



**Candidate brief
for the position of
chair of trustees**

Introduction letter by David Barrand, chair of trustees

Thank you for your interest in becoming chair of the board of trustees at Prospect Hospice.

It has been my privilege to have been a trustee of Prospect Hospice for almost ten years but, with sadness, I will soon step down from the role, and my role as chair of trustees, and someone new will take forward the governance of this great local charity.

In my wonderful time as a trustee, I have seen the hospice, our staff and volunteers, grow and develop our offer and support for local people, as well the increased outreach into the community we support and those who support us. I look forward to watching the hospice continue to grow and improve all that we do in the coming years as a passionate supporter, like so many people across Swindon, Marlborough and north-east Wiltshire.

Prospect Hospice provides a wide range of care and support to people with life limiting illnesses and their families, and has deep roots in the community which it has served since 1980. Our services enable people to access the support and care they need to live well for as long as possible and die with dignity in the place of their choice. Like most hospices we rely on the income generated from our extensive fundraising activities and network of charity shops for the majority of our funding, equating to around 70% of our £8million income. The remaining 30% of comes from statutory and other grant funding. Our income will need to continue to grow as we seek to extend our service to support even more people.

In recent times, I'm proud of the way our team has managed the challenges that Covid-19 has brought. Everyone from our clinical teams to our fundraising teams, retail and support staff were responsive to the changes needed and have been incredibly flexible over the last year, embracing the opportunity to work in different ways to ensure we are still able to deliver our specialist care to those that need us and raise the vital income that is needed to support this.

Now is an exciting time to be joining the charity. As we faced challenges at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, we learnt many lessons that will shape our work over the coming months and years and we are seeking a new chair of our board of trustees to oversee the continuing development and expansion of our care and services. Ideally, you will have a proven, professional track record of leadership at the highest level. You will share our vision, and ambition to take a leading role in our journey to be recognised as an outstanding organisation. In this crucial role, you will spearhead our governance as we face the challenges of new regulatory practices and the wider social and economic factors that may affect our work in the years ahead. As the hospice sector continues to mature, there is also a growing need for collaboration between us and other health and social care providers in the south west.

If you would like to have an informal discussion with a current trustee or you need more information, please contact Siobhain Acott, on 01793 816119 or siobhainacott@prospect-hospice.net.

With very best wishes,

David Barrand
Chair of trustees
Prospect Hospice



Organisational overview

About Prospect Hospice

Prospect Hospice is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, founded in 1980 by the Reverend Derryck Evans, then the chaplain at Swindon's hospital, who was inspired by Dame Cicely Saunders vision and work at St Christopher's Hospice in South London. Prospect Hospice provides free palliative care and support for patients and their families living with end-of life care needs, for a community of more than 300,000 people.

Care is based on the simple idea that patients are ordinary people living with physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs. The hospice provides enormous support to families and friends, caring for the patients and all those around them. Last year we cared for 2,359 patients.

What we do at Prospect Hospice

Prospect Hospice provides a wide range of services including an inpatient unit in Wroughton, just outside Swindon. Additionally, we offer our Prospect@Home service, a community-based nurse specialist team providing support and advice to patients, a dedicated therapy team and a family support and bereavement service for patients and those important to them.

Our team of community-based nurse specialists work closely with local GPs, district nurses and other healthcare professionals, and are available to give advice and support for patients and their families and to refer them to services to match their needs. We also have a consultant-led medical team that works in all patient settings, and an education service which is also offered to healthcare professionals in the area.

To be able to provide our free care to those who need it, we need to raise around £8m each year. We also have a fully trained team of volunteers who support our specialist clinical teams, ensuring that patients and their families receive the best possible care. Many more volunteers support our fundraising, retail and administration teams, including in our finance department.

Our vision

Excellent, personalised and compassionate care for everyone affected by a life-limiting illness.

Our values

Our values apply in every setting - between staff, within teams, with volunteers, how we treat patients and families and how we engage with partner organisations and suppliers. They are: authentic, specialist, person-centred, inclusive, resilient and excellent.



Our strategy

Some of the key reasons we need this compelling vision and ambitious strategy are:

We know that there are more people from our community who we could support through our services, particularly in community groups who have previously been under-represented in our patient group.

An increasingly frail population, with over 40 % of over 65s living alone.

A growing population of around 300,000 in Swindon and north Wiltshire, with an expected increase of 10 % in the years ahead.

As a result, our key strategic aims are:

- We will provide excellent services and support within the hospice and our community to meet the growing needs of all patients, their families and carers
- We will extend our influence across the community to improve understanding and support for everyone affected by life-limiting illness
- We will strengthen our organisation, to ensure patients and those around them can continue to rely on us being there for them.

