

Volunteering for Civic Roles

Information for employers and employees



Acknowledgements

Business in the Community – mobilises business for good

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Volunteering for Civic Roles

Information for employers and employees

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Communities and Local Government Publications
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Online via the Communities and Local Government website: www.communities.gov.uk

75% recycled
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75% recycled paper

March 2010

Product code: 09 CES 06333

ISBN: 978-1-4098-2404-6

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Chapter 1 An Introduction to Civic Roles

Participation in civic roles is the backbone of our community. Across the country, thousands of people serve in a wide range of roles essential to the successful running of civil society. Some of these roles are well known – councillor, magistrate and school governor. However, many others, although no less essential to the accountability and effectiveness of institutions and services, are far less in the public eye and, as a result, far less understood.

This publication hopes to redress this balance a little. In particular, it hopes to encourage those in employment to consider serving in some of these lesser known board level roles – whether in the criminal justice system, in the housing sector or attached to local authorities. You will find a wide range of roles featured, ranging from housing association board members to members of courts boards, through to independent members of standard committees, who are charged with ensuring integrity in public life. All these roles are essential and rewarding and, crucially, often available close to home.

The second objective of this publication is no less important: to educate and encourage employers to allow their staff to volunteer for these important roles. More and more employers are appreciating the value of employee volunteering, both to their business, their staff and to the organisations with which the employees volunteer. Employee participation in board level civic roles can build skills and confidence and expose the employee to information and circumstances that can be helpful back in the business. In return, the organisation with whom the employee volunteers can benefit from the vast range of skills that exist in other sectors.

Towards the end of this publication, you will find two vital sections. The first highlights the need for trustees in the charity sector. According to the Charity Commission there are over 160,000 registered charities in the UK. Many of these will regularly need good reliable people, with a range of skills, to serve on their boards. Business people can be ideal in this respect. The second section aims to expose some of the many myths that exist about employees in civic roles, such as the time commitment required. Civic roles are rarely onerous and more often enjoyable and inspiring.

The success of civil society needs the backing of both employees and employers. We hope that this publication helps spread knowledge of the roles on offer and how people can get involved.

Chapter 2 Employee Volunteering: The Benefits

Employee volunteering is an effective and powerful way for businesses to invest in their people and communities and a vital element of any company's approach to corporate responsibility. Employee volunteering is a growing trend in the UK. An increasing number of employers support formal volunteering schemes, which give a specified amount of time off per year for employees to volunteer in a community setting. Other companies, particularly small and medium sized sector employers, informally free up time for employees to do their own volunteering.

Employee volunteering is not just for the corporate sector: all employers, including public sector organisations, can support their employees to act as volunteers. Size is also no barrier. Nearly all employers can support volunteering in some shape or form.

Employee volunteering provides direct benefits to the employee, employer and community or public sector organisation with which the volunteering takes place. Research and feedback demonstrates that employee volunteering:

- develops talent and skills and motivates employees
- demonstrates an employer's commitment to being an employer of choice
- is an effective way for employers to take action on social issues that have an impact upon their businesses
- builds networks through collaboration with other local employers; and
- brings corporate values to life, engaging employees, customers and suppliers.

Employee volunteers can give an hour, a day, a week or more. People can volunteer individually, with their colleagues, or participate in collaborative activities with other companies. As a culture of volunteering embeds within businesses, it tends to become more important that employers understand the benefits of volunteering back to their operations and that the skills developed are recognised through the appraisal process. This is just as true with civic roles. One size rarely fits all and an employee volunteering culture needs to be developed through a mutually supportive partnership between the employer, employee and receiver of the volunteers.

For more information on who to contact about employee volunteering, see page 25.

Did you know?

- Eighty-nine per cent of employee volunteers believe that their employment prospects had improved as a result of volunteering (CSV, March 2009)
- Thirty-six per cent of employees had employee volunteering schemes available to them (National Survey of Volunteering and Charitable Giving, 2007)
- Employees who are actively involved with community activities are 36 per cent more likely to recommend their employer to family or friends (Research International, 2007)
- Among managers and HR professionals, 76 per cent see volunteering as a personal development opportunity; 72 per cent as a tool to motivate staff; and 69 per cent as a way to develop new skills, experience and ideas (Roffey Park, 2006).

