EXETER COMMUNITY INITIATIVES
ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR TRUSTEES
(as at 26.06.12)

Overall Role:
To take overall responsibility (shared collectively with other trustees) for the governance of the organisation, its strategic direction, management and policy-making; and to ensure that the charity pursues its mission and fulfils its charitable objectives and legal responsibilities.

Key Responsibilities:
1. To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as set out in the governing document, and acts at all times in the interests of its beneficiaries.
2. To ensure that the organisation fulfils its legal and best practice responsibilities as an employer (e.g. in respect of Health and Safety, Insurance, Equal Opportunities, etc) and as a charitable company.
3. To ensure that all money and assets are prudently managed and used in pursuit of the objects of the organisation.
4. To ensure that the organisation accounts for its activities to its key stakeholders.
5. To work jointly with other trustees, and act in accordance with ECI's Trustee Code of Practice and other organisational policies and procedures.
6. To ensure that the organisation manages its affairs reasonably and properly, taking account of the risks it faces.
7. To work in the interests of the organisation, and not for personal gain.
8. To ensure that trustees take proper professional advice on matters in which they do not have competence.

Specific Tasks:
1. To attend quarterly meetings of the ECI Council (the Board of Trustees), and an Annual General Meeting, read papers in advance of meetings, and contribute to decisions made at these meetings.
2. To take a key role in at least one specific project of the organisation, which will involve attending Project Committee/Steering/Working Group or other trustees sub-groups meetings as appropriate (Project Committees/Steering Group meetings are usually quarterly).
3. To work with other trustees and Senior Staff to oversee the strategic direction of the organisation, including attending annual strategic planning sessions, and liaising with staff between Committee meetings as appropriate.
4. To oversee the appointment of the Executive Director, and be involved in the appointment of other Senior Staff as appropriate.
5. To supervise and support the Executive Director, and Senior Staff from particular projects with which the trustee is involved, and ensure that other staff and volunteers are properly supervised.
6. To work collaboratively with other trustees to form an effective governing body.
7. To represent the organisation at particular occasions, in liaison with Senior Staff.
8. To keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues which affect its work.
9. To participate in other tasks as arise from time to time.

Skills, Knowledge and Experience Required:
Essential
1. Committed to the aims, ethos and policies of the organisation.
2. Experience of taking strategic decisions in other areas of life.
3. Ability to communicate clearly and effectively.
4. Previous experience of working with Committees and/or team working.
5. Ability to support and encourage other trustees, staff and volunteers, and work effectively with a range of people.

6. Ability to maintain appropriate confidentiality.
7. Skills, knowledge and experience in at least one of the following areas:
   - Trustees responsibilities (e.g. finance, human resources, learning and development, marketing, strategic development, legal, chairing, etc)
   - Specific areas of the organisation's work (e.g. housing, children and families, social inclusion, community work, project development, etc)
   - That which comes from being part of and able to represent the wider interests of a particular group with whom ECI works (e.g. local faith groups, Black and Minority Ethnic communities, etc)

Desirable
8. Knowledge of legal and charity commission requirements of charities.
9. Previous experience of the voluntary sector at Committee or staffing level.

Link trustee role
This role fulfils the following functions:
- act as a critical friend to the project
- act as a well-informed advocate for the project
- feed issues into Strategy, Project and Review Committee (SPRC) or trustee quarterly meetings as appropriate, including contributing to any reviews of project's work instigated by SPRC or trustees

Accountability and reporting for the project's work day to day accountability for the project manager remains through the Chief Executive. Project reporting to trustees would be from the manager to the 'link trustee'.

It was proposed that the link trustee would have the following roles:

The link trustee will be invited to all meetings of any Partnership/Reference/Steering Group, although there is no obligation to attend or chair these meetings. It is expected that the link trustee meet with the project manager for about an hour on a quarterly basis to:
   - enable the project manager to update the link trustee on current work, issues arising (including opportunities and concerns) and future developments
   - provide an opportunity for the trustee to ask questions/make comments/raise concerns about any aspect of the project's work
   - brief the link trustee before any partnership reference group (if applicable)

Please note that specific roles like Chair, Treasurer and Secretary have separate roles and skills required which are reflected in their role descriptions (to be developed)

Time Commitment Involved:
An average minimum of about 2 to 3 hours per month, although the work-load will not be evenly distributed throughout the year.

