



# Chair/Vice Chair Candidate Information

**March 2022**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to the role	2
What we're looking for	3
Person Specification	7
Who we are	8
Still interested? Next steps ...	11

## **Introduction statement about the positions**

A great opportunity has arisen for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair of Trustees of the Stoke-on-Trent and District Gingerbread Centre Ltd. You would be joining a committed team of Trustees who want to support the charity in its next phase of development. As Chair, the Trustees would look to you for your vision and leadership in taking the Gingerbread Centre forward and as Vice Chair you would act in a supporting role to the Chair in this mission. You would be joining us at an exciting time as we are in the process of moving the charity forward, growing and diversifying our services to help more vulnerable families.

As the Chair you would be responsible for leading the Board of Trustees who will collectively ensure the development and good governance of the charity. As Vice Chair, you will be a Trustee, and will also be required to assist the Chair in their role and stand in for the Chair at Board meetings and other external events when required. These roles are pivotal in developing a strong link between the Trustees and the staff working at the Gingerbread Centre, the roles will involve you being an advocate for the charity and you will represent the charity externally as required and in collaboration with staff at the Gingerbread Centre.

These are highly rewarding positions which will allow you to use your skills and expertise to make a difference and help in taking the Gingerbread Centre forward into the future. We hope you will consider applying and we look forward to working with you and supporting you in these roles.

Best wishes

**Trustees**

# What we're looking for

## Role Description – Chair/Vice-Chair

### Key Responsibilities:

- To provide leadership to the Board and to ensure that Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity.
- To support and manage the performance of the Chief Executive and to ensure that the Board as a whole, works in partnership with executive staff.

### Duties and Tasks

**1 To provide leadership to the Board and to ensure that Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity.**

#### **1.1 To guard the long-term future of the charity by ensuring that:**

- The board sets the mission, vision, strategy, and high-level policies for the charity within the powers and restrictions in its charitable objects and governing instruments
- The board takes steps to monitor the performance of the charity and to ensure that the charity satisfies all regulatory and legal compliance requirements
- Major risks to which the charity is exposed and reviewed regularly, and systems are established to mitigate these risks without the charity becoming totally risk-averse
- The charity has a satisfactory system for holding in trust for the beneficiaries' monies, properties and other assets and ensure the monies are invested to the maximum benefit of the charity, within the constraints of the law and ethical and other policies laid down by the board
- The charity's financial dealings are systematically accounted for, audited and publicly available

- Internal controls and systems (both financial and non-financial) are audited and reviewed regularly
- The board and the charity are fair and open to all sections of the community in all the charity's activities
- The board and the charity hear the voices and views of key stakeholders, especially beneficiaries

**1.2 To ensure the highest possible standards of governance by ensuring that:**

- The charity has governance structure that is appropriate to a charity of its size/complexity, stage of development, and its charitable objects and that these structures and the governing instruments are reviewed regularly
- The board, delegates sufficient authority to its committees, the chair, the chief executive and others to enable the business of the charity to be carried out effectively between meetings of the board
- The boards delegated authority is recorded in writing by means of terms of reference for board committees, role descriptions for honorary officers and for key staff, etc.; and, the board monitors use of these delegated powers
- The board has on it the skills it requires to govern the charity well and these skills are utilized, and that the board has access to relevant external professional advice and expertise
- There is a systematic, open and fair procedure for the recruitment and co-option of trustees, future chairs of the board and future chief executives
- All members of the board receive appropriate induction, advice, information and training (both individual and collective)
- Trustees act reasonably, always act in the interests of the charity and comply with the charity's' code of conduct for the business
- The board of trustees regularly reviews its performance

**1.3 To ensure the proper and efficient conduct of board meetings by:**

- Chairing trustee meeting effectively, seeking consensus, balancing the need for full debate on key questions with the expeditious dispatch of business so as to reach clear and agreed decisions as swiftly as possible
- Encouraging all trustees to participate and to feel free to challenge constructively both the chair and the chief executive
- Taking an active role ensuring that board agendas are meaningful and reflect the key responsibilities of trustees

- Ensuring that the chief executive and his/her staff provide the board with relevant, timely, accurate information in order to allow the board to discharge its responsibilities. This should include alerting the board to major risks, informing the board of current and future key issues, including significant trends, and informing the board about external changes which may have impact on the charity
- Ensuring that board decisions are made in the best, long term interests of the charity and that the board takes collective ownership of these decisions
- Ensuring that decisions taken at meetings of the board are implemented
- Ensuring that there is an annual program of board and committee meetings, carefully structured agendas and high-quality briefing papers providing timely information and concentrating on governance

## **2. To support, and manage the performance of the chief executive and to ensure that the board as a whole works in partnership with executive staff**

### **2.1 To support the chief executive by:**

- Ensuring there are clear and open processes for the recruitment (and if necessary, dismissal) of the chief executive, and for setting and reviewing the remuneration package of the chief executive
- Ensuring that the board focuses on its governance role and does not slip incrementally, or otherwise, into the management role
- Arranging regular, but not over-frequent, meetings with the chief executive and by developing a very professional relationship with the chief executive within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges
- Providing leadership to the chief executive and to ensure the charity is run in accordance with the decisions of the board and the charity's governing documents and that there is clarity about the charity's objectives at all levels
- Supervising the chief executive on behalf of the board (unless arrangements are made), always remembering that the chief executive is responsible to the board as a whole and not to any one individual trustee or sub-group of trustees
- Ensuring the chief executive's performance is reviewed regularly
- Ensuring the chief executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support
- In partnership with the chief executive, to agree respective roles in representing the charity and acting as spokesperson

