



Godmanchester Baptist Church

The role of Leadership Team as GBC Trustees

1. Introduction

GBC is a community of God's people seeking to see the Kingdom come through loving God, loving each other and making disciples. The Leadership Team (LT) are responsible for the spiritual direction of the church, worship and prayer, discipleship, outreach and the administration of the church.

GBC is also a charitable organisation which owns buildings, employs people and has a range of legal responsibilities. This paper outlines the responsibilities the members of LT have as legally accountable trustees of a charity.

As trustees, LT have to ensure that GBC carries out its **public benefit purposes** and complies with the Church Constitution and the law. They must act in GBC's best interests, manage resources responsibly, act with reasonable care and skill, and ensure that GBC is accountable.

The public benefit purposes of the Church are:

- a) **To advance the Christian Religion in accordance with the Church Covenant,**
- b) **To relieve persons who are in conditions of need or hardship or who are aged or sick and to relieve the distress caused thereby.**

What this means for everyone

We cannot do anything we like. We have to do things which either advance the Christian Religion or help people in need. Members of LT must do what will best enable the charity to carry out its purposes.

2. Legal responsibilities of LT

LT may undertake the following activities listed as 'powers' in the Constitution, *(as long as they further the objectives)*:

- **Raise funds and other contributions and borrow money including as a mortgage on the property but not to undertake any substantial permanent trading activities.**
- **Buy, lease, manage and sell property;**
- **Employ staff;**
- **Co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities;**
- **Establish charitable trusts, associations or institutions**
- **Support and make donations or loans to other charities, voluntary bodies and Christian workers**
- **Appoint advisory committees**
- **Produce literature, audio and visual aids and other media of communication;**
- **Arrange meetings, lectures, seminars, conferences and training courses;**
- **Regulate the management of any subsidiary organisations.** These are currently any preschool, children's and youth clubs, Godmanchester FoodBank, and Lunch Club

What this means for LT

LT must make balanced and adequately informed decisions, thinking about the long term as well as the short term. They must not put themselves in a position where there is a conflict of personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body. They, or anyone financially connected to them, must not receive any benefit from the charity unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in the charity's interests (for example, the remuneration of Trustees within limits defined by the Church Constitution).

Decisions by the LT are not to serve the interests of trustees or staff, the personal interests of church members or other donors, or indeed GBC as an institution in itself.

What this means for activity leaders

You must ensure that LT have agreed to the way your activity is managed and that it is clear which decisions have been delegated for you to make.

3. Finance

Trustees are responsible for the finances of the charity including its subsidiary organisations.

What this means for LT

LT are expected to set a budget and keep track of it, put in place clear policies and procedures to deal with income and expenditure, to keep accurate records of income and expenditure, to have robust and effective financial controls in place, to protect GBC from financial crime such as theft or fraud, to have an appropriate reserves policy and to ensure the charity receives tax reliefs to which it is entitled.

LT must make sure that GBC's assets are only used to support or carry out its purposes, avoid exposing GBC's assets or reputation to undue risk, not over-commit the charity and take special care when investing or borrowing. The LT have to have appropriate procedures and safeguards in place and take reasonable steps to ensure that these are followed.

What this means for activity leaders

LT are responsible for the financial accounting and auditing of your activity, even if the day-to-day management of monies is carried out within your activity. You must follow the procedures laid out in the "Financial Procedures" document.

4. Risks

LT have to manage risk responsibly in managing property, employing staff, using volunteers, using IT, working with children, young people or adults at risk, or implementing new activities. LT cannot expose GBC to undue risk but can take responsible risks. Therefore, LT has a process for identifying and assessing risks, and deciding how to deal with them.

What this means for activity leaders

You must follow the GBC policies and procedures for safeguarding, health and safety and risk assessments. You must have LT agreement before you extend your activity. This includes being aware of fire safety, having evacuation procedures appropriate to your activity in the event of a fire and ensuring that all of your team are aware of them.

5. Staff and volunteers

LT must ensure that GBC complies with relevant law including employment, pension, equality and health and safety law. They must make sure that volunteers are clearly distinct from employees in terms of responsibilities and rights.

LT also have to ensure that people are clear about what they are supposed to do, through appropriate job descriptions for staff or role descriptions for volunteers, that people are aware of the rules and boundaries within which they must work, that people work safely, that people know what to do if there is a problem, and that people know what they need to report and who they report to.

What this means for activity leaders

You must make sure your volunteers follow the GBC guidelines and procedures applicable to their role. You have to advise LT if this is not happening. Each of your volunteers should have a clear role description.