



Governance Policy

Purpose:

To define the guidelines for Parents in Partnership, Croydon (PIP) concerning governing board structure, characteristics and practices that promote decision and policy making in the best interests of the Organisation and meeting obligations as set out in it's constitution. To provide an overview of policies in place for the governance and management of the organisation.

Relevant to all Trustees and Manager. All amendments to be agreed by Board of Trustees. This policy will be reviewed annually.

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Related Documents:

Finance Policy
Trustee induction Policy
Human Resources Policy
Business Plan

1.1 Charity's Aims & Objectives

What are our aims?

At Parents in Partnership, Croydon we understand the many complex issues and situations that parent/carers of children and young people with disabilities and special needs come across on a daily basis.

We work in partnership with a diverse range of families in Croydon to ensure the best possible access to information, support, services and training.

We do this through effective teamwork and close collaboration with schools, the local authority and other service providers.

Our aim is to offer opportunities to parent carers and to motivate them to speak up for themselves, realise their potential and improve their quality of life.

At the heart of what we do is an unwavering belief in the importance of children and young people leading happy, fulfilled lives.

For full constitution document please see appendix 2.1

How do we set out to do this?

Our Trustees employ a number of qualified and highly dedicated staff to ensure local parent-carers are informed, represented and supported.

PIP Partnership Manager oversees PIP services, supports PIP's staff and facilitates engagement and representation of parents at a strategic level.

PIP Family Link Workers provide individual support to local families and facilitate positive engagement with relevant agencies that support parents to access the services they need.

We value the views of parents and enable them to share these along with their suggestions for service and policy development. We lead an active parent forum that can meet key people in the borough to take part in local or national consultations.

We communicate with families by email, social media, website, telephone and post, as appropriate. We regularly inform parents of current developments and resources in the borough through links to Croydon Local Offer.

We provide training, workshops and events for parents to empower them, raise their confidence and further their skills.

What do we achieve?

We enable parents to be involved with each other, share their experiences and empower each other. This leads to families being more able to access services relevant to their family's needs and helps to reduce the isolation that can be part of having a disabled child.

By providing meaningful and correct information we enable parents to better understand and navigate the complex system of education, social care and health; this enables them to access support where this has previously not been possible.

Our training, workshops and events are aimed to create a sense of supportive community and expand parental knowledge, skills and confidence.

We implement parent's views, developed by experience, into strategic settings and work towards the improvement in services in the borough.

What are our values?

Throughout our work, we strive to be:

1. Independent

We treat our position of being trusted by parent/carers with utmost respect. Our independence is key to this, so we are independent of both public and private sectors and not take on projects that compromise our integrity as an independent organisation.

2. Parent-Carer Specialist

We believe that issues of families with children and young people with disabilities and special needs are complex and require particular expertise. We focus exclusively in this area and strive to develop and promote best practice in all aspects of what we do.

3. Professional

We maintain the highest possible standards of working, employ staff with the appropriate skills and experience and provide quality, reliable and inclusive services.

4. Motivational

We believe caring should not be a barrier to a fulfilled life and involvement in the community. We empower and motivate parent/carers to speak up for themselves, realise their potential and take advantage of all available opportunities.

5. Outcomes focused

We believe the only way to judge services is the changes that users of the service report in their own lives. We measure success by focusing on personalised outcomes jointly agreed with parent/carers. We find positive and creative ways to help them achieve these outcomes.

6. Representative

We represent wishes and opinions of parent/carers in a non-judgemental and respectful way.

Through the means of the Parent Forum we take a group representation approach to challenge poor practice and stigma and influence positive change in Croydon.

7. Inclusive

We treat everyone who comes into contact with the organisation with respect. We do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, beliefs or for any other reason.

8. Transparent in our communication

We listen to parent/carers carefully and engage with empathy. Progress, change and agreed plans will be documented. We will fully consult and communicate with all stakeholders on decisions and change.