### **2.2 To make sure that the board understands and fulfils its responsibility to hold the chief executive and the executive team to account ensuring that:**

- When necessary, the chair and trustees challenge the chief executive constructively and only in the best interests of the charity and its 'critical friends'
- The chief executive is clear about the key performance indicators by which he/she will be held accountable
- The chief executive understands his/her crucial responsibility to provide relevant, honest, timely, high-quality information and advice to the board of trustees
- There are appropriate mechanisms, both internal and external, to verify that the board receives a balanced and honest picture of how the charity is doing

### **2.3 To ensure the board works in partnership with management by:**

- Ensuring through the chief executive, that the staff understands the role of the board and that the chief executive provides an effective link between the board and the staff
- Ensuring that staff are aware of the board's appreciation of their success and hard work
- Ensuring, that through the chief executive, a performance evaluation process is in place for everyone in the organisation and that the charity invests in the development of staff
- Ensuring that whenever practicable, trustees visit various parts of the charity, attend a few events organised by the charity and have informal opportunities to meet the senior management team, staff and end users

## Person Specification – Chair/Vice-Chair

**Education/Qualifications** Preferred educated to degree level (or equivalent)

**Experience:**

- Experience of chairing meetings at a strategic leadership level

**Skills and Abilities:**

- Ability to articulate a clear vision for the future of the organisation and establish a high-performance culture
- Ability to steer the direction of the organisation and the Board of Trustees
- Personal commitment to the development of the Charity and its objectives
- Strong communication skills and ability to work with a wide range of people, instilling trust and confidence
- Ability to oversee the governance of the organisation including ensuring that the financial and legal requirements are met

## Additional Information

**Time commitment:** We require a monthly commitment to support the CEO. There will occasionally be some evening and weekend meetings/events.

**Board Meetings:** Held quarterly, either online or in person.

**AGM:** Held annually, either online or in person

## Who are we?

The Gingerbread Centre is a warm, friendly charity based in Stoke-on-Trent that works closely with the families we support.

The Centre was established in 1977 in Stoke-on-Trent, providing 24 hour supported accommodation for homeless lone parent families from across North Staffordshire. In 2014, we extended our service to include couples with children.

We also work with partners across Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire to provide floating support to families in the community at risk of homelessness. The families we accommodate include:

We provide short-term accommodation, personal development, training, advice and encouragement, so families can regain their independence and see the benefits of this support on a daily basis. Our work impacts on parents and children - crossing the generational gap - leaving a lasting impression on all.

We help lone mums, lone dads, couples with children, single pregnant women and teenagers, couples with children

Many of the people we help have complex needs, such as poor mental health, drug and alcohol addictions, learning disabilities and many have experienced domestic abuse.

With a small team of staff, The Gingerbread Centre relies on the support of individuals, community groups, companies and volunteers to enable us to continue providing this quality service for families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness every year.

**In the words of  
two people we  
have supported ....**

*"I think most families are at Gingerbread for near enough similar reasons, and it's not always something you want to share with the world. There are certain things you might not want people knowing - you might feel ashamed, or embarrassed, or worried about what people might find out. It's so much easier to talk to someone who has been through what you've been through, rather than someone who's just pretending to understand.*

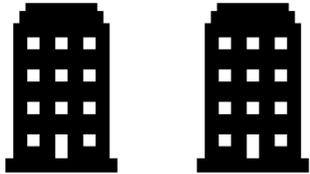
*If I had a problem, I could go to any member of staff at Gingerbread. There wasn't one person that I didn't feel able to talk to if I needed to. You can trust everyone there. You know they won't judge you and they'll help you if they can. That's what talking to people at Gingerbread felt like - no judgement.*

*We've since moved out of the centre into our own home, and while I loved our time at Gingerbread, I was excited to be moving on. Having lived by myself since I was 17 years old, I'm used to being independent. They understand that and helped me secure my new home.*

*Gingerbread supports you the whole way through, from the day you arrive to after you begin living how you want to, as a family, and together as family is exactly how it should be."*

**"I rebuilt my family during my time at  
the Gingerbread Centre."**

## Who we are – Facts and Figures



**2 sites - 33 units of accommodation**



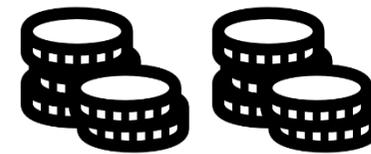
**24-hour support for families**



**11 Full Time and 24 Part-Time Staff**



**Growing Board of Trustees**



**2021 income: £1,074,837**

## Still interested? Next Steps...

We'd like to read your CV, once you have reviewed it to make sure it illustrates how you match up to what we're looking for. Please make sure your CV isn't more than 3 pages.

We'd also like to hear about why you would like to be considered for this role, and the skills and expertise you can offer to The Gingerbread Centre.

Please state if you would prefer to be considered for the role of Chair and / or Vice Chair.

Once you're ready, then send an email to [Victoria.Hopkins@gingerbreadcentre.co.uk](mailto:Victoria.Hopkins@gingerbreadcentre.co.uk) attaching your CV and a completed equal opportunities form. Your application must get to us before 5pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

### Dates to note

Deadline for submission of application **5pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### Any questions?

Contact Vicki Hopkins in our team if you have any queries by emailing [Victoria.Hopkins@gingerbreadcentre.co.uk](mailto:Victoria.Hopkins@gingerbreadcentre.co.uk) or please leave a message on 01782 370319. Like many of our staff, Vicki works part-time, so she'll get back to you as soon as she picks up your call/email.

**We look forward to hearing from you!**