One Minute Tips on Governance

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Third Sector

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Foreword

When charities are in the news, it is often because something has not been properly dealt with around the board table. Governance is a subtle, multi-faceted subject and the rules are far from simple.

Third Sector magazine wanted to offer readers cumulative insights into the complexities of good governance without asking too much of their time. We came up with Checklist, a fortnightly column of no more than 200 words that would make two or three key points.

There was some resistance among our expert contributors: it can be much harder to write concisely than at length. But Mike Hudson and others rose to the challenge and Checklist ran for more than five years without running out of important subject matter, simply dealt with.

I'm delighted that Mike, rather than leave his wide contributions sitting in the archive of our website, has collected them into a booklet for wider distribution. Each page takes only one minute to read but leaves you with a lot to think about: there should be a copy by every trustee's bed.

Stephen Cook
Editor
Third Sector

Introduction

Compass Partnership has a strong commitment to sharing learning from our consultancy work with as many people as possible. We also make significant investment in evidence based research into the governance and management of civil society organisations.

The booklet brings both those commitments together by promoting our learning and structuring it under the four headings of the Compass – Cass Business School model of governance.

This model (shown overleaf) identifies the wide range of characteristics that need to be managed to deliver effective governance. It was developed through our research (*Delivering Effective Governance*, DSC, 2012) that pinpointed the most important determinants of effective governance. That work demonstrated that whilst the structures and processes of governance need to be well managed, the best boards pay particular attention to team working and board member behaviours.

The articles written for Third Sector on these topics have been brought together in this booklet and lightly edited to provide a compendium of topical guidance for anyone involved in the governance of civil society organisations.

Compass-Cass Governance Model

The determinants of effective governance include:

Governance

Structures

- Governance structure
- Board size
- Terms of office
- Term limits
- Representation
- Committee types
- Committee size
- Task and advisory groups
- Subsidiaries
- Members from nations and stakeholder groups
- Vice chairs

Processes

- Succession plans
- Recruitment
- Appointment
- Diversity
- Induction
- Remuneration
- Skills/experience
- Chair selection
- Committee selection
- Strategy and performance
- Risk Governance
- CE performance
- Performance of governance

Meetings

- Frequency
- Duration
- Attendance
- Agenda planning
- Meeting management
- Quality of papers
- Consent item
- CE's/ Managers presence
- Away days

Behaviours

- Use of board member skills
- Listening
- Team working
- Praise/challenge
- Openness / trust
- Strategic focus
- Outside meetings
- Conflicts of interest
- Chair – CE relationship
- Experience of other boards

Governance Structures

Lead trustees – boon or bane

Lead trustees are members of a board who take particular responsibility for an area of work - for example, as a treasurer. Other functions for which there might be a lead trustee include finance, fundraising, services, campaigns and human resources.

There are strongly held arguments in favour of lead trustees. Boards are more comfortable if a member with relevant experience takes on such responsibilities. And being a lead trustee enables the organisation to make better use of trustee expertise.

It can also strengthen relationships between the board and management. In some cases, the board member can be a voluntary 'coach' for the relevant senior manager.

There are also strong arguments against lead trustees including the ever-present danger of lead members becoming complicit with management, finding it increasingly difficult to remain independent and objective. Lead trustees can further blur the often murky boundary between governance and management.

When there is a clear role and holders are aware of the dangers, lead trustees can be valuable. Otherwise, all board members should give their full attention to aspects of governance and not rely on a few colleagues to shoulder particular responsibilities.

Ensuring advisory councils add value

An advisory council can add great value to an organisation. It can bring together various stakeholder groups to advise the board on the big policy and strategy issues.

These councils are becoming more common as boards become smaller and can no longer accommodate representatives from the different locations, user groups and professions.

When well-managed, they provide a place for scrutinising policy and plans. They bring different perspectives into the organisation and alert the board to sensitive issues. When meetings are not well planned or prepared, they can quickly become a source of discontent.

Good communication between the board and its advisory council is essential. It's best to have some cross-membership between the board and its council or to require board members to attend council meetings. Generally, the two should be chaired by different people, who will need to establish and maintain open and trusting personal relationships.

