

Ten questions to ask yourself and your board



NPC's research into trusteeship found that few boards evaluate their performance. However, those that do are more likely to practice good governance. These questions are intended to be starting point for boards who want to review their work and think about how they could improve. For more information, see NPC's review of charity trusteeship in the UK, *Board matters*, available on our website.

1. Do we have the resources we need on our board?

- Do we have the right skills? Are they being applied?
- Do our board members have enough time to do the job properly?
- How diverse are we?

2. Does every board member understand his/her role and responsibility as a trustee generally?

- Do they understand the contribution expected of them for this charity?

3. Does the board do what it should?

- Does it ensure compliance with regulation?
- Does it try to improve the long term performance of the charity?
- Does it, where possible, avoid discussing operational detail?

4. How good is our induction process?

- Does every board member receive an induction?
- Is it comprehensive?

5. How open and constructive are our relationships?

- What are relationships like among board members?
- What is the relationship like between the board and the management team?

6. Do we have the best governance structure?

- Does the board delegate appropriately?
- Does the board benefit from expert advisors where possible?
- Does every member of the board understand the basis for all board decisions?

7. How well-run are board meetings?

- Are they held regularly enough with full attendance?
- Are board papers prepared in good time and to high standard, with useful information about the charity's achievements and challenges?
- Are all members able to make a full contribution?
- Are decisions made collectively?

8. How well do we plan and manage recruitment and succession?

- Do we use the best recruitment method for finding the type of trustees we are looking for?
- Do we have succession plans?

9. Do we know how well we are doing?

- Do we review our individual performance?
- Do we evaluate the performance of the board as a whole?

10. Are our board processes, decisions and impact transparent to staff and outsiders?

- How do we communicate our impact with others?
- What do others say about our board?