

# Trustee Recruitment Pack 2023

## Is This You?

Are you passionate about your local communities, how they work together and volunteering?

Does contributing to the future of these communities interest you?

Do you enjoy meeting new people who bring different ideas/ experiences and enjoy working together?

Do you want to learn new skills through trustee board experience?

**If so, read on!**



# About Community First Oxfordshire

Community First Oxfordshire is a community development charity which helps diverse communities and individuals to identify issues that affect them and find their own solutions. We support and advise volunteer-led actions in Oxfordshire, helping hundreds of volunteers fulfil many roles in their communities.

We support the principles of asset-based community development (ABCD). We think that stronger, more sustainable communities are built using the skills and gifts that people already have. We are open to the needs of our diverse and hard to reach communities and aim to support targeted asset-based community development. We know that one size does not suit everyone and will work with communities to identify what works for them.

The values and practice of CFO are rooted in human rights, social justice, and respect for diversity. In our projects and working practices we seek to achieve inclusion, remove barriers to involvement, and challenge racism and discrimination.

## **Vision**

Strong, diverse, inclusive, and thriving communities.

## **Mission**

Supporting communities to find solutions to their planning, housing, social action, and service needs. Promoting positive change for all.

## The Role of the Trustee

As both the directors of CFO as a company and the trustees of CFO as a charity, collectively Board members have overall control and legal responsibility for CFO's activities. Charity trustees have the general control and management of the administration of a charity ([Charities Act 2011, section 177](#)).

The trustees take decisions as the governing body of the charity. Collectively, they may exercise all the powers given to them by CFO's governing documents - its memorandum and articles of association. These include the powers to appoint:

- sub-committees, to which they may delegate any of their powers, and
- staff to carry out specific functions.

The Trustee's functions include electing the Chair and Vice-Chair annually, deciding CFO's overall strategy and its annual work programme and budget, and monitoring progress in relation to these. A Trustee's other functions include exercising overall control of CFO's financial affairs, fulfilling CFO's responsibilities as an employer and an occupier of property, and approving an annual report and annual account for presentation to members at the Annual General Meeting.

All Trustees are expected to promote CFO and its work whenever appropriate and reflect the interests of member organisations and rural communities in Oxfordshire in the management and direction of CFO.

Trustees are subject to the law relating to company directors and charity trustees. The following paragraphs summarise the key points. If in doubt about the extent and limitations of their legal powers, Board members should seek appropriate advice with another trustee or appropriate professional. Trustees have a duty of care, being the duty to exercise such care and skill as is reasonable in the circumstances, having particular regard to:

- any special knowledge or experience that they have or hold themselves out as having; and
- where they act in the course of a business or profession, any special knowledge or experience that it is reasonable to expect of a person acting in the course of that kind of business or profession.

Board members are accountable for the solvency and continuing effectiveness of CFO. Collectively they must exercise overall control over its financial affairs; and should ensure that the way in which CFO is administered is not open to abuse by unscrupulous associates or employees and that their systems of control are rigorous and constantly maintained.

Declarations of Interest - conflicts of interest may arise when the interests of Trustees (their own, their family, friends or other organisations with which they are involved) are incompatible with, likely to benefit directly from, or in competition with, the interests of CFO. Board Members are required to sign a Declaration of Interest on becoming a Board member and then update CFO should this situation change.

## **Who are we looking for?**

CFO is committed to ensuring that the voices of people with a wide range of lived experiences are heard and all are welcomed to the Board. Applications are encouraged from individuals with a knowledge and interest in local communities of place and culture, and rural life.

*Also:*

- Have integrity.
- Understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of trusteeship.
- Be willing and able to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a Board member.
- Have a strategic vision.
- Be a Member of CFO.
- Have good independent judgement.
- Have an ability to think creatively.
- Be willing to speak his/her/their mind.
- Be an effective team member.

# How does the Board Work Together?

The Board consists of members who are elected at the AGM. The Board can also make provision for co-optees (this provision has tended to be used sparingly, usually where the Board has wanted to bring in someone with particular skills).

The Board meets bi-monthly on the last Thursday of the month either online or sometimes in-person at Cassington or Yarnton Village Hall.

## ROLE OF HONORARY OFFICERS

### President

- Is an ex-officio member of the Board, and undertakes the duties and responsibilities attached to that office.
- Represents and promotes CFO at appropriate occasions.
- Has no other specific responsibilities but is welcome to participate in CFO's activities.

### Patron

- Patrons are appointed from time to time.
- It is mainly an honorary appointment – often in recognition of service to CFO – without specific responsibilities. Patrons are very welcome to participate in CFO's activities.

## ROLE OF A TRUSTEE CHAIR

The Chair is a Board member and undertakes the duties and responsibilities of that office, including participating in the overall management and policy direction of CFO. In particular, the Chair:

- Chairs meetings of the Board, the Honorary Officers Group and such other committees as may be required from time to time.
- Ensures that the Board works effectively to provide the overall management and policy direction of CFO through its decision-making and consultation processes; and that the Board's decisions are implemented.
- Presents CFO's annual report to the AGM.
- Takes a leading role in representing and promoting the work of CFO to its own members and to other organisations, potential partners and funders, local government, and the general public as appropriate.
- Is expected to participate actively in events and conferences organised by CFO.
- Acts as line-manager to the Chief Executive/s, liaising with the CEOs on a regular basis to keep an overview of CFO's affairs and to provide support as appropriate.
- Acts as one of CFO's authorised signatories on cheques, contracts or other financial instruments.

In the event of a vacancy arising at senior staff level the Chair ensures that the post is filled adequately, and the member of staff is fully briefed and has an appropriate induction programme.

## Qualities

In addition to the abilities needed by all Board members, the Chair of CFO should possess the following qualities and experience:

- Leadership.
- Experience of committee work.
- Tact and diplomacy.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability of respect confidences.
- Experience of the wider aspects of the voluntary and statutory sectors.
- Experience of human resource management.

## Term of Office

The Chair is elected by the Executive Committee for one year and may stand for annual re-election but, by a convention adopted by the AGM, no individual may serve in this capacity for more than six consecutive years.

## **THE ROLE OF THE VICE-CHAIR**

The Vice-Chair is a Board member and undertakes the duties and responsibilities of that office, including participating in the overall management and policy direction of CFO. The Vice-Chair supports the Chair and deputises for them as required in carrying out the Chair's functions (see above).

## Qualities

The Vice-Chair should have qualities and experience similar to those required of the Chair (see above).

## Term of Office

The Vice Chair is elected by the Board for one year and may stand for annual re-election.

# **Benefits of Being a Trustee**

Being a Trustee is an unpaid, voluntary role. However, Board members may benefit from professional reference and CV experience. The Trustees will also benefit from training session opportunities. In the past, Trustees have attended training sessions on topics such as Climate Action Training, EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) workshops and in-house training on ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) and other topics.

Being part of the CFO team will present opportunities to share knowledge and experiences, or learn new things.

# How to Apply

You can apply to become a Trustee of CFO by sending us an email telling us about yourself, your occupation (past occupation/s), why you are interested in becoming a Trustee and any key skills or experiences that you feel would be helpful to our organisation.

**Applications should be sent to [info@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:info@communityfirstoxon.org)**

As a member of the Board, you need to be a paid-up individual member. Membership fees for an individual are currently £15 per year.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this and we're so glad you're interested in being a part of CFO - please get in touch if you have any further questions or would like to chat further about the role of a Trustee at CFO. Our co-CEOs would be delighted to answer any queries that you have:**

Tom - [tom@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:tom@communityfirstoxon.org)  
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