Trustee and officer person specification

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# Overview

Trustees form the governing body of the Neurological Alliance (‘the Alliance’) and are, collectively and personally, ultimately responsible for all the Alliance’s activities. Trustees must act independently, uphold collective decisions, and remain aligned with the charity’s objectives as defined in its governing documents and charity law in England and Wales.

Trustees are not reimbursed for their time. Travel, subsistence and accommodation expenses are available in line with the Neurological Alliance expenses policy.

# Trustee

## Core responsibilities

Core responsibilities of Trustees of the Alliance are to:

* Represent the Alliance.
* Ensure that the Alliance complies with its Articles of Association constitution, charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
* Provide strategic direction, approve policies, define goals and evaluate performance;
* Review and approve the Alliance’s strategic plan and annual budget.
* Safeguard the Alliance’s reputation and promote its vision and mission as ambassadors for the Alliance.
* Safeguard the Alliance’s assets and ensure financial stability and appropriate investment of funds.
* Promote the Alliance’s mission, vision and values—Inclusive, Bold, Together, Leading, Expert.
* To review and approve the Alliance’s annual report and accounts.
* Receive the Independent Examiner’s report.
* Ensure that an Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held every calendar year.
* Attend Board meetings and participate fully by preparing thoroughly, considering carefully the views of others and acting corporately in the best interests of the Alliance.
* Undertake board committee or work group responsibilities as appropriate.
* Stay up to date with charity law and other relevant legislation.
* Use any specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the board reach sound decisions.
* Uphold all decisions properly made by the board.
* Maintain appropriate confidentiality, disclose any conflicts of interest and abide by the Alliance’s code of conduct or practice, policies and procedures.
* Ensure effective governance, attend inductions and training, and participate in Board evaluations.
* Appoint and appraise the Chief Executive, ensuring robust leadership and management.

## Skills and attributes

* A collaborative and strategic mindset, with the ability to contribute creatively to shared problem-solving. Confidence working both independently and as part of a diverse, values-led team.
* Ability to listen to, read and assimilate information quickly and effectively
* Able to act corporately and not in the interests of one particular group and to reach objective and independent decisions.
* An understanding of neurological conditions and the effects of living with them together with an appreciation of the work of the Alliance.
* Understanding and appreciation of good governance and the role of trustee and the desire and ability to take part in committee work along with a commitment to attend all meetings and undertake associated work.
* Strong communication skills, with the ability to listen actively, express ideas clearly, and build positive relationships.
* Ability to act as an ambassador for the Alliance.
* A genuine commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and ensuring all voices are heard and valued.
* Commitment to the time required to fulfil the role.
* Trustees must act personally within the Board and stand by any decisions made. They should not act on behalf of another group, irrespective of how they were nominated, to ensure that they remain independent.

Our trustees are passionate about improving the lives of people affected by neurological conditions. Our trustees share our values:

* **Inclusive:** You listen deeply, value every voice, and welcome all who share our goals.
* **Bold:** You speak truth to power and act based on real lived experience.
* **Together:** You collaborate meaningfully to achieve collective impact.
* **Leading:** You champion rights and shape the debate on healthcare access.
* **Expert:** You apply robust evidence and lived experience to drive change.

Time Commitment
We value and respect the time our trustees give to the Neurological Alliance. The role requires a manageable and meaningful time commitment, which includes:

* **Quarterly online Board meetings**, each lasting approximately 2 hours, with time beforehand for reading papers and preparing.
* **One annual in-person away day**, focused on strategy, reflection, and team building.
* **One in-person Annual Members Meeting and AGM**, providing a chance to connect with our wider community and shape our shared future.

Additional involvement may include participation in occasional working groups or task-specific meetings, which will be scheduled flexibly. We aim to support trustees in balancing their commitment with other responsibilities, and we welcome open conversations about accessibility and availability.