Chapter 3 Civic Roles

Board Members of Arms-Length Management Organisations

An Arms-Length Management Organisation (ALMO) is a company set up and wholly owned by a local authority to manage and improve all or part of its housing stock. ALMOs are responsible for day-to-day housing management, such as rent and service charge collection, repairs and maintenance and capital expenditure. They may also play a key role in broader regeneration and neighbourhood activities, including improving the local environment or supporting employment training schemes.

As not-for-profit companies, ALMOs are managed by a board of directors, comprising tenants, local authority nominees and independent members, many of whom are often drawn from the world of business. The board director role is crucial. As with any limited company, directors are responsible for the financial management of the organisation, set the strategic direction, scrutinise performance and appoint and appraise the ALMO's chief executive. Independent members are usually selected for relevant skills, which may include financial and performance management skills, customer relations or human resource experience.

Board members typically spend three hours per month attending meetings and receive remuneration at the discretion of the individual ALMO, plus out-of-pocket expenses. Most ALMOs provide an induction and ongoing training. Meetings tend to be in the evening, although there may be some daytime workshops and away days.

For more information on becoming an ALMO board member contact the National Federation of ALMOs at www.almos.gov.uk or contact your local ALMO direct or via your local authority.

Andrew Feldhaus, Stockbroker, Park Square Stockbrokers

Andrew Feldhaus first volunteered as an independent board member of the Aire Valley ALMO in Leeds, as a way of serving the local community, while developing his skills. Applying his knowledge and professional skills in the ALMO board meetings and on sub-committees has required adapting to a different working style and structure, which has helped broaden his perspective and provided additional insight into the day-to-day challenges faced by employees. This contrast with his day job has made his contribution all the more satisfying.

'Our business board members are invaluable. They bring a commercial approach to strategic decision making and have a strong focus on value for money and customer satisfaction which complements the skills of the tenants and councillors. In addition, our independent board members have brought a culture of 'can do' and a drive to implement changes quickly. As a company wholly owned by the council, independents have been able to challenge the council in a constructive manner which, due to their position, the council has responded to positively.'

Gail Teasdale, Head of Corporate Services, Aire Valley Homes, Leeds

Housing Association Board Members

Housing Associations are independent, not-for-profit, social businesses set up to provide affordable homes for people in housing need. Housing Associations that are registered with the Tenant Services Authority (the regulator of social housing in England) are known as Registered Providers of Social Housing. TSA's role is to ensure that Registered Providers provide decent homes and services to tenants. Housing Associations currently provide around half of all social housing in England.

Housing Associations are run by management boards, typically comprising local authority nominees, tenant and leaseholder representatives and members of the public. Boards are responsible for financial management, business planning, selection of senior staff and fulfilment of commitments to tenants. Housing Associations are responsible for housing management, including rent and service charge collection, maintenance and repairs, etc, while some also develop new homes for rent and sale. In addition, many Housing Associations provide a range of neighbourhood services, such as employment training schemes, credit unions, community centres and food co-operatives.

Board members typically spend five hours per month attending meetings and receive remuneration at the discretion of the individual association's board, in addition to out of pocket expenses. No formal qualifications are required; however, independent board members with financial and property backgrounds are often highly sought after. Board meetings tend to be in the evening, although day time sessions can occur. Induction and training is usually offered.

For more information on Housing Association board governance see the National Housing Federation website – www.housing.org.uk. Many associations advertise directly for board members in the press and through their websites.

Chris Newton, Facilities Management Director, Lloyds TSB

Chris Newton first volunteered as an independent board member for the Three Rivers Housing Association in Durham. At the suggestion of his previous manager, Chris had been looking for a way to develop his skills outside of his organisation and felt board level volunteering would be a way to broaden his knowledge and perspective. He was particularly attracted to Three Rivers because of its community base. Adapting to a different working structure and pace has been a challenge, but an experience that he has found wholly beneficial. Chris strongly believes that independent members can be a valuable asset to housing association boards both in terms of the challenge and the skills that they bring and would encourage other business people to get involved.

