Community & Voluntary Services cheshire east

Join us as a Trustee FAQ

This document aims to answer some of the common questions you may have if you are thinking about applying to become a Trustee at CVS Cheshire East.

This should be read in conjunction with the other documents in our recruitment pack in particular the Trustee Role description and Person Specification.

If you have any further questions, please contact:
Caroline Whitney, Chief Executive, caroline.Whitney@cvsce.org.uk or 07792 754904

Further information on the charity and the full recruitment pack can be found on our website https://www.cvsce.org.uk/join-our-board

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1. Who is CVS Cheshire East?

Community and Voluntary Services (CVS) Cheshire East is a membership organisation that provides specialist unique development and advice services to charities and voluntary and community and faith groups.

We currently have a membership of over 220 voluntary and community sector organisations and have a community network of over 1500 Voluntary, community and faith Groups within Cheshire East. We actively support over 400 of these organisations each year but communicate with them all!

Our purpose is to increase our member's ability and capacity to deliver services and activities which improve the quality of life for the community within Cheshire East.

CVS Cheshire East came into existence in January 2010 as a result of the merger of three charities Crewe and Nantwich District Voluntary Action, Congleton District Voluntary Action and Macclesfield and District Council for Voluntary Services. These organisations were providing services in the old local authority districts of Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton and Macclesfield.

Our Vision:

Building Strong Empowered Communities that make a difference

Our Mission:

Building Dynamic Communities

Build Strong self-motivated communities that are skilled, informed and knowledgeable

Inspiring Volunteering

Inspire the community to volunteer and showcase the diverse range of roles available within the community

Empower a Voice

Empower the voluntary and community sector to have a strong voice

2. How is CVS Cheshire East managed?

We are a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee which is managed by a Board of Trustees and is supported by a Chief Executive with a staff team of 13 and a volunteer team of 21.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of CVS Cheshire East, developing the organisations aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document (copy enclosed in recruitment pack), legal and regulatory guidelines

We currently have 6 trustees (5 men and 1 women) 3 who are representative of our membership and 3 co-opted. We are currently recruiting for Trustees from our current membership to ensure the board retains a membership majority. We are also interested in individuals that bring specific skills and attributes to be co-opted onto the board.

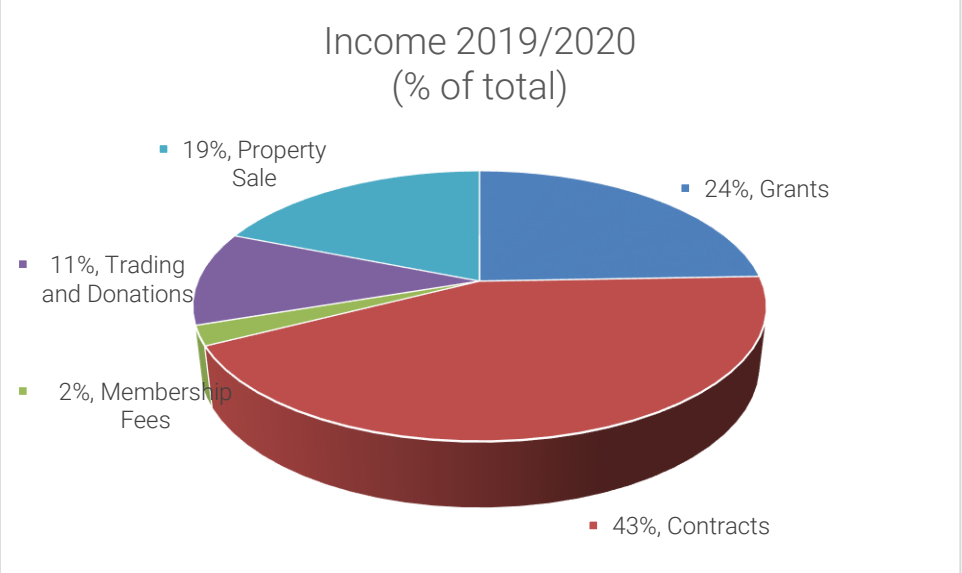
The Board of Trustees delegates the day to day operations of the charity to the Chief Executive and the staff team.

3. How is CVS Cheshire East funded?

In 2020 CVS Cheshire East has a turnover of just over £500,000.

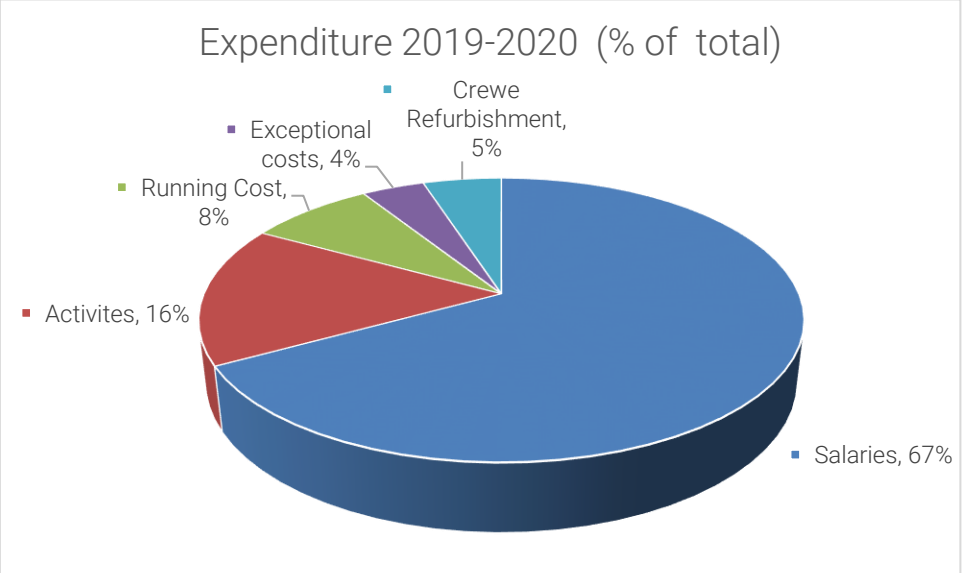
Our income is split into the following areas.

