The concept of governance has been widely discussed in both the business and non-business sectors. The debate has also been entered into within the charity sector, which comprises over 169,000 organizations in the UK. The UK-based Charity Commission, which describes itself as existing to ‘promote sound governance and accountability’, has taken a lead in this debate by promoting greater regulation and producing numerous recommendations with regard to the proper governance of charitable organizations. However, the concept of what is meant by governance is unclear and a myriad of ideas are placed under the umbrella of ‘good governance’. This paper explores the major themes that form the basis of much of this discussion, examining both the theoretical underpinnings and empirical investigations relating to this area (looking from the perspective of the key stakeholders in the charity sector). Based on an analysis of the extant literature, this paper presents a broad definition of governance with respect to charities and outlines a future research agenda for those interested in adding to knowledge in this area.