



Trust Housing Association Board Member Recruitment and Retention Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out how Trust Housing Association will seek to recruit new governing members onto the Trust Board of Management. It takes into account the Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes and standards, the Scottish Housing Regulator guidance and the SFHA model rules which have been fully adopted by the Trust Board. Voluntary members make up the Trust Board of Management and collectively have the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise to apply the highest standards of good governance for the organisation.

Objectives

This policy sets out how Trust will:

- Recruit individuals who have the relevant skills, knowledge, experience and who share the core values that are required by the Board and who will act as ambassadors of Trust and the Trust brand.
- Adopt a recruitment process to fill vacancies that is open, fair and transparent that attracts a wide range of people with the necessary expertise whilst promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensure that voluntary Board Members are supported effectively in their role to gain up to date knowledge and skills.
- Recognise the value and contribution of voluntary Board Members and provide regular training, conduct annual reviews and agree development plans.
- Ensure continuity of service by retaining a consistent Board membership who are engaged, empowered and relish the challenge of the role.
- Support Board Members who wish to become office-bearers by providing an open, fair and transparent recruitment process and path to the role.

Implementation

Recruitment of new Board Members

All Board Members are Trust ambassadors who promote the work of the Board using networking opportunities to raise Trust's profile and attract potential candidates to join the Board. In the event of a vacancy, an advertisement will be produced to publicise Trust Housing Association and the important work carried out by the Board to encourage high calibre individuals to join Trust. The advert will be distributed to a wide audience: in Trust's newsletter and website, any other relevant professional body / organisation / network, on housing sector forums together with targeted professional media sites such as LinkedIn.

An application pack will be provided with the role description and the skills, knowledge and experience required of new Board Members. The pack will contain

information about the frequency and length of Board meetings and the other work associated with the role, including the responsibilities of being a charity trustee.

All Board Member applicants will be asked to submit a CV together with a covering letter outlining their skills, expertise and experience that are relevant to the Board's remit. The covering letter will form part of the nomination papers for those standing for election (or re-election) at the Annual General Meeting.

Prospective Board Members will have the opportunity to meet with relevant stakeholders to discuss their areas of interest and to learn more about what the Board Member role involves. In addition, prospective Board Members may be invited to observe one or more Board and / or Sub Committee meetings to give an insight into the work of the Trust Board. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a formal interview including a skills based exercise with the Chair and the Chief Executive together with a tenant representative. Co-optees or casual vacancies will be used to fill vacancies which arise during the year or which remain following the AGM. Any potential co-optees will follow the recruitment process as detailed above.

In accordance with Trust's Governing Model Rules, all prospective Board Members will require to stand for election at the AGM. Any Member of the Association can be nominated to be elected onto the Board. If at the AGM the number of Members standing for election is less than or equal to the number of vacant places, the Chairperson will declare them elected without a vote. If there are more Members standing for election than there are vacant places, those present at the general meeting or those exercising a postal vote will elect Members onto the Board.

Trust has a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Board will encourage those who are under represented to consider becoming a Board Member and all meeting arrangements will promote accessibility and inclusion.

Skills review

The Trust Board has adopted a skills matrix framework for Board Members to assess their skills, knowledge and expertise. The skills matrix will provide an overview of the skills mix on the Board and will assist with succession planning and identifying skills gaps during any recruitment process. It will be regularly reviewed by the Chairs Support Group and will highlight areas for support and professional development to be incorporated into Board Members' annual development plans.

The demands being made of the Board Members will be monitored through annual appraisal discussions with the Chair / Vice Chair and through regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the Board and its meetings.

Providing support and valuing contribution

New Board Members will be supported by being paired up with a mentor who will be an experienced member of the Board together with a tailored induction programme. The Board Member handbook will be a further reference point for information about the Board Code of Conduct, Trust's Model Governing Rules and claiming expenses.

The Board Member skills matrix and annual review will identify training areas, support needs and skills gaps. The Board will receive an annual programme of training and individual support will be given to those Board Members who wish to acquire additional skills to enable them to carry out or develop their role.

Strategic board away days will provide an important opportunity for networking and team building as well as training and development. The Board are encouraged to identify any other development areas throughout the year and to attend relevant conferences and events.

To promote the voluntary nature of the Trust Board and to acknowledge the commitment of Board Members, all Trust publications will reflect the valuable work done by the Trust Board and will be circulated using a variety of platforms such as the Trust Annual Report, Trust website, social media and housing sector articles.

Board Members Service

The Chair will identify Board Members who would be interested in becoming office bearers through the annual appraisal discussion and will agree any appropriate development support to assist them in achieving their ambitions.

In accordance with Trust's Model Governing Rules it is expected that any Board Member who reaches 9 years service will resign from the Board. The Board must satisfy itself that any Board Member seeking re-election to the Board after service as a Board Member for a continuous period in excess of 9 years can demonstrate his / her continued effectiveness as a Board Member. In practice this means Board Members should confirm their intention to resign from the Board at the annual appraisal discussion which takes place prior to reaching 9 years of service. Any Board Member with 9 years of service who wishes to remain on the Board will be asked to submit a written statement which justifies future service.

The Chief Executive, with the assistance of the Company Secretary, is responsible for the effective implementation of all aspects of this policy.

Please also refer to:

Trust Model Governing Rules
Board Member Code of Conduct
Board Member Role Description & Person Specification
Board Member Guide