'The boards purposely seek private sector members because of the skills and experience, including the external network that they bring. The challenge provided by a business member is always welcome and ensures that we consider all issues from a commercial perspective and ask ourselves how we can become more efficient, understand our customers better and respond to market opportunities and the external operating environment.'

Michael Axe, Finance Director, Three Rivers Housing, North East

Tenant Management Organisation Board Members

A Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) is an organisation of council or housing association tenants and leaseholders that takes on collective management responsibility for their housing estates. The TMO usually elects a tenant-led management board, made up of a combination of independent and tenant members, to oversee the running of the organisation.

The services managed by a TMO vary with local circumstances, but may include day-to-day repairs, allocations and lettings, tenancy management, cleaning, caretaking and rent collection. TMOs enter into a management agreement with their landlord and are paid an annual management fee and maintenance allowance to carry out the duties delegated to them. TMOs tend to have a close relationship with their tenants and provide a good level of service.

Independent members spend an average of ten hours per month attending meetings to monitor how well the TMO is doing, agreeing plans for the future and deciding on policies. Board members are also involved in committees, sub-committees, working groups and panels. Volunteers do not receive remuneration; however, they may claim for any travel and childcare expenses. Although specific skills may not be requested, independent members are often former residents or other people with an interest in the housing estate. Training is likely to be provided to ensure TMO members are fully effective and knowledgeable on relevant legislation.

For more information contact the National Federation of Tenant Management Organisations at: www.nftmo.com

Selena Ellis, Business Analyst, MTV Network Europe

Selena Ellis initially volunteered for the Blenheim Gardens TMO board (Lambeth, South London) as a resident, but has remained on the board despite moving, as she finds it interesting and enjoys being involved. She has found the experience eye-opening and feels the training she has received as a result of her role has been a significant addition to her CV. The communication skills she has acquired have been beneficial in her day-to-day work, in addition to giving her a personal sense of achievement. Selena would encourage others to get involved in a similar organisation and support their community in tackling local issues.

'Many Tenant Management Organisations have the benefit of independent board members co-opted from the local business and voluntary sectors. Their support can add valuable skills and knowledge to complement the experience of the tenant board members. In return, independent board members get the satisfaction of being involved in grass roots organisations that are working hard to improve the quality of life for local people.'

**Terry Edis MBE,
Chair of National Federation of Tenant Management Organisations**

Co-opted Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members

Overview and scrutiny is a process through which a local council looks at its own performance, and that of other public sector services, to check how well they are doing. Overview and scrutiny committees review decisions and actions of the council and make recommendations for improvements. Typically scrutiny committees will cover major services areas such as finance, housing, education, social services, environmental management and health.

Typically co-opted members of overview and scrutiny committees tend to live or work in the local authority area and have relevant skills and experience, such as performance or financial management, problem solving or analytical skills. Members tend to spend an average of three hours per month attending committee meetings and working on task force groups focused on specific issues, such as road safety, school standards or housing management.

Co-opted members tend to spend an average of three hours per month attending one evening committee meeting, plus time preparing for meetings. Volunteers do not receive remuneration, although they might be paid an allowance to cover travel costs and other out-of-pocket expenses like childcare. Training on the scrutiny process and relevant legislation is usually provided.

James Page, Operations Manager, Joju

James Page began volunteering as a co-opted member of the Richmond upon Thames Environment and Sustainability Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a result of his interest in local planning policy and environmental standards in his community. As the Operations Manager of a small business making solar panels, James feels strongly that his position on the committee has given the opportunity to contribute his skills and knowledge in a vital policy area through allowing him a greater input to local decision making. James has found the experience rewarding and intellectually challenging.

Independent Members of Standards Committees

Standards committees promote and maintain high standards of conduct in elected authorities, such as local councils or regional assemblies such as the Greater London Authority. Standards committees are responsible for arrangements related to the authority's Code of Conduct, which sets standards of behaviour for all elected members of that authority. Standards committees will give advice on the adoption of a Code, are responsible for monitoring its effectiveness and will ensure that training takes place for everybody who needs it. If there are complaints against members of the authority, it is the standards committee that reviews the complaint and, if necessary, will conduct hearings. Finally, it is the standards committee that has the power to grant dispensations to authority members with prejudicial interests that might otherwise restrict them from participating in the authority's business, plus grant exemptions for politically restricted posts.

