

Chartered Trustee/Board of Trustee Role Description

(A) Chartered Trustee Role:

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the management of the affairs of the Institute and promoting the Institute's charitable objectives. RTPI being a registered Charity, its trustees must follow the rules and regulations as mentioned in the RTPI's governing documents; act responsibly and only in the interests of the RTPI; use reasonable care and skill and make well-informed decisions, taking advice when needed.

(B) What's involved?

The Board of Trustees are responsible for making decisions in the following areas. This list is indicative and other items may arise.

Leadership

- Shaping the RTPI's corporate planning processes – including the corporate strategy, the business plan, and the annual budget and supporting documents such as committee work plans.
- Responsible for making decisions on key policies such as the health and safety policy, investment policy and the reserves policy.

Statutory responsibilities

- Ensuring that the Institute is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Complying with the Institute's governing document and the law
- Acting in the Institute's best interests
- Managing Institute's resources responsibly
- Acting with reasonable care and skill

Governance

- Approving the RTPI's annual report and accounts.
- Reviewing the auditors' report on the annual accounts.
- Agreeing the subscription structure for the following year, subject to consultation with the General Assembly.

Building relationships

- Receiving reports from the Institute's standing committees, subcommittees, panels and groups (if any).
- Receiving reports from the President, Chief Executive, volunteers and senior staff.
- Fostering and maintaining good relationships with Trustees, committee members, volunteers and staff.

In addition to the above, the Trustees are required to follow:

- Trustees responsibilities, behaviour and competencies as explained in **Annex 1** in this document
- The guidance published by the Charity Commission: [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do](#)

Being a RTPI Trustee is a voluntary role. All RTPI volunteers:

- Act in the interests of the RTPI, irrespective of any commitments to other organisations or groups or any personal interests.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest and seek advice from the governance team, if necessary.
- Adhere to relevant RTPI policies, procedures and behaviours.

(C) Expected commitments and term of office:

- This role is for a two-year term from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023.
- In total there are six Trustees Meetings and four General Assembly meetings a year plus preparation work and follow up actions.
- Members of the Board of Trustees are also members of the General Assembly, unless they are already a member of the General Assembly in another capacity.
- Trustees are expected to attend and contribute to the discussions and decisions at Board meetings. This will involve reading the papers for each Board meeting, which are sent out at least ten days in advance of the meeting. Trustees can raise questions about the papers with officers as necessary.
- Papers may be circulated electronically between meetings for consideration by the Board. On an average, this might take place once in couple of months.
- Trustees may also be asked to serve as Chair, Vice-Chair, or as a member of the Institute's committees/subcommittees/panels or on a task and finish group. Trustees might also represent at a conference/events as required.
- The role
- Elected Trustee will be required to attend the following key meetings for 2022, please ensure your availability:
 - Board Meeting dates: 23 Feb; 13 Apr; 13 Jul (Incl. Trustees Away Day); 05 Oct; 14 Dec
 - General Assembly Meeting dates: 19 Jan; 06 April; 29 June; 19 Oct
 - In addition to the above meetings in 2022, there will be inductions on: 08 Dec 2021
- The role will require an average of 1-2 days a month.

(D) What support can you expect?

- Support from the RTPI staff.
- Well planned induction programme.
- Training, briefings or guidance documents on relevant topics.
- Expenses covered in line with our policy.

(E) What's in it for you?

The chance to be part of an enthusiastic team of professionals and make a real difference to the planning profession and communities in which we live and work.

The opportunity to:

- Gain high level chairing the RTPI Finance Committee experience and transferable skills in strategy, business planning, investment and risk management.
- Help shape the future development of the RTPI.
- Opportunity to help steer the delivery of the objectives set out in the Institute's corporate strategy 2020-30.
- Access professional networking.
- Expand your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) portfolio.
- Gain an understanding of the role of governance in a membership organisation.
- Learn about areas of planning outside of your expertise.

(F) About you

As the RTPI Trustee, you will have the following attributes:

- Credibility within the profession and among external stakeholders and the wider community.
- The ability to work as a member of a team and a willingness to accept a majority decision and be tolerant of the views of other people.

- A commitment to be well informed about the work of the Institute and to devote the necessary time to the requirements of the role.
- A strong commitment to planning and the RTPI's strategic objectives and vision.
- Active involvement within the Institute.
- Availability to attend GA, Board and other relevant meetings as scheduled.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to treat sensitive information confidentially.
- Good understanding of the Institute's work and the key stakeholders with which it engages.

(G) Eligibility

Candidates must be:

- A Chartered Member; and
- Supported by at least four other Chartered Members.

The trustees are elected by the General Assembly. The election will take place on the basis of a single transferable vote (voters rank the candidates in order of preference: 1 for their first preference, 2 for their second preference, and so forth).

This is a voluntary role. The duties outlined above reflect our shared hopes and expectations but do not create any contractual obligations.

Annex 1:

Trustee Responsibilities, Behaviours and Competences

Introduction:

Boards of all organisations, whether private, public or not for profit, including charities, are fully responsible for their organisations, although of course they delegate many decisions and the operation of the organisations to their Chief Executives and through the CEO to staff. Because the RTPI is a registered charity, its board members are known as Trustees.

