



## **Trustee Application Pack**

**Becoming a Restorative Justice Council  
Trustee**

**December 2021**

Dear colleague

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of the Restorative Justice Council (RJC). This document is intended to help you to decide whether to stand and sets out what the role involves.

Our role as a board is about corporate governance – collectively setting goals and ensuring that the RJC works effectively to meet those goals for the public benefit.

We do that by drawing on the experience of trustees from a range of backgrounds to focus on four key tasks:

- A. working with the chief executive to set the RJC's strategic direction
- B. holding the chief executive and the staff team to account for their work
- C. working with the chief executive to do joint problem-solving work
- D. providing oversight of financial and governance issues

Of course, board membership also means collectively making and owning shared decisions.

We have two types of trustees:

1. membership trustees, who are elected by the RJC's members
2. council trustees, who are recruited by the board to bring specific expertise to its work

If elected to the board, you would be a membership trustee and your term would last for three years. If you want to, you can stand for re-election on two occasions, meaning that the maximum length of time that you can be a trustee is nine years.

As trustees, over the next three years we will be responsible for ensuring that our ambitious strategic plan is delivered. We have set four key objectives which include:

- Expand our focus to increase knowledge of, and an evidence base for, restorative justice across all sectors
- Create collaborative relationships with statutory agencies across sectors to promote and increase the application of restorative justice
- Raise public awareness of restorative justice
- Consult with our membership and draw on their expertise to expand our reach and ensure that our goals and strategies reflect their concerns

To ensure we are successful, we require a board which has:

1. Clarity in our purpose, business plans and financial and other risk management so that trustees can exercise proper stewardship in the best interests of the RJC on behalf of our members.
2. Leadership skills and experience of managing change.
3. The ability to make clear decisions at and, when needed, between meetings.
4. Agreed stakeholder roles for trustees, working with staff, to ensure all our key partners are engaged.

### **A balanced board**

Our constitution requires most of the board be made up of membership trustees. Membership trustees are elected from the RJC's membership by other members, based on their experience and expertise. It is vital that the board and staff team can draw on that expertise to inform our decisions.

The other type of board members are council members. As a board we also undertake periodic skill set reviews to make sure we have the right mix of skills on the board, including the full range of both restorative experience and business skills available.

Applications from potential trustees who have the following skills/or who are from the following sectors would be particularly welcome:

### Skills

- finance, income generation and fundraising
- business development
- standards and practice development

### Sectors

- education
- mental health / social care
- housing
- victim and/or offender services
- police
- youth justice
- academia

### Trustee requirements and expectations

Trustees must:

- be willing to be an active member of the board by preparing for and attending meetings, contributing ideas, and playing a full part in discussions
- be willing to contribute to building a positive and supportive environment that enables the RJC to thrive
- have a strong personal commitment to the charitable aims of the RJC and to restorative practice

The board meets every two months. Board meetings are normally held online in the evening, typically between 7.30pm and 9.3-pm. The agenda and papers for the meeting are circulated a week before, and time needs to be put aside to prepare.

In addition, board members are normally expected to contribute their time, where possible, to other ad hoc activities - for example, by taking part in recruitment, responding to requests for advice from the chair or chief executive, commenting on papers, attending meetings or speaking at events. Trustees may be invited to join formal or informal working groups as circumstances demand.

The chair between meetings engages other trustees as needed to liaise with the chief executive on decisions needed between board meetings. The chair and the chief executive also liaise with individual trustees according to specialist knowledge and expertise between meetings. All trustees are asked to take a horizon scanning role in their daily work so that emerging opportunities (or threats) are shared with the chair and chief executive.

Members of the board are volunteers and are therefore unpaid. Their travel expenses to attend meetings and carry out other RJC activities are paid by the RJC.

## In summary

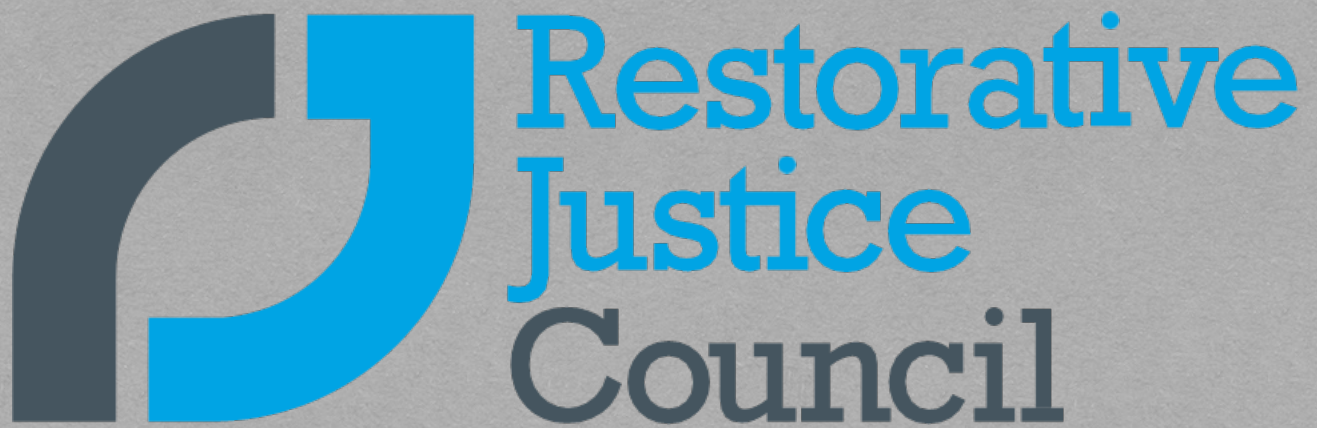
This is a demanding role in corporate governance. You can, however, help support the development of restorative practice by playing a key strategic role in ensuring that the RJC delivers on its promises in support of more and better restorative work. This can be challenging but it is also hugely rewarding for trustees who have worked in the restorative practice field and see its enormous potential for good.