9. Confidential.

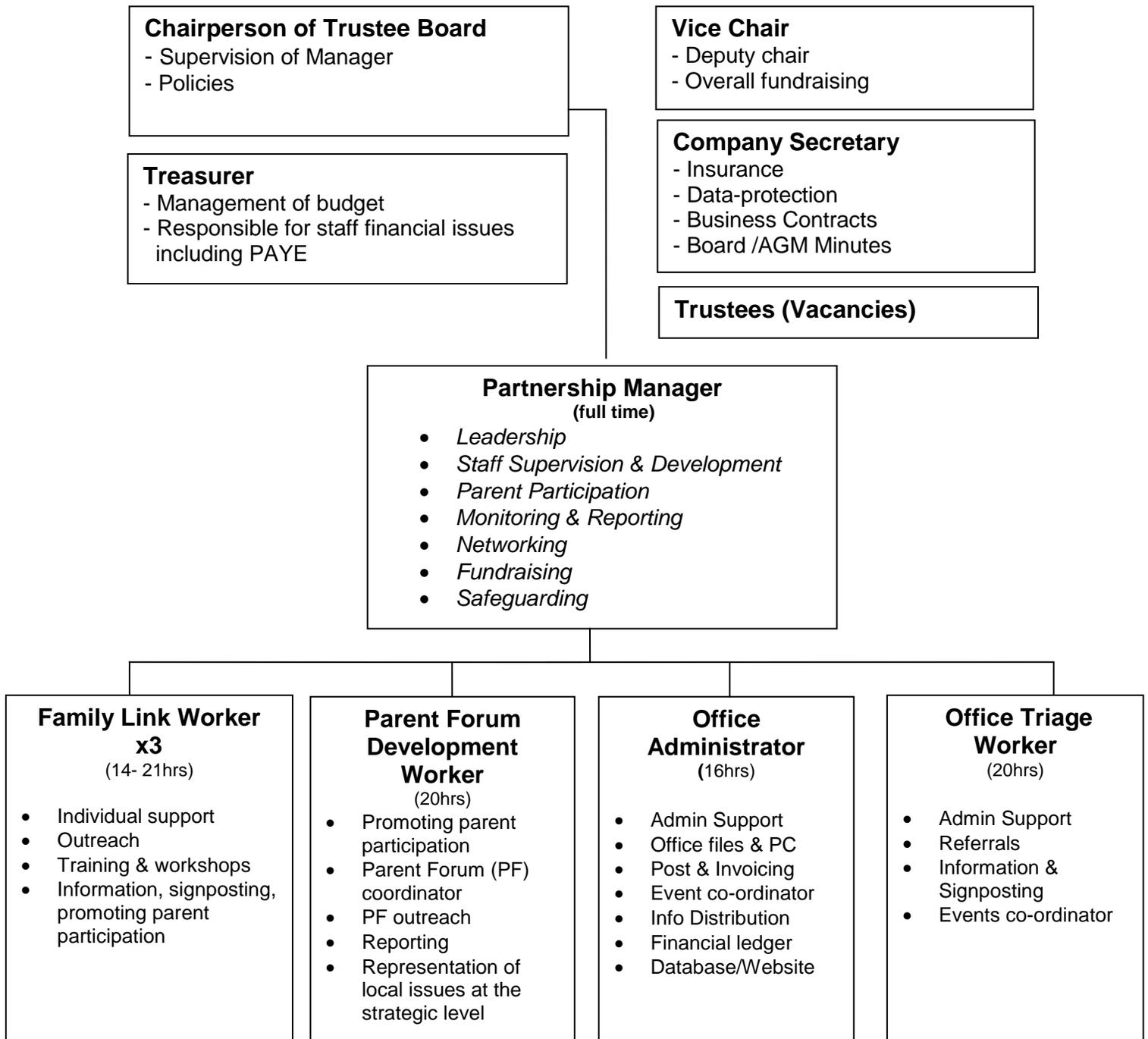
We have a clear policy on confidentiality and data protection that ensures that information shared with us remains confidential within the organisation and explains circumstances under which confidentiality might be breached.

