



Vedic Society Hindu Temple, Southampton

79 –195 Radcliffe Road

Southampton

SO14 0PS

United Kingdom



Roles and Responsibilities Document

Preface

This document defines the roles and responsibilities of the Charity Trustees (committee members) and Holding Trustees.

Introduction

Who's in charge? This is a commonly asked question. Is it the president or chair of the Trustees?

The Temple has two types of Trustees – Holding Trustees and Charity Trustees.

The Holding trustees are elected for a 5 year term. At the end of their term their position is up for re-election. There are 5 Holding Trustees and the way it has been set up is that the resignation of these Trustees is staggered such that every year one Trustee resigns and the position is available to be filled at the AGM. The 5 Trustees shall have their separate meeting to elect the Chair.

All committee members are elected for a single year. At the next AGM, their position is absolved and their position is up for re-election. The committee members are elected for a specific role or as a member to fulfil the criteria number set out in the constitution.

There is no limit on the number of times that an individual can be re-elected (for the same position or another).

The role of the Holding Trustees is two-fold

1. To observe that the Committee members are running the Temple as set out in the constitution.
2. To hold the assets of the Temple in their names.

Apart from these two primary duties, they have no say in how the Temple is run. At the committee meetings they are merely observers.

The role of the Charity Trustees (committee members) is

1. To ensure that the Temple is run smoothly and effectively in accordance to the objectives of the constitution.
2. Ensure that all events are celebrated.
3. Ensure that all necessary maintenance is carried out.
4. Ensure prudent use of finances.

So as long as the Temple is run according to the constitution, the President is in charge.

Duties of the President

The President is the general manager Temple and has, subject to the control of the constitution, general supervision, direction and control of the business and activities of the Temple. The President has the general powers and duties of management usually vested in the office of president and general manager of a corporation and such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by the committee. Among other things, the President shall be responsible for:

- Ensuring the Temple's activities are compliant and in furtherance of its objectives
- Leading, managing, and developing the Temple's employees, volunteers, and organizational culture
- Developing, implementing, monitoring, and assessing the Temple's programs (including their impact)
- Developing, implementing, monitoring, and assessing sound and compliant financial management practices (including budgeting)
- Developing, implementing, monitoring, and assessing sound and compliant fundraising practices
- Developing, informing, and supporting the committee and the Holding Trustees to carry out their governance functions
- Working with the development staff and the committee in cultivating and soliciting major foundation grants and individual gifts
- Developing and maintaining beneficial relationships with donors, funders, supporters, collaborators, allies, vendors, and other stakeholders
- Ensuring effective external communications about the organization and its mission, priorities, importance, programs, and activities
- Championing the Temple and advocating its mission to internal and external stakeholders
- Keeping informed and the Temple's leadership informed of significant developments and changes in the internal and external environment
- Leading the Temple's planning processes
- Ensuring legal compliance (including all required filings) and sound risk management practices

Duties of the Vice President

The duties of the Vice President are to assist the President in carrying out his/her duties and to be a stand-in for the President.

Duties of the Secretary

The secretary's position plays a critical role in fostering communication and ensuring proper management and utilization of important Temple records. Typically, the secretary should be equipped to handle the following matters:

Communication

The secretary is an active conduit for communication between the management, and members (if any), by giving proper notice of any meetings and timely distribution of materials such as agendas and meeting minutes. The secretary should be knowledgeable of the organization's records and related materials, and should be able to provide advice and resources to the committee on relevant topics at issue, such as particular governance matters being addressed at a meeting. The secretary should aim to be helpful to the office bearers as they discharge their fiduciary duties.

Scheduling, Notice, and Materials

The secretary is tasked with knowing and complying with notice requirements and scheduling meetings. Notice requirements can be particularly important and should be complied with strictly, as improper notice can open the organization up to challenge. The secretary is responsible for scheduling committee meetings and should ensure an adequate number of meetings are held per year, in accordance with the constitution. The Temple, meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each calendar month. Generally, the committee can more efficiently and effectively hold a meeting when the secretary prepares and sends meeting materials far enough in advance of the meeting for each Trustee to review such materials, correct any errors, and prepare questions and comments.