Before establishing a council or reinvigorating an existing one, make sure it can be given sufficient attention by management and the board. With well-planned and resourced meetings, everyone can add wisdom, insight and judgement.

Governance Processes

Tips on appointing the chair

The appointment of a new chair of an organisation is a critical moment in its life. A good appointment can bring energy and application. The wrong appointment can lead to torpor or even strife.

Most appointments need to start with the constitution of the organisation, so check first at what it requires about the appointment of the chair and about the terms trustees may serve. You may conclude that the most promising potential chairs are running out of time.

Some constitutions allow chairs to serve an extra term and some are altogether less prescriptive. Neither length of service nor being the vice-chair are necessarily the best qualifications to become chair. Indeed, it's worth making it clear that there is no presumption of this preferment when a vice-chair is appointed.

Recruiting both externally and from among existing trustees can be energising, but also costly and time-consuming. Trustees need to agree the overall approach to recruitment and designate one person with the skills and time to lead the search.

Involving the chief executive is important. A confident chief executive will want a chair who is challenging as well as supportive and, better still, a joy to work with.

Regular feedback for the chair

Being a charity chair is a demanding role that requires skill, judgement and continuous honing of chairing skills. Constructive feedback is one of the best ways of helping chairs to be more effective, regardless of their level of experience.

Chair feedback is an excellent precursor to performance feedback for all board members. However, it is invidious for board members to suggest that the chair would benefit from feedback, so chairs should always take the initiative and ask for it.

It should be done in a systematic way. All board members should be invited to respond to questions such as 'what has the chair done well' and 'what should he or she do differently in future?'

The information should be gathered, summarised and given face-to-face to the chair by someone with skill in giving feedback. Ideally, this is a role for the vice-chair, but it can be carried out by another board member or an independent person.

Constructive feedback should be seen as a gift from the charity to the chair - a contribution to his or her personal development and a reward for all the time and effort that goes into performing the role effectively.

Balancing appointed and elected board members

I am frequently asked whether board members should be appointed or elected. Appointments are usually made by the board itself, sometimes supported by a Nominations Committee. Election is usually by a wider group of people.

Appointment allows organisations to establish a board with skills and experience identified through a rigorous recruitment and selection process. The danger though is that in 'professionalising' the board, it gradually moves it away from the concerns and values of users or members.

Election allows members to vote for people they want on the board. The risk is that the board may not include the required range of skills and experience. Indeed our research shows that boards elected by wider memberships are less diverse than appointed boards. So some organisations compromise with a part elected and part appointed board, though the balance can be hotly debated.

The trend is towards increasing the proportion of members appointed on the basis of their skills and experience. Indeed, some organisations that elect board members now expect candidates to demonstrate an appropriate level of experience before they stand.

Either way, efforts to ensure that boards are diverse and have the requisite skills and experience helps to ensure civil society organisations are better governed.

The importance of thorough induction

In some organisations there is an unstated expectation that new board members will learn on the job. This is insufficient - they need to have a deep understanding of the organisation's environment, its policies, strategy and plans, its culture and the opportunities and threats it faces. They also need to understand the particular roles that trustees perform.

Board members from other sectors might need briefing on charity governance and its differences from corporate and public sector governance.

All new board members face a steep learning curve. So, as well as the usual pack of induction papers, new board members should also be expected to visit the services the organisation provides or funds.

They should be briefed by the chair or chief executive on the strategic issues the organisation faces. They could also shadow a top team meeting and have one-to-one meetings with key people to gain insights into the issues management is tackling.

Good induction allows new trustees to raise background questions that might otherwise waste valuable time in board meetings. In return, new members should be expected to report back to the board their first impressions, as fresh eyes can bring new perspectives to board meetings.

Setting chief executive pay

Recruiting and retaining a great chief executive is one of the board's most important responsibilities. The strong demand for the limited number of people with finely tuned skills and experience needed for these demanding positions makes this task challenging.

Money is not the only motivation for chief executives, but pay is part of the package and there is genuine public concern about their salaries. Most boards of larger charities delegate salary-setting to remuneration or other committees. Good practice includes gathering evidence from charity salary surveys and comparison with charities of the same size, in the same sector and in the same location.