At least 25 per cent of standard committee members must be independent in order to send a clear signal to the public that the work of the standards committee is fair and impartial. There are no formal qualifications for standards committee members, although applicants are immediately disqualified if they have been a member or employee of that authority in the last five years, are a relative or close friend of a current member or employee or are a serving member or employee of another relevant authority.

Successful standards committee members will have integrity, objectivity, impartiality and decision making skills. Members tend to spend an average of two to five days per year at meetings and panel hearings assessing complaints (with four meetings per year being average). Volunteers do not receive remuneration; however independent members should either receive an attendance allowance or be able to claim for financial loss, travel and subsistence.

Lucy Dennett, Head of Regulatory Affairs and Compliance, BT

Encouraged by the strong corporate responsibility ethos at BT, Lucy decided to volunteer as an independent member for the Greater London Authority Standards Committee. Having started her career in the public sector, Lucy retains a strong interest in public sector governance and wanted to contribute in a meaningful way at a senior level. Lucy believes that the need to prove her competence within the committee setting, without the usual security of her job title conveying her abilities as it does within the private sector, increased her confidence, while the exposure to alternative management perspectives has benefited her work with BT. Lucy would recommend the role to others looking to develop their skills and expand their career options, but warns that potential volunteers should expect a very formal interview process in order to avoid all appearance of favouritism. This is not a reflection on an individual's performance!

'We see board-level volunteering as a great opportunity for our talent to develop a breadth of experience and skills that are also highly relevant within the workplace.'

Katherine Thomas, Group Talent Director, BT

Youth Offender Panel Members

Most 10 to 17 year olds who plead guilty in Court to a first-time offence receive a referral order and must attend a Youth Offender Panel meeting, which is based on a restorative justice approach, unless the charge is serious enough to warrant custody. The Panel must consist of two volunteers, plus one member of the local Youth Offending Team. The volunteers might be from the local community or from business. One of the community panel members will chair the meeting and they will take the lead in challenging the young person to take responsibility for their actions and to help them change their behaviour. The Panel meets with the young person with the aim of agreeing a tailor made contract aimed at putting things right and a programme of behaviour for the young person to follow.

Panel members need to be good listeners. As well as listening to the young people themselves, members will often interact with parents and guardians, social workers, teachers and magistrates. The victim of the crime may also be encouraged to attend the meeting to describe how the crime affected them.

Volunteer Youth Offender Panel members spend on average ten hours per month preparing for and sitting on Panel meetings. Volunteers do not receive remuneration; however, travel and childcare is reimbursed. No formal qualifications are required, other than being over 18, and Panel members are offered an induction and regular training. Volunteers from business are very much welcomed and Panel meetings can often be arranged around members' diaries.

For more information on becoming a Youth Offender Panel member visit:
www.yjb.gov.uk

Angelique Weatherby, Furnishing Adviser, John Lewis Partnership Panel Member, Norfolk Youth Offending Team

Angelique volunteers as a Panel member for the Norfolk Youth Offending Team, as well as sitting on the Team's proactive Prevention Against Crime Taskforce – an initiative aimed at teaching school children to make good decisions and take responsibility for their actions. Angelique feels strongly that young people respond well to guidance and deserve the support that Panel members can offer. She believes that Panel Members must be open-minded and impartial as each case must be dealt with individually. Angelique has enjoyed learning more about the justice system and believes that being a Panel Member has enhanced her communication skills.

'Norfolk Youth Offending Team benefits greatly from having business volunteers as part of the team, as they bring a wealth of personal and professional skills from the private sector and provide an empathetic, realistic sounding board for the young people we work with. Business volunteers often make innovative and imaginative suggestions for reparative actions and their diligence and commitment give the team a boost.'

Jo Church, County Volunteer Coordinator, Norfolk Youth Offending Team

'Encouraging partners to volunteer in the community is a key part of our trading principles and offering community support is integral to how we behave as a business. It adds to the fulfilment of our partners, as well as increasing confidence and self esteem. It allows the opportunity to improve skills and learn new ones and to gain new experiences and pass on previous ones.'

