



Candidate Briefing Pack

Chair of the board of trustees

September 2023

Welcome

Hello, I'm Melvin. I've been at MhIST for over 20 years. I have occupied the senior role for 14 years. Prior to that I led one of the main services that we offered at that time, before that. Well contact me for more.

MhIST, short for Mental Health Independent Support team and pronounced 'MIST' (the 'h' is silent) is a community mental health organisation. We provide for people in Bolton and only Bolton. We are also a 'user led' organisation. That means most of our board and employees plus about a two thirds of our volunteers have personal experience of poor mental health.

MhIST is a remarkable organisation: we meet lots of people many of whom are from excluded and seldom heard from communities. Our biggest successes happen when we listen to what these people have to say as this enables us to co-produce services and approaches that are valuable and suitable for a diverse range of people within the communities we serve and across society.

When we've done that people say that what we do is great and they feel as if they are part of the 'MhIST family'.

We are at the beginning of an exciting period of growth and transformation for MhIST and our new chair of trustees will be central to us achieving the possibilities we see before us.

If you have a senior health or care sector background (or maybe you are passionate about mental health and creating stronger communities from a different background) and share our values, our passion and our belief, we'd love for you to join our board of trustees.

If you would like to learn a bit more contact me on 07966 842498 (WhatsApp works well) or email melvin.bradley@mhist.co.uk.



Dr Melvin Bradley. BSc(Joint Hons), MSc, DProf, DHC (honoris causa), FRSA.

CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melvin Bradley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

About us

Who we are

MhIST is the leading Bolton based mental health charity. We have built on over 30 years of experience working with people experiencing mental health problems in the community, in hospital and in supported environments. We take a broad view of mental health, and we work with anybody who professes a mental health problem.

What we do

MhIST is an innovative user-led organisation that provides a responsive, safe and confidential service that supports people with mental health challenges and their carers'. Our services are free at the point of access, inclusive, responsive and creative. We are committed to supporting people to drive their recovery, develop self-management strategies, and respond positively to future challenges.










Our uniqueness comes from the personalised care we provide, through one-to-one support, talking therapies, self-help groups, employment advice and information and Advocacy Services. We equip each individual with the skills, attitude and self-belief they need to go on to live a successful independent life in their community.

We are committed to creating a safe and non-judgemental space where people can receive a warm welcome and help to access the right support at the right time. We believe everyone has the right to be listened to, to be heard and to have a voice, that every individual is at the centre of decision making.

Our core values are to support vulnerable people to have a voice in their care and to secure their rights, represent their interests in care planning and obtain services to meet their bespoke needs. Specifically, we:

- Promote social inclusion;
- Promote health equality;
- Promote social justice.

Our year in numbers

Turnover in 2021/22	£335,799	
	8,091	Total interventions in 2021/22
Self-help service attendance	3599	
	2064	Talking therapy sessions delivered
Advocacy service interventions	1929	
	499	Young people supported
Growth in numbers 2021 – 2022	70%	
	77	Number of volunteers
Percentage of our staff team with lived experience of mental health problems or as a carer.	72%	

The landscape

The UK economy has shrunk by 9.8% - the worst contraction in 300 years - and over six million people are on Universal Credit, which is double the figure a year ago. Government borrowing is at its highest since war-time levels. As of August 2022, inflation hit 9.9%, contributing to the worst cost-of-living crisis England has seen in 30 years.

Bolton is ranked the 34th most deprived local authority in the country (out of 317). In 2015 it was ranked 46th, and in 2010 34th (adjusted to 2019 local authorities). So Bolton has become relatively more deprived since 2015 - but because it's relative a lower rank doesn't necessarily mean things have got worse in real life, they may just not have improved at the same rate as other areas around them.

Bolton is in the 20% of all Lower Super Output Areas within the 10% more deprived areas in England. In particular, 20% of children live in poverty and people with a disability and unemployment being the most disadvantaged. Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the national average, and Bolton's suicide rate is higher than the average for England. Coupled with the COVID-19 crisis many service users are at greater risk of worsening mental and physical health. Isolation, fear, anxiety and uncertainty have caused further anxiety, inability to cope and increased stress.

The pandemic has also exacerbated the pre-existing challenges in the charity sector associated with mental health. Significant workforce shortages and high rates of turnover pose a real risk to the recovery of services and the quality of care, as well as to the health and wellbeing of colleagues. In addition finance has become more difficult to attract.

As the government seeks to address some of the societal impacts of the pandemic, a broad range of policy announcements have been made. There is a new drug strategy, multiple mental health frameworks, social care and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) reviews underway and the ongoing journey of the Health and Care Bill through Parliament. This legislation is expected to put integrated care systems (ICSs) on a statutory footing and to increase collaboration between different parts of the system so that there is 'no wrong door' for those seeking support.

Our vision and values

Before, during and beyond the pandemic, our vision and values continue to drive everything we do - as an employer, support provider, and a trusted and respected community organisation.

Our vision

To deliver a friendly, safe and positive environment for people with mental health problems. Giving people the skills and tools to self-manage their emotional wellbeing.

The quality of our services means everything to us. The people we work with inspire us and in turn we look for new ways to inspire change. We owe it to the people we work with to grow and shape the future, because we believe in what we do.