Our funding comes mainly from Public Sector grants and contracts. We also have a small amount from our back office services and training currently about 11%. In 2019 we sold a property which was a one off income. This increased the turnover by £99k.



Our expenditure is split into the following areas:

We always strive for a balanced budget. In 2019 operationally we had a small surplus.



If you would like further financial information please contact our Chief Executive, Caroline Whitney. Copies of our audited accounts can be found at www.cvsce.org.uk/about-us

4. What services does CVS deliver?

We provide services within the Cheshire East Borough Council area. Since January 2019 we operate from 1 bases one in Crewe. During 2019 we sold our base in Macclesfield and went into a 10 year rental agreement for our Sandbach site providing income for the charity.

We provide development and advice services in 5 main areas;

I. Training and development
   For example, our training includes; how to manage accounts, how to use social media and first aid
II. Recruitment and development of Volunteers
   For example, we help groups identify what volunteers they need, advertise volunteer opportunities and signpost people that are interested in volunteering
III. Governance and Funding Advice (how to run a charity)
   For example, we help groups become registered charities, advise them on how to fundraise
IV. Representation, Lobbying and networking
   For example, we run regular network sessions for individuals to meet, we lobby the public sector ensure equal opportunities for the third sector
V. Back office support
   For example, we rent meeting room space

5. Why should I be a Trustee for CVS Cheshire East?

CVS Cheshire East is working to our 5-year strategy which has some ambitious plans for how we will deliver our services in the future. These plans will mean that there will be exciting challenges and change ahead for the organisation. You will have the opportunity to use your skills and experience and be part of the new strategy for the organisation helping to ensure we continue to deliver a high quality service to our members.

CVS Cheshire East is able to directly impact on people's lives and our community as a whole and you can be part of that. You will be able to hear how through placing someone in a volunteering role we have helped people back into work or even for some people volunteering helps them overcome a health issue.

For example, one volunteer told us;
"It's been a life saver... Whilst I'm unemployed and slightly demoralised at the state of the current job market, volunteering has given me purpose! Also it's allowing me to acquire new skills and experiences that I can take on with me through my whole life. Very good experience!"

6. What does being a Trustee for CVS Cheshire East involve?

Being a trustee for any charity is a big decision and as a trustee you will be responsible for the charity so you should understand the role and the organisation. There may be some times when tough and difficult decisions need to be made, for example staff redundancies or removal of services.

Trustees that are joining the board from a member organisation must ensure that their actions on the board are at all times taken in the best interest of CVS Cheshire East not the organisation they are representing.

Being a trustee is a voluntary position and we don't offer a payment to our trustees for their time and expertise. We will however cover any out of pocket expenses that you may have.

CVS Cheshire East is a Company Limited by guarantee which means that you will have limited liability if the organisation had financial problems. Each trustee is equally responsible in an organisation and we ensure that all trustees have access to the financial reports at the board meetings and through the Finance Committee.

It is expected that Trustees will need to commit around 8 hours per month to the role. This includes:

- 6 Board meetings per year (we meet in the evenings and rotate between our offices in Sandbach and Crewe)
- being part of 1 Sub committee
- Attending 2 away days per year
- Ad hoc attending events on behalf of CVS Cheshire East

7. What skills and experiences is CVS Cheshire East looking for in a Trustee?

Currently the Board of Trustees are recruiting for representatives from the membership. This could be a staff member, volunteer or trustee/committee member from the organisation.

The Board would be keen to ensure that the board represents our membership and so would encourage individuals from a range of voluntary sector organisations including:

- Volunteer led organisations/groups – no paid staff
- Faith based organisations

We are also specifically aiming to ensure our board is representative of our community and so would encourage applications from:

- Young People (18-35)
- Women
- Black and minority ethnic

Please see our Trustee role description for further information.

8. What is your application process?

Our Application process is currently ongoing and we are accepting applications at any time.

Once your application is received a panel of trustees will review the application and then invite you for an informal interview to discuss the role.

Applicants successful after interview will then be invited to the next Trustee meeting.

Successful candidates will be co-opted onto the board until the next AGM where the appointment will be ratified by the membership. Until this time, you would be a full part of all discussions but would not have a vote.

It is expected that new members would attend at least two trustee board meetings before becoming a trustee. This is to ensure that there is time for you to make an informed decision about becoming a trustee and accepting the responsibility.