

Finance Trustee Recruitment Pack

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You can make a meaningful difference to the lives of people with a learning disability, their families and carers in Chelmsford and mid-Essex.

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Thank you for your interest in volunteering with City of Chelmsford Mencap in the role of trustee. This information pack is designed to provide you with plenty of information for you to determine whether we might be a good fit for each other. We include background on the following:

- About City of Chelmsford Mencap, the charity's history, its purpose and its links with Royal Mencap Society
- The charity's governance structure
- An overview of the trustee role
- A description of the trustee role
- The application process

If you have any questions about any aspect of the charity or the role, please don't hesitate to contact our Chair of Trustees, Anthony North: chair@cityofchelmsfordmencap.co.uk

You can also speak to a member of our team in the Mencap Centre office on 01245 268 303.

About us

City of Chelmsford Mencap is a registered charity which was established in 1951. It provides lifelong learning, social opportunities and specialist support for people with a learning disability in mid-Essex. It is estimated there are 5,600 people with a learning disability aged 18-64 in mid-Essex, with numbers likely to rise in the next 20 years.

Our mission is 'to nurture, empower and celebrate every individual impacted by learning disability by enabling their own unique sense of belonging, dignity, resilience, independence and achievement'.

The charity is affiliated to Royal Mencap Society (RMS) but is an independent, local, charity and receives no direct funding from RMS or government. Our Board of Trustees has sole responsibility for setting the strategy, budget and priorities of the charity as well as ensuring we meet our obligations to the Charity Commission, our employees and our beneficiaries.

In 2020, City of Chelmsford Mencap received the **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**, the highest honour for voluntary groups. This award recognised the strong voluntary ethos that runs through our charity, from the trustees to the occasional voluntary supporter. As a trustee, you will play an important role in ensuring we continue to develop our strong culture of voluntary service and the benefits that this brings.



Governance Structure

Board

The Board of Trustees is the senior body of the charity, setting and monitoring the framework of everything the charity delivers. Whilst day-to-day management lies with our superb team of staff, trustees share a collective responsibility for the strategy and its delivery. The board operates as a team, making collective decisions, but specific oversight functions are given to individual board members based on their experience and contribution. Our Chair of Trustees works with each board member individually to ensure that each is able to maximise their contribution without feeling overstretched. The charity does expect that its board members will be visible across the charity and will help and advise members of staff where appropriate. Likewise, we encourage trustees to 'roll up their sleeves' and to mix with our service users in order to gain a thorough understanding of their challenges, preferences and unique skills.



Advisory Panel

We are currently establishing an Advisory Panel to support the board. This group of expert 'friends of the charity' are available to provide guidance and suggestions in their particular fields to assist trustees in their decision making.

Sub-committees

The board is moving towards making more use of sub-committees and those trustees who are willing are likely to be asked to join or chair sub-committees in order to make main board meetings more productive and efficient.

Community Partnerships

City of Chelmsford Mencap has a broad range of community partnerships, through which we aim to represent, inform and promote the needs and abilities of our beneficiaries. We provide work experience placements for health and social care students at Chelmsford College and Anglia Ruskin University to help ensure future professionals are familiar with the needs of people with a learning disability. The charity works closely with health and social care agencies to enhance service users' health and wellbeing and to improve and develop services; partners include Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust, Anglian Community Enterprise and Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Trust. The charity, and its service users, also run innovative community development projects with other charities, including Farleigh Hospice.

Trustee role overview

This role is suited to candidates who can demonstrate knowledge and experience in both finance and strategic development. Working closely with the Chair, the finance trustee will develop the charity's financial plans and budgets and then report to the board on progress on a regular basis. The charity employs an experienced financial administrator and the finance trustee will provide oversight and guidance for their activity.

Purpose

City of Chelmsford Mencap's Board of Trustees ensures the charity has a clear strategy and that our core services and developmental aims are aligned with our vision and mission. Our beneficiaries are at the forefront of everything the charity seeks to achieve and the board regularly monitors that this remains the case.

Trustees are legally responsible for the charity's management and administration. The role of the finance trustee is to maintain an overview of the charity's affairs, safeguarding its financial viability and ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained. They will take responsibility for confirming that all statutory reporting, specifically that for the Charity Commission, is completed in a timely and compliant fashion.

Impact

Being a trustee at City of Chelmsford Mencap involves making decisions that will impact on the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in society. Through your role you will make a meaningful difference to our beneficiaries' lives and to the local community.

At the same time, the charity employs a skilled and dedicated team of staff (as well as self-employed tutors). We pride ourselves on being a nurturing and respectful employer and the finance trustee (together with our Chair and HR trustee) will have a central role in ensuring this priority is maintained.

Our finance trustee is key to the effective working of the board through their specialist financial, commercial and strategic experience and provides oversight and guidance for our senior management team.



Become a CCM trustee and we'll give you that priceless feeling of making a valuable difference to the lives of others.



