

Board Membership Policy



1 Aims of policy

To ensure that members of the Board of Chorley Community Housing are recruited and trained to make certain that the Board has the relevant skills necessary to perform its duties efficiently and effectively.

2 Scope of the policy

This policy applies to Board members and potential Board members of Chorley Community Housing.

3 Monitoring, review and consultation

This policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually to ensure it continues to meet Housing Corporation requirements and is in line with current good practice.

The policy will be reviewed in consultation with Board members.

4 Responsible Officer

Director of Corporate Services

5 Contact details

Richard Roe
Tel: 01257 414893
E-mail: richard.roe@chorleych.co.uk

Date: February 2006
Revised: October 2006

Executive Summary

The Board of the Association has responsibility for strategic decision making and for directing the business of Chorley Community Housing (CCH).

Board members will be recruited with the necessary skills mix to ensure a sufficient range of expertise in order that the Board can perform its duties effectively. Board members will be recruited in line with good practice and the Adactus Group Equality and Diversity Policy. Ongoing training will also be provided.

The Board will comprise of 12 members in total. Of these 4 will be tenants, 4 Council nominees and 4 independent members.

The Board

The Board of the Association has ultimate responsibility for the governance of CCH. The Board's central role is to direct and control the work of CCH by determining strategic direction and policies, establishing and overseeing control and risk management frameworks and ensuring that the organisation achieves its aims and objectives. Board members will bring their skills to ensure delivery of these requirements.

The functions of the Board include:

- Define and ensure compliance with the values and objectives of the Association
- ensure that Chorley Community Housing is managed efficiently, effectively and in line with the requirements of the Housing Corporation, the law, the regulatory bodies and best practice;
- approve each year's accounts and budgets;
- act only in the interests of Chorley Community Housing and not on behalf of any constituency or interest group;
- uphold the reputation of Chorley Community Housing and the values, objectives and principles for which it stands;
- agree policies and plans to achieve the objectives;
- monitor the Association's performance against the Business Plan;
- establish a framework of delegation and systems of control;
- abide by the Code of Conduct;
- appoint (and if necessary remove) the Managing Director.

Board members are expected to attend a significant number of meetings. If it is necessary for members to be absent from meetings for a period of time, they should seek a leave of absence from the Board.

All members of the Board will be expected to comply with CCH's Code of Conduct, Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality Policy.

The Board Composition

The Board will comprise of 12 members in total. Of these 4 will be tenants, 4 Council nominees and 4 independent members.

The Association is a member of the Adactus Group of Companies. Each year the Board is entitled to nominate three Board members to sit on the Board of Adactus.

Board Recruitment

It is of vital importance that the Board makes sure its members have the skills, knowledge and information to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

The recruitment, induction and training of Board members are crucial in ensuring the sound governance of the Association.

When recruiting Board Members the following process will be followed:

1. Identification of potential skills gap		
2. Review the balance of the board - to take into account appropriate representation of black and minority ethnic groups, disabled people, gender and other appropriate groups on the Board.		
Independent Board Members	Tenant Board Members	Local Authority Board Members
<p>3.the position will be advertised – any approach in placing advertising or contacting partners, agencies or other stakeholders will be representative of the person sought and will ensure adherence to equality and diversity legislative and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Individuals who it is felt may have appropriate skills may be approached and asked to make an application.</p> <p>Applicants will fill out an application form. This will aid monitoring and transparency of the recruitment process.</p> <p>Applicants will be provided with a job profile and a person specification.</p>	<p>3. Candidates for Tenant Board Member will be drawn from those tenants who wish to stand for election and who have undertaken the Tenant Board Member Candidate Programme.</p> <p>The Board Member Candidate programme is open to all CCH tenants. It will take the form of a number of training/briefing sessions plus a brief assessment.</p> <p>Those tenants completing the programme, who then wish to stand for election will have their names put forward to the Board for approval.</p>	<p>3. The Council Board members will be nominated annually at the Council's Annual General Meeting. The Council will write to the Board of Chorley Community Housing to inform them of the Council nominations.</p>

<p>4. Screening of potential members – potential new members will be interviewed by a sub committee comprising of at least 2 Board Members.</p> <p>Potential members will again be made aware of the responsibilities that would be involved and the commitment of the role.</p> <p>This process should verify the skills and knowledge that the applicant has detailed on the application form, other skills they may not have included and the unevaluated potential they may possess.</p>	<p>4.Tenant Board Members will be elected through a democratic process (vote) by the tenants of Chorley Community Housing.</p>	<p>4.Chorley Community Housing will encourage the Council nominations to take into account any skills gaps or under representation on the Board.</p>
<p>5. There will be a formal interview by at least 4 members of the Board.</p>		
<p>6. If, at the AGM, the candidates for election as independent board members do not exceed the number of vacancies on the board, the chair shall declare those candidates to have been duly elected. If the number of candidates exceed the number of vacancies, the meeting shall elect the board members by ballot in such a manner as the chair directs.</p>		
<p>7. Training and induction</p>		

The Board may also appoint co-optees to serve on the Board. A co-optee may act in all respects as a Board member but they cannot take part in the deliberations nor vote on the election of officers or matters directly affecting shareholders.

