



youth focus NW
Improving the lives of young people

Chair & Trustees
Youth Focus North West

Candidate Pack

Contents

01.	Welcome Letter	2
02.	Executive Summary	3
03.	About Youth Focus North West	4
04.	Role Description – Trustees	6
05.	Role Description – Chair	7
06.	Person Specification – Chair & Trustees	9
07.	Appointment Details and How to Apply	10

01. Welcome Letter

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee for/chair of the board of Youth Focus North West. We are delighted you are considering joining us and you will be doing so at key point for our organisation as we develop our work to meet changing needs.

I joined the Board of YFNW over 10 years ago and became Chair three years ago. Our Board is a group of passionate individuals who are highly committed to enabling Youth Focus North West to flourish and to ensure even more people have the opportunity to engage with the organisation.

We work closely and collaboratively with our experienced and forward-thinking leadership team, and we seek individuals who are collegiate, and team orientated in their approach. We are now looking for a new chair and several trustees who can bring their skills and experience to support our work across the North West and more widely across the country.

We welcome both experienced Board leaders and those looking to take on their first Charity Trusteeship. We are looking for individuals who are dynamic in their thinking with a real drive and passion to make a substantial impact on our work. We take great pride in our work for Youth Focus North West.

If you'd like to bring your skills and expertise to support us, we'd love to hear from you.

Kind regards,



Sue Lomas OBE DL
Outgoing chair of the board
Youth Focus North West



02. Executive Summary

Youth Focus North West are experts in youth voices, youth work policy, and practices. They work in close partnership with young people across the North West region to allow them to have a voice where it counts.

Youth Focus North West (YFNW) is a charity that exists to promote and represent youth work across the North West region. They provide opportunities for services working with young people to respond to and impact national government agendas. Striving to improve the quality and consistency of youth work across the region, they promote and support good practice and effective workforce development. They ensure that the voices of young people and organisations are heard in policymaking, and nurture youth work practice, create networks, broker partnerships, and open opportunities for collaboration. Essentially, they empower young people so that they feel confident and motivated to make changes to the world around them.

YFNW provides support and partnership to over 400 young people per year, making a huge difference to their engagement and confidence levels. It has an annual turnover of about £400,000, and a staff of 10 people.

The Chair and Trustee roles are voluntary leadership positions that will place you right at the heart of a charity with major impact on the lives of young people across the North West.

As a Trustee, you will help YFNW to shape and deliver the next stage of their growth as they look to build on the strong reputation built to date and increase their impact.

We are seeking a Chair with a credible charity governance background and knowledge of the youth work sector. Prior non-executive experience is a pre-requisite, as they will be leading a reasonably new Board cohort.

Candidates for both the Chair and Trustee positions should have some sort of direct personal or professional connection to youth work in the North West, a strong resonance with YFNW's vision, and genuine ambition for what the charity can achieve.

YFNW is being assisted in this appointment by the executive search firm Society. Applications should consist of a CV and covering letter. These can be uploaded via Society's website [here](#). The deadline for receipt of applications is 12pm GMT on Tuesday, 26th November 2024.



02. About Youth Focus North West

YFNW's work is achieved through three core areas of focus – Youth Voice, Training, and Networks.

Youth Voice

With the belief that all children and young people should be heard and have their views acted upon, YFNW's Youth Voice work is underpinned by the [Lundy Framework](#), and delivered through a variety of youth-led projects. These projects are across Democracy, Environmental, and Health.

Training

YFNW are delivering the Level 2 and Level 3 Youth Work Awards, in partnership with Your EDGE, a training provider. They also offer a whole host of professional development opportunities, including Supervision Skills, an Introduction to Deaf Awareness, and an Introduction to Trans Inclusion.

Networks

The charity's networks build communities of practice. This collaborative approach strengthens practice, drives innovation, and makes a greater impact on young people's lives across the North West.

The Regional Impact Network, delivered in partnership with George Williams College – Centre for Youth Impact, brings together colleagues from across sectors who are interested in impact and quality in work with young people.

The network provides a space to share knowledge and approaches to impact measurement, access groups who can help develop and test ideas and tools and form collaborative solutions to impact measurement challenges.