I hope this document helps you make the decision about whether to stand as a trustee. If you would like to find out more about what is involved, a current trustee would be more than happy to talk to you on the phone – or meet you in person – to discuss their experiences. If you would like to arrange this, please contact [james.simon@restorativejustice.org.uk](mailto:james.simon@restorativejustice.org.uk) or on **0203 5815717**.

Best wishes

**Dr Gerard Drennan**

**Chair, Restorative Justice Council**



## **Appendix 1**

**What does the Charity Commission say  
trustees have to do?**

### Compliance - trustees must:

- Have and accept ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.
- Ensure that the charity complies with charity law, and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator; in particular, ensure that the charity prepares reports on what it has achieved and Annual Returns and accounts as required by law.
- Ensure that the charity does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in its governing document and that it remains true to the charitable purpose and objects set out there.
- Comply with the requirements of other legislation and other regulators (if any) which govern the activities of the charity.
- Act with integrity and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or misuse of charity funds or assets.

### Duty of prudence - trustees must:

- Ensure that the charity is and will remain solvent.
- Use charitable funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the charity's objects.
- Avoid undertaking activities that might place the charity's endowment, funds, assets, or reputation at undue risk.
- Take special care when investing the funds of the charity or borrowing funds for the charity to use.

### Duty of care - trustees must:

- Use reasonable care and skill in their work as trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that the charity is well-run and efficient.
- Consider getting external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the charity, or where the trustees may be in breach of their duties.

The responsibilities of trustees are also discussed in the Charity Commission guide *The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know*, which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>, and in the law firm Bates Wells Braithwaite's helpful guide to Duties of Charity Trustees, which is available at <http://www.bwbllp.com/file/duties-of-charity-trustees-colour-amended-version-pdf>.



## **Appendix 2**

**The RJC board of trustees skills and experiences**

### **Trustees' skills and experiences will be used to:**

Develop a shared view of the purpose, aims and strategy of the RJC – the three-year plan. This will set out agreed priorities.

- Adopt the annual business plan.
- Monitor financial and performance reports against the annual and three-year plan.
- Approve structures and processes to achieve the RJC's goals.
- Monitor RJC policies and practices to ensure they meet financial, constitutional and legal standards. This includes:
  - HR policies
  - Financial and accounting procedures
  - Data protection
  - Fair assessment for Registered Practitioners, Training Providers, Service Providers and Restorative organisations, and process for handling complaints/appeals
  - Procurement

### **Ensure risk to the RJC is minimised by:**

- Regular review of our risk register
- Strategic management
- Ensuring a fair and transparent complaints system
- Being ready to support the chair and chief executive in any crisis management
- Ensure continuous improvement including by performance review and by training for trustees and staff.
- From time to time the trustees will resolve to draw in additional expertise to assist with specific work.

### **Individual trustee**

Trustees will work with each other trustees, the chief executive and staff to achieve the best for the RJC by:

- Adding value through their skills and experience.
- Asking the right questions to check assumptions and clarity.
- Bringing objective 'big picture' thinking to discussions.
- Declaring any conflict of interest in discussions (and maintaining an up to date register of trustees' interests).
- Ensuring the right balance is maintained between short term needs and the long view.
- Keeping the needs of the whole field of restorative practice in mind (schools, care, criminal justice system, workplace etc).
- Using their skills and experience on specific work both inside and outside board meetings – including understanding of specific stakeholder groups.
- Committing to participate in induction and training as required for effective governance of and contribution to the RJC.



## About the RJC

The Restorative Justice Council (RJC) is the independent third sector membership body for the field of restorative practice. It provides quality assurance and a national voice advocating the widespread use of all forms of restorative practice, including restorative justice. The RJC's vision is of a restorative society where everyone has access to safe, high quality restorative practice wherever and whenever it is needed.

### Restorative Justice Council

Rouen House, Rouen Road Norwich, NR1 1RB

E: [enquiries@restorativejustice.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@restorativejustice.org.uk)

W: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)

Patron: HRH the Princess Royal

Company no 4199237

Charity no 1097969

## Follow us



**[@RJCouncil](https://twitter.com/RJCouncil)**



**[@restorativejusticecouncil](https://www.facebook.com/restorativejusticecouncil)**



**[RJC - Restorative Justice Council](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rjc-restorative-justice-council)**