



Shildon Railway Institute
Committee Roles
Description

Version 1.1 (Adopted) 11 Jun 2023

Last reviewed and updated: 26 September 2025

The Nolan Principles

As representatives of the shareholding members of this organisation, Officials and Committee Members of Sildon Railway Institute should be familiar with, and be prepared to conduct themselves and serve at all times in a manner aligned to Nolan's seven principles of public life:

- Selflessness,
- Integrity,
- Objectivity,
- Accountability,
- Openness,
- Honesty
- Leadership

Role of Chairperson

The Chairperson (or Chair) has to ensure that the Management Committee functions properly, so everyone is able to contribute fully during the meetings and that all the items on the agenda are discussed and that effective decisions are made.

The position of Chair can be difficult at times, however, it is an important key role on the Committee.

The Chair is expected to provide leadership to the Committee, but must not dominate the meeting or inhibit the contributions of the other Committee Members or (in a general meeting) Members.

Main Duties of the Chair are:

To be a figurehead for the organisation.

- This is a representative role; the Chair acts as a spokesperson for the organisation wherever necessary.

To make sure the Management Committee operates effectively.

- It's the Chair's responsibility to make sure that the Committee is made up of suitable active Committee Members with appropriate skills and experience to run the organisation. They must know the process of the meetings, as set down by the rules.

To ensure appropriate supervision of Staff.

- The Chair will sometimes be required to act as the supervisor to the senior Staff members for the organisation. This will involve developing a system of supervision for the paid workers.

To assist with the management of the organisation;

- The Chair may find him/herself involved in some of the managerial tasks of the organisation.
- This could involve overseeing budgets and expenditure, signing cheques, liaising with the Treasurer, writing and signing letters, participating in the recruitment of new Staff.

An effective Chairperson can play a pivotal role in the success of an organisation, helping to enhance its governance, providing strategic direction and overseeing the management of any senior Staff. The Chairperson also acts as the the ultimate authority within the organisation with regard to Health & Safety Policy and Senior Information Risk Owner in respect of our Data Privacy Policy

The Committee will also elect the role of Vice-Chair to share the responsibilities of the Chair and act in their absence.

Role of Treasurer

The overall role of a Treasurer is to:

- Maintain an overview of the organisation's affairs
- Ensuring its financial viability
- Ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

In small organisations without paid Staff the Treasurer may take a greater role in the day-to-day finances of the organisation.

The Committee will also elect the role of Deputy Treasurer to share the responsibilities of the Treasurer and act in their absence.

Additional duties of the Treasurer

- Overseeing, approving and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements
- Being assured that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs
- Ensuring that the organisation has an appropriate Reserves Policy
- The preparation and presentation of financial reports to the Management Committee
- Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place
- Liaising with any paid Staff and volunteers about financial matters
- Advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plans
- Monitoring investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the organisation's policies and legal responsibilities
- Ensuring the organisation's compliance with legislation
- Ensuring equipment and assets are adequately maintained and insured
- Ensuring that the accounts are prepared and disclosed in the form required by funders and the relevant statutory bodies, e.g. the Financial Conduct Authority
- If external scrutiny of accounts is required, ensuring that the accounts are scrutinised in the manner required (independent examination or audit) and any recommendations are implemented
- Keeping the Management Committee informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
- Contributing to the fundraising strategy of the organisation
- Making a formal presentation of the accounts at the Annual General Meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way
- Sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required

Treasurer person specification

- Commitment to the organisation
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak their mind
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Financial qualifications and experience
- Some experience of finance, fundraising and pension schemes
- The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
- Preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the Committee
- Willingness to be available to Staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis

Role of Secretary

The Secretary has many responsibilities some of which may be delegated by mutual consent to other members of the Management Committee:

The Committee will also elect the role of Deputy Secretary to share the responsibilities of the Secretary and act in their absence.

General responsibilities of Secretary

- To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
- To contribute actively to the Management Committee's role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of any funds.

Additional duties of Secretary

Either personally or by delegation, the Secretary should:

- Receive agenda items from other Committee Members and Staff
- Prepare agendas in consultation with the Chair
- Circulate agendas and supporting papers in good time
- Make arrangements for meetings: book the room or venue, equipment, organise refreshments, dietary requirements etc.
- Ensure there is proper access and appropriate facilities for disabled people
- Check that a quorum is present
- Minute the meetings and circulating the draft minutes to all Committee members
- Ensure that the minutes are signed by the Chair once they have been approved
- Check that Committee members and Staff have carried out action agreed at a previous meeting
- Circulate agendas and minutes of the Annual General Meeting and any Special or Extraordinary General Meetings
- In organisations which are companies, act as company Secretary where this role is not delegated to a member of Staff. This includes ensuring that annual returns are submitted to Companies House as applicable.
- Sit on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required

Secretary person specification

- Commitment to the organisation
Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
Good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak their mind
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and, if applicable, being a Company Secretary
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Organisational ability
- Knowledge or experience of business and Committee procedures
- Minute-taking experience, if this is not being delegated to Staff

General Committee Member Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the broader Committee Members include:

- To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects
- To contribute actively to the Management Committee role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.

- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of any funds.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each Management Committee member should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Management Committee members reach sound decisions.

This may involve:

- Scrutinising Management Committee papers
- Leading discussions
- Focusing on key issues
- Providing guidance on new initiatives
- Other issues in which the Committee Member has special expertise

Membership Coordinator - takes responsibility for maintenance and security of the register of members, issue of share certificates, claims for share withdrawal, membership resignation and annual renewal.

Volunteer Coordinator - takes the lead on behalf of the Management Committee on, but is not solely responsible for, induction of volunteers including signing of a volunteer agreement, volunteer communication networking and co-ordination of volunteer activity as part of day to day operation of the Institute and special event planning.

Events Coordinator - takes the lead on behalf of the Management Committee on, but is not solely responsible for, co-ordination and arrangement of events. Liaises with the Premises Manager over management of the calendar of event bookings. Guides the Management Committee on upcoming opportunities and celebrations in which the Institute could or should participate.

Other members of the Committee may have roles and duties (shared or solo) named or otherwise that require a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort, safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.

To ensure these roles are carried out in an effective and efficient manner

Adopted Principles of Good Governance

Make sure that all members of the Management Committee and Staff understand the organisation's business or other plans, and that there are clear priorities or targets, budgets and financial information to match the plan.

Ensure the Committee has the right mix of people, skills and abilities to support and develop the organisation and its plan.

Maintain the written policies and procedures that guide our organisation annually and ensure everyone is working in a coherent way, including our code of conduct for the Management Committee.

Ensure Committee members are well informed – they can't fulfil their role without quality information. Well prepared reports, papers and proposals distributed in advance of meetings play a part in achieving quality decisions.

Ensure that financial reporting is given due importance, and that Committee members can understand what is being said and recommended. Do not rely on decisions made 'on advice' or 'in good faith' - which would be a high risk strategy.

Spend time on building good relationships to underpin and determine the quality of discussion and decision-making.

Ensure the Management Committee understand its role and responsibilities – clear role descriptions and a person specification clarify what is required.

The Committee are representatives of the community of members that elected them - and should consult with their stakeholders members and the community.