as Chair and Trustee
* ability to take decisions for the good of the organisation
* sound, independent judgement
* strong communication skills and ability to speak effectively in public
* tact and diplomacy
* ability to listen to the views of others and to challenge where appropriate
* ability to work effectively as a member of a team
* understanding of the legal responsibilities and liabilities of a Trustee

**Desirable**

* prior experience of committee/Trustee work or leadership
* income generation and partnership working
* knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the Citizens Advice Service
* a wider involvement with the voluntary sector

**3. Time Consideration**

* The Board meets at least four times a year
* The following Board sub-committees are in place and have their own additional time commitments
  + Finance Committee meets four times a year. The Chair is a member of this committee but this is optional
  + Personnel and Operations Committee meets four times a year and the Chair is usually an ex officio member
  + There are also working parties set up as and when needed, and a Trustee away day once a year
  + The Dacorum Citizens Advice AGM is held once a year
* In addition to Board meetings there are regular officer meetings, at least four times a year, to fit in with the meeting cycles
* Citizens Advice is also a member of two local consortiums, Dacortium and the Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service (HCAS). It is expected that the Chair becomes a Trustee of the latter, HCAS, which meets at least four times a year. With regard to Dacortium, it is for the Board to agree who their representative should be but currently the Dacortium board meets monthly/bimonthly
* Outside scheduled meetings, other contact – usually electronic or by telephone – will be necessary.
* It is also important that the Chair is able to visit the organisation’s office (soon to be moving to The Forum, Hemel Hempstead) and be available to the chief executive on a regular basis.
* The time commitment for the Chair is expected to be 3-4 days, on average, per month, although the Chair will be able to manage contact time as he or she sees fit.

Currently officers of the board serve for 3 years with an option to renew for further 3 years and then must stand down.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact the Interim Chair, Alison Bateson, on 07802 720249 or [alisonbateson@btinternet.com](mailto:alisonbateson@btinternet.com).