

**CLEAN
BREAK**



**Board & Finance Committee
Complimentary Information Pack**

Background information

Clean Break has a strong track record of delivering original theatre productions including the most recent successful tour of Scenes from Lost Mothers, which toured to universities, theatres and women's centres nationally, support in prisons and the community, and professional training and development. Our mission is to shine a light on the injustices women experience in and beyond the criminal justice system and to enable women to challenge the oppression they experience.

Our turnover is £1m+ and we own our building, a former piano factory, in Kentish Town, North London. We have strong trustee board led by Co-Chairs Josette Bushell-Mingo and Sarah-Jane Dent and an excellent staff team headed up by Anna Herrmann, Artistic Director/Joint-CEO and Natasha Bucknor, Interim Executive Director/Joint-CEO.

Whilst this has been a period of great achievement, we are also experiencing significant organisational change and challenge. Income targets remain high and are becoming increasingly difficult to achieve in a climate of underfunding and with a competitive funding landscape. Like many peer organisations in the cultural sector, income levels have not fully recovered following the Covid pandemic. This, alongside the cost-of-living crisis, has resulted in reserves being below the minimum level agreed by the Board of Trustees. To meet this challenge, we are in the process of a Business Model Review. This work is led by the Joint CEO's with the support of a pro bono Consultant (grant from the Triangle Trust), to ensure that we remain sustainable for the future. This work will be completed in January 2026. This is the right moment for Clean Break to reinstate the role of Treasurer, to support the organisation we transition to the next phase of our development.

Please see the [Directors' Report](#) for a financial and organisational review of 2024/2025.

Finance Committee

Purpose

The Finance Committee will recommend finance policy to the Trustees and ensure that existing finance policy is implemented. The audit function of this committee is to consider the adequacy of risk management, internal controls and corporate governance.

Activities

In general terms, the Committee is responsible for advising on financial operations and controls including recommending the annual budget and business plan, monitoring the production of management accounts, the approval of operational financial systems, Treasury Management controls and policy, and considering the adequacy of risk management, internal control and corporate governance.

Membership

Two to three board members with financial/commercial experience and the Executive Director and Head of Finance & Operations. The quorum shall be one trustee and either the Executive Director or the Head of Finance & Operations.

Specific responsibilities are:

- To review and recommend the annual budget and business plan for approval by the Trustees.
- To ensure that the Board receives regular financial reports
- To ensure that accounting procedures are in accordance with company and charity accounting rules and best practice and that they are efficiently operated and kept up to date.
- To ensure that Clean Break has a written description of its financial systems and procedures, which is kept up to date.
- To receive and review audit reports and to agree on the resulting management letter. Ensure that the management letter recommendations are implemented.
- To review compliance with all UK corporate and charity law.
- To ensure that a register of the interests of Trustees and the Executive Team is kept and regularly updated.
- To ensure that any amendment to existing financial policy is approved by the Trustees
- To ensure that the risk assessment and corporate governance processes are in line with best practice.
- To review the annual accounts of the organisation

The Committee shall have access to all information it considers necessary from members of staff and management and shall have the right to consult with auditors directly should it so wish.

Accountability

The minutes of the Committee will be circulated to the Board. No decisions will be taken by the Committee without express authorisation from the Board.

Board and Senior Team Working Together Guidelines

A strong and healthy working relationship between the Board and the Senior Team is essential for the company's effective performance and impact. We aim to work together in a way which embodies our organisational values of collaboration, compassion, courage, creativity and equity and fairness. The spirit of the relationship and its key principles are summarised as follows:

Trust – we will build a climate of trust, understanding that we all bring our best intentions, and are guided by a shared vision & mission. Trust enables constructive and open discussion and empowers everyone to fulfil their respective roles to the very best of their ability.

Respect – we will show respect and listen to each other deeply, making space for each other, and knowing that everyone deserves to be heard. We see our diversity as a source of strength and seek to understand differing points of view, while recognising the value of building towards a broad consensus wherever possible.

Courageous Conversations – we will bring complex and sometimes challenging discussions to the table for the shared aim of organisational growth and improved impact. We do not shy away from tough conversations and will hold ourselves to account with kindness. We are unapologetic in our commitment to anti-racism requiring us to 'call in' behaviour. We are able to sit in discomfort. With trust and mutual respect in place, these conversations have the potential to be opportunities for learning and development.

Focus – we will use our time together efficiently, maintaining focus on our mission and on using our resources well. The Co-Chairs and the Chief Executives will structure board agendas accordingly and all trustees commit to engaging strategically whilst delegating detailed scrutiny to the Board's subcommittees where appropriate.

Communication – we will communicate openly and without judgement – aiming to say what we mean with clarity and kindness. We will pay attention to the quieter voices. The senior team will prepare information that is pitched at the right level to support Trustees fulfil their duties, and Trustees will be clear in stating their needs. Any issues will be raised in a transparent way, either at Board meetings or in advance with the Executive Director or/and Co-Chairs.

Commitment – Trustees will do their best to attend all Board meetings, become champions for different areas of work and sign up to working groups and sub-committees, as appropriate. It is equally hoped that trustees commit to attend company events, introduce their networks and show support to and engage with our staff, stakeholders, funders and Members. The Senior Team commit to ensuring that Board members are given advance notice of key events, including full briefings and support when necessary.

Celebration – we will make time to celebrate the company’s achievements, and to come together with the broader staff team and Members to share these successes more widely. We understand the importance of making space for joy. We will speak with pride about the work of Clean Break and acknowledge those not in the room, always remembering the journeys of our Members’.

Review – we will review how we work together across the year, led by the Co-Chairs and Chief Executives, to ensure that we are living these principles, and to give us space to reflect together, to learn and be open to change. We will address areas of concern at an early stage to strengthen Governance for the benefit of all at Clean Break.

The Role of Trustee

- Ensure that Clean Break keeps on track in fulfilling its purposes, as defined in its Articles of Association, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensure that Clean Break complies with its governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that Clean Break applies resources (being income, the building and other staff) exclusively in pursuance of achieving the purposes listed above for the benefit of the public
- Ensure that Clean Break defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of Clean Break
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of Clean Break, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensure the financial stability of Clean Break
- Protect and manage the property of the charity (2 Patshull Road, NW5 2LB) and ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds
- Support the succession planning, appointment, supervision, and remuneration of the Joint CEOs

Our current For details of our current trustees, please visit www.cleanbreak.org.uk/about/