Minutes

The secretary is also charged with recording minutes of meetings. Minutes are an important document and provide a memorialized chronology of key information such as any committee actions, and certain reports from committees and staff. Meeting minutes can have vital legal significance in a Charity Commission's examination and as evidence in courts if, for example, someone challenges the validity of certain actions or positions. The secretary should be well-equipped to record accurate minutes and be aware and sensitive to any special or confidential information discussed at a meeting.

Maintenance of Records

As the custodian of the Temple's records, the secretary is responsible for maintaining accurate documentation and meeting legal requirements, such as annual filing deadlines. The secretary is responsible for reviewing and updating documents as necessary and ensuring all documents are safely stored and readily accessible for inspection by Trustees and/or members.

The secretary position has wide-ranging responsibilities, requiring much more than simply being present at all committee meetings.

Tips for Being an Effective Secretary

- Understand what to record and what not to record when taking minutes

- Maintain a binder containing the governing documents, key governance policies, minutes of board meetings, and written consents
- Consider using appropriately secured electronic storage of key documents as a backup

Traps to Avoid

- Noncompliance with provisions in the governing documents and applicable timeframes for giving notice of meetings, sending and receiving electronic communications, nominating and electing directors and officers
- Recording minutes as if they are transcripts of the meeting
- Recording executive session discussions in meeting minutes that will be open to inspection to all members
- Storing minutes and other sensitive documents

Duties of Assistant Secretary

The duties of the Assistant Secretary are to assist the Secretary in carrying out his/her duties and to be a stand-in for the Secretary.

Duties of a Treasurer

A Treasurer is typically charged with overseeing the management and reporting of the Temple's finances.

Since an organization's financial management is directly tied to the Treasurer's responsibilities, the Treasurer's execution of his/her responsibilities will have a strong impact on the public's perception, trust, and assurance as a whole.

Typically, the Treasurer's duties shall include the following:

Financial management and/or oversight. A Treasurer may manage or oversee the management of the financial affairs of the Temple, often including such basic tasks as selecting a bank, reconciling bank statements, and managing cash flow. The Treasurer should be knowledgeable about who has access to the organization's funds and any outstanding bills or debts owed. The Treasurer should create and maintain systems for ensuring the organization's ongoing solvency and oversee the development of the organization's financial policies. Helpful policies to consider include check signing authority, expense reimbursement, credit card usage, and petty cash policies, if applicable.

Budgets. The Treasurer is responsible for preparing, or facilitating the preparation of an annual budget and accounts, as well as regularly monitoring and comparing the actual revenues and expenses incurred against such budget. The development of a budget that supports the organization's goals and drives decision-making is an important part of an organization's success in effectuating its mission. The budget should be reviewed and approved by the committee, however, the Treasurer should be prepared to explain and justify the document.

Reports. The Treasurer should have thorough knowledge and understanding of the Temple's financial reports. The Treasurer should keep the board apprised of key financial events, trends, and concerns, and his/her assessments of the fiscal health. The Treasurer is also generally responsible for completing, or ensuring the completion of, required financial reporting forms in a timely manner and making these forms available for the committee's review.

Financial Liaison. A skilled Treasurer should be able to translate financial concepts and information for board members who do not have financial backgrounds or substantial financial experience.

Ultimately, while financial management is the primary focus of the Treasurer, the entire committee shares the responsibility of financial oversight and accountability.

Tips for Being an Effective Treasurer

- Develop and enforce strong internal controls and financial management policies
- Ensure accurate and complete financial reporting and proper maintenance of financial records and information/tax returns
- Regularly assess risks and whether and how such risks should be mitigated
- Keep a calendar of filing requirements and deadlines and have clear assignments (with backups) to help ensure they are all met in a timely manner
- Have the organization's financials audited whenever required or advisable

Traps to Avoid

- Neglect to wisely limit access to and control of the organization's funds
- Fail to keep and share with the board accurate and timely financial records
- Treat the Form 990 merely as a financial report and not a critical marketing communication
- Give legal or tax advice to donors about the deductibility of contributions

Duties of Assistant Treasurer

The duties of the Assistant Treasurer are to assist the Treasurer in carrying out his/her duties and to be a stand-in for the Treasurer.