

Notes from the TNF Workshop: Good Governance makes for Good Neighbours

These notes were kindly taken by Catherine Webster at the TNF Workshop on 4th March 2023

A major point raised was that anyone who is a voting member of a TN's Committee is automatically considered a Trustee and needs to be registered as such.

Other points that I picked up on are:

- Understand and work to your constitution: TNs must share their Constitution with their Trustees before they agree to join along with all Charity Commission documents. It is a legal requirement for all Trustees to have a copy of the Constitution and to implement it. It is considered good practice to have at least one VIP as a Trustee (some Constitutions limit numbers of VIPs)
- Ensure regular, minuted Committee meetings: It is essential that all TNs have these. Their agenda needs to contain discussion of accounts etc. Trustee meetings are separate to general meetings. Timings and attendance etc must be as in Constitution. Charity Commission expects printed copy of minutes to be kept and each sheet signed by Chair. Some TNs keep record of attendees in minutes others have all attendees sign a book to say they have attended. Trustee meetings are completely separate to general meetings.
- Know your Committee: Best practice is to have social as well as formal meetings. Some discussion about who should and can pay for social gatherings. Important for training/team building.
- Meet/know your volunteers: Chair should always meet new volunteers and also to say goodbye to ones leaving. There is a lot of silo working so it is useful for Chair to know all volunteers. It was pointed out that in some TNs the Chair does not need to meet all volunteers as there is another layer of management who look after volunteers.
- Establish links with TNF: As a minimum a TN's Chair and Treasurer should have links with TNF.
- Establish links with neighbouring TN Chairs: It is good practice to have good working relationships with neighbouring TNs; it is a good way to share best practices within a region.
- Promote awareness of your TN: Not much to report on this.
- Sound finances: Many of TNs seem to be on a sound footing. Looking to setup a workshop to discuss raising funds and what help there is and how to apply for it.
- Gather data: We were reminded that if you can't measure it you can't manage it. Data is important.

There was then a more general discussion about communication: TNF faces problem managing flow of communication both in and out and wants to improve this flow e.g. what they can help with. They found recently in trying to contact each chair of TN that their central list was out of date/incomplete. Want all TNs to check that our public facing contact information is correct both on TNF's website and our own. An exercise would be to try checking that we can contact other TNs in our region. When get our renewal forms this week ensure that they are completed correctly and fully and returned in

timescale. TNF would like to know how we make our information available to our clients and keep them up to date.

There was some discussion about how available local news is.

There were some comments on how involved some Trustees are.

TNF's archive is available to all and a link and access information will be shared.

There was a request again to keep TNF's central database up to date.

Best practice is to keep up to date with neighbouring TNs. Facebook can be useful for this.

This was TNF's last Winter Workshop. There was a query about moving day/time of workshops but it was felt that it should remain as is.

Feedback on whether a workshop of moving to a CIO would be of interest was requested.

All feedback/queries should be sent to TNF's Enquiries email.