**Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust (SLEDT)**

**The Responsibilities of Being a Trustee**

**Introduction**

The Trust is a small, registered charity in the United Kingdom. Its purpose is to improve the life chances of children and young people in one of the poorest countries in the world. It does this by removing the barriers to education that are the result of disability or poverty or both. There are two distinct aspects to this work. Firstly, the committee of trustees that run the charity set the strategic direction of its work, are responsible for ensuring good practice in delivering services and, crucially, generating sufficient income to underpin the charity’s work. Secondly, a remarkable team of volunteers in Sierra Leone identify potential beneficiaries of the charity and manage all the issues involved in delivering support to the people the charity is supporting.

**Being a Trustee** **– General**

If you are a trustee of a UK charity you are registered with the Charity Commission and you have a few key obligations which apply to all charity trustees:

1. Ensuring that the charity’s resources are only spent on the objects agreed with the Charity Commission. In the case of SLEDT these are, broadly speaking, the prevention or relief of poverty and the promotion of education for the benefit of people under the age of 25 in Sierra Leone.
2. Ensuring that the charity has a credible plan to deliver services that fulfil these objects.
3. Ensuring that the charity has sufficient resources to carry out its work and that the organisation does not commit itself to spending money when there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the necessary finance will be available.
4. Ensuring good practice and compliance with the law regarding health and safety, data protection, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, the use of volunteers, financial probity, etc.

# This is a very brief account of trustee responsibilities. A much fuller account is contained in *The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do (CC3)* which can be downloaded from the Charity Commission website. Potential trustees are advised to look at this document.

# Being a Trustee of SLEDT

# In addition to the above the expectations are:

# That you attend committee meetings and contribute to them in terms of strategy, policy development, etc. There are only three or four meetings a year and they are unlikely to be more than two hours long. This is not very onerous but, because they are infrequent, attendance is a high priority. Attendance is usually online. Once a year we meet in person for the AGM.

# That you participate in email discussions addressing key issues for the charity and respond to requests for comment from the Chair.

# That you contribute to raising the profile of the charity. This might be through helping to develop promotional material, using your own social media networks (personal or business) or identifying and tapping into other networks that have the potential to deliver new supporters.

# That you contribute to income generation for the charity. This might involve soliciting corporate or grant making trust donations but most donations come in the form of regular, individual giving (about £28,000 in 2022). Growing this form of income is a high priority and, being a small charity with no staff, we ask our trustees to help. Our experience is that making a direct “ask” of people using the kind of networks described above is effective in securing income.

# Key Attributes We Would Welcome in New Trustees

# - personal commitment to helping to improve the lives of children and young people in one of the poorest countries on earth

# experience and skills in the use of social media for promotional purposes

# - fundraising experience

# - experience and understanding of international development issues

# - youth! – the age profile of the existing trustees is higher than we would like and we would welcome the energy and fresh perspectives that younger people can bring

# - knowledge of Sierra Leone. This is a big ask and not essential. Nevertheless, it would be an asset in any potential new trustee

# - specialist knowledge and understanding in any of the good practice areas outlined in section 4 on the first page

# Further information about becoming a trustee of the Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust can be obtained from the Chair, Kevin Curley, at: kevincurley59@btinternet.com or phone 07970 028178.

# Stories and photos of the children and young people we support can be seen at [www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk](http://www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk)

# If you would like to see our most recent ‘Achievements’ report and our accounts please email Kevin Curley

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