

## Charity Governance Code: The value of acting with integrity

Integrity is the third of the seven principles of the Charity Governance Code and is vital in ensuring public trust in the charity is upheld.

Pivotal in this is the role of the Trustees which, as leaders, set the tone for their respective charities. The application of this principle in the day-to-day running of the charity helps to support a charity's efforts in upholding integrity as a value. Following the negative media publicity certain charities have faced in recent times, Trustees should fully recognise the importance of this governance principle. They should prioritise and monitor their ongoing relationship with the public.

The reputation of a charity is a valuable asset, which cannot be underestimated and, if nurtured correctly, can significantly contribute to the sustainability of the charity and the achievement of its charitable objectives.

### What steps can charities take to ensure compliance with the integrity principle?

1. Implementing a code of conduct is an effective method of formalising the expected principles of behaviour and integrity, and Trustees should ensure that they sign up to the standards set on an annual basis to confirm adherence to the code.
2. Ensuring that the code of conduct is fully embedded within the organisation and that leaders are constantly seen as 'doing the right thing'.
3. Introducing a conflicts of interest policy and maintaining a register of interests that details all current and potential conflicts. Trustees need to ensure such conflicts are highlighted and most importantly dealt with in accordance with the governing documents of the charity.
4. Developing a complaints and feedback policy to review and act upon, where necessary, any complaints or feedback received, will ensure that

Trustees fully understand the views of the public especially when exercising their decision making on behalf of the charity.

The implementation of such steps can be a burden on the day-to-day running of your charity, therefore, working with a trusted specialist corporate governance provider will not only ensure adherence to the Charity Governance Code, but also allow Trustees the time they need to focus on pursuing their charitable objectives.

If you would like to find out more about the help that is available, please contact us.

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