

# The Role of the District Executive in Supporting the Explorer Scout Section



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## Overview

The Explorer Scout Section is a District Section and the District Executive Committee fulfils the role of the Group Executive Committee so far as this Section is concerned.

The Executive Committee is responsible for:

- the maintenance of any property belonging to the District Explorer Scouts
- the raising of funds and the administration of the Section's finance
- the insurance of persons, property and equipment
- assisting with the recruitment of Leaders and other adult support

## District Explorer Scout Commissioner

The District Explorer Scout Commissioner or DESC is responsible to the District Commissioner for the operation of the section within the District.

The DESC is a member of the District Executive Committee and should ensure that the Executive is fully informed as to the nature of Explorer Scouting within the District.

One of the key functions of the DESC is to advise the District Commissioner on the setting up or closure of Explorer Scout Units within the District. This **is not** a task for the District Executive.

The DESC is supported by the District Explorer Scout Administrator or DESA with regard to the administrative function of providing the programme on a local basis. Explorer Scout Leaders, Assistant Leaders and Unit Assistants are appointed to assist in the running of individual Units.

## Finance

The DESC is responsible for the implementation of the programme throughout the District and will need sufficient funds to be able to discharge this responsibility.

As there is no one specific model for the set-up of Explorer Scout Units within the District it is not possible to detail how these finances will be spent. When setting an annual budget it is suggested that the following are taken into consideration as a minimum:

- Requirements of all individual Partnership Agreements (see Factsheets FS 452001, FS 452002 and FS 452003)
- Activities
- HQ subscriptions
- County levy
- Printing and stationery
- Postage and telephone
- DESA costs
- Travel costs

## The Scout Information Centre

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- General DESC Expenses
- Young Leaders' Scheme
- Badges and Awards
- Publications
- Leader Training

As you will appreciate the above items may constitute a considerable sum. The District Executive must decide whether these costs (and others that it may decide on) are passed to Explorer Scouts only by way of their Unit Membership fee or whether these costs are incorporated in the general District membership Fee paid by every member of the District. It may be that a split between the two payment methods is appropriate.

Additionally, the District Executive may decide that the Explorer Scout Section needs to undertake fund-raising activities to assist in its' finances. Care needs to be taken when deciding on this option as it is important that the burden of fund-raising is borne by all members of the section and this may prove difficult in some Districts.

There are many grants available locally for this age group and these should be investigated wherever possible.

A combination of all or some of the above options for providing finance is appropriate.

It should be recognised that setting a budget for a section is not an exact science and that there should be sufficient leeway in the budget process to allow for contingencies.

### **Explorer Scout Accounts**

*P.O.R. Rules 4.59, 4.60 and 4.61 cover the opening and operation of Unit Bank accounts.*

The District Executive may authorise an opening of Bank Accounts for individual Units subject to the restrictions outlined above.

Each Unit must submit its accounts and bank account statements to the District Treasurer for scrutiny at no greater than three monthly intervals.

All Explorer Scout Units are answerable to the District Executive in respect of their finances.

The annual accounts for the Explorer Scout Section may either be fully incorporated into the District accounts or produced as a separate appendix to them.

A separate fact sheet (FS452013) is available with more information about Finance in the Explorer Scout Section.

### **Property**

There are many issues surrounding property and before a decision is made to purchase property the District Executive will need to address the following:

- should the equipment be purchased for the Section only or for the District generally?
- who is able to use the equipment?
- where will it be stored?
- who is responsible for the upkeep?
- who is responsible for replacement?

All of the above are simple questions that may prove difficult to answer.

Good practice would indicate that equipment should be purchased for as wide a use as possible. Additionally consideration should be given to Units borrowing existing equipment from Scout Groups.

## **Insurance**

The District Executive has a responsibility to ensure that all persons and property are adequately insured.

If the District includes the DESA on the annual census (which means paying membership subscription) it ensures that the insurance issue cannot be overlooked.

However, if the DESA is not included on the census and is not a 'member of the Association' they can take out personal injury cover in one of two ways:

1. The District could include them on an 'odd bod' policy (basically an extension to the main Personal Accident Policy) covering up to 25 persons working with the District.
2. The District could take out a specific policy for the DESA under the Personal Injury Plan (PIP).

In both cases, details should be obtained from Insurance Services in Lancing.

## **Registration of Units and Charity Numbers**

Explorer Scout Units are not individually registered; the section is registered to the District on completion of the census form.

The charity number Units should quote is that used by the District (where applicable).

## **Recruitment**

The District Executive has the same responsibility for recruitment of adults and young people as the Group Executive has within a Scout Group.

Recruitment should be undertaken in conjunction with any partner included in a Partnership Agreement.

- the District Executive has to ensure that there are sufficient and appropriate leaders for all Units within the District
- ensure that there is a DESA in place or sufficient administrative support if one is not available
- ensure that there is an opportunity for Young Leaders to receive the appropriate training

The District Executive should also assist in the recruitment of young people ensuring that adequate provision is made for 14 - 18 year olds to participate in Scouting within the District wherever possible.

## **Use of Young People on the District Executive**

A young person under the age of 18 is unable to be a trustee and full voting member of the District Executive.

Explorer Scouts can be co-opted onto sub-committees and they may be invited along to District Executive meetings when appropriate.

If they are invited to participate at this level it is imperative that:

- they are involved in discussion
- they are listened to
- they are fully included in the decision making process
- they are used in an appropriate way

To ensure that this participation functions effectively it may require some change to the normal workings of the District Executive Committee. For example using small working Groups in break out sessions to think through the reasons for a decision during the meeting rather than have the normal round-the-table discussion may be more appropriate for the age group.

### Dealing with differences of opinion.

There are always going to be occasions when there are differences of opinion. It is important that when these issues arise that they are dealt with promptly and are not allowed to turn into a major dispute.

If there is a difference of opinion between the District Executive and the DESC ensure that the matter in hand is the responsibility of the District Executive to consider. As an example, matters of programme are not the responsibility of the Executive, however providing funding for them is.

If there is a legitimate difference of opinion between the Executive and the DESC it should be resolved by discussion between the District Commissioner, DESC and District Chairman. Subsequently an agreed proposal may be put to the District Executive with the full backing of these three individuals.

If the difference of opinion is between a partner in a Partnership Agreement and a Unit then the matter should be resolved with discussion between the DESC and the appropriate member of the partner organisation (e.g. Group Scout Leader if the partner organisation is a Scout Group). If necessary the District Commissioner should also be involved.

If the matter cannot be resolved at a District level it can be referred to the County Commissioner whose decision will be final.

### Discharging Responsibility.

It may be that the District Executive Committee will not want lengthy discussions concerning the Explorer Scout section at every meeting. The District Executive may appoint a sub-committee to discharge as much of their responsibility as the Executive feels fit and then report to the District Executive as requested.

For example, the District Executive may not wish to discuss the funding of the programme, equipment and expenses at length. Instead it may decide that the sub-committee submit a budget direct to the District Executive for approval.

Best practice would indicate that if a sub-committee is formed it should include the District Explorer Scout Commissioner and District Explorer Scout Administrator.

When considering whether to set up a sub-committee to oversee this section you may wish to review the demographics of your District Executive and decide whether you wish a different demographic profile for the sub-committee, perhaps including Explorer Scouts.

### Summary

Proper financial support for the section is crucial.

There must be adequate administrative support provided

The Executive **does not** have responsibility for the programme, only the funding for it.

The District Commissioner must ensure that the District Chairman is aware of these responsibilities and will fully support all reasonable proposals.