Our values

Service user led. We are staunchly committed to reflecting the needs of users and involving members in decisions throughout the organisation. We encourage members to collaborate in service delivery and in the governance of the organisation.

Non-judgemental. We want to provide a friendly and safe environment so that everyone in our organisation feels accepted. We know that feeling judged makes our mental health worse.

Confidential. MhIST protects the confidentiality of everyone in the organisation. Poor mental health has made us and our members feel vulnerable and want to ensure that we do not contribute to those feelings.

Encouraging. MhIST provides an empowering environment that enables people to develop and grow as individuals. We make sure that everything we do is working with people towards their own goals.

Empathic. We champion the wellbeing of individuals and treat everyone with kindness. Respect and dignity are the cornerstones of our behaviour.

Role description

Objective

The Chair will hold the Board and Executive Team to account for the organisation's mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the MhIST Board, ensuring that each Board member fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the organisation. The Chair will also support, and, where appropriate, challenge the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and ensure that the Board functions as a team and works closely with the entire Executive of the organisation to achieve agreed objectives.

Principal Responsibilities

Governance

- Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for MhIST.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board through leading and mentoring other Board members and enable access to training/coaching/information to enhance the overall contribution of the Board.
- Encourage positive change where appropriate, addressing and resolving any conflicts within the Board.
- Ensure that the Board is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the organisation effectively, and which also reflects the wider population.
- Approve the annual cycle of the board meetings, meeting agendas, chair and facilitate meetings, monitor decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented.
- To lead on board development, Trustee appraisals and Board self-assessment.

Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership to MhIST and its Board, ensuring that the organisation has maximum impact for its beneficiaries.
- Ensure that the Board provides a clear strategic direction for the organisation and actively seeks out business development opportunities and makes decisions which lead to action furthering the aims and objectives of MhIST
- Ensure that the Board is able to regularly review major risks and associated opportunities, and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities, and manage and mitigate the risks

- Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the CEO, ensuring that s/he is held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives
- Leads trustees in the development of a business plan for the charity, ensuring that it is implemented in accordance with decisions of the trustees.
- Encourages positive change where appropriate, addressing and resolving any conflicts within the Board.

External Relations

- In conjunction with the CEO, act as a spokesperson for the organisation where appropriate.
- Represent and safeguard the reputation of MhIST at external functions, meetings, and events.
- As with all Board members, s/he will also act as an ambassador for MhIST, representing and promoting it to external stakeholders as appropriate.

Legal

- Ensure that Board members fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the organisation
- Ensure that MhIST pursues its objects as defined in its governing document, company law and other relevant legislation/regulations
- Ensure that MhIST complies with all relevant legislation, regulations, and policies.

Financial

- Maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the organisation.
- Ensure that the Board puts in place systems for monitoring both the quality of MhIST's work and the sound financial health of the organisation including financial accountability and transparency.
- To ensure that MhIST has effective financial control systems and procedures.

Person specification

Essential

- Experienced trustee or non-executive director.
- Commitment to the ethos and values of MhIST including equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity and inclusion.
- Applied understanding of the corporate governance and management structures of medium sized local organisation.
- An extensive network of relevant contacts and willingness to leverage those contacts to further the business aims of MhIST.
- Ability to play a strategic role in order to successfully effect change.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trustee and non-executive director.
- Broad knowledge and understanding of the VCSE and current issues affecting it

Desirable

- Applied understanding of the functioning of a board and an ability to work as part of a team.
- Knowledge and experience of financial and risk management at board level.
- Appreciation or knowledge of the public sector commissioning landscape for health and social care services.
- An appreciation for the quality standards and risks associated with NHS health and social care delivery.
- Good understanding of legal issues affecting charities and their environment

Additional information

Time commitment

At least eight Board meetings per year. The Chair is also expected to have regular meetings and be in regular contact with the CEO and liaise with other Board members and Board Sub-Committees in between full Board meetings.

Eligibility

You must not act as a trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act, unless your disqualification has been waived by the Commission. Reasons for disqualification include if you:

- are disqualified as a company director,
- have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud),
- are an undischarged bankrupt (or subject to sequestration in Scotland), or have a current composition or arrangement including an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) with your creditors,
- have been removed as a trustee of any charity by the Commission (or the court) because of misconduct or mismanagement,
- are on the sex offenders' register.

You can read the **automatic disqualification guidance for charities** which explains the disqualification rules in more detail.

Remuneration

The role of Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel may be claimed.

How to apply

All applications must be received by midnight on 29th October 2023.

If you would like to have an initial conversation, please contact Melvin Bradley on 07966 842498 or by email at melvin.bradley@mhist.co.uk

All applications must quote the reference 'chair' and include:

- A full curriculum vitae
- A covering letter (no more than two pages) indicating how you meet the selection criteria and articulating why you are interested in the role.
- Contact details for two referees (who will not be contacted without your permission)
- A contact email address and telephone number.

Please send all documentation by email to: jobs@mhist.co.uk

Key dates:

Application deadline	Midnight 29 th October 2023
Shortlisting	w/c 6 th November 2023
Interview date	w/c 20 th November 2023