The recommended salary should also take account of remuneration in the rest of the organisation and be linked to the achievement of personal performance objectives. The salary should be approved by the full board and explained in the Annual Report. Board members and chairs in particular should be willing to explain their decisions to stakeholders and the press.

Good chief executives are crucial to charity effectiveness. Appointing and retaining them, while maintaining the charity's reputation, is a crucial judgement that all boards must make with great rigor.

Diversity matters

The great value of diverse boards is that their members bring a range of perspectives to the board. These include the perceptions of people of different age, gender, employment, religion and race.

These should not be tokenistic appointments. They should recognise that the best boards include people who bring great skills and who come from a variety of backgrounds.

However, while diverse boards can be more creative and bring different viewpoints, they can also be more challenging to manage. Members need to have high emotional intelligence, good listening skills and be willing to change their minds having heard others' views.

Evidence from detailed research by Compass Partnership and the Centre for Charity Effectiveness suggests a clear relationship between greater diversity and more effective governance. It also shows that organisations with rigorous arrangements for succession planning tend to achieve more diverse boards.

Boards that want greater diversity need to have a clear 'grid' of the demographics as well as the skills they require, compare it with their current profile and work hard to attract candidates who ensure the board achieves both objectives.

Board performance reviews

It is widely accepted that trustees should regularly review the performance of the board - indeed, it is part of Charity Commission advice. Performance reviews can range from a brief discussion among board members to rigorous reviews of every aspect of governance, usually carried out through a questionnaire or structured interviews by an independent person.

So where should your organisation be on this spectrum? Large and high-profile charities should generally be at the more systematic end. These boards and their stakeholders need to be confident that every aspect of the board's performance is of the highest standard.

Such reviews can be time-consuming and costly, so many medium-sized and smaller charities opt for a lighter-touch approach. This could include a shorter questionnaire, conversations between the chair and individual members or a well-prepared discussion at a board meeting.

The keys to effective reviews include agreement on the approach, strong leadership from the chair (including feedback on his or her performance), recognition of what works well, openness about what requires attention and a plan and timetable for making improvements.

Dealing with a difficult trustee

Most trustees are supportive, sensitive people who know how to work as members of a team.

However, some boards will find they have one or more trustees who are consistently difficult. They might be unwilling to listen carefully, always raising problems and seldom suggesting solutions, or be generally disinclined to behave in a collegiate way.

All board members need to recognise that they share responsibility for finding ways to deal with difficult trustees. It is seldom in the organisation's best interest to duck the issue.

Members can give respectful feedback - for example, with gentle comments during the meeting or in review sessions at the end of the meeting. Sometimes there will be an opportunity to raise the topic outside the meeting.

The chair has particular responsibility for addressing behaviour that is not conducive to team working and, if necessary, having a more formal conversation (see next article).

Ultimately, if persuasion does not work, the board might need to be bold and ask a difficult trustee to resign, so it can focus its efforts on the more important task of delivering the charity's mission.

Individual reviews for trustees

Whilst most trustees are highly talented, some boards have members who would benefit from a little feedback. Trustees can find it hard to balance their interventions with the need to maintain a highly motivated board team that exudes great spirit.

Holding individual performance reviews allows the chair to give trustees feedback on what they do well and how they could improve. Most will welcome constructive comments that enhance their personal development.

These reviews should be written into trustee role descriptions so they don't come as a surprise. When considering such reviews for the first time, chairs should invite feedback on their performance first - a valuable role for the vice-chair.

Although time-consuming for the chair, reviews provide an opportunity to thank members, discuss their future involvement, persuade good trustees to serve for longer and suggest to difficult ones that they change their approach or contribute in other ways.

Ensuring boards work as a team was found to be the strongest driver of board effectiveness in our governance research. Holding regular reviews with each board member helps to create the collegiate team needed to deliver excellent governance.

Governance Meetings

Attendance

Good attendance at board meetings is a prerequisite for effective governance. Most boards meet between three and six times a year, so missing one leaves a considerable gap.

Members who do not attend a high proportion of meetings disrupt the flow of governance work and the continuity of teamwork on the board.

Research shows that most large charities achieve attendance of more than 80 per cent. But a fifth of large charity boards do not have formal expectations, and those tend to have lower attendance rates than boards that state their requirements.