Targets will be put in place for Board membership relating to:

- Black and minority ethnic members
- Women members
- Disabled members

There is no target for the ages of members although it is recognised that it is desirable to maintain a wide spectrum of ages amongst Board members.

Board members will be required to sign a declaration form to prove that they are eligible to be a Board member. Board members will also be required to become a shareholder and will be asked to pay the sum of £1 for their share. This share will be relinquished if a Board member steps down or is relieved of their post.

Ideal Skills Mix

It is our strategy to recruit individuals to Board membership so as to ensure that a wide spread of knowledge, experience and interests is available to the Board.

The Board should collectively possess the qualities required to take decisions and monitor the Association's performance. The Board will need experience and understanding of the following to be able to discharge their responsibilities effectively:

- the housing needs that Chorley Community Housing aim to meet
- residents' needs and concerns
- strategic management in a public or private body
- general business activities including the management of staff, property and contracts
- finance (accountancy or audit)
- legal matters
- community relations and needs, including equal opportunities
- working with Local Authorities
- development and building
- public relations
- management of information technology
- equality and diversity

Board members should also have the following abilities:

- work as a team member
- think in a strategic manner
- willingness and ability to attend the meetings and appropriate training
- a confident and constructive approach
- respect the views and support other Board members
- a fair and balanced approach
- good communication skills

Any required training will be provided to support the development and skills of Board members in their role.

Eligibility criteria for Board members

No one can become or remain a board member at any time if:

- They are disqualified from acting as a director of a company for any reason
- They have been convicted of an indictable offence within the last 5 years
- They are not a shareholder (unless they are a co-optee or employee of the association or any other body whose accounts must be consolidated with those of the association) or have been appointed by the Parent or the Local Authority
- Has been adjudged bankrupt or has made a voluntary arrangement with creditors (LGA 1972 & Hsg Act 1996 Sch 1 Pt II)
- Is incapable of acting by reason of mental disorder because either (i) is admitted to hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983; or (ii) has a Court Order made relating to the illness or to appoint someone to look after their property or other affairs (Hsg Act 1996 Sch 1 Pt II)
- (If a tenant of CCH) is in serious breach of their tenancy agreement. Serious breach of tenancy whereby the landlord has implemented proceedings for possession, including the issuing of a notice of seeking possession, or sought an injunction to require compliance with the terms of the tenancy. (Housing Corporation Registration Guidance for Stock Transfer Applicants)

There may be occasions when it is judged that a member should not remain on the Board through:

- Improper behaviour at Board meetings or other company events
- Irregular attendance - they have absented themselves from four consecutive meetings of the Board without special leave of absence from the Board.
- Failure to declare an interest
- Failure to abide by the rules and policies of Chorley Community Housing
- They are a tenant Board member who ceases to be a Chorley Community Housing tenant
- They are an independent Board member who becomes a tenant or a Council employee

If this happens, the Chair of the Board will take action to ask the member to resign.

A Board member may be removed from the Board by a special resolution at a general meeting.

Retirement by Rotation

There will be a cyclical retirement and recruitment process for Tenant and Independent Board members. This is to ensure that new members are recruited/elected on a systematic and continuous basis, thus avoiding bigger changes at infrequent intervals.

At each annual general meeting (AGM) Board members will retire as follows:

Year 1	1 tenant member retires	1 independent member retires
Year 2	1 tenant member retires	2 independent members retire
Year 3	2 tenant members retire	1 independent member retires

Those to retire will be those who have served longest on the Board. Where there is a case of Board members being appointed at the same time this will be chosen through lots unless a specific Board member has expressed a desire to step down.

The tenants of Chorley Community Housing can reappoint tenant board members who are due to retire through the voting process.

Independent Board members who are due to retire can be reappointed by the Board where it feels it is in the interest of Chorley Community Housing to do so.

The Council has the right to nominate 4 members to the Board; it also has the right to remove those members at any time.

To support board renewal, the maximum term of office will be three terms (9 years).

All Board members have the right to resign from the Board at any time by giving one months notice to the Board.

Monitoring, review and consultation

This policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually to ensure it continues to meet Housing Corporation requirements and is in line with current good practice.

The policy will be reviewed in consultation with Board members.