



A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) No. 1181855

Membership of Sanctuary In Chichester - a paper for inclusion on the agenda for the 2022 annual general meeting to be held on 31st October 2022 at St Paul's Community Hall, Northside, Chichester PO19 6FT

Sanctuary in Chichester provides practical, social and pastoral support to refugees and asylum seekers in the Chichester area.

First registered in 2019 the charity has grown exponentially particularly during 2021 and the first half of 2022 due largely to the evacuation of refugees from Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine.

The constitution of the charity envisages two main elements of governance i.e. a board of trustees (max 12) that has been in place since the incorporation albeit with a number of changes. The key post holders are the chair of trustees, the treasurer and secretary. In addition there is a lead trustee for safeguarding, for befriending, for the Drop-In, for English language tutoring and for data protection.

The constitution also depicts 'members'. This element has not until now been formalised and this paper makes proposals to our annual general meeting to do just that.

The constitution states: It is the duty of each member of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to exercise his or her powers as a member of the CIO in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO.

The members of Sanctuary In Chichester are largely its volunteers and supporters. The term 'supporters' relates largely to donors but may also include other individuals or organisations upon whom the charity relies for essential support e.g West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council or the Chichester Rotary clubs.

Any person or organisation may apply to become a member and the trustees must consider and decide whether or not to accept each application on its merits.

The current board of trustees believe that members bring real benefits both to the work of the charity and for society more generally. It is through its members that the best charities shape their agendas and objectives and the trustee body is refreshed and its accountability to its members improves.

There may be a charge for membership (as there is with many of the larger charities such as National Trust) but this paper does not recommend a charge for membership of Sanctuary In Chichester at this point.

Members elect the trustees at each annual general meeting. Members may also make proposals for any changes to the charity they see necessary either at an AGM or call a separate meeting of members and trustees if sufficient members feel that such a meeting is necessary.

The trustees elect a chair, secretary and treasurer from among their number, Trustees may also appoint additional or replacement trustees during the year between AGMs.

Trustees are tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the charity's work ensuring best practice and good governance in line with the Charity Commission's requirements and advice.

It is believed important therefore that any new nominations being considered by members for a notified AGM be communicated to the standing trustees ahead of the meeting.

Trustees also appoint paid members of staff and oversee the Safeguarding Policy that amongst other things, sets out the requirements for becoming a volunteer for the charity.

All trustees and members must act and make decisions that are entirely in the charity's best interests.

Any personal benefit or interest can only be permitted within the terms set out in the constitution.

Conclusion: Sanctuary In Chichester is blessed with a growing number of dedicated and accomplished volunteers providing essential support to refugees and asylum seekers. In addition the charity has a wide range of supporters many of whom give money generously and others provide a range of benefits in kind and the statutory authorities provide hugely valuable help and guidance.

Recommendation: that the AGM held on 31st October 2022 approve this paper in its entirety.

Tony Toynton  
Chair of trustees

Note: this paper is circulated with the proposal to hold an AGM, any member who wishes to propose any amendment at the AGM should notify the trustees in advance and not later than two weeks before the meeting date. The chair of the AGM reserves the right not to accept any substantive amendments that have not been duly notified in advance.