The chair is responsible for ensuring good attendance. Establishing clear expectations before members are appointed and taking quick action when a member's attendance falls below the agreed threshold helps to maintain good attendance.

Some organisations have rules to manage attendance, such as only one absence a year or making trustees explain their absence to the chair.

More recently, some have started to publish individual attendance in their annual report. These actions help to ensure the highest levels of attendance.

Making board meetings work

The heart of good governance is effective board meetings. Great meetings can bring foresight, new perspectives and wise judgements. Poor meetings get bogged down in the details of the past.

Attending to four basic disciplines brings great results. Rigorous agenda planning, done jointly by the chair and chief executive, is essential. The majority of board time should be allocated to understanding key changes in the external environment, anticipating opportunities and exploring ways of achieving the mission.

Agreeing regular matters in one 'consent' item, unless members have raised a concern before the meeting, helps to minimise time spent on routine reports. Points of detail should be dealt with outside the meeting.

Top quality board papers are also essential. Papers should be vetted by the chief executive and crucial ones by the chair as well, to ensure they pinpoint the key governance issues the board needs to debate.

Finally, setting the right tone is crucial. It should be focused and energised, always expecting members to make contributions of the highest standards. Boards that are on top of their meetings spend most of their time creating an inspiring future for their organisations.

Getting the board to work as a team

Despite the best intentions of board members and staff, boards sometimes find they are not getting the best performance from the team.

Meetings can end up being fractious, conversations outside the boardroom can become more important than those inside and discussions can get bogged down in detail.

Common causes of team problems include members not knowing each other well enough to be open and frank, elephants in the room, overly ambitious agendas and poor chairmanship.

Ultimately, the chair is responsible for getting the best from the team and therefore raising the topic. If the chair is part of the problem, other board members have to be bold and suggest that team working should be discussed.

A board performance review can highlight the problem and possibly pinpoint the causes. Time spent talking about the team and how it can work most effectively is one of the best ways of making improvements.

Setting the right tone for these conversations is crucial to making progress. An annual awayday provides the ideal opportunity for such discussions.

Private time in board meetings

There are divided views on whether charity boards should have private time. Some boards have time without any staff present at every meeting, but others believe that board members should never meet alone.

Those in favour of private time believe the board should have a chance to ruminate on topics such as the performance of the leadership team, succession planning and the performance of the board itself. They should also consider the performance and pay of the chief executive alone.

Those against argue that private time can damage trust between the board and management and that all matters - except the chief executive's performance - are best discussed with management present.

In my experience, boards should have private sessions. They should be scheduled in advance, held only once or twice a year and should not stray into matters that could be discussed with management.

A good model is to schedule this time towards the end of a meeting - ask staff to leave first, so the board can have time with the chief executive alone. Then he or she should leave.

After the session, the chair should always have a meeting with the chief executive to ensure trusting relationships are maintained.

Governance Behaviours

Collective responsibility

When boards have robust debate but are united in their decisions, they can add huge value. However, when board members express division outside the boardroom, beneficiaries, funders and staff can all lose confidence.

Collective responsibility is important because the board has to earn and maintain the trust of the organisation's stakeholders. That can ebb away when the board is seen to be divided or when its members criticise each other.

Charity boards have to take decisions on very difficult issues, and there can be genuine and strongly held differences of view, sometimes reflecting disparate views in the rest of the organisation. However, once an issue has been thoroughly debated, decisions should be taken and the majority view should prevail.

Members in a minority will then have to decide whether to support the decision wholeheartedly or, if they can't, and it is a big issue, accept that their position is untenable, resign with grace and allow the organisation to move on.

This is generally a more satisfactory outcome than continuing with a conflict that saps the organisation's energy and is demotivating for all concerned.

Time the chair should give

Most chairs give their time generously, but problems can occur when they give too much or too little. Chairs who give too little time risk leaving their chief executives insufficiently supported and shifting the workload to management.

Chairs who invest an inadequate amount of time also miss opportunities to inspire staff by not being visible across the organisation. Ultimately, a chair's lack of time can cause deterioration in the crucial relationship with the chief executive.

By contrast, chairs who give up too much time risk interfering with management and compromising their ability to view the organisation from a wider perspective. They can also make the role look so demanding that it becomes difficult to find a successor.

