



South of England Advocacy Projects

Appointment of Chair of the Board of Trustees

Information for Candidates

May 2009



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This document provides candidates with information on the appointment of the Chair of the Board of Trustees for South of England Advocacy Projects. For further information about this organisation please visit the website at <http://www.seap.org.uk>

1. The Organisation

Background

South of England Advocacy Projects (SEAP) is a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. SEAP was formed in 2000, having taken over the management of three projects from a local Council for Voluntary Services.

SEAP now oversees the management of 6 projects across the South East and South West regions:

- *MY CHOICE* (Adults with Learning Disabilities) – East Sussex
- *Xpress* (Children & Young People) – East Sussex
- *ICAS* (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service) – South East & South West Regions – supporting those who wish to make a complaint about their NHS healthcare
- *Mental Health Advocacy Service* (Adults with Mental Health Issues) – East Sussex, East and West Berkshire & Slough
- *SEAP Portsmouth* (IMCA/Mental Health/Learning Disability/Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment Advocacy/Appropriate Adult) – Portsmouth
- *SEAP Cornwall* (IMCA/Mental Health Advocacy) – Cornwall and Isles of Scilly.

The purpose of the organisation is to ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of those using health and social care services are promoted to service providers; and to provide advocacy support to individuals or groups who wish to resolve specific issues. It achieves this primarily in two ways:

- Advocates provide information, support and representation to clients relating to specific difficulties, concerns, or complaints
- The organisation works directly with service providers at local and national level, aiming to ensure that client experiences are at the heart of service planning, implementation and monitoring.

The organisation also provides a number of related services, including training, consultation exercises, and client-group specific services such as buddy schemes, independent visitor services, peer advocacy projects, and supporting clients to be involved in local and national groups.

SEAP is committed to the central advocacy principles of independence, confidentiality, best interests, and empowerment. It believes that the views, wishes and feelings of clients should be central to both its own work, and the planning and delivery of health and social care services. SEAP staff are required to work to high standards of professionalism with both clients and service providers, building good working relationships with key stakeholders across all sectors whilst maintaining the core independence of the service.

Structure and Governance

SEAP is governed by a Trustee Board, currently comprising 9 members. The Chief Executive is Jill Miles, who leads an executive management team of 4. SEAP has over 130 staff plus sessional workers spread over 18 offices across the South of England. SEAP relies on the contribution of volunteers; its services would not always be possible without its 80 trained volunteers who carry out various roles.

The Trustee Board, led by the Chair, is the governing body for SEAP and the policy making and standard setting body for the organisation. It sets the policy of the charity, determines corporate strategy, including setting key strategic objectives, makes major decisions about the use of finances and sets a framework for human resources policy.

2. The Role

SEAP is looking to recruit a Chair to the Board of Trustees to replace our current chair, Marie Casey, who is standing down in June 2009.

SEAP is looking for a dynamic individual to meet this challenge and to lead this fast growing, nationally recognised Advocacy organisation.

Role Description

Purpose of the Role

The Chair is to lead the Board of Trustees in taking responsibility for the overall governance and strategic direction of SEAP, developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing documents, legal and regulatory guidelines.

1. Key Responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the Chair as reflected in models of good governance are as follows:

- To provide leadership for the Board in their role of setting the strategy and policy of the organisation, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets and the strategic plan.
- To ensure that SEAP complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations and to ensure that it pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure with the Chief Executive that SEAP has sufficient resources and deploys its resources in the most effective way in line with the organisation's objects, policies and strategy.
- To ensure that all Board Members are given the opportunity and support where necessary to express their views.
- To ensure that a constructive working relationship is established with, and support provided for, the Chief Executive and that regular meetings are held with the Chief Executive.
- To ensure that the Board delegates sufficient authority to its Committees, the Chair, the Chief Executive and others to enable the business of the organisation to be carried on effectively between Board meetings.
- To ensure that the Board receives professional advice when it is needed.
- To ensure that SEAP is represented as required.
- To ensure that the organisation's affairs are conducted in accordance with the Code of Good Governance and SEAP's code of conduct.

2. Conduct of Board Business

The Chair has a prime but not exclusive responsibility for ensuring that the Board conducts its business effectively. This will mean:

- Maintaining an appropriate balance of Board attention to strategy, policy financial management, performance review, needs of service users and other key decisions in order to exercise effective overall control.
- Agreeing the agenda for each meeting and chairing meetings in such a way as to ensure that the agenda items are dealt with effectively within the target time for the meeting, and in accordance with policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that decisions are correctly recorded by checking the minutes and following up decision points.
- Ensuring that the Board enables service user participation at all levels of the organisation.

3. Delegated Authority between Meetings

- The Chair should maintain a degree of oversight of SEAP's work between meetings of the Board.
- The Chair is responsible for initiating the urgency procedure for any decisions required between meetings, which have not been delegated to staff.

4. Delegated Authority to Review Board Effectiveness

- The Chair shall review the composition and performance of the Board annually, including attendance, and the skills and experience of its individual Members.
- In conjunction with the Chief Executive, the Chair should make recommendations to the Board to remedy any deficiencies.
- The Chair must also ensure that the following areas of Board effectiveness are periodically reviewed:
 - Board and Committee structures
 - Framework of delegation to staff
 - Staff/Board relationship
 - Board Member induction and training needs
 - Board Member appraisals
 - Compliance with SEAP's Code of Conduct

5. Other Specific Authority Delegated to the Chair

The Chair is also required to undertake the following:

- To establish a constructive and effective working relationship with the Chief Executive and to generally act as coach and mentor with appropriate support and monitoring.
- To appraise annually the performance of the Chief Executive in accordance with the SEAP appraisal scheme.
- To ensure periodic review of the remuneration of the Chief Executive and other Members of the Executive Team, in accordance with their contracts of employment.
- To ensure where necessary the Chief Executive is replaced in a timely and orderly fashion, in accordance with the SEAP's Human Resources and equal opportunity policies, chairing the selection panel for appointment.
- To chair an annual Strategic Away Day and participate in a staff away day.
- To authorise Board Members' attendance at major conferences and seminars which accords with SEAP's objectives.
- To receive and act upon as appropriate any confidential matters referred by the Audit & Risk Management Committees and any ad hoc sub committees. The Chair is expected to maintain confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received in the course of carrying out the trustee's responsibilities to SEAP.
- To participate in other Committees as ex-officio Member.