# Chair

## Core responsibilities

The Chair has the duties and responsibilities of a Trustee (see role description). He/she has the following additional responsibilities:

* Support the Board to work well together and ensure it fulfils its responsibilities for good governance in line with charity law and best practice.
* Act as a visible and values-driven representative of the Alliance, championing our mission and inclusive approach.
* Provide collaborative leadership in forming strategy, setting policy and achieving the aims through objectives which can be monitored.
* Oversee the Alliance’s financial responsibilities, ensuring transparency, proper accounting, and legal compliance.
* Chair Board meetings in a way that is inclusive, focused, and effective—using accessible agendas and materials prepared with the Chief Executive.
* Approve Board minutes, and support the timely and consistent implementation of decisions.
* Create a respectful space where every trustee’s skills and lived experience are welcomed, ensuring all contributions are considered with care and fairness.
* Ensure the planning of the annual cycle of Board meetings and the preparation of an annual plan of work for the Board and any committees.
* Ensure an appropriate scheme of delegation is in place.
* Maintain a clear framework for the election, re-election, co-option and retirement of officers and trustees.
* Ensure all trustees receive appropriate advice, training and information relating to their role including a trustee induction programme.
* Encourage reflective learning by supporting trustees and officers to review their individual and collective contributions annually.
* Agree a framework for regular, open and constructive communication with the Chief Executive.

## Skills and attributes

The Chair must be able to demonstrate the skills, abilities and personal qualities required of a trustee of the Neurological Alliance (‘the Alliance’) (see trustee person specification).

In addition, the Chair must be able to demonstrate:

* Experience as a Chair of a board or equivalent committee.
* A strong understanding of effective governance, especially in the charity or voluntary sector, and a willingness to keep learning.
* A confident, inclusive leadership style with the ability to bring the Board together, support trustee development, and foster a constructive, team-focused culture. Excellent communication skills, including the ability to listen well, engage meaningfully with diverse audiences, and speak with clarity and purpose in public or high-profile settings.
* Strong influencing and relationship-building skills, with the ability to represent the Alliance effectively and build trusted connections with senior stakeholders and decision-makers.
* A good understanding of the work of the Neurological Alliance and the wider health, voluntary and social care sectors—and a commitment to championing the voices of people affected by neurological conditions.
* People management skills.

## Time Commitment

The role of Chair requires a consistent but flexible time commitment, which includes:

* Quarterly online Board meetings, each lasting around 2 hours, with preparation time for reading and reflecting on meeting papers.
* One annual in-person away day, bringing trustees together to reflect, plan and connect, with preparation time.
* One full day in-person Annual Members Meeting and AGM.
* Quarterly online Finance and General Purpose Committee meetings, with preparation time for reading and reflecting on meeting papers.
* Regular one-to-one conversations with the Chief Executive, at least every two weeks.
* Occasional attendance of Neurological Alliance internal meetings.

# Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair assists the Chair and the Chief Executive in leading the Neurological Alliance (‘the Alliance’) and ensuring that it remains focused on achieving its objects acting at all times in line within the Alliance’s governance arrangements.

## Core responsibilities

The Vice-Chair has the duties and responsibilities of a Trustee (see role description). The Vice-Chair has the following additional responsibilities:

* Support the Board to work well together and ensure it fulfils its responsibilities for good governance in line with charity law and best practice.
* Act as a visible and values-driven representative of the Alliance, championing our mission and inclusive approach.
* Assist the Chair to provide leadership in forming strategy, setting policy and achieving the aims through objectives which can be monitored.
* Chair meetings of the Board efficiently as directed by, or deputising for, the Chair.
* Create a respectful space where every trustee’s skills and lived experience are welcomed, ensuring all contributions are considered with care and fairness.
* Participate in the planning of the annual cycle of Board meetings and the preparation of an annual plan of work for the Board and any committees.
* Participate in the appraisal of the Chief Executive and agreeing and regularly reviewing their objectives.
* Lead the appraisal of the Chair and agreeing and regularly reviewing their objectives.

