Living On Bereavement Service
The Parish Room, Skibbs Lane, Chelsfield, Kent, BR6 7RH

Trustee – Chair

Purpose of the role

The Chair provides leadership to the Board of Trustees and works closely with the CEO to support the effective governance, strategic development and sustainable growth of Living On Bereavement Service.

The Chair will ensure that the Board operates effectively, provides appropriate challenge and support to the CEO, and remains focused on the charity's vision, mission, beneficiaries and long-term development.

The Chair will act as a trusted strategic partner to the CEO, while maintaining the appropriate distinction between governance and operational management.

The Chair will also play an important role in helping Living On develop its profile, partnerships, networks and future opportunities.

Key responsibilities

Leadership of the Board

The Chair will:

- Provide effective leadership to the Board of Trustees.
- Ensure the Board operates as an effective, supportive and appropriately challenging team.
- Work with trustees to ensure the Board has a clear focus on strategy, impact, governance and sustainability.
- Chair Board meetings effectively, ensuring all trustees have an opportunity to contribute.
- Encourage constructive discussion and healthy challenge.
- Ensure that Board decisions are clearly understood and appropriately followed through.
- Ensure that the Board maintains an appropriate balance between support, scrutiny and challenge.
- Work with trustees to ensure that the Board fulfils its collective legal and governance responsibilities.
- Support effective succession planning and development of the Board.
- Lead the annual review of Board effectiveness and trustee contribution.

Supporting and working with the CEO

The Chair will develop a strong and constructive working relationship with the CEO.

This will include:

- Providing support, encouragement and strategic challenge to the CEO.
- Acting as a sounding board for the CEO on strategic and organisational matters.
- Meeting regularly with the CEO outside formal Board meetings.
- Supporting the CEO in developing and delivering the charity's strategic priorities.
- Ensuring the CEO has appropriate support while also maintaining appropriate accountability.
- Working with the CEO to identify opportunities for organisational development and growth.

- Supporting the CEO through significant organisational change or challenge.
- Leading the CEO's annual appraisal and objectives process on behalf of the Board.
- Ensuring the Board has appropriate oversight of the CEO's performance and wellbeing.
- Ensuring there is a clear and constructive relationship between the Board and the CEO.

The Chair should not become involved in the day-to-day management of the charity, which remains the responsibility of the CEO and staff team.

Supporting the development and growth of Living On

The Chair will play an important role in helping Living On move forward into its next stage of development. This will include:

- Supporting the Board and CEO to deliver Living On's strategic vision.
- Helping the Board think creatively about the future development of the charity.
- Supporting sustainable organisational growth.
- Identifying opportunities for partnerships, collaboration and increased community reach.
- Using appropriate professional and community networks to open doors for Living On.
- Supporting the development of the charity's reputation and profile.
- Representing Living On at appropriate external events and meetings.
- Supporting the CEO and fundraising team in developing relationships with potential supporters, partners and funders where appropriate.
- Helping ensure that growth remains sustainable and consistent with Living On's values and purpose.
- Keeping the Board focused on the charity's long-term impact rather than solely its immediate operational needs.

Governance and accountability

The Chair will:

- Ensure the Board understands and fulfils its responsibilities as trustees.
- Work with the Trustee Secretary/Governance Trustee to maintain effective governance arrangements.
- Ensure conflicts of interest are appropriately managed.
- Support regular review of key policies and governance arrangements.
- Ensure appropriate oversight of risk, safeguarding, finance and organisational performance.
- Ensure that Board decisions are made in the best interests of Living On and its beneficiaries.
- Encourage trustees to understand and fulfil their individual responsibilities.
- Ensure that the Board receives appropriate information to make informed decisions.

The Chair will work closely with the Treasurer, Finance Trustee and other trustees to ensure that the Board has appropriate oversight of the charity's financial position and risks.

Board development and succession

The Chair will help Living On build a strong and effective Board for the future.

This will include:

- Identifying gaps in skills, experience and diversity.
- Supporting implementation of the Trustee Recruitment Strategy.
- Encouraging recruitment of trustees with complementary skills and experience.
- Supporting effective induction of new trustees.
- Encouraging ongoing trustee development and training.
- Supporting succession planning for key Board roles.
- Promoting a Board culture that welcomes different perspectives and constructive challenge.
- Ensuring the Board remains representative of, and connected to, the communities Living On serves.

External representation

The Chair may act as an ambassador for Living On, alongside the CEO, where appropriate.

This may include:

- Representing the charity at external meetings and events.
- Developing relationships with community, statutory, professional and voluntary sector organisations.
- Supporting relationships with funders, donors and corporate partners.
- Helping raise the profile of childhood bereavement and Living On's work.
- Using professional and community networks to create opportunities for the charity.

The Chair will work closely with the CEO to ensure that external representation is coordinated and consistent.

Working relationships

The Chair will work closely with:

CEO
Providing strategic support, challenge, encouragement and accountability.

Trustees
Providing Board leadership and ensuring effective collective governance.

Treasurer
Supporting appropriate oversight of financial management and financial risks.

Finance Trustee
Working together to ensure the Board has appropriate strategic financial oversight.

Trustee Secretary/Governance Trustee
Supporting effective Board administration, governance and compliance.

Staff team
Maintaining appropriate relationships while respecting the CEO's responsibility for operational management.

Essential skills and experience

We are looking for someone with:

- Senior leadership experience.
- Experience of leading or chairing a Board, committee or organisation.
- Strong strategic thinking and decision-making skills.
- Ability to lead a diverse group of people effectively.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to provide constructive challenge while maintaining positive relationships.
- Experience of supporting senior leaders.
- Understanding of good governance.
- Ability to think strategically about organisational growth and development.
- Confidence representing an organisation externally.
- Ability to build strong relationships and networks.

Desirable

- Previous charity trustee or Board experience.
- CEO, Director, Managing Director or equivalent senior leadership experience.
- Experience of organisational growth or transformation.
- Experience of fundraising, partnerships or business development.
- Experience of working within the voluntary, community or public sector.
- Understanding of childhood bereavement or related services.

Personal qualities

We are looking for someone who is:

- Collaborative and approachable.
- Strategic and forward-thinking.
- A good listener.
- Comfortable providing constructive challenge.
- Able to bring people together.
- Calm and considered when dealing with difficult situations.
- Passionate about improving outcomes for bereaved children, young people and families.
- Committed to Living On's values and mission.
- Able to maintain appropriate boundaries between governance and operational management.
- Able to commit the time and energy required to lead the Board effectively.

Time commitment

Approximately 4–6 hours per month, including Board meetings, preparation and regular contact with the CEO.

Additional time may occasionally be required for significant strategic issues, organisational development, external meetings, fundraising opportunities or periods of organisational change.

What difference will you make?

The Chair will play a central role in shaping the next chapter of Living On.

By providing strong Board leadership, supporting and challenging the CEO, helping develop the charity's strategy and opening doors to new opportunities and partnerships, the Chair will help Living On build the foundations for sustainable growth.

Ultimately, the Chair will help ensure that Living On remains well governed, financially sustainable, ambitious and focused on reaching more bereaved children, young people and families.