The CaredFor Network (Cared4NW) brings together Children in Care Council practitioners and those working with Care Experienced young people. It enables colleagues to share good practice, guidance and insight into around lived experience youth voice and engagement. The network also co-produces conferences and events with young people.

The Strategic Leads Network is a network for Lead Officers of youth provision. Members are based within both, Local Authorities and the voluntary sector. YFNW coordinate this network to support the Youth Offer in each authority and ensure that local areas are well-informed, skilled, and responsive to changes in Government policy and young people's needs.

This network aims to explore policies affecting young people, provide links to national bodies, facilitate sharing, learning, and collaboration, and offer a safe space for Heads of Services to engage in peer support and discussion.

Finally, the Voice and Influence Network brings together practitioners from a variety of sectors that lead and deliver youth voice, participation and engagement activities with children and young people.

Creating space to collaborate, learn, and act as a community of practice, the network enables different voices to be heard, learning from diverse participation approaches, and encouraging good practice. Each meeting focuses on relevant emerging voice and influence themes, utilising learning circles for facilitated discussions on key topics

Key Stakeholders



Sue Lomas
Outgoing Chair



Sally Carr
Vice-Chair



Jim Cooke
Treasurer



Dr Rajesh Patel
Trustee



Stuart Dunne
Chief Executive Officer

For more information, visit
<https://youthfocusnw.org.uk/about-us/our-trustees>



03. Role Description – Trustees

Being a Trustee of YFNW will be a hugely rewarding and impactful experience. You will help to set the future course of the charity, enabling it to grow and scale its impact.

The new Chair and Trustees will play a central role in developing YFNW's new strategy, (current strategy runs until 2026) bringing fresh ideas to help grow their profile, scale its excellent project delivery and support services, and become a stronger campaigning force.

Both the Chair and the ordinary Trustees will serve a six-year term which can be extended to a max of 9 years if a Trustee becomes a Chair, Vice Chair or Treasurer. The term for a Chair is six years. The Trustee Board meets four times a year, twice online and twice in person. Full Board meetings last up to three hours.

Key responsibilities for Trustees will include:

Compliance with Statutory Duties

- Ensuring that the charity complies with charity law and with the requirements of the Charity Commission, specifically the preparation of reports, Annual Returns, and accounts;
- helping to ensure adherence with all requirements and rules laid out in the YFNW governance document, and that the charity remains true to the charitable purpose and objectives set out there;
- complying with the requirements of any other legislation and regulators which govern the activities of the charity as required;
- acting with integrity and avoiding any personal conflicts of interest, or misuse of charity funds or assets;
- safeguarding the financial stability, solvency, and sustainability of the organisation;
- using charitable funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the charity's objectives;
- avoiding undertaking any activities that might place the charity's endowment, funds, assets, or reputation at undue risk;

- utilising their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure the charity is well-run and efficient.

Strategic Support & Guidance

In addition to compliance with statutory duties, all Trustees should use their specific skills, knowledge, and experience to help the Board make sound decisions. Trustees must understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and adhere to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

In a practical sense, this will involve:

- scrutinising Board papers;
- focusing on issues of key importance to YFNW;
- providing guidance on new initiatives (especially for areas in which the Trustee has relevant experience or knowledge);
- attendance at all Board meetings, and events as required, to support the work of YFNW.

Time Commitment

Trustees will be required to attend four Board meetings per year. Including review of Board papers this should equate to a time commitment of roughly 2–3 hours per month.

04. Role Description – Chair

The Chair will hold the Board to account for the charity’s mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees and ensuring that each Trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.

The Chair will also support, and, where appropriate, challenge the Chief Executive and ensure that the Board functions as a unit to achieve agreed objectives. They will act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with the Chief Executive.

The Vice-Chair acts for the Chair when the Chair is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the Chair.

The below list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

Key responsibilities will include:

Strategic Leadership

- Providing leadership to the charity and its Board;
- ensuring that Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity;
- assuring that the Board operates within its charitable objectives, and provides a clear strategic direction for the charity;
- regularly reviewing major risks and associated opportunities, and confirming that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities, and manage and mitigate the risks;
- taking accountability for ensuring that the Board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health and sustainability of the charity;

Governance

- Developing the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees;
- encouraging positive change and, where appropriate, address and resolve any conflicts within the Board

- appraising the performance of the Trustees and the Board on an annual basis;
- regularly reviewing the capabilities across the Board, incorporating the right balance of skills, knowledge, and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively, and which also reflects the wider population;
- working within any agreed policies adopted by the charity.