Boards are responsible for setting strategy, for making sure organisations are properly resourced and for monitoring progress. Whilst boards have the ultimate legal responsibility, well-functioning and successful organisations have boards that work collegially, with its members respecting each other and their staff and in a way that offers critical friendship and support to their CEOs and other staff reporting directly to boards.

The purpose of this note is to list the roles and responsibilities of the RTPI Board, the values and behaviours expected of all Board members and the skills and experience needed to be a successful Trustee. It is hoped that this will help those considering standing for election to the Board to understand what is involved before they take the decision to stand.

Like all good Boards, the RTPI board regularly appraises its collective performance to ensure it fulfils all its obligations efficiently, effectively and fairly and to ensure that all its members have opportunities to develop the skills and experience needed to contribute to all its debates and discussions.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Trustees:

All members of the board share the same legal status and have equal responsibility. Each must act only in the interests of the RTPI and not on behalf of, or representing any constituency or interest group. Board members must ensure that the interests of the RTPI are placed before any personal interests, whether commercial or otherwise. Although the Board may (and has) delegated decisions to committees, the Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for all decisions taken by its committees: hence the importance of all the standing and other committees reporting to the Board and for the Board to monitor and scrutinise their decisions and offer challenge as well as support for their recommendations.

The core purpose of the board is to determine vision and strategy, direct, control, and scrutinise the RTPI's affairs. Although operational management of the RTPI is delegated to the CEO and staff, the board must monitor their decisions and hold them to account.

Trustees are thus collectively responsible for:

1. Setting the strategic direction of the RTPI within the framework of its Royal Charter Bye Laws and regulations made under it;
2. Ensuring the RTPI also complies with charity law both in England and Wales, in Scotland and in Northern Ireland;

3. Overseeing the development of policy and taking major policy decisions by: approving a corporate strategy, business plan, annual budgets, and developing a framework for reviewing policy and monitoring operational performance, including approving annual financial statements;
4. Ensuring that RTPI members have confidence in the Board, in conjunction with the CEO, and specifically reporting to and being accountable to the General Assembly;
5. Ensuring that the RTPI has measures in place to engage with stakeholders and with other relevant organisations and government agencies in the four countries of the UK and Ireland and in other countries where RTPI has members;
6. The appointment and salary of the chief executive and her/his annual appraisal and annual salary review;
7. Providing challenge and scrutiny of the RTPI's operations, both those led by staff and by those delegated to the Board's standing and other committees, ensuring that they are aligned with the RTPI's corporate strategy and business plans;
8. Holding the CEO and Senior Executive Team to account for day to day operations, ensuring operations function to best effect; including establishing and reviewing delegation frameworks, internal controls and risk management;
9. Ensuring that the Board and all its members follows the Principles of Public Life and set a positive tone, behaviour and culture for the organisation
10. Evaluating the effectiveness of the Board in fulfilling its purpose;

Values and Personal Behaviour

Each trustee should commit to:

1. Understanding and upholding the principles and practice of good governance and exercising reasonable care, skill and diligence;
2. Upholding the values of the RTPI including its professional code of conduct, taking decisions without fear or favour whilst showing dignity and respect to all Board colleagues and RTPI staff and also promoting equality, diversity and inclusion for the profession as a whole;
3. Accepting full accountability for the work and decisions of the board, including delegated responsibilities, and for the staff and services for which Trustees are responsible
4. Acting with honesty in all actions, transactions, communications, behaviours and decision-making, and resolving any conflicts arising from personal, professional or financial interests that could influence or be thought to influence Trustees' decisions as board members
5. Being open about the reasoning, reasons, and processes underpinning actions, transactions, communications, behaviours, and decision-making and about any conflicts of interest
6. Acting with integrity by consistently and fairly applying these values in all actions, transactions, communications, behaviours, and decision-making, and always raising concerns if harmful behaviour or misconduct by others is experienced or observed
7. Working collaboratively and constructively with others, contributing to discussions, listening to others and, providing constructive and effective challenge and earning the respect of fellow Trustees; and raising concerns effectively; reflecting on personal, board, and organisational performance, and on how personal behaviour affects others and supporting colleagues to do the same

Technical and Other Competences

Each trustee should commit to:

1. Taking responsibility for having the relevant knowledge and skills to perform as a board member; reflect on and identify any gaps in knowledge and skills, and participate constructively in appraisals and in collective board or individual Trustees development;
2. Specifically, to having, or be committed to developing, an understanding of finance, operational processes, organisational development, people services, all relevant legal requirements, including on health and safety, equal opportunities and data protection; and of operating at board level in a membership focussed organisation.
3. Making the best use of individual expertise and that of colleagues while working within the limits of individual competence and knowledge;
4. Understanding Trustees' roles and powers, the legal, regulatory, and accountability frameworks and guidance within which the Board operates and the boundaries between Trustees, the CEO and RTPI staff
5. Thinking strategically and developmentally about RTPI's strategy, business plans and budgets, thus ensuring the RTPI is fit and able to serve its members; securing assurance that the RTPI's financial, operational, and risk management frameworks are sound, effective, and properly used;
6. Ensuring that the RTPI's contractual and commercial relationships are honest, legal, regularly monitored, and compliant with best practice in the management of money
7. Helping the RTPI to working in partnership and co-operating with local and national bodies to support the promotion and delivery of high quality planning services;
8. Ensuring that the RTPI's dealings are made public, unless there is a justifiable and properly documented reason for not doing so.