Expenses
All reasonable travel and other associated expenses will be reimbursed in line with ECI's travel allowance policy.

Background:
The ability of charity trustees to work together for the good of the charity depends essentially on trust, and an understanding of common purpose. This code has been developed by ECI trustees to ensure this trust, and understanding of common purpose is developed and maintained.

General:
- We have responsibility for carrying out our legal responsibilities as trustees, and any others set out in the 'ECI role description for trustees'
- We have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the broad policies, plans and procedures within which the organisation operates
- We recognise that the Chief Executive (through the Management Team) is responsible for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management of the organisation and the implementation of ECI's strategy and business plan
- We have no legal authority to act individually, except when the ECI Council has given us delegated authority to do so
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for the employment of staff, we will fulfill all that is reasonably expected of a good employer
- We will encourage open and transparent decision-making where at all possible, and should be seen to be doing so
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect other local charities or organisations

Commitment:
- We acknowledge that accepting office as a trustee involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the trustee body (ECI Council), attend meetings regularly, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups
- We will get to know the organisation well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in ECI activities
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for learning and development activities

Relationships
- We will strive to work as a team
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Chief Executive, Management Team and other staff, and other relevant stakeholders/partner organisations as appropriate
- We will endeavour to work considerately and respectfully with all those we come into contact with at ECI, respecting different roles and boundaries between roles

Managing Potential Conflicts of Interest
- We will not gain materially or financially from my involvement with ECI unless specifically authorised to do so
- We will act in the best interests of the organisation as a whole, and not as the representative of any particular project or group (whether within or outside ECI) – considering what is best for ECI and its present and future beneficiaries and avoiding bringing ECI into disrepute

- Unless authorised, we will not put ourselves in a position where our personal interests conflict with our duty to act in the interests of the organisation. Where there is a

conflict of interest or even a potential one, we will ensure that it is declared and managed effectively in line with ECI's Articles of Association and any other procedures that may be set out.
- We understand that a failure to declare a conflict of interest, or potential one, may be considered a breach of this code

Confidentiality
- We will observe complete confidentiality when required or asked to do so by the ECI Council, especially regarding matters concerning individual staff
- As a matter of trust we will not discuss the views of other trustees with members of the public outside our meetings
- We will exercise the greatest prudence if a discussion of a potentially contentious issue affecting the organisation arises outside the ECI Council

Conduct
- We will encourage the open expression of views at meetings, but accept collective responsibility for all decision made by the ECI Council or its delegated agents
- We will only speak or act on behalf of the ECI Council or the organisation as a whole when we have been specifically authorised to do so
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the organisation we will follow
the procedures established by the ECI Council
- Our visits to the organisation will be undertaken within the framework established by the ECI Council, liaising with the Chief Executive where appropriate
- In discharging our duties we will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our organisation

Raising Our Concerns
If we have concerns about the organisation as a whole, or about a specific project that we are involved with, we will raise these concerns with any other trustees directly involved and with the Chief Executive or the Management Team member responsible.
- If the issue cannot be resolved to our satisfaction, then we will arrange to meet with the Chair and Chief Executive (and other trustees directly involved if appropriate) and seek to resolve the issue
- If the issue still cannot be resolved to our satisfaction, then we will raise the issue at the next appropriate trustee meeting or by e-mail with all trustees if urgent
- Where concerns relate to overall strategy, policy or governance issues, then these should be raised with the Chair of ECI Council in the first instance, who would seek to resolve the issue, involving other trustees and the Chief Executive as appropriate, and in any event informing the trustees and Chief Executive that this issue has arisen
- If our concern is about issues which would normally be considered 'serious misconduct' under ECI's staff disciplinary procedure, then they should be raised with the Chief Executive and Chair immediately; if concerning the Chief Executive, then only with the Chair in the first instance; and if concerning the Chair, then with the Chair of the Business and Resources Committee in the first instance. Where appropriate, the Chair will then decide to inform the whole of the ECI Council.

Leaving the ECI Council
- We understand that substantial breach of any part of this code may result in a process potentially leading to resignation from the ECI Council
- Should this happen, we will be given the opportunity to be heard. In the event that we are asked to resign, then we will accept the majority decision of trustees in this matter and resign at the earliest possible opportunity
- If we wish to cease to be a trustee of ECI at any time, we will inform the Chair of trustees in advance in writing, stating our reasons for leaving.