

## Guidance on standing for Board of Trustees 2020-2021

### Introduction

PEC Trust is registered as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee; this makes it a corporate body. Accordingly, its Board of Trustees are considered to have the same level of responsibilities as Trustees and Directors of other corporate bodies such as companies.

PEC abides by its charitable aims and objectives governed by both Companies House and the Charity Commission.

### Composition of the Board of Trustees

The Board of PEC Trust is comprised of up to twelve Trustees:

- One appointed place from Plymouth City Council,
- Up to six Trustees elected by and from PEC Trust membership,
- Up to four professional external Trustees co-opted at the Board's discretion,
- Appointed as Trustee ex officio the holder of the office of Chief Executive (optional).

Every year one third of the elected Trustees shall retire from office. Retiring Trustees are eligible for re-appointment.

Trustees co-opted for their particular skills and/or experience need not be Members and shall serve a fixed period determined by the Board of Trustees at the time of co-option, subject to review at least every 12 months. The number of co-opted individuals must at no time comprise more than one third of the Board. Casual vacancies may also be filled by co-option; individuals co-opted for this purpose must be Members of the Trust and will hold office as a Trustee until the next annual general meeting.

### Experience and qualifications

Collectively the Board aims to reflect the values, principles, interests and background of the wider membership.

### What is involved in serving on the Board of Trustees?

The Board meet quarterly during the year. Along with attending board meetings, members are expected to contribute additional voluntary effort, such as reading papers and reports sent to them and responding as necessary. Additional involvement may include representing PEC at events. Most Board members also take on other roles, usually by serving on one or more sub-committees concerned with specific areas of activity. Meetings will be held at a central location in Plymouth and usually on Thursday mornings. If you decide to stand you should be prepared to make a significant contribution to PEC. Trustees will be fully supported in their role.

In addition, Trustees liaise and engage via email, being able to communicate electronically is an important part of being a Trustee – papers and meeting arrangements are made by email. If this is inaccessible to you, please contact us to discuss an alternative.

### What are the responsibilities of the Trustees?

As the Board is representative in nature, whilst it is important the Trustees are aware of their responsibilities under the law and in relation to good corporate governance, the Board's focus in the main is to lead the strategic thinking and focus of the organisation.

Members of the Board are expected to demonstrate;

### **Duty of care**

Trustees have a duty of care, which includes:

- Ensuring they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the business and clear about the charity's aims and ensures these are being delivered effectively and sustainably,
- Ensuring decision making processes are informed, rigorous and timely,
- Demonstrating integrity, adopting values and creating a culture which help deliver the organisation's charitable purposes,
- Understanding the principal risks faced by the business,
- Seeking professional advice when appropriate ,
- Delegation of functions when appropriate and supervision of these.

### **Due diligence**

Trustees are in charge of the organisation's affairs and are fully liable in law. Ignorance is no protection under the law. They must always act with due diligence and will hold greater responsibilities on matters in which they are professionally qualified or experienced.

### **Confidentiality**

Trustees are in a position of trust both for the Board and the organisation as a whole. They act as trustees and agents for the organisation and its members, and must not disclose confidential matters.

### **Expenses**

As a charitable organisation, it is not our policy to pay expenses to attend Board meetings. This can be reconsidered in exceptional circumstances if the cost of attendance at meetings is a significant barrier to an elected or co-opted board member being able to support the organisation. Reasonable expenses of Trustees will be considered if undertaking additional engagement activities.

### **More information**

If you would like more information or would like to speak to a current member of the Board of Trustees, please contact [support@plymouthenergycommunity.com](mailto:support@plymouthenergycommunity.com) or phone 01752 477 117.