Alison Rowland, Community Liaison Coordinator, John Lewis Norwich

Lay Advisers Assisting Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) bring together the police, probation and Prison Services to manage the risk posed by specified sexual and violent offenders. Each of the MAPPA Strategic Management Boards has two Lay Advisers, who operate as full members of the board and relevant sub-groups.

Lay Advisers are not expected to become experts; their value is as 'critical friends' – informed observers able to raise issues relevant to the public. While no specific qualifications are required, there is a formal interview and an enhanced criminal records check, necessary due to the sensitive nature of the material addressed by the board. Volunteers routinely interact with senior police, prison and probation officers, plus an array of organisations that collaborate with MAPPA in the interest of public welfare.

Lay Advisers spend an average of eight hours per month preparing for and attending Strategic Management Board meetings. Volunteers do not receive remuneration, although they may claim travel expenses. Training is available and Lay Advisers often attend conferences and external meetings to help build an understanding of how the system operates.

Wendy Smith, Special Educational Needs Teacher

Wendy Smith became involved with Nottinghamshire MAPPA as a result of her interest in policing and a desire to volunteer in her community. She believes that her engagement with the probation and police service at a senior level has enhanced her confidence. The serious nature of the cases she reviews has challenged her analytical skills and enabled her to learn more about judicial processes. Wendy feels that Lay Advisers play an invaluable role within MAPPA, bringing the voice of the public to an extremely important process.

'We need the Lay Advisers as our 'critical friends', to provide fresh eyes to the public protection arena and represent a more victim-oriented angle and the community's perspective.'

Ian Williams, MAPPA Policy & Strategy Officer, Nottinghamshire MAPPA

Statutory Appointees

Courts Board Members

Courts Boards work in partnership with Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) to achieve effective and efficient administration of the courts. Courts Boards do not manage or administer the courts themselves, but give advice about how to improve the service they provide to the local area.

The role of a Courts Board member is to scrutinise, review and make recommendations about the way in which local courts are being run. Courts Boards are made up of no more than 12 members, consisting of at least one Judge, at least two Magistrates, at least two people who can represent the local community and at least two people with knowledge or experience of the courts in the local area.

Courts Board members need to be able to commit nine days per year to their duties, which includes preparation and attendance at meetings, undertaking training and familiarisation including visiting local courts, for which they are paid £1,500 a year. Courts Boards Chairs are paid £2,000 a year and are asked to commit 11 days a year.

Gill Pyatt, Head Teacher, Barnwood Park Arts College

Gill Pyatt began working with the Avon & Somerset, Devon & Cornwall and Gloucestershire Courts Board in response to the Board's request that members of the community get involved. Although new in the role Gill has found the experience interesting and eye opening. As a Head Teacher of Barnwood Park Arts College she believes her knowledge about the court system may be potentially useful in her day-to-day work by boosting her understanding of both governance and the judicial system. Gill describes the cross-fertilisation of ideas that occurs during board meetings as essential for continued improvement and an opportunity for all involved to learn new approaches to solving issues. She is looking forward to exploring the role further and would encourage others to take up similar roles.

'Courts Board members from a business background tend to be more aware of current issues and pressures and they bring their current experience and knowledge of problem solving in their respective area of business, which can sometimes provide a different approach.'

David Gentry, Area Director
for Avon & Somerset, Devon & Cornwall and Gloucestershire

Probation Trust Board Members

Probation Trust Boards are the decision making bodies that manage the staff and resources of Probation Trusts in England and Wales. The Probation Service in England and Wales is a law enforcement agency delivering community sentences, supervising and working with offenders within the terms set by the courts or on their release from prison. It works with offenders to reduce their re-offending and protect the public. Probation Trust Boards set the strategic direction for each Trust, within the policy and resources framework determined by the Secretary of State, and have a duty to monitor and assess each Trust's performance against an annual plan and budget. Each Probation Board also establishes a statutory audit committee to review the financial management and integrity of the Board.

Board members spend up to five days a month on Board business, with the option to increase their involvement through participation in additional committees. Board members are paid a standard hourly rate to cover time spent on Board business, plus out of pocket expenses. Although there are no specific skills required, independent members with private sector experience and a range of business skills, such as financial management, are often particularly valued. All members typically receive an induction pack before commencing Board business.