External Relations

- Acting as an ambassador for the charity;
- acting as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate;
- representing the charity at external functions, meetings, and events;
- facilitating change and addressing any potential conflict with external stakeholders.



Efficiency & Effectiveness

- Chairing meetings of the Board of Trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process;
- driving and encouraging full engagement from all Trustees, ensuring that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the charity, and that the Board takes collective ownership;
- fostering and maintaining constructive relationships with and between the Trustees;
- working closely with the Chief Executive to give direction to Board policy-making and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees;
- monitoring the effective implementation of decisions taken at meetings.
- ensuring regular contact and transparent communication with the Chief Executive, developing and maintaining an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges;
- liaising with the Chief Executive to maintain an overview of the Charity's affairs, providing support as necessary;
- conducting regular, recorded supervision and an annual appraisal review for the Chief Executive in consultation with other Trustees;
- providing the Chief Executive with the opportunity for professional development as required and relevant.

Relationship with the Chief Executive

- Establishing and building a strong, effective, and constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive, holding them to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives;
- supporting the Chief Executive, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles;

Time Commitment

The Chair will be expected to lead and attend 4 Board meetings per year. The Chair is also expected to have regular supervision meetings with the Chief Executive, as well as representing the Charity at various events and meetings with key stakeholders if required.

Including review of Board papers and CEO support, this equates to a rough time commitment of 1 day per month.



04. Person Specification – Chair & Trustees

The successful candidates will be expected to demonstrate evidence of the following skills, capabilities, and experience.

Ordinary Trustees

- some form or direct personal or professional connection to youth work in the North West;
- a strong personal resonance with, and a demonstrable commitment to, the charity and young people;
- an ability and willingness to devote the necessary time and energy to YFNW;
- a track-record of strategic development and creative problem solving;
- fair, independent judgment and a willingness to speak their mind;
- an ability to work collaboratively and collectively, accepting consensus;
- applications from first-time Trustees are welcome.

Chair of Trustees

In addition to the attributes shown on the left, Chair candidates will also be expected to show:

- strong commercial acumen and an understanding of competitive growth;
- excellent communication skills and the ability to articulate a compelling vision;
- prior non-executive experience, gained in either the public, private or voluntary sectors;
- a strong understanding of and knowledge of charity governance;
- relevant and credible experience in the youth work sector;
- an innate understanding of the facilitative role that an effective Chair needs to take, and an ability to actively include all Board members in discussions.



05. Appointment Details and How to Apply

Youth Focus North West is being assisted in this appointment process by the executive search firm Society (www.society-search.com).

Applications should consist of:

1. a concise covering letter (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification;
2. an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
3. names and contact details of three referees (although referees will only be approached at the final stage of the process, and only with your express permission).

General advice on how to write a [strong CV](#) and [strong covering letter](#) can be found on our website.

To upload your documents via Society's website, click [here](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday on Tuesday, 26 November 2024.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview on Tuesday, 10, and Wednesday, 11 December 2024.

An appointment will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references. The appointed candidate will be offered a salary that is commensurate with their experience and the seniority of their new role.

We are committed to ensuring that anyone can access our application processes. This includes people with hearing, sight, mobility, and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to this document in an alternative format, wish to apply in a different format, or need any other reasonable adjustments made for you (including at interview), please contact us at inclusion@society-search.com. We also welcome suggestions or comments about any more general access improvements we should consider.





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Society is a global executive search firm and a certified B Corporation. 10% of our profits go to charitable causes through The Society Foundation. With colleagues in the United Kingdom, the United States, and New Zealand, we solve senior hiring challenges for responsible businesses and purpose-driven organisations around the world.

We believe that the right candidate, placed in the right organisation at the right time, can initiate a chain reaction of transformative change that will help to deliver a more inclusive and sustainable future.

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