About our area

Prospect Hospice serves the towns of Swindon, Marlborough and north Wiltshire, which encompasses towns and villages including Highworth, Pewsey and Royal Wootton Bassett.

Our services and main activities are delivered from the hospice in Wroughton, a village just outside Swindon, and we also offer outpatient services from our Wellbeing Centre, based at the Savernake Hospital in Marlborough.

Swindon is the biggest town within our area of care and was historically a town with a rich industrial heritage based on its development as a primary manufacturing town for Isambard Kingdom Brunel's Great Western Railway.



Its railway heritage is reflected in its excellent transport links to London, Bristol and Cardiff, while Bath, Oxford and the picturesque Cotswolds are all within easy range. The headquarters of Nationwide Building Society and the National Trust are both in the town.

Marlborough, the second largest of the towns in our area, is renowned for its Neolithic heritage, reflected in nearby landmarks such as Avebury stone circle and Silbury Hill. The town itself is notable for its charming, wide High Street, lined with shops, cafes, restaurants and pubs, and is popular as a tourist destination throughout the year.



About the role

1. Post Title - Chair of the board

Responsible to: The board of trustees

Purpose

The role of the chair is to provide leadership to the board and to ensure that trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity. To support and where appropriate challenge the chief executive and to ensure that the board as a whole works in partnership with executive staff. In addition the chair represents the charity and may be required to act as spokesperson on certain issues.

Personal requirements

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the chair should also possess:

- Leadership skills and experience
- Experience of committee work
- Tact and diplomacy
- Good inter-personal / people skills
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- Time to perform the role effectively

2. Main responsibilities

To provide leadership to the board and to ensure that trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity:

To guard the long-term future of the charity by ensuring that:

- The board sets the mission, vision, strategy and high-level policies for the charity within the powers and restraints in its charitable objects and governing instruments.
- The board takes steps to monitor the performance of the charity and to ensure that the charity satisfies all regulatory and legal compliance requirements.
- Major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed regularly and systems are established to mitigate these risks without the charity becoming totally risk averse.
- The charity has a satisfactory system for holding in trust for beneficiaries' moneys, properties and other assets and ensure that moneys are invested to the maximum benefit of the charity, within the constraints of the law and ethical policies laid down by the board.
- The charity's financial dealings are systematically accounted for, audited and reviewed regularly.
- Internal controls and systems (both financial and non-financial) are audited and reviewed regularly.
- The board and the charity hear the voices and views of key stakeholders, especially beneficiaries.

To ensure the highest possible standards of governance by ensuring that:

- The charity has a governance structure (including a board assurance framework) that is appropriate to a charity of its size/complexity, stage of development, and its charitable objects and that these structures and the governing instruments are reviewed regularly.
- The board delegates sufficient authority to its committees, the chair, the chief executive and others to establish the business of the charity to be carried on effectively between meetings of the board.

- The board's delegated authority is recorded in writing by means of terms of reference for board committees, job descriptions for honorary officers and for key staff, etc; and the board monitors the use of these delegated powers.
- The board has on it the skills it requires to govern the charity well and these skills are utilised, and that the board has access to relevant external professional advice and expertise.
- There is a systematic, open and fair procedure for the recruitment and co-option of trustees, future chairs of the board and future chief executives.
- All members of the board receive appropriate induction, advice, information and training (both individual and collective).
- Trustees act reasonably, always act in the interests of the charity and comply with the charity's code of conduct for trustees.
- The board of trustees regularly reviews its performance.

To ensure the proper and efficient conduct of board meetings by:

- Chairing trustee meetings effectively, seeking consensus, balancing the need for full debate on key questions with the expeditious dispatch of business so as to reach clear and agreed decisions as swiftly as possible.
- Encouraging all trustees to participate and to feel free to challenge constructively both the chair and the chief executive.
- Taking an active role in ensuring that board agendas are meaningful and reflect the key responsibilities of trustees.
- Ensuring that the chief executive and his/her staff provide the board with relevant, timely and accurate information in order to allow the board to discharge its responsibilities. This should include alerting the board to major risks, informing the board of current and future key issues, including significant trends, and informing the board about external changes which may impact on the charity.
- Ensuring that board decisions are made in the best long-term interests of the charity and that the board takes collective ownership of these decisions.
- Ensuring that decisions taken at meetings of the board are recorded and implemented.
- Ensuring that there is an annual programme of board and committee meetings, carefully structured agendas and high-quality briefing papers providing timely information and concentrating on governance.