Research shows that chairs in large charities spend an average of 30 days a year in that role. The larger the charity, the more time the chair gives.

The balance also depends on individuals. Chairs who add high value are drawn in more often and those that are meddlesome are kept at arm's length.

All chairs need to be particularly astute in finding the right balance.

Building trust

Boards are most effective when there are high levels of trust. This is hard to earn and easily lost.

To build trust, board members need to establish good personal relationships. People who understand each other and their motivations are more likely to value each other's viewpoints. Board members and managers frequently tell me that board performance would be improved if trustees spent more time together outside formal meetings.

Being prepared to compromise also helps to build trust. Demonstrate deep respect for other people's views. Ask open questions to express an interest in their perspective. Saying that you have listened to other viewpoints and changed your mind also helps.

Open communication is essential. Expressing one view inside the boardroom and a different one outside it destroys trust. Strive to be as honest as possible. When things go wrong, boards and management teams should be willing to admit mistakes to each other and use them as opportunities for learning.

Together, these actions should help to strengthen relationships and build trust between board members and senior managers.

More praise allows stronger challenges

Trustees often come to meetings with plenty of questions and concerns written in the margins of their board papers. They are often less good at identifying all the achievements that deserve praise.

Research shows that board members are better at listening to each other and challenging management than they are at praising management. It also shows that chairs think they are better at praising management than chief executives perceive them to be.

Board members can improve relationships with management by generously acknowledging progress. Most charity managers strive to do their best for the organisation and appreciate praise for their efforts and achievements. A few words of praise can bring smiles to their faces - provided it is not gratuitous and followed immediately by criticism.

So when you next prepare for a board meeting, remember to note successes and praise management generously for thier achievements. This will provide a more secure foundation for raising those concerns that you wrote in the margins of the board papers. It will also lead to greater respect and trust between board members and managers.

Constructive challenge

Questioning is generally a good modus operandi for board members, implying openness, curiosity and a willingness to listen and explore issues.

The two behaviours to avoid are questioning that is perceived as repetitive or pursuit of a 'hobby horse', or when others feel adequate answers have been given previously. Both can be perceived as being awkward and unhelpful.

The best boards encourage collegiate working, so when questioning is obstructively persistent the chair needs to remind the questioner to respect the views of the majority of the board.

There is an equal danger that board members don't ask the difficult questions, being anxious about asking a silly question or fearful of upsetting someone. However, the obvious question no one dared ask can often shed new light on an issue. The chair should strongly encourage these questions and discourage a culture of institutional politeness.

Intelligent questions, put respectfully, should always be welcome; they can help to get to the heart of the matter and play an important role in delivering effective governance.

If you are not sure, test your question on someone else before the meeting.

Managing conflicts of interest

Concern about conflicts of interest is becoming more prevalent. Ideally, trustees should avoid conflicts by keeping family, business and charity interests entirely separate. However, the best trustees are sometimes people with expertise from related businesses or charities.

The Charity Commission's definition is clear: 'a conflict of interest is any situation in which a trustee's personal interests, or interests they owe to another body, may (or may appear to) influence or affect the trustee's decision making'. This applies to financial and other benefits, to both you and your close family.

The key is to consider whether there could be perception of a conflict. If there is, transparency and careful management are essential. Avoid any involvement in decisions about the issue, inform the chair that you might be conflicted, step outside meetings when the item is discussed and ensure your absence is noted in the minutes.

If potential conflicts arise more than a few times, consider relinquishing your trusteeship and contributing in other ways. This will ensure that the reputation of your charity, and that of the wider sector, are not put at risk.

Conflicts with the electorate

Some board members are appointed or elected because they bring to the board the views of people from particular stakeholder groups such as users, regions and professional groups. These members can bring valuable insights from the groups they embody.

So what should trustees do when the interests of their electorate come into direct conflict with the interests of the whole organisation - for example, when closing a facility or service?

The law is clear: when entering the boardroom, their role as a trustee of the whole organisation is paramount. They can strongly represent the case of the group that they come from and, if they genuinely believe that their viewpoint is in the organisation's overall interest, they can vote accordingly.