Finance trustee role description

Location

Our charity's premises are located in central Chelmsford. Whilst remote working is the norm, we do encourage our trustees to visit Mencap Centre whenever possible.

Support

You will be supported by the other members of the Board of Trustees, our Advisory Panel and the senior management team.

Responsibilities


- To oversee and present budgets, accounts and financial statements, and to formally report on these at the Annual General Meeting, drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way
- To ensure the financial resources of the charity meet its present and future needs
- To ensure the charity has an appropriate reserves policy
- To present financial reports to the board and to provide commentary and forward-looking guidance throughout the year
- To ensure appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place, owning and reviewing relevant policies on behalf of the charity
- To liaise regularly with the Services Manager and Financial Administrator to discuss financial matters and address matters arising
- To advise on the financial implications of the charity's strategic plan
- To support the board in monitoring the charity's investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the charity's policies, aims and legal responsibilities
- To ensure that the annual financial statements are audited and prepared in accordance with SORP and relevant charity standards, any auditors' recommendations are implemented, the accounts are included in the annual report and are submitted to the relevant statutory bodies, e.g. Charity Commission
- To keep the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
- To contribute to the fundraising strategy of the charity
- To act as an ambassador for, and in the best interests of, the charity and RMS
- To work closely with the Chair, providing information and advice between meetings




Qualities and experience

This role is suited to candidates who can demonstrate knowledge and experience of both a financial and strategic background, and who have:

- A proven track record of integrity and respect for confidential and proprietary information
- An ability to communicate clearly and to explain detailed financial principles to others who may not have such expertise, including those with a learning disability
- A keen and respectful listener who is able to empathise and respectfully challenge
- Commitment to the charity and enthusiasm for its vision, mission and aims
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee (we estimate this to be three hours per week in addition to board meeting commitments below)
- Strategic vision
- Sound, independent judgement
- Willingness to participate in frank and open discussion
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to coach staff where required
- Financial experience and business planning skills
- Some experience of charity finance and fundraising (desirable)
- Skills to analyse proposals and their financial consequences
- Preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board
- Willingness to be available to provide guidance to the senior management team on an ad hoc basis



All those skills you have accumulated through years of working can be used to the benefit of others. What's most rewarding is working with other trustees and staff members to further improve our services.





Time commitment

The charity holds monthly board meetings, with each lasting approximately two hours. A minimum of two hours reading time before each meeting is required to ensure trustees are familiar with items to be discussed. The finance trustee must also be available to approve the management accounts before inclusion in the board papers.

There may be occasions when trustees are required to attend charity events at weekends or evenings.

Sub-committee participation is anticipated, the time commitment will be discussed during interview.

Whilst all trustees are volunteers and are not expected to commit to a term of engagement, we suggest that candidates assume a two-year term of office at the outset. We are very happy to discuss this further during interview.

Training

You will be given a basic induction to the charity and opportunities to meet with the senior management team. We also strongly encourage trustees to spend time participating in our services delivery, getting to know our staff, tutors and volunteers – and most importantly, our beneficiaries. We will customise a training and familiarisation package for the successful candidate based on their prior knowledge and experience.

Rewards

The role of a trustee is voluntary and is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although reasonable expenses may be claimed.

Being a trustee of City of Chelmsford Mencap is rewarding for many reasons, from the satisfaction of making a difference to our beneficiaries' lives to the excitement and achievement of helping our charity develop.

Through the selection process, we will arrange for you to meet with a number of our existing trustees and we encourage you to explore their motivations and rewards as part of your evaluation of us.

Conditions of engagement

Whilst you must be at least 18 years old, City of Chelmsford Mencap is an equal opportunities employer committed to diversity and treating all employees and volunteers with dignity and respect regardless of their background.

You must not act as a trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act, including if you have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud), are bankrupt or have entered into a formal arrangement (e.g. an individual voluntary arrangement) with a creditor or have been removed as a company director or charity trustee due to wrongdoing.

Appointment to our Board of Trustees is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and the production of a clean enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) certificate. We will arrange the latter once an offer to join our board has been made.

Application process

If you would like to apply for the finance trustee role, or to discuss it informally, please contact me at chair@cityofchelmsfordmencap.co.uk

Our recruitment process will typically include the following:

- Two interviews, providing the opportunity for you to meet with at least two existing trustees in addition to me
- An invitation to attend a class at Mencap Centre, meeting with some of our service users and staff
- An informal meeting with a member of our senior management team
- Dedicated email/phone support for any queries or concerns

Please note: our recruitment process is designed to facilitate a two-way dialogue. We recognise that you need to be as comfortable with us and our operating model as we are with you. Our commitment throughout is to be open, transparent and to give you as much information as we possibly can so that you can be sure you are making an informed choice to volunteer as a trustee with us.

We look forward to meeting you!

Anthony P. North

Chair of Trustees



Registered Charity No. 245421

www.cityofchelmsfordmencap.org.uk

