

## **BOARD INDUCTION PACK**

### **Purpose**

Styles House is committed to inducting and supporting new board members to help them familiarise themselves with the role and how the Board operates.

This pack is intended to be a helping guide to people who are new to being a member of Styles House TMO Board.

### **Role of Board Member**

Styles House Board is responsible for controlling the organisation's management and administration. They are responsible for ensuring that income and allowances are used for the purposes set out in the organisation's governing document (The Rules) and for no other purpose. Board members have a responsibility to act reasonably and prudently and in the best interests of the organisation in all matters relating to styles House.

Above all, Board members need to work together as a team to ensure their organisation is run effectively and efficiently. As a body, the Board should contain people who collectively have the skills and confidence that will enable the organisation to confront and challenge any issues affecting it. This means that the board should work to avoid situations where knowledge or an excessive degree of influence is held in the hands of a select few.

### **Conflict of Interest**

All Board members must act, and be seen to act, in the best interest of the TMO and not for their own private interest or gain. There may be situations where board/committee members' own interests and the interest of the organisation arise simultaneously or appear to clash.

Examples of conflicts of interest might be where a family member works for an organisation that has bid to deliver a service for Styles House.

The issue is not the integrity of the Board member concerned, but the TMO's management of any potential overlap or conflict of interests. Any potential conflicts of interest should be declared at the start of a meeting. It will often be enough for a member to withdraw from discussions and decisions, which closely involve their interests, or simply to declare interests that are more general or indirect so that everyone is clearly aware of them.

The Board has arrangements in place for dealing with potential conflicts of interest and ensure that new Board members are aware of these arrangements. An open approach to potential conflicts of interest, which includes recognising, acknowledging and managing the issue in a transparent and efficient manner, can help to meet good practice guidelines and protect the reputation of the TMO.

### **Ensuring good management**

Board members are responsible for controlling the TMO's management and administration; they are responsible for ensuring that that income is used for the purpose set out in the Management Agreement with Southwark Council, the business plan and the Rules, and for no other purpose. Board members have a responsibility to act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the organisation, and have a responsibility to act in the best interest of the organisation.

In order to avoid the most common difficulties that can arise in a TMO, Board Members should:

- Appreciate their responsibilities for the organisation and its resources

- Make themselves familiar with the TMO Rules and the Management Agreement, so that they are clear what it does and does not have the powers to do
- Spot any circumstances in which they need to get advice, for example on legal or financial issues
- Not leave an individual Board member or staff member, or a small group, to run matters without sufficient accountability or control
- Never allow personal affairs and resources to become entangled with those of the organisation, or otherwise fail to spot and manage potential conflicts of interest
- Manage the organisation in the interest of the organisation as a whole, not in their own, or those of a narrow interest group.

Styles House is registered as an Industrial and Provident under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965. Industrial and Provident Societies are regulated by the Financial Service Authority. The IPS rules provide, amongst other things, that:

- There shall be a Board of between four and nine members
- The Board shall manage the business of the Association.
- The Board should meet not less than six times in each calendar year and may hold such additional meetings as needed.
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The Board may employ persons on such terms as it may determine. As such, therefore, the Board is the Governing Body of Styles House TMO. It is important to ensure that each Board member fully understands the role and responsibilities of the Board as well as their specific responsibilities as individual members. For the purposes of this paper, governance is defined as the process by which the Board seeks to ensure that Styles House TMO is effectively and properly run.

### **Job Description for Board Members**

Job description; the roles, responsibilities, and tasks which board members are expected to carry out. A board member will be expected to perform a number of tasks. These fall into two main groups: tasks to fulfil legal duties and managerial tasks

#### **Tasks to fulfil legal duties:**

1. To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as set out in the constitution.
2. To have read and understood the constitution.
3. To act at all times in the interests of the members.
4. To understand the legal responsibilities of the board.
5. To make sure that the organisation acts within the law: as an employer, in respect of equal opportunities, meeting health and safety requirements, as a company and so on.
6. To ensure that all money and assets are prudently managed and used in pursuit of the objects of the organisation.
7. To make sure that money is spent for the purposes for which it was given.
8. To ensure that the organisation accounts for its activities to its funders, its members, the local community and others as required.
9. To work jointly with the other Board members.
10. To ensure that the organisation manages its affairs reasonably and properly.
11. To work in the interests of the organisation, and not for personal gain.
12. To ensure that the Board takes proper professional advice on matters in which it does not have competence.

### **Managerial tasks:**

1. To understand and be committed to the mission of Style House TMO.
2. To ensure that the organisation pursues its mission.
3. To read and understand the financial information about Styles House TMO and to ensure the finances are sound and properly managed.
4. To ensure that resources are used efficiently and economically.
5. To ensure that the organisation is a good employer of its paid and voluntary staff.
6. To appoint the TMO Manager, and usually to be involved with the appointment of other staff.
7. To supervise and support the TMO Manager (the Chairperson normally takes on this role) and ensure other staff and volunteers are properly supervised.
8. To monitor and evaluate the work of the organisation on a regular basis. This includes receiving reports from staff and receiving feedback from members.
9. To make sure that the TMO is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities.
10. To make sure that any premises and equipment are properly looked after.
11. To ensure that any investments and cash balances are managed properly.
12. To be effective
13. To work with the other members of the Board to form an effective governing body for the organisation.
14. To attend meetings and to read papers in advance of meetings.
15. To attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate.
16. To participate in other tasks as arise from time to time, such as: interviewing new staff, helping with appeals and fundraising.
17. To keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues, which affect its work.
18. To ensure that the organisation is effectively managed and gets its work done.

