Code of Good Governance for Rowing Ireland Board

Foreword

Within Rowing, a wide range of people work to achieve a variety of goals, but the need for good governance is common to all. Having sound systems of internal governance in place will help us adapt to the changing environment we now face. It will play a vital role in helping us to enhance our governance and provide the best possible service to our beneficiaries.

We would encourage all those within Rowing Ireland to adhere to the principles which follow.

Introducing the Code

The Sporting sector in Ireland is now recognising the need for standards of governance, and the need for a proactive approach in promoting good governance in the sector.

This Code of Good Governance is intended to help and support the board of directors (from here on called the board).

The Code has been adapted from other Codes of Good Governance, to be suitable for Irish Rowing.

The Code sets out the seven key principles & the most important supporting principles. It is not mandatory.

Equality is fundamental to the work of the organisation so rather than being covered separately, the principle of equality, of ensuring equity, diversity and equality of treatment for all sections of the community, has been applied throughout the Code.

Seven Principles for the Board:
- Leadership
- Responsibilities
- Effectiveness
- Performance, review and renewing
- Delegation
- Integrity
- Openness

Principle 1: Board leadership
Leadership is a key role of the board.

Board to: • ensure delivery of objects,   • set strategic direction, and   • uphold its values.
Every board member is responsible for: • directing activity,   • ensuring good running, &   • delivery of outcomes.
Board to have a clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities and should provide leadership by: • Direction setting   • Effective management   • Monitoring against principles, objects and values.

Principle 2: The board's responsibilities.
We (board members) are equally responsible in law for board actions and decisions.
We are collectively responsible and accountable for ensuring:
- good performance,
- solvency, and
- compliance with obligations.

Understand and comply with: • Governing documents   • Relevant laws   • Contractual obligations   • Requirements of regulatory bodies
Internal controls: maintain & review: • System of internal controls,   • Performance reporting   • Policies and procedures
Equality & diversity: • Uphold & apply principles of equality & diversity   • Organisation to be fair and open to all sections of community in all activities.
Prudence: • Protect assets and property, and   • Ensure their use to deliver objects
Managing Risk   • Understand and review risks   • Act to manage risks identified
Managing staff & volunteers   • Distinguish between staff and volunteers   • Ensure good practice in recruitment and management of both

Principle 3: The effective board.
Have clear responsibilities & organise board to deliver effectively.

Understand individual & collective roles, responsibilities and duties and have these outlined in writing and circulated.
Organise work, for effective use of time, skills and knowledge
Info & advice to be obtained to enable good decisions
Have skills & experience, or gain access to these, as necessary.
Induction, training & support for effective working, to be received
All staff to be supervised, supported appraised and remunerated
Volunteers to be properly recruited, supervised and supported, including written roles and a policy for expenses. Policies and procedures to refer to volunteers as well as paid staff.

Principle 4: Performance, review and renewing board. Review board and organisation effectiveness, and address gaps.

Board member recruitment to be open, and focus on diversity, skills and effectiveness. Plan for renewal of board personnel
Review all aspects of work, start with governing docs, to promote positive change.
Review and assess board performance, board member performance and that of committees and working groups.

Principle 5: Board delegation.
Set out functions of Committees, officers, staff, duty holders, and monitor their performance.

Give sufficient authority and limits to staff, volunteers & duty holders, written limits on budgetary, reporting, and other matters.
Set clear TOR's for Committees, and working groups, by Board.
Board to monitor all delegated authorities

Principle 6: Board integrity.
Maintaining integrity to be overriding duty.
Act reasonably at all times in interest of organisation, its present & future beneficiaries/users/members. Board members to uphold high ethical standards and ensure conflicts of interest are properly dealt with.

No personal benefit from their position, beyond that allowed by gov docs & the law, and only when in best interests of the organisation
Members to identify & declare any actual/potential conflicts of interest including conflicting loyalties which may arise
Probity. Develop clear guidelines on receipt of gifts or hospitality by board members

Principle 7: Board openness.
Be open, responsive and accountable to users, beneficiaries, members, partners, funders and others with an interest in work of board

Identify those with legitimate interests (stakeholders) and ensure regular and effective communication & consultation
Be open & accountable to stakeholders about board work and governance
Encourage and enable stakeholder involvement in the organisation's planning and decision making

Glossary of terms:

Governance is about leadership and ensuring that organisations are effectively and properly run. It has been defined as "the systems and processes concerned with ensuring the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of an organisation".

Autonomous refers to a self-governing, independent body which is free from external control and constraint.

Volunteering is defined as the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.

Prudence is care, caution and good judgement as well as wisdom in looking ahead.

Compliance is the act of conforming to official requirements.

Integrity describes soundness of of moral character, and this is demonstrated through adherence to moral and ethical principles.

Probity is to behave with integrity, being open, transparent and honest.

Equity is used to mean fairness and impartiality.

Diversity describes the quality of being different.

Effectiveness is being able to bring about the intended or expected result.

Accountability is being liable for one's responsibilities and answerable for one's actions in relation to these.

For further information see:
www.diycommitteeguide.org
A useful resource for practical help and support for management committees/boards which will map information to the principles in this code.