To support, and where appropriate, to challenge the chief executive and to ensure that the board as a whole works in partnership with executive staff.

To support the chief executive by:

- Ensuring there are clear and open processes for the recruitment (and if necessary, dismissal) of the chief executive, and for setting and reviewing the remuneration package of the chief executive.
- Ensuring that the board focuses on its governance role and does not slip incrementally or otherwise into the management role.
- Arranging regular, but not over-frequent, meetings with the chief executive within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- Providing leadership to the chief executive to ensure that the charity is run in accordance with the decisions of the board and the charity's governing documents and that there is clarity about the charity's objectives at all levels.
- Supervising the chief executive on behalf of the board (unless other arrangements are made) always remembering that the chief executive is responsible to the board as a whole and not to any one individual trustee or sub-group of trustees.
- Ensuring the chief executive's performance is reviewed regularly.
- Ensuring the chief executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

- In partnership with the chief executive, to agree respective roles in representing the charity and acting as a spokesperson.

To make sure that the board understands and fulfils its responsibility to hold the chief executive and the executive team to account by ensuring that:

- When necessary, the chair and the trustees challenge the chief executive constructively and only in the best interests of the charity and as 'critical friends.'
- The chief executive is clear about the performance indicators by which he/she will be held accountable.
- The chief executive understands his/her crucial responsibility to provide relevant, honest, timely, high-quality information and advice to the board of trustees.
- There are appropriate mechanisms, both internal and external, to verify that the board receives a balanced and honest picture of how the charity is doing.

To ensure the board works in partnership with management by:

- Ensuring through the chief executive, that the staff understand the role of the board and that the chief executive provides the effective link between the board and staff.
- Acting as an official escalation point for staff or volunteer grievances and whistleblowing.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of the board's appreciation of their successes and hard work.
- Ensuring that, through the chief executive, a performance evaluation process is in place for everyone in the organisation and that the charity invests in the development of staff.
- Ensuring that whenever practicable, trustees visit various parts of the charity, attend a few events organised by the charity and have informal opportunities to meet the senior management team, staff and beneficiaries.
- Acting as an external representative and ambassador of the charity and attending external meetings and events such as the South West Hospice Forum and Hospice UK's annual conference.
- Presenting the charity's achievements and acting as a spokesperson to the press and public.
- Providing input to the charity's annual report and chairing business at the annual general meeting of the charity.

Boundaries

The chair has to take a leadership role in ensuring that the board of trustees fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the charity, as such they will be responsible for conducting annual trustee reviews and any conduct and performance related issues.

The chair must work closely with the chief executive to support him/her in achieving the aims of the charity, respecting the day-to-day operational management and clinical responsibilities of the chief executive and the executive team, and responding appropriately as required.

The role of the chair extends beyond chairing meetings of the board of trustees.

The chair may be authorised by the board to act between meetings of the full board as appropriate.

The chair is ex officio on all committees; however, the chair's attendance will be identified:

- Through a prior request to the committee chair, or
- By invitation to a meeting where particular issues are to be discussed which would inform the chair when later brought to the board.

Location

The majority of the work will take place at Prospect Hospice, Wroughton, but representation and ambassadorial activity could take place anywhere in the charity's catchment area, or within the south west (e.g. for meetings of the South West Forum of Hospices), with occasional meetings in London (for example with Hospice UK). The current pandemic has created a need for most contact to be remote/virtual and it is anticipated that future requirements may involve a combination of virtual and on site contact.

Key contacts

- Patrons
- Other trustees of the board
- Chief executive and executive team

Authorisation level

The chair is an authorised signatory for Prospect Hospice Ltd.

All bank payments must be signed by two signatories and, for amounts over £150,000, one signatory must be a trustee.

Person specification

Experience/ Qualifications

Essential

- Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation
- Successful track record of achievement through their career
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a board of trustees
- Experience of chairing meetings and events

Knowledge and understanding

Essential

- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together
- Good understanding of charity governance issues

Desirable

- Broad knowledge and understanding of the hospice community/sector and current issues affecting it
- An understanding of the regulatory and commissioning environment in the health sector
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues

Personal skills

Essential

- Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the charity, its strategic objectives and cause
- Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively
- Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the charity
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment, and facilitate conflict resolution where required
- Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including attending meetings and events out of office hours

Notes...

Your next steps

To arrange an informal discussion, contact Siobhain Acott on 01793 816119 or email siobhainacott@prospect-hospice.net.

To apply, please email your CV and supporting statement to siobhainacott@prospect-hospice.net by Friday 26 March 2021.



Prospect Hospice

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