### **Person specification for Styles House Board Member**

Person specification - the skills, experience and qualities that are expected from Board Members

1. A commitment to Styles House aims and objectives
2. A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
3. Strategic vision
4. Good, independent judgement
5. An ability to think creatively
6. A willingness to speak your mind
7. An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of members
8. An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
9. Selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
10. A willingness to be available to all staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.

## Board Skills and Self-assessment Monitoring Form

In order for the Board to make the best use of new members it needs to know about your skills and experience. The form that follows is intended to help you and the other board members decide what role you would best be able to carry out.

### Personal details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your main area of interest in this Board (if more than one, please number in preference order)

1. Work in the voluntary and community sector
  - a) Housing management
  - b) Community development and involvement
  - c) Gardening
  - d) Quality and standards
  - e) Events
  - f) Training
  - g) Policy and public affairs
  
2. Specialist area
  - a) Chair
  - b) Secretary
  - c) Treasurer
  - d) Other

3. Other – please state

**Skills and experience** (Please tick as appropriate)

Skills and Experience			
Communications		Legal Issues	
Community		Risk Management	
Event Management		Marketing	
Equal Opportunities issues		Mentoring	
Employment		Quality Improvement	
Financial Planning & Control		Repairs	
Housing management		Sector policy issues	
Information Technology issues		Lobbying	
Investors in People process		Training and Development	
Gardening		Voluntary sector	
Fundraising		Sage Accounting Software	
Governance Issues		Strategic Planning	

**Courses and Training Attended on Behalf of the TMO**

Course Title	Date

**Board Members Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form**

Please complete using BLOCK letters

Name:	Date of joining: Date of leaving: Date of birth:
Address: (home)	E-mail
Mobile no:	Home no:
Ethnicity:	
Are you a disabled person? (please tick)	Yes                      No
Sex (please tick)	Female                      Male

We would like to circulate your main contact details i.e. name, address, email address and telephone numbers, to other Board members. Would you please sign below to signify your agreement to this, or tick the relevant box if you do not want this information circulated.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Please do not circulate my details

## Board members meeting availability and preference survey 2014-15

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board usually meets every month. In order to arrange the dates for the coming year we would like to check on availability to ensure the meetings go ahead with the maximum number of members being present. Please complete this form by ticking the appropriate boxes.

### Weeks of the month

- Week 1
- Week 2
- Week 3
- Week 4

### Days of the week

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday

### Time of day

- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening

### Checklist for Board induction pack

The following items or information should be available as a hard, or electronic copy, or one-to-one meeting:

- The IPS Rules
- Code of Governance (The Rules)
- Management Agreement
- Set of recent Board papers, minutes and dates of future meetings
- Terms of reference for any sub or working groups
- Annual reports and accounts for the previous year
- Policy documents including equal opportunities and financial controls
- Information about Styles House
  - A brief history of the organisation
  - Business plan, budget and risk assessment
  - Structure of the organisation
  - TMO Manager's job description
  - Any publicity materials
  - Information about the Board's role
  - Job descriptions and person specifications of Board members and officers
  - Profiles of Board and contact details
  - A self-assessment form to indicate skills, experience, interest and support needs

### **Checklist for new Board Members**

- Have you received an induction pack?
- Have you filled in a self-assessment form?
- Do you have a code of conduct and agreement?
- Do you know how and why the TMO was set up and its history?
- Do you know the aims of the TMO?
- Do you know about the activities of the TMO?
- Do you know how the organisation is funded?
- Do you know about the key issues facing the TMO?
- Do you know about the future projects or activities planned?
- Do you know about other organisations the TMO has networks or special relationships with?
- Are you aware of the structure of the organisation and your role in it?
- Are you aware of the staff structure and your relationship with staff?
- Are you aware of your roles and responsibilities as a Board member?
- Have you met with the chair and the TMO Manager?
- Have you met and got to know the other Board members?
- Do you have support or training needs and are they being addressed?

### **Review meeting guidelines**

A review meeting with the Chairperson after a couple of meetings can allow the new board member to feed back with their first impressions and address some of the following points:

- Any further explanation of the organisation's structure or activities.
- Identify skills / interests the board member could contribute to the organisation.
- Ensuring the new board member is fully aware of the time, commitment and responsibilities involved. For example, are they aware of their role as a board member and how they work with staff in the organisation? Are they aware of any conflicts of interest they may have and have these been declared?
- A review of support or training provided and any further support or training that may be necessary - for example, the new trustee may want training on a particular area of work they are taking on, such as public speaking.
- How the new board member has experienced working with the Board (or vica versa).