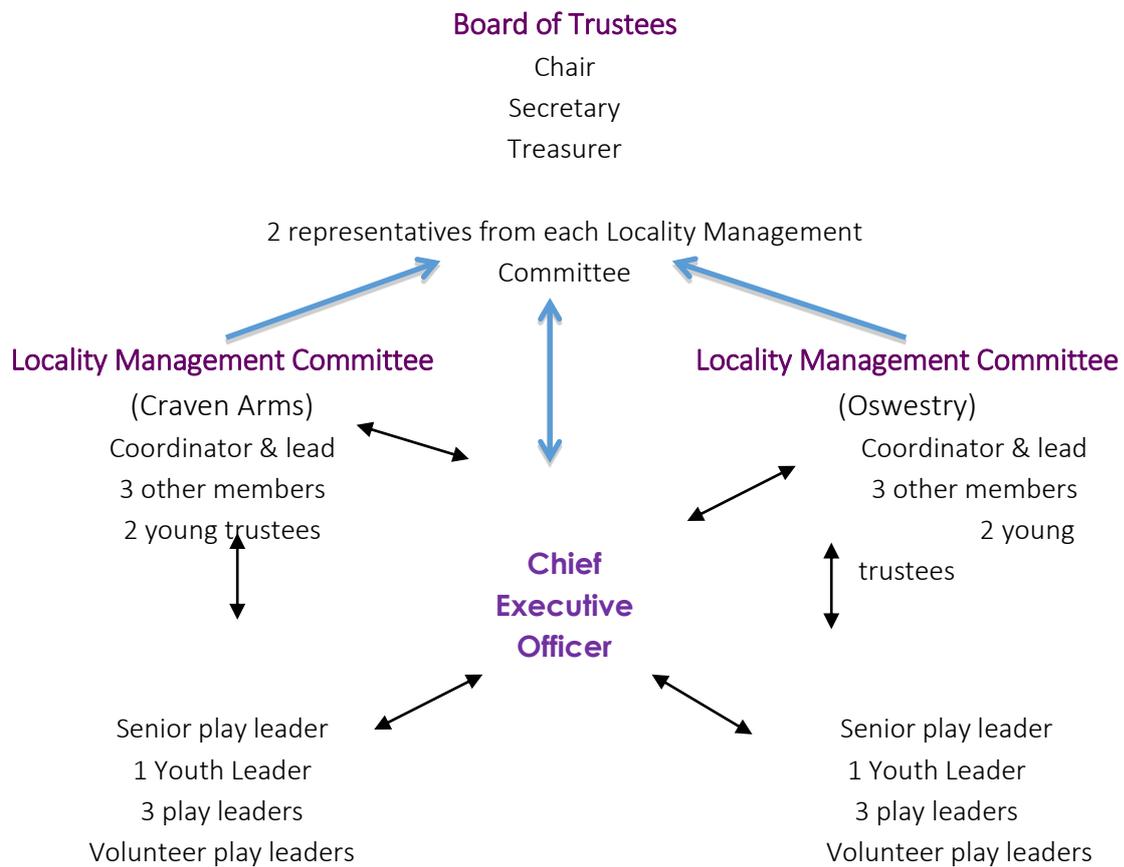


There is an overarching Board of Trustees supported by two management committees, one for each of Empathy’s localities. Each locality is represented on the Board of Trustees and this is a flexible structure that lends itself readily to the inclusion of additional locality groups.



A trustee role is not to be taken on lightly. The role is a commitment and may at times have a heavy work load. Whilst we are constituted to ensure that trustees have no liability for the organisation, as a registered charity trustees are agreeing to run the organisation with the guidelines set out by the charities commission. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3> for more info.

If you would like to help but don’t feel you can commit to a trustee role perhaps you might consider becoming part of your Local Management Committee – see separate document

Terms of Reference for the Board of Trustees:

- To take overall responsibility for everything that Empathy does and its programme of activities
- To act collectively and effectively in the interests of Empathy
- To give strategic direction, determining and safeguarding the reputation, aims and objectives of Empathy
- To lead the fundraising strategy
- To take the decisions required for the proper control and management of Empathy
- To ensure that there is a clear structure for governing the organization, including defining the role of its subsidiary locality management committees, any focus groups or sub-committees
- To ensure that Empathy has adequate financial resources for its activities including a breakeven budget, and the appropriate financial policies, procedures and controls in place
- To act prudently to protect the assets and property of Empathy
- To ensure that Empathy complies with its own governing document, relevant laws and the requirements placed upon it by its funders and/or other bodies
- To review the risks to which Empathy is subject, take action to mitigate these risks and to ensure sound risk management
- To act as a responsible employer.
- To ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are upheld and that Empathy is fair and open to all families that have children within the remit and within the local community, in all of its activities
- To seek assistance from experts in areas where the trustees lack the necessary skills
- To induct every new trustee
- To develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders

Meetings of the Trustees

- Meetings to be held as often as board business requires but a minimum of six times a year
- A formal record will be kept of each meeting of the trustees
- The day and time of meetings will be arranged to suit most trustees, but every effort will be made to ensure that no one member is continually prevented from attending meetings
- Business will be conducted efficiently
- Comments on agenda items and/or board papers from trustees unable to attend a meeting are to be given, where applicable, to the Chair of Empathy in advance of the meeting for inclusion during board discussions
- Three trustees will constitute a quorum for trustee meetings

Minutes:

All decisions will be recorded accurately in minutes that are agreed and signed by the Chair with the approval of the trustees. These are a formal record of the business of the organization.

Attendance:

- In addition to the trustees, any co-optees and the minute taker, if applicable, can attend meetings
- A prospective trustee may be invited to attend a meeting with the consent of the Chair
- The trustees may invite any expert brought in on an ad hoc basis to advise the board to attend all or part of a meeting

Central activities

The specific activities that will be undertaken centrally by the Trustees will include:

- Overall governance of Empathy to ensure that it is run safely, fairly and legally
- Provision of literature, policies and insurance
- Securing funding for play leaders and activities
- Provision of training, where necessary
- Provision of advice and support to the Locality Management Committee (LMC)
- Management of the bank account and the production of the annual accounts and annual report
- Ensuring compliance with legal and charity governance requirements
- Business planning and budgeting

Liaison with the CEO to ensure good communication between the board and the users