However, once a decision has been taken they should abide by the collective responsibility of the board. If the decision hasn't gone their way, elected members should share the evidence that the board considered in coming to its decision with the people who voted for them and strongly support the outcome.

They can also remind their electorate that while they will ensure the interests of that group will always be presented at board meetings, trustees are ultimately required to take decisions in the interests of the whole organisation.

Business-charity culture clash

Trustees from business backgrounds can add great value to a board, but they need to understand that business directors and charity trustees perform different roles.

Businesses have boards, with executive and non-executive directors sharing the same legal responsibilities. They have a duty to maximise shareholder interests and they generally meet more frequently than charity boards. In charities trustees carry ultimate responsibility. Their primary duty is to deliver charitable objectives and they are more concerned with policy and strategy.

Business and charity boards both use the language of strategy, performance and governance, so it is often assumed that their roles are similar. In fact, they are subtly different: charity boards don't have profit as a measure of success and they have to consider a wider range of stakeholder groups.

These differences can lead to tensions when trustees from business and charity backgrounds make different assumptions about their roles. However, I have found that exploring these differences in an open and inquisitive way enables charities to benefit more from business perspectives and gives business people new insights to take back to their companies.

Electronic devices in board meetings

Fifteen years ago there were few electronic devices to distract participants in board meetings. Today we are surrounded by smartphones, tablets and laptops - busy people want to keep connected to their emails, blogs and networking sites.

This is having a significant impact on the quality of board meetings and the ability of the board to work as a high-performing team. It is simply not possible to concentrate on complex strategic issues, be acutely aware of people's feelings and body language and simultaneously read tweets or respond to emails.

It is also disrespectful to other participants. They notice when people 'check out' of the meeting because they consider other business to be more important. So I start meetings by asking participants to turn off all electronic devices unless they are specifically referring to papers for that meeting.

We have to recognise that people are expected to work in real time. But in my experience the best board meetings are those in which everyone is fully aware of the impact of their own behaviour on the rest of the group and their full attention is focused on delivering excellent governance.

Giving difficult advice to chief executives

The performance of many charity chief executives is outstanding. However, even the best sometimes need feedback on an aspect of their behaviour that is causing problems. The chair is then responsible for anticipating, planning and initiating those conversations.

Difficult feedback can be given only if the relationship between the chair and the chief executive is based on mutual respect and trust. Ideally, it should be given as part of an annual appraisal. When feedback is needed at other times, the chair has to decide on the degree of formality required for the nature of the feedback.

Whether it's a brief chat or a more formal conversation, it should be done in an appropriate environment, when there won't be interruptions and when ample time is available for exploration and discussion.

The feedback should be set in the context of achievements, be based on robust evidence and be clear about the problem and the solution. It should be illustrated with recent, pertinent examples and lead to agreement about the behaviour expected in future.

When these conversations are constructive, they can lead to more open and trusting relationships and set a good example for the board and the rest of the organisation.

Board and Trustee Development

Strengthening governance

Are you considering how to improve the performance of your board? Research by Compass Partnership and Cass Business School into the drivers of effective governance suggests that the following five topics will bring the greatest reward for the effort put into strengthening your board.

Ensure the board works as a team, giving respect to different viewpoints, reading the emotional intelligence in the room and taking collective responsibility for decisions.

Strive to have high-quality meetings, with short, high-quality papers and strategic discussions that lead to clear decisions.

Refresh the board with people who fill carefully considered skill and experience gaps and who will meet the future demands on the board.

Strive to increase openness and trust between trustees and between board and management, praising achievements and providing robust but courteous challenge when needed.

Regularly review board and individual performance to ensure the organisation gets the best from its trustees and can deal with poor performance.

Climbing the career ladder

Trusteeship requires many skills. It can take years to gain a rounded understanding through a number of trusteeships.

There is an emerging trustee career development ladder that begins with having a clear understanding of the role and knowing how to challenge and be collegiate in board meetings. Trustees with more experience know how to provide good judgement and strategic oversight in a range of situations. The top level of skill is the ability to ensure that governance arrangements are fit for the future and to respond to major transitions and crises.