## Skills and attributes

* Experience of serving as a vice-chair, committee chair, or senior trustee, or the ability to step confidently into a supportive leadership role.
* A strong understanding of effective governance, especially in the charity or voluntary sector, and a willingness to keep learning.
* Ability to help turn governance principles into inclusive, accessible and practical ways of working for the Board.
* Confidence in supporting the Chair to guide and develop the Board, including fostering open, collaborative and reflective trustee culture.
* Excellent communication skills, with the ability to listen actively, engage with a wide range of audiences, and speak confidently at public events when needed.
* Strong influencing and relationship-building skills, with the ability to represent the Alliance and build partnerships across sectors.
* Familiarity with the work of the Neurological Alliance, and an understanding of the wider voluntary, health or social care landscape.
* Skills in building trusted, respectful relationships across a diverse team, encouraging participation and supporting effective team dynamics.

## Time Commitment

The Vice-Chair role requires a consistent but flexible time commitment, designed to complement other responsibilities while ensuring meaningful contribution. This includes:

* Quarterly online Board meetings, each lasting around 2 hours, with time allocated for preparation and reflection.
* One annual in-person away day, focused on team-building, strategy and shared learning.
* One all day in-person Annual Members Meeting and AGM, offering an opportunity to engage with the wider neurological community.
* Quarterly online Finance and General Purpose Committee meetings, with time allocated for preparation and reflection.
* Regular one-to-one meetings with the Chief Executive, typically every four weeks, to provide support and maintain alignment on key priorities.

# Treasurer

The Treasurer provides financial and governance advice to the Neurological Alliance (‘the Alliance’) to support achieving the Alliance’s aims.

## Core responsibilities

The Treasurer must be able to demonstrate the skills, abilities and personal qualities required of a trustee of the Neurological Alliance (‘the Alliance’) (see trustee person specification). The Treasurer has the following additional responsibilities:

* Maintaining an overview of the Alliance’s financial affairs.
* Assessing the Alliance’s financial viability.
* Ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are implemented and maintained.
* Communicating financial information to the Board.
* Ensuring that the Alliance’s financial dealings are prudently accounted for, audited and publicly available.
* Chairing of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
* Advising the Board on governance issues, relating to finance and compliance
* Ensuring that the Alliance complies with its legal responsibilities in terms of governance and finance.
* Other duties and responsibilities as may be delegated by the Board, or by the Chair (subject to informing the Board) as may be necessary and expedient to the effective operation of the Alliance.

## Skills and attributes

The Treasurer must be able to demonstrate:

* Experience of charity finance and fundraising.
* A strong understanding of effective governance, especially in the charity or voluntary sector, and a willingness to keep learning.
* Ability to help turn governance principles into inclusive, accessible and practical ways of working for the Board.
* The ability to provide sound advice to the Board on the financial affairs of the Alliance and the financial implications of decisions.
* The ability to support the Chair of the Alliance in translating good governance into the processes required for effective Board working.
* A knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the Alliance as well an understanding of the voluntary sector and other networks.

## Time Commitment

The Treasurer role requires a consistent but flexible time commitment, ensuring financial oversight and strategic contribution while respecting other personal and professional responsibilities. This includes:

* Quarterly online Board meetings, each lasting around 2 hours, with time set aside to review and reflect on meeting materials.
* One annual in-person away day, supporting strategic development and team connection.
* One full day in-person Annual Members Meeting and AGM, engaging with our wider community and celebrating collective achievements.
* Quarterly online Finance and General Purpose Committee meetings, helping shape financial strategy, compliance, and resourcing.
* Regular one-to-one conversations with the Chief Executive, typically every four weeks, to support financial planning and governance.
* Fortnightly sign-off of payroll and payment runs, ensuring timely, accurate, and transparent financial operations.