



Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface

Relationship between Committee and Staff

The management committee of a voluntary organisation which employs staff has particular legal and practical responsibilities.

In a smaller or newly formed organisation the voluntary management committee may be directly involved in the frontline work of the organisation as well as the governing of it. If a voluntary organisation employs staff, the staff should handle the day-to-day work of the organisation. The voluntary management committee has responsibility for the overall governance and direction of the organisation.

It is important to take time to be clear about the separate roles and responsibilities of the voluntary management committee and staff. There should be clear policies and systems for staff to be able to report back decisions and activities to the voluntary management committee. The relationship between the management committee and staff should be a partnership. The legal liabilities of each should be explained to the persons concerned.

The voluntary management committee has specific responsibilities in relation to the employment and management of staff.

In practice, and for the most effective running of the organisation, most tasks will be delegated to staff. Staff should also have some decision-making delegated to them. However, there needs to be clarity on which decisions are made by staff and which need to be made by the voluntary management committee e.g. the limit of expenditure which staff can handle. It is helpful to have policies and procedures on delegation of decision-making and tasks and to have clear procedures for staff accountability to management. It is necessary to have systems for staff to report back to management on an ongoing basis and also how to get in touch when decisions need to be made urgently.

Problems in the relationship between the management committee and staff can arise even in well run organisations. It is the responsibility and right of anyone involved in either the management committee or staff team to draw attention to problems in the relationship between the two groups. These should be addressed honestly and openly. Agreed strategies and policies for raising these issues can be helpful.

It is important to remember at all times that staff and volunteers are accountable for their actions to the voluntary management committee. The voluntary management committee is ultimately responsible for ensuring the organisation fulfils its legal obligations and operates efficiently and in line with good practice guidelines.

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface | 01369 700100 | support@argylltsi.org.uk

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface is a Company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. SC277345
Scottish Charity No. SC029947

Registered office: c/o Edward Street Community Centre, Edward Street, Dunoon PA23 7PJ



Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface Relationship between Committee and Staff

Difficulty between the Board and senior staff member

Setting Boundaries

An important first step to take in sorting out difficulties between the Management Committee – staff relationship is to set out clearly the roles of each party. It is important to do this in writing.

The following table is a starting point:

The Management Committee Role The Senior Staff Member Role

Acts as a group Is an individual

Concentrates on the long term Concentrates primarily on the short-term but is also interested in the long term development of the organisation

Is mainly concerned with policy and plans Is mainly concerned with implementing those plans

Has ultimate responsibility Has limited responsibility

Is typically not an expert in the field Is typically a professional and expert in the field

Volunteers its time Is paid a salary

Only has an overview of the organisation Has intimate knowledge of the organisation

Has overall authority to act Has delegated authority to act

Understands and complies with Employment

Law in their dealings with staff Is protected by Employment Law

Good Communication

It is important to ensure good communication between the committee and the most senior staff member. Setting time aside for regular support and supervision between the Chair and the most senior staff member can help avoid issues building up.

Code of Behaviour

It can be helpful to develop a Code of Behaviour to govern the relationship and this can help to put things on a clearer footing. This will cover issues such as respect on both sides, communication methods and style as well as frequency of contact.

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface | 01369 700100 | support@argylltsi.org.uk

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface is a Company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. SC277345
Scottish Charity No. SC029947

Registered office: c/o Edward Street Community Centre, Edward Street, Dunoon PA23 7PJ



Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface

Relationship between Committee and Staff

Published on the Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface Self-Serve system (www.argylltsi.org.uk)

(Adapted from CVS Falkirk)

Version: 2.0

Published: May 2020

Review date: May 2021

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface | 01369 700100 | support@argylltsi.org.uk

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface is a Company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. SC277345
Scottish Charity No. SC029947

Registered office: c/o Edward Street Community Centre, Edward Street, Dunoon PA23 7PJ