

HOW

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

WORKS

Committee Member Information Pack

Deadline for Applications: 12 noon on Friday 18th May 2018

Action for Children

Seeking NI Country Committee Members

We are seeking to recruit four new Members to serve on our NI Committee.

We are looking for individuals with a background in the private, public, voluntary or community sectors who can contribute to the leadership, oversight and governance of the organisation as it operates in Northern Ireland. We wish to strengthen the Committee's collective portfolio of skills in the following areas:

- Finance and Governance
- Commercial General Business and/or Social Enterprise Development
- PR, Communications and Marketing
- Fundraising
- Children's services/social care

Action for Children

Action for Children has been working with the UK's most vulnerable children since 1869. From our origins running children's homes, with our close links to The Methodist Church, our work has focused on developing services for children that are proven to work. We work in partnership with other charities, local authorities and health services, and are supported by a team of experts and specialists. Evidence drives everything we do.

Our ambition is that any child or young person that needs help gets help. How Action for Children works: from before they are born until they are into their twenties, we help disadvantaged children across the UK. We do it through practical services and programmes that are proven to work.

We help children through fostering or adoption. We intervene early to stop neglect and abuse. We make life better for disabled children. We influence policy and advocate for change. Our 7,000 staff and volunteers run over 600 services, from family centres to intensive support services, youth work to residential care homes. Together, we make a difference to the lives of 370,000 babies, children, teenagers, parents and carers every year.

In Northern Ireland, we have been operating since 2000 and currently deliver a range of support services to around 16,000 children young people and families across NI through almost 30 services. We work with children from before they are born until they are 25 years old.

Our work depends on public support. We earn it by showing how every single thing we do makes a difference. We will succeed by doing what's right, doing what's needed and doing what works for children.

Action for Children are delighted that we are working with Chief Officers 3rd Sector (CO3), to help with the recruitment process. If you have any initial queries relating to the post in the first

instance please contact Daniel McVicker at daniel@co3.bz or telephone 028 90 245356/07803 209590

Current Challenges

Action for Children, in common with many in the voluntary sector, faces turbulent and challenging times as a combination of the economic conditions, government policies and deep cuts in public spending place pressure on the provision of services for children and young people. Our emphasis on working with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and their families – those most impacted upon by poverty and neglect – means that we face significant demands to deliver continuity in the quality and scope of our services.

A significant proportion of our income comes from Health and Social Care Board and Trusts who commission our services. Because of our determination to be there for the poorest children, it is important that we do everything that we can to deliver consistent quality at lower cost whilst maintaining our campaigning stance with governments and other stakeholders. With Local commissioners looking for greater value for money, this context provides opportunities to provide new solutions including the clustering of services and the development of innovative partnerships.

These initiatives are being actively pursued whilst we look for ways to deliver our existing services through internal efficiency and overhead reduction. Within Action for Children itself, there are a number of organisational change initiatives underway or planned. These are detailed within our Annual Report and include a six-point plan:

1. Improving our reach and impact
2. Building support to fund our work and drive change for children
3. Improve our ability to innovate
4. Improving our systems and processes
5. Mobilising and engage all our people
6. Building capacity through partnership and collaboration, whether this be by cooperation/closer working generally, sharing services or merger.

In addition, we are starting to diversify our income and increase our commercial offering and expertise to help us fund and pursue our charitable ambition. Accordingly, we are a modern charity, operating too as a social enterprise and have trading activities.

For further information on Action for Children see our website:

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/>

Link to Action for Children's Annual report:

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/our-organisation/our-annual-report/>

The Role

The role of Committee Member is important in taking oversight of our activities and performance; to the development of our services in NI and for enabling our organisation to fulfil its potential and deliver on our ambition that any child that needs help gets help.

We want our people to reflect modern society in all its diversity and positively encourage applications from suitable qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, gender and or disability.

Role Description

A Country Committee member has three main responsibilities:

- 1) An oversight and fiduciary responsibility, holding Action for Children in trust and ensuring public confidence
- 2) to provide encouragement and leadership
- 3) to determine the overall direction of the charity specifically in NI.

Members will ensure a commitment to meeting our mission and charitable objectives whilst upholding our values:

- good governance
 - effective and efficient administration
 - our financial stability
 - the protection and management of our property
 - proper investment of our funds
 - that we apply resources exclusively in the furtherance of our objectives.
- contribute actively to the business of Action for Children NI Committee, giving firm strategic direction and overseeing the performance of the work in NI.
 - safeguard our good name, purpose and values.
 - use any specific knowledge or experience to help the NI Committee reach sound decisions. This will include scrutinising committee reports, leading discussion, focusing on key issues and providing advice and guidance as requested on new initiatives or other issues relevant to our work.
 - understand the legal requirements of a governance committee.



Members should be committed to those principles the Nolan Committee identified to which all those in public life should adhere: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership.



Person Specification

The successful candidate must have a range of qualities which include:

- commitment to the ethos and values of Action for Children
- commitment to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity
- independence of thought and judgement
- ability to provide leadership to NI senior staff on concerns relating to safeguarding of children and quality of practice
- ability to work as part of a team
- ability to provide guidance and governance and understanding of boundary between these requirements and those of strategic or operational management
- willingness to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a committee member

Aptitude and Skills

- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of being a Committee member
- ability to evaluate and interpret information
- an understanding of key questions to ask and answer before making decisions relating to the operation of a children's charity.
- ability to provide challenge to other members and officers and to do so while also providing support to future development
- an understanding of issues affecting the voluntary sector, especially in respect of children
- ability to play a strategic role to successfully effect change and meet the objectives of Action for Children

Knowledge and Experience

- senior management and/or practitioner experience in a local authority or similar organisation with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection services.
- Relevant professional qualification in the area of expertise e.g. social work, finance with experience in practice and/or management
- Understanding of the needs of children including those with mental health challenges and children in foster care or children's homes

To Apply

Please submit a CV of not more than three A4 pages.

Essential Dates and next steps...

1. Please submit your CV to Daniel McVicker by 12 noon on Friday 18th May 2018. Either by

Email:

daniel@co3.bz

Or

Post:

Daniel McVicker
Executive Recruitment Director
CO3
34 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DB

2. This will be followed up with a conversation with Daniel McVicker from CO3 to talk you through the main roles and responsibilities.
3. This will be followed by a conversation with a purpose with the Chair and two Committee members to see how you meet the criteria set out in the role description and the level of commitment you are able to make in this voluntary role. Additionally, there will be an opportunity to meet with a number of young Ambassadors as part of the process including those who currently sit as members of the NI Committee.
4. There will be an opportunity for successful candidates to meet the full Board before they make a commitment to join.