Donna Pumfrey, Public Policy Executive, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Donna Pumfrey serves as an independent board member with the Northamptonshire Board. She had found applying her skills in a different environment challenging and has learned that it is not always possible to assume that a private sector solution will transfer into a public sector setting. Donna believes that serving as a board member has enhanced her analytical skills and ability to think around problems, skills that have been beneficial to her back in the workplace. The experience has provided Donna with a greater understanding of the probation service and the issues they face, as well as the overall police and prison management systems.

'We believe that our employees who serve at board level bring significant value back to our business. Undertaking this civic role is a rewarding and inspiring experience that develops and enhances valuable skills which can then also be applied in employees' day-to-day work.'

**Jonathan Moulds, president, Europe, the Middle East and Africa,
Bank of America Merrill Lynch**

Chapter 4: Board Level Volunteering in the Third Sector

Charity Trustees

There are over 160,000 charities in the UK, many of which regularly seek board level volunteers. Charities range from the large and international in focus, to small groups working at local level to deliver community projects.

All charities are set up to benefit society. They enjoy some tax advantages and, while in certain circumstances they can trade for profit, they must use that profit for the purposes of the charity. To qualify as a charity, an organisation has to demonstrate that its overall purpose is for public benefit.

Charity trustees (also known as directors, board members, governors or committee members) are the people who serve as volunteers on the governing body of a charity. They are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the charity. It is an important role, with trustees accepting ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity, ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivers the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up. Specific duties of trustees include ensuring that the charity complies with charity law, acts with integrity at all times, and avoids unnecessary financial risks with the charity's funding.

Almost anyone can be a trustee unless they are an undischarged bankrupt or have an unspent conviction. First and foremost, trustees should have an affinity with the cause of the charity. However, a wide range of skills are in demand, with many charities specifically welcoming business people with financial management and business planning skills. Human resource, media and other professional skills are also highly prized. In some cases, trustees act as ambassadors for the charity, with the chair in particular acting as a public face.

Charity trustees tend to spend three to five days per year on board duties, comprising regular board/committee meetings, relevant sub committees, plus meetings with external stakeholders. Chairs of boards often spend more time on their charity duties. Few trustee positions receive remuneration, although out-of-pocket expenses may be paid. The level of training will vary from charity to charity, dependent on the resources of individual charities. However, this can be augmented by training sessions and materials produced by national organisations such as Volunteering England, the Charity Trustee Network and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

Information on board level volunteering opportunities can be sought from a variety of places, including through local volunteer centres and the Volunteering England website: www.volunteering.org.uk

Potential trustees should learn as much as they can about the charity prior to volunteering, including through reading annual reports and speaking to existing trustees and staff.

Jeffrey Ng, Information & Operations Director, Beachcroft LLP

Jeffrey Ng initially started as a volunteer offering his skills to various organisations through the Reach Skilled Volunteers' brokerage service, but was soon asked to join the Reach Board of Trustees to support them in a more strategic way. He decided to get involved in the third sector because he wanted to support smaller charities in their struggle to alleviate social issues using the knowledge and skills that he had developed working in commercially successful firms for over 30 years. Jeffrey describes the experience as mutually beneficial. Jeffrey feels that his skills have helped the charity; while he has learned how organisations succeed with little resource – a skill he believes is helpful in times of economic downturn. Jeffrey feels that volunteering as a trustee is a great way for employees to step out of their comfort zone and develop skills through practical experience. Jeffrey encourages anyone to get involved with a charity as their trustee, especially when the cause is one they are passionate about.

'We strongly encourage our senior lawyers to join third sector boards. It encourages strategic thinking and develops skills which are an asset both when advising clients and within our own business.'

A J Cherry, Partner, Beachcroft LLP

Chapter 5 Myth Buster

For employers

I can't allow my employees to volunteer for these roles – the time commitment will be too great.

The time commitment for civic roles can be as little as three hours per month. Many of the organisations featured in this publication hold meetings in the evening and meetings during the day will be the exception rather than the rule. In any case, the inconvenience of employee time lost at work will be amply counterbalanced by the skills developed by employees and brought back into the company.

What's the benefit going to be for me? Surely this is completely irrelevant to my business.