6. Public Relations

The Chair should represent SEAP at functions, events or to the media, acting as organisational spokesperson where appropriate. This role may be shared with other Members of the Board by approval of the Chair on a case by case basis, and is complementary to the Chief Executive's responsibility in this respect.

3. Person Specification

The Chair will be able to demonstrate the skills and track record to lead SEAP, with a vision of how the organisation can make a real impact on policy and practice. He or she must have a passion for the vision of SEAP, and provide the energy, enthusiasm and drive to bring about significant change.

Candidates will be able to demonstrate the following skills and personal qualities:

1. A strong commitment to the vision and values of SEAP
2. Knowledge and understanding of Advocacy within the health and social care field.
3. Experience of chairing a voluntary organisation or public body.
4. Understanding of the voluntary sector
5. High level of interpersonal skills and ability to communicate with service users, staff and stakeholders
6. Proven experience of successful leadership
7. Proven experience of supervision and appraisal of staff at senior management level
8. Proven experience of change management and the ability to respond to a fast moving environment
9. Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
10. Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
11. Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
12. Good, objective, independent judgement
13. Ability to think creatively
14. Strategic vision
15. Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
16. Ability to hold confidential information, and willingness to work to a high threshold of confidentiality

4. Terms of Appointment

Trusteeship is a voluntary role and SEAP's Chair and Trustees are not paid. Reasonable out of pocket expenses will be met.

The role requires a time commitment of between one to two days a month or eighteen to twenty four days a year. This includes 6 formal Trustee Board meetings a year and a Strategic Planning Day.

In addition to meetings of the Board, the Chair will visit and attend regional events, and work with the Chief Executive to strengthen relationships with external stakeholders.

Trustee Board and Committee meetings are currently held in East Sussex. Some travel throughout England will be required.

5. How to Apply

Applications should be sent to:

**Human Resources Department
SEAP
42 Robertson Street
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 1HL**

or by fax: 01424 429163

or email: hr@seap.org.uk

The closing date for applications is **29 May 2009**

Please enclose with your application:

- a full CV, including educational and professional qualifications, a full employment history showing the more significant positions, responsibilities held, relevant achievements and budgets and staff managed;
- a covering statement of not more than two pages summarising your proven ability related to this role and including the name and contact details of two referees (who will not be contacted unless you are shortlisted for final interview);
- the completed detachable candidate summary form and equal opportunities monitoring sheet, which are attached. Applications from all groups are warmly welcomed;
- daytime, evening and/or mobile telephone numbers (to be used with discretion).

The process

The selection panel will select a shortlist of candidates. Interviews are expected to take place in Hastings week commencing 8 June 2009.



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SUMMARY DETAILS

Please complete this form and send with your application to SEAP			
SEAP Chair of the Board to Trustees			
Surname	First name	Initials	Title
Address for correspondence			
Phone	Email		
Mobile			
Latest employer (organisation name)	Latest job title		
How did you learn of this vacancy?			

Please return this form with your application.



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Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

South of England Advocacy Projects values diversity and promotes equality. We encourage and welcome applications from suitably skilled candidates from all backgrounds. Monitoring recruitment and selection procedures is one way of helping us to ensure that there is no discrimination in the way that we recruit and select people for jobs.

To do this we need to know about the diversity profile of people who apply for posts at SEAP. Please help us by providing the following information. The information you give is confidential and will be separated from the application form prior to shortlisting. It will not be accessed by any person involved in making selection decisions. If you prefer not to answer any of the questions, please leave them blank.

Data Protection Act 1998

SEAP will record the information given for the purposes of recruitment and selection monitoring. If you become an employee of SEAP the information will be processed for the purposes of personnel administration only. The information will be retained for monitoring purposes only.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Gender

Male Female

Age

Date of birth: Age: years

Nationality (please state):

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Religion/Belief

Do you follow a particular religion or hold a religious or similar philosophical belief?

Yes No

Ethnic Origin (please check the relevant box)

Asian or Asian British

- Bangladeshi
- Indian
- Pakistani

Any other Asian background (please specify):

Black or Black British

- African
- Caribbean

Any other black background (please specify):

Chinese

- Chinese

Any other Chinese background (please specify):

Mixed

- White & Black Caribbean
- White & Black African
- White & Asian

Any other mixed background (please specify):

White

- British
- Irish

Any other white background (please specify):

Any other ethnic background (please specify):

Sexual Orientation

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Gay woman/lesbian
- Heterosexual/straight
- Other please specify

Disability

A disability has been defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term (i.e. more than 12 months) adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. You may still be considered to have a disability if you are currently not adversely affected but the impairment is likely to recur. People with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are deemed to be covered by the DDA from the point of diagnosis, rather than from the point when the condition has some adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled within the definition of the DDA?

Yes No

If yes, please give details of your disability or condition:

Volunteering

Are you, or have you been, a SEAP volunteer?

Yes No

Please return this form with your application form.