

2 March 2015

Dear Parents

**PTFA Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

We hereby give notice of the AGM of St Albert the Great PTFA, to be held at school, 8pm, Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

The PTFA plays a vital part in the school community and all parents/carers and teachers, as members of the PTFA, are invited to support the AGM. This is your chance to hear and see how the funds you have helped to raise have been used for the benefit of the children at our school.

The AGM is also an opportunity for you to elect the PTFA Committee, to represent the association throughout the forthcoming year. Nominations should be sent in advance of the AGM, for existing committee members willing to stand for re-election and for anyone wishing to stand as an Officer or Ordinary Committee Member, for the first time. Please see the attached notes for information on the various roles and responsibilities.

As our PTFA is a registered charity, all committee members automatically become Trustees of the Charity. Before submitting your nomination form, please read the Charity Commission publication 'The Essential Trustee – What you need to know'.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3)

Please return the slips below as soon as possible, or by Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March at the latest.

We look forward to seeing you on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Regards

**The PTFA Team**



**NOMINATION FOR OFFICER/MEMBER OF THE PTFA COMMITTEE**

**NOMINEE:** .....  
For position of: Chair/Secretary/Treasurer/ Ordinary Committee Member [mark one]

**Proposer** .....  
[please sign and print name]

**Secunder** .....  
[please sign and print name]

I, ..... agree to my nomination for the position .....

Signed .....

Date .....

## **Committee structure**

The key elements of the structure of the association are the:

- constitution (governing document)
- members
- committee
- trustees

## **Constitution**

All associations need a constitution. This is a document which establishes the fundamental rules by which the association is governed and describes:

- the aims of the association and its powers
- its membership
- the size of the committee and how members are elected
- the need for an annual audit and general meeting

## **Members**

The type of association your school has or wishes to establish will depend on its membership:

- in a Parents' Association (PA) members are limited to parents, carers and guardians of pupils currently at the school
- in a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Home School Association (HSA) members are limited to the above plus the teaching and non-teaching staff currently employed by the school
- in any other association, such as a Friends or Community Association (CA), the members may be those described above plus any persons wishing to offer appropriate support or help to the school/association who is deemed suitable as a member by the Committee e.g. grandparents, members of the local community.

It is important that the definition of membership is clear in your constitution. Members are not legally responsible for the actions of the association. It is the elected committee members who are legally responsible for the management of the association.

## **Committee**

A committee is a team of volunteers who are elected at the association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) to manage the association on behalf of the members. There are two types of committee member, Officer and Ordinary (or Other) member. Officers have specific roles such as Chair, Treasurer or Secretary. Ordinary Committee Members play a vital role working alongside and supporting the Officers. All committee members have equal voting rights, with the exception of the Chair, who has an additional casting vote, should this be needed.

It is normal for the size of the committee to vary, depending on the size of the school. The minimum number with which it is possible to operate is two; usually a Chair and a Treasurer. There is no restriction on the maximum number of committee members. However, it is in the association's interest not to make a committee too large, as this may prove to be unmanageable.

## **Additional support**

In addition to the elected committee, it is valuable to have a list of volunteers/helpers, who are willing to support the work of the committee. It would be acceptable for such volunteers to attend committee meetings but they would not have a vote; only elected committee members (Ordinary and Officers) can vote. Being a nominated PTFA volunteer can be a gentle introduction to the committee and such volunteers may well go on to being a fully elected committee member with full voting rights.

## **Trustees**

If your association is a registered charity all the elected committee members (Officers and Ordinary) automatically become Trustees of the association (charity) and have a legal duty to ensure that the association (charity) acts lawfully and is managed properly.

Whilst Trustees have a legal duty it is important to remember that all decisions should be made collectively by the committee. No one individual should take sole responsibility for a committee decision or activity.

If your association is in England or Wales you can contact the Charity Commission to check if your association is already a registered charity. If your PTFA is in Northern Ireland, you can check your charitable status with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Fast track charity registration is available to PTA-UK members (England and Wales) who have adopted the PTA-UK Model Constitution. The Charity Commission expect that all committee members will have been subject to a recent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

## **Role of Chair**

The Chair should ensure that issues are properly debated and an agreement is reached. Some committee members will be better at expressing themselves than others; it is important that the Chair welcomes contributions from all members of the committee so that everyone feels involved. New members of the committee may feel nervous at first. The Chair should welcome all new members, introduce them to the other members and encourage them to play an active part in the discussions.

Occasionally, disagreements arise. The Chair should remain impartial, call the meeting to order without upsetting the parties involved, and make sure that the committee's decisions are not hindered in any way.

