

BRIEFING NOTE

**TRUSTEE FOR
SEVERN TRENT WATER CHARITABLE TRUST FUND**

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Please apply by 6th January 2019 (early applications encouraged)

Interviews 14th and 16th January, Auriga offices, Sutton Coldfield.

**Clive Stone
Chair of Trustees**

December 2019

Severn Trent Water Charitable Trust Fund
Registered Charity Number: 1108278
Company Registered in England Number: 05338827

ABOUT THE CHARITY:

Severn Trent Water Charitable Trust Fund (known as the Severn Trent Trust Fund) is a Registered Charity. It is also a Company Limited by Guarantee¹. This corporate model is fairly typical of charities generally. Importantly it limits the liability of the Trustees.

Established in 1997 by Severn Trent Water, its object is to provide support to Severn Trent Water's customers who are in need and unable to meet the cost of water services.

The charity is successful and is known and has a good reputation throughout the utility industry and the money advice sector.

In 2004 the Trust Fund established a 'trading subsidiary'; Auriga Services Limited (Auriga) and all the staff were transferred to Auriga which is wholly owned by the Trust. However, it operates independently with its own Board of Directors and provides services for other organisations.

Therefore, Severn Trent Trust Fund does not employ staff or rent premises directly. It has a contract with Auriga to provide all management and administration for the Trust Fund.

¹ 'Limited by Guarantee' is an alternative to a company whose liability is limited by shares. Each of the Trustees (who are also the only members of the company) guarantees to pay £10 in the event of the Charity/Company not being able to meet its liabilities.

This safeguards the financial position for Trustees who in a non-incorporated charitable trust can be personally liable for commitments

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The Trust Fund is governed by Memorandum and Articles and therefore Trustees must be appointed in accordance with these. Existing Trustees decide how to select but in practice this has not been by open advertisement (and there is no requirement for this).

Under Charity Law, Trustees cannot be paid for their time whilst acting as a Trustee. However, expenses can be paid.

Trustees are also Directors of the incorporated Company, although they are referred to as 'Trustees'. Whilst the Mem & Arts also talk about 'members', the Trustees are the only members of the company.

Trustees therefore must not be precluded by any of the normal rules from being either a Trustee of a Charity or a company Director.

All Trustees have the same voting rights on the Board and although a Chair may be appointed (see below for the role of Chair for information) he or she has no greater powers than any other Trustee.

NEW TRUSTEES

The Trustees have reviewed their skills and experience, and have concluded that the board would benefit from two new members.

The skills we are seeking are:

A person who is experienced in financial matters and knowledge of charity law is desirable but not essential. They need not necessarily be a qualified accountant, although this would be a benefit.

We are also looking for someone from the debt advice sector or who has good knowledge of the sector.

Activities are likely to be in the region of 8-10 half days per year. Applicants are requested to be certain that they can devote this time prior to application.

UNIQUE TO SEVERN TRENT TRUST FUND

All Trustees can expect to take an interest in the relationship that exists between the Trust Fund and Auriga. In practice Chair will take the lead in this relationship.

Auriga has its own Board of Directors and periodically, the Chair of Auriga will attend the Severn Trent Trust Fund Trustee meetings to assist and report on activities. Between these times, the CEO and other staff of Auriga attend each meeting and submit written reports on the Trusts operations and Auriga's activities.

The interest in Auriga includes the financial health of the company. Whilst the charity cannot legally support Auriga financially it must maintain a watching brief and it has a vested interest in ensuring its success and its survival.

This brings to the role of both Trustee and Chair in particular, a further and interesting dimension.

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT AURIGA SERVICES

Auriga Services was formed in 2004 as a wholly owned trading subsidiary of Severn Trent Trust Fund. Its original purpose was to extend the administrative services of the Trust to other similar trust such that economies of scale could be obtained.

In 2015, Auriga embarked on its own growth strategy with a mission of "Changing lives every day" and a vision for helping two million people by 2020.

It now has an ambitious growth agenda in its own right and has diversified to deliver welfare benefits realisation, debt advice and income maximisation services. This is delivered to a number of charities and the National Health Service.

Full details about Auriga can be found at www.aurigaservices.co.uk

FACTS ABOUT SEVERN TRENT TRUST FUND

- A Registered Charity: Established in 1997 by Severn Trent Water who continue to give generous support.
- Making help available to Severn Trent's 4.3 million household customers who are in genuine hardship and unable to meet the cost of their water/sewerage bills.
- Donations come from Severn Trent Water and up to 2018/19 total £65 million.
- A simple concept but well executed: Instead of chasing people for money they simply don't have, their situation is assessed carefully and confidentially. They are then helped to clear their existing debt with grant aid and offered where needed, other help to get them back on their feet financially. Experience shows that customers, once helped, often manage better in the future.
- Over 165,000 families have been helped directly from the Trust with nearly 87,000 receiving grants.
- Over £5m has also been given to advice agencies in the region to support money advice work.
- Tried and tested, the charity has gone from strength to strength achieving a good reputation in the region and nationally – others have followed its best practice.

Severn Trent Trust Fund is managed by a Board of independent unpaid Trustees who set and oversee policy (Day to day administration is carried out by Auriga Services Ltd who also manage other similar schemes for major clients):

- *Clive Stone* *Chair of Trustees*
- *Hazel Moss* *Chair of audit and risk committee*
- *Clive Mottram* *Legal Director, Head of Water Regulation, Eversheds*
- *Andy Phelps* *Strategy and Regulation Specialist in the Energy Sector*
- *Craig Simmons* *Sector Co-ordination Manager at the Money Advice Service*
- *Lowri Williams* *Legal Counsel at Alliance Medical*

Previous Chairs have been Lord Denis Howell, Marjorie Brown and Derek Harris & Liz Pusey