The Assembly

Terms of reference

1. Role

The purpose of the Assembly is for its members to form the majority of the Charity's Company Membership and to ensure the experience and expertise at the local level is directly available to the Board of Trustees. The role of the Assembly will be to help inform the Board of Trustees in their decision making and represent the views of the wider membership.

2. Responsibilities

i. debate issues of common interest and concern relating to the delivery and development of services to victims and witnesses;

ii. identify and comment upon strategic options and policy for consideration by the Board of Trustees;

iii. identify for the Board of Trustees patterns of service need and delivery for future attention by the charity;

iv. ensure that all volunteers have a collective means of informing and influencing the decisions of management, and where applicable, the Board of Trustees and attend relevant regional forums and area forums where possible; and

v. put forward suitable candidates (excluding the Chair) with relevant experience to sit on Committees of the Board, working groups and policy forums.

3. Membership

Only Supporter Members are eligible for election to the Assembly and must be nominated and elected by Supporter Members from their region. The Assembly will be constituted of two elected representatives per region (four for London) and the Chair to be drawn from the Supporter Membership.

No Trustee, other than the Chair of the Assembly, shall be a Member of the Assembly. No employee of the Charity shall be a Member of the Assembly, other than a Supporter Member who is paid for no more than 75 hours in any year, calculated from the point at which they joined the Supporter Membership.

No Assembly member shall usually be eligible to serve as an Assembly member for more than two consecutive full terms, each of three years.

4. Officers

Assembly Members shall elect a Chair by postal vote and the results will be announced by the retiring Chair at the AGM. On appointment the Chair shall cease to serve as a regional representative. The affected region will then elect an additional member to the Assembly.

The Chair of the Assembly shall automatically become a Trustee Ex-officio and shall remain so unless he or she ceases to be a Trustee or Chair of the Assembly.

No Chair shall usually be eligible to serve as such (and therefore as Trustee) for more than two consecutive full terms, each of three years.

Assembly Members shall be elected a Vice Chair by a closed ballot and the results will be announced by the retiring Chair at the AGM.

No Vice Chair shall usually be eligible to serve as such for more than two consecutive full terms, each of three years.

5. Quorum

The quorum for Assembly meetings is 11 members.

6. Frequency of meetings

The Assembly shall meet not less than four times a year and shall feed into and from local meetings and meetings of the Board of Trustees.

7. Communication & accountability

i. The Assembly will report any issue of concern to management, and where applicable, the Board of Trustees at the earliest opportunity;

ii. The minutes of the Assembly shall be presented to the first available Board of Trustees' meeting.

8. Role of National Centre Staff

i. The [Assistant] Chief Executive or nominee will be in attendance at all Assembly meetings and with the agreement of the Chair will invite such other members of the Charity's staff as may be useful to have in attendance [Locality Directors].
ii. The Board of Trustees is responsible for providing staff to convene and to act as a secretariat to the Assembly, including all administration before and after meetings; provision of information and advice; and communicating the Assembly's decisions. All staff work is carried out in the context of normal line management arrangements within the National Centre.

The Assembly

Role description

1. Term of office

Assembly members are initially appointed for a three year term. Assembly members can generally not serve for more than two consecutive full terms and after this time must stand down. Assembly members are required to retire by rotation, with one third retiring each year.

2. Time commitment

The Assembly usually meets four times a year. Meetings generally last three hours and are held during work hours. Assembly members are expected to adequately prepare for, attend and contribute to all Assembly meetings and participate in additional tasks and meetings as required by the Board. These include attendance at the Annual General Meeting and optional membership of Board committees or Assembly work plan projects.

In addition Assembly members must attend two regional forums per year and alternate the chair with their regional counterpart/s. At least one Assembly member from the region should also attend each area forum in the region. These meetings may alternate between evening and office hours. Assembly members are also invited to attend local management meetings.

Regular annual commitments include:

- 4 half day meetings of the Assembly
- 2 half day meetings of regional forums (additional attendance is optional)
- 5 half day meetings of areas forums (additional attendance is optional)
- 6 half day local management meetings (additional attendance is optional)
- 1 full day meeting of the Annual General Meeting
- Committee commitments as appropriate

3. Expenses

The position of Assembly member is unpaid. However, all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred on charity business will be reimbursed.

4. Personal specification

Assembly members will be required to demonstrate the following: -

Essential

1. The aims and principles of Victim Support
2. The voluntary sector and or volunteering
3. Service delivery
4. Community engagement

Desirable

1. Networks/alliances
2. Collaboration/partnership working
3. Conflict resolution
4. The Criminal Justice System