The Chair needs to work closely with the Treasurer and Secretary to ensure that the association is run effectively. The Chair can be a signatory for the association's bank account, along with either the Treasurer, Secretary or other elected committee member.

Key responsibilities:

- provide leadership; ensure the Committee fulfils its role in respect of governance of the association
- set the agenda for meetings, liaising with the Secretary
- ensure the agenda is followed and that all business is covered
- call the meeting to order when it is time
- welcome and involve new members
- ask for apologies for absence
- sign the approved minutes of the last meeting
- agree a date for the next meeting
- close the meeting
- write the annual report, liaising with the Secretary
- sign cheques for the PTFA with one other elected committee member
- get to know committee members

## **Role of Treasurer**

A key responsibility for all committee members is to manage and control the funds the association raises. Although all the committee members have equal responsibility for the control and management of funds the Treasurer plays an important part in helping the committee carry out these duties properly.

The Treasurer should maintain a record of all income and expenditure. This can be done in a simple accounts book or using a computer based package. The Treasurer is responsible for handling the money raised at events, making approved payments and making arrangements for counting of money at events,

The Treasurer should report on the current financial position at each committee meeting and this should be recorded in the minutes. The report should include an update on any income and expenditure since the last meeting and the current balance. If the Treasurer is unable to attend a committee meeting, a written report should be sent to the Chair in advance of the meeting. All financial decisions taken should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Treasurer operates the bank account, reconciles the bank statements and liaises with the bank regarding changes to the bank mandate and list of authorised signatories. The Treasurer should retain the cheque book and arrange for all payments to be authorised by a second signatory ensuring regular payments, for example, PTA-UK membership, are made on time to guarantee benefits and take advantage of any discounts. The person co-signing must see what is being paid for before signing and once processed the original invoices should be kept by the Treasurer.

At each event, two people, the Treasurer and another committee member should take charge of monies received and count the proceeds before they leave the event venue. Once both parties agree the total, it should be recorded and then banked or placed in a safe overnight. We recommend that funds raised should not be kept at home. PTA-UK insurance provides cover for cash to specified limits. Please refer to the PTA-UK Policy Insurance Summary for further details.

The Treasurer should also be involved in pursuing charitable status and Gift Aid. Before the AGM, the Accounts will have to be drawn up in collaboration with the Chair and either audited or independently examined as specified in your constitution.

### **Key responsibilities:**

- maintain accurate and detailed financial records
- present a financial report at each meeting
- liaise with the bank
- make approved payments
- consults with the bank or building society regarding the availability of higher rate interest accounts
- count and bank monies
- prepare and co-sign cheques as required
- provide and account for cash floats at events
- charity registration and Gift Aid
- pay agreed expenses
- prepare annual accounts and liaise with the independent examiner of accounts
- ensure the committee has agreed appropriate procedures for the handling of financial matters

### Accounting system

Depending on the experience of your Treasurer your accounts can be produced in several ways:

- in an analysed cashbook
- using a spreadsheet application
- using an accounting program

Any of these systems can be used to record information throughout the year and will allow your association to produce periodic and end of year reports. Simple computer software is a good option. A lack of knowledge of such packages should not preclude anyone from being the Treasurer as it is acceptable for the committee to arrange for appropriate training for the Treasurer.

## **Role of Secretary**

The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that there are effective communication links between committee members and between the association and the school. The Secretary deals with all the correspondence that the association receives and helps the Chair ensure that committee meetings run smoothly. Building up a good relationship with the school Secretary will help ensure that any correspondence that is sent to the school is passed onto your association promptly. With the agreement of the Headteacher, the Secretary can usually arrange to leave PTFA notices with the school Secretary for distribution with school mailings to parents or for distribution via 'pupil mail'.

As well as dealing with correspondence following a committee meeting, the Secretary will need to make bookings and other arrangements for forthcoming events, confirming arrangements made by telephone in writing (by letter or e-mail). The Secretary will make arrangements for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and help the Chair prepare the annual report. The Secretary may also co-sign cheques on behalf of the association, along with the Treasurer, Chair or other elected committee member.

Key responsibilities:

- deal with correspondence
- prepare agendas
- call meetings - giving plenty of notice
- keep a record of attendance at meetings
- take notes during meetings
- ensure that enough committee members are present to make the meeting quorate (this number is defined in the constitution)
- write up the minutes of meetings
- distribute minutes to all the committee
- make meeting & event arrangements
- co-sign cheques as required
- write the annual report with the Chair