Board level volunteering develops a range of high level skills, including knowledge of governance procedures, financial and performance management scrutiny skills, team working and relationship management skills. This is in addition to the development of direct subject knowledge about the sector in which the employee is volunteering. Evidence from companies with embedded employee volunteering policies also shows that employee volunteering increases motivation and loyalty to the employer.

Why do some organisations charge fees to find volunteering opportunities for my employees?

Matching employees with the right type of volunteering opportunities is not a cost free process. Brokerage organisations spend time working with employers, employees and volunteer receiving organisations to gauge the needs of both sides and ensure that the experience delivers mutual benefit to all involved. Brokerage organisations often deliver training, advise on or arrange any CRB checks of employees and support employers in developing employee volunteering policies. In addition, such intermediaries campaign to increase the number of volunteers overall. However, many brokerage organisations will not charge for signposting employees to civic roles.

I'm a public sector employer. Surely employee volunteering is just for the private sector?

An increasing number of public sector agencies are encouraging their staff to volunteer. This is likely to increase in the future. The development of board level skills and the evidence of increased employee morale as a result of employer supported volunteering is applicable regardless of sector.

For employees

I'm so busy at work, I simply can't get involved.

Only individual employees can judge whether employee volunteering is right for them. However, do bear in mind that an increasing number of employers value the skills developed through board level volunteering and will happily accommodate the limited time off that some civic roles require. Also bear in mind that many civic roles require more attendance in the evening than during the day.

My line manager won't support me if I volunteer for a civic role.

Many employers are already supporting employees to serve in a wide range of civic roles. It may well be that line managers are serving in a similar role already. Employee volunteering is an increasing trend in the UK. An increasing number of employers operate official time off policies for employee volunteering; with a far higher number operating unofficial policies that happily accommodate employees serving in this sort of role.

I have no experience of the charity/justice/housing/local authority sector. What can I bring to the table?

Almost all boards need a wide range of skills in order for their work to be effective. Typically these include financial and performance management skills, human resource, media and other professional skills – these usually do not need to be sector specific. Most boards say that they benefit from a diversity of experience and that a commitment to the cause or service provided by the organisation is the most important factor.

Where can I find out about what my responsibilities are as a charity trustee?

The Charity Commission publishes a useful document called *'The essential trustee: What you need to know'* which provides information about the main responsibilities of charity trustees. It is available on the Commission's website at the following link:
www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc3.asp

Chapter 6 Sources of Further Information

Employee volunteering

Business in the Community:	www.bitc.org.uk
Volunteering England:	www.volunteering.org.uk
Community Service Volunteers:	www.csv.org.uk
CIPD Non-executive directors' resource:	www.cipd.co.uk/nedresource
TUC Education:	www.tuc.org.uk www.unionlearn.org.uk
Getting on Board	www.gettingonboard.org

Probation Trust Boards

Probation Boards Association:	www.probationassociation.co.uk
National Probation Service:	www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk
What Can I Do?:	www.ccjf.org/whatcanido/probation.html

Court Boards

Her Majesty's Courts Service:	www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk
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Youth Offender Panel members

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales:	www.yjb.gov.uk
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Lay Advisers assisting Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

National Probation Service: click on the link for the MAPPA Annual Report for your area:	http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page30.asp
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Co-opted overview and scrutiny committee members

The Centre for Public Scrutiny: www.cfps.org.uk

Board members of Registered Social Landlords

The National Housing Federation: www.housing.org.uk

Tenant Management Organisation Boards

National Federation of
Tenant Management Organisations: www.nftmo.com

Arms-Length Management Organisation Boards

National Federation of ALMOs: www.almos.org.uk

Independent Members of Standards Committees

Standards for England: www.standardsforengland.gov.uk

Association of Independent Members
of Standards Committees in England: www.aimsce.org.uk

Third Sector

National Council for Voluntary Organisations: www.ncvo.org.uk

Volunteering England: www.volunteering.org.uk

Timebank: www.timebank.org.uk

Charity Trustee Network (CTN): www.trusteenet.org.uk

Do-it: www.do-it.org.uk

Reach: www.reachskills.org.uk

Charity Commission: www.charitycommission.gov.uk

ISBN: 978-1-4098-2404-6