1.2 Organisation Chart

Board of Trustees (Directors)

Elected at Annual General meeting

Board meeting every month chaired by Chairperson and Management report received
5 Trustees currently elected to take responsibilities as;



1.3 Planning

Business plan

A three to five-year Business Plan is developed by the Board and Manager. This is distributed widely to our funders and when tendering. The plan is reviewed regularly to ensure it is in line with our current work and outcomes requirements and voluntary sector and Local Authority funding opportunities.

Annual SWOT

On an annual basis, a meeting of all staff and Trustees is undertaken. This is an opportunity for PIP to meet team, review our past year, through identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This enables us to finalise our existing development plan and agree our new plan for the following year.

Development Plan

Our plan is reviewed at Trustee meetings. This enables the board to focus on agreed developments, improvements and targets, make any recommendations for priorities, and ability to measure performance of staff.

1.4 Financial Arrangements

All our financial activities are conducted in line with the Charity commissions' requirements and our agreed policies.

Financial status, specific expenditure requests not contained within the budget and budget performance are reported at Trustees Meetings as appropriate.

For full details of financial responsibilities, procedures and guidelines please refer to Finance Policy.

1.5 Reserves policy

The organisation seeks to maintain an unrestricted reserve at all times of 6 months' salary and core running costs. This allows for staff and volunteers to be assured of a reasonable continuity of PIP's services. The reserve levels are monitored on a monthly basis and the reserves policy is reviewed annually.

1.6 Human Resources

Recruitment

For all appointments (except Manager), the Manager, a member of the Trustee board and where possible an independent person from a similar voluntary organisation, a member of our consortium or a funder will be present at the Interview.

Staff handbook

All employees are provided with a staff handbook which contains PIP's policies and procedures which are to be followed and adhered to. This is signed for by the employee to agree they have read and understood the policies.

These are reviewed by the Manager and approved by the Trustees prior to distribution.

Staff Development

All staff are required to agree to undertake training and development of skills to enhance their role. This is included and discussed during staff supervision meetings and will be recorded. Staff development costs are agreed annually and included within the budget.

Safeguarding/DBS Check

All employees and Trustees are requirement prior to undertaken any external duties to have a clear enhanced certificate. New employees will not have their employment contract issued until this has been received. Certificate detail is recorded and information maintained by the Office Administrator who will arrange renewal prior to three-year expiry. All staff will undertake safeguarding training on an annual basis.

Changes to the law on preventing illegal working

All potential employees will have their proof of identity confirmed and supporting documents copied in line with the recommended guidelines prior to issue of employment contract.

For full details please refer to Human Resources Policy.

1.7 Trustee Recruitment

PIP will proactively advertise the recruitment of trustees to access the most appropriate people. Anyone who would like to be a trustee will have to undertake the following:

- Send an expression of interest to the Chair, indicating the reasons for wanting to be a trustee and the contribution she/he is likely to bring to the role.
- Attend a short interview to be conducted by the Chair and/or another member of the Board.
- Receive, read and complete Trustee induction pack.
- Agree to a six-month probationary review.

For full details of Trustee conditions, roles and responsibilities please refer to Trustee Induction Policy.

1.8 Procedure for Board Meetings

- The Board of Trustees meets once a month. Additional staff maybe invited to attend; this will be agreed at previous meeting.
- Agenda items are prepared by the Chair and disseminated to trustees at least one week prior to the meeting.
- The Mangers Report to the Board will be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting.
- Minutes of the meetings are taken by the Board Secretary and distributed within two weeks following the meeting.
- At least three board members should be in any given meeting for decisions to be made.
- An Annual General Meeting will be held, whereby Annual Accounts are approved, Auditors are appointed and previous minutes are agreed. Agenda, reports and last minutes are prepared by the Chair and distributed at least three weeks prior to the meeting.

1.9 Quality Systems

PIP is working towards the PQASSO standard Level 1. This is co-ordinated by the Office Administrator and all staff and Trustees are responsible for assisting to meet the requirements of the standard.

Our document control system ensures all policies and procedures are up to date and are reviewed regularly. Original copies of all approved policy documents are held on file at our office with a summary list clearly showing their status.

This Governance Policy detailed above was agreed and minuted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees on:

Approved by: Julie Newton-Smith Chair of Trustees	Signed:	Date: Review by July 2018
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