Some skills, such as team working, thinking strategically and being creative can be gained from business and management experience. But others can be learned only by being a trustee. Gaining experience should start with smaller, simpler or well-governed organisations and lead eventually through to trusteeship of larger, more demanding bodies, such as a multinational charity delivering services and campaigns.

Trustees who want to be most effective should assess their level of development and identify knowledge and experience gaps before taking the next step up the ladder.

Compass Partnership governance services

We help organisations to:

1. Review board performance

We pinpoint what boards do well and identify areas for improvement. We conduct questionnaire and interview based reviews and benchmark performance so your board can compare its performance with other boards.

2. Streamline governance

Our service enables organisations to:

- Re-structure boards and committees
- Create and develop international structures
- Develop structures across the four nations of the UK.

3. Strengthen board and management relationships

We work with boards and senior managers to clarify roles, align expectations of each other and build strong relationships.

4. Enhance governance skills

We help chairs, chief executives, boards and senior managers to develop their governance skills by:

- Undertaking skills audits
- Reviewing individual board member performance
- Supporting induction of new members
- Providing coaching and mentoring support.

We have assisted over 60 organisations to develop their governance.

Board and Trustee Development

The author

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Mike is the Director of Compass Partnership. He was Administrative Director of Friends of the Earth during its formative years. Following this, Mike worked in the UK and USA for a business strategy consultancy. He has worked as a consultant to not-for-profit organisations for over 30 years leading teams that bring about major change in complex organisations. His clients include the Chairs and Chief Executives of a wide range of national and international organisations in the health, housing, education and international development fields, and their government and foundation funders.

In addition to managing Compass, Mike has been a Visiting Fellow at Cass Business School in London since 2004.

He is author of *Managing Without Profit* (Third Edition, Directory of Social Change, 2009).

Mike is Chair of the Farm Animal Welfare Forum and a member of the Editorial Board of *Civil Society Governance*.

He is most grateful to all the clients and colleagues who made these articles possible through sharing problems and working together on solutions.

Compass Partnership

Compass Partnership is a management consultancy specialising in the governance and management of independent non-profit-seeking organisations.

Established in 1982, we have now worked with over 900 civil society organisations and have built up a large body of knowledge about excellence in governance and management.

Our services include the development of governance, the creation of strategy and strengthening leadership teams.

If you would like a preliminary conversation about how we might be able to assist your organisation, please call our Business Manager, Debbie Emerson on 01628 478 561

Our books
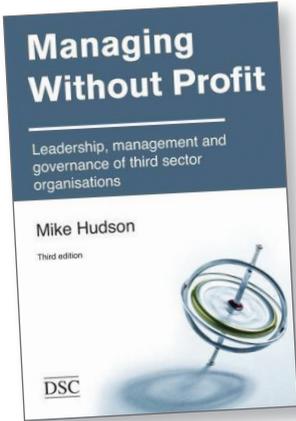
Managing Without Profit, **Leadership, management and governance of third sector organisations.** Mike Hudson, (DSC, 2009) sets out the theory and practice of creating highly successful third sector organisations. It has sold over 20,000 copies and been translated into three languages.
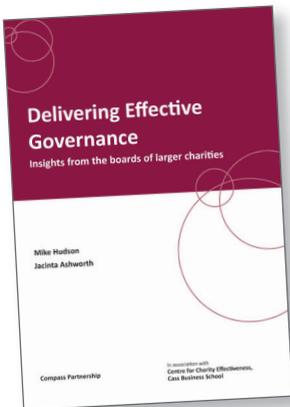
Delivering Effective Governance, Insights from the boards of larger charities, Mike Hudson, Jacinta Ashworth, (DSC, 2012) identifies the key drivers of governance performance.
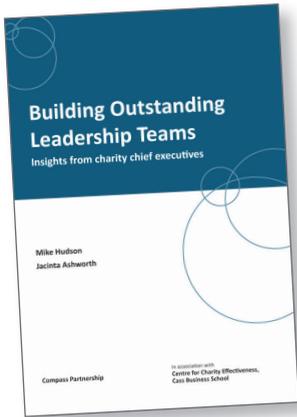
Building Outstanding Leadership Teams,
Mike Hudson, Jacinta Ashworth, (DSC 2014)
identifies key drivers of effective leadership
teams and actions to improve their
performance.

Books available from www.dsc.org.uk

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