

## Thames Reach Board non-executive Director - role description, role qualities and competencies

### Summary

The Board has ultimate responsibility for the governance of Thames Reach. As a board member, in partnership with Board colleagues, you are responsible for determining Thames Reach's objectives and policies, the acquisition and use of resources in order to achieve the organisation's aims, the overall control of Thames Reach's operations and for appointing and, if necessary, dismissing the Chief Executive.

The Board's activities are directed towards achieving Thames Reach's mission - that all service users may have a decent home, supportive relationships and a fulfilling life, in pursuit of the organisation's vision: an end to street homelessness.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the organisation has clearly expressed ethos and values and that these are upheld; that there is a current business plan that sets out organisational strategy and that this is implemented; that the organisation is compliant with legal and regulatory responsibilities; and that there is appropriate support and challenge for the Chief Executive and other executives.

### Main responsibilities

The main responsibilities of a board member are to:

- Ensure that the organisation complies with its governing documents including Code of Conduct and Standing Orders and other relevant legislation and regulations
- Ensure that Thames Reach pursues its strategic objectives as defined through the Business Plan in order that the organisation can achieve its mission and vision.
- Uphold the organisation's ethos and values, guided by the core policies including those relating to equality of opportunity
- Uphold principles of good governance and achieve the highest standards through prudence, integrity and by behaving in a professional and business-like manner
- Attend board meetings which currently take place six times over a year and additionally take part in an annual board away-day
- Participate in sub-committees and other working groups, as requested
- Appoint and monitor the performance of the Chief Executive
- Take shared responsibility for the Board's decisions
- Represent Thames Reach externally, always safeguarding the good name of the organisation
- Respect confidentiality and declare any conflict of interest.

## Role qualities and competencies

The qualities and competencies sought of board members are:

- An interest in issues related to homelessness, housing and social care and a commitment to helping Thames Reach achieve its mission and vision
- An ability and willingness to work with others to achieve the best possible outcome for Thames Reach and contribute to a positive atmosphere of openness, trust and mutual respect
- A willingness to contribute particular areas of expertise, experience and knowledge for the benefit of the Thames Reach board and wider organisation
- A willingness to engage with the organisation and to fully understand the business of Thames Reach through direct contact with staff and service users
- A preparedness to read all relevant papers prior to meetings and to actively stay abreast of developments in the field of homelessness, housing and social care
- Ability to scrutinise and challenge the executive as part of the role of holding them to account and to appropriately delegate to, and support, the executive in order that strategy decisions can be successfully implemented
- Ability to contribute to setting the strategy of the organisation and to focus on defining objectives and outcomes
- A willingness to undergo an appraisal of performance as a Thames Reach Board member and to actively contribute to the appraisal of colleagues on the Board.

## Time commitment - minimum requirements

As a minimum, Board members are expected to:

- Attend board meetings and prepare in advance for them by reading all relevant papers. Members who have absented themselves from four consecutive meetings without special leave of absence may not remain as members. Board meetings will usually take place on a Monday evening from 5.30 to 7.30 at Thames Reach's central offices at the Employment Academy, 29 Peckham Road, Camberwell, SE5 8UA.
- Join one of the Thames Reach sub-committees which meet on a minimum of three occasions each year either at the Employment Academy or a central London location and last on average two hours
- Attend a Board planning 'away-day' which takes place once a year
- Be prepared to attend other events and celebrations during the year to represent the organisation
- Visit Thames Reach projects at least annually in order to fully understand the work of the organisation
- Undergo performance appraisal every third year.

We estimate that the minimum time commitment for a board member is four hours a month.

## What you can expect back from Thames Reach

To carry out the duties required as a Board member, Thames Reach will provide:

- Induction and other specialist training to enhance Board member skills

- 'Buddying' support during the induction period from an experienced Thames Reach board member
- Information on Thames Reach's objectives and services and on governance matters
- The opportunity to visit a range of Thames Reach projects and services
- Reimbursement of incidental expenses associated with attending meetings and events
- An agenda and papers circulated in advance of meetings
- Administrative assistance with, and advice about, matters associated with the role of Board member