

FERGUSLIE PARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD
BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES



Ferguslie Park
Housing Association

**Date Approved by the
Management Board**

25 SEPTEMBER 2019

Signed:

Chairperson

Date of Next Review

AUGUST 2022

Ferguslie Park Housing Association Board Member Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Ferguslie Park Housing Association's (FPHA) Management Board has the important responsibility of directing and controlling the affairs of the association. As a registered social landlord and a Scottish charity, it is essential that the association has people with the right skills, knowledge, objectivity and experience to carry out this role.

1.2 To do this, we will:

- Be clear about the mix of skills and experience necessary for the Management Board to operate effectively, and we will re-assess these skills annually
- Annually assess the skills and experience which current Management Board members have and match these against the skills and experience we need
- Identify gaps between the skills and experience required and those currently held
- Take steps to fill those gaps by a mix of:
 - Structured training and development programmes for the Management Board as a whole and/or for individual Board members
 - Recruitment (through election at the AGM and by co-option during the year) of additional members in an open and transparent way.
- Ensure a process of succession planning is in place for office bearers and other Board members, in order to protect and enhance the skills and experience held by individuals in the event of their departure from the Management Board
- Support the work of the Board in order to make the most of the contributions made by voluntary Board members.

1.3 We recognise the importance of the balance between experience and continuity as well as the new ideas and fresh perspective on association policy and practice, which new members can bring, and we therefore aim for a reasonable turnover of Board members over time.

1.4 This policy sets out the steps we will take to secure additional skills through recruitment. It also forms part of a range of governance measures designed to sustain and increase the capacity of the Management Board.

2. What we are looking for

2.1 We are looking for individuals to serve as Board members who can demonstrate the following:

- **A commitment** to supporting the community that FPHA serves
- **Experience** of receiving, providing or developing high quality housing and related services and / or of being involved in community regeneration and sustainability
- **A willingness** to work as a member of a **team** with a responsibility for **leading and directing** FPHA's work.

2.2 In addition, prospective members should have knowledge, skills and experience of / in **at least one** of the three areas listed below.

- **Local knowledge:** for example, awareness of the housing and wider community needs in Ferguslie Park, awareness of concerns facing FPHA's customers, knowledge of local issues in Renfrewshire and the needs and priorities of the people who live here, familiarity with Renfrewshire Council's plans, priorities and practices.
- **Business skills and knowledge:** for example, previous Board experience, strategic and business planning, personnel or Human Resource issues, financial planning and control, monitoring and control of performance, public relations, information technology, corporate management / administration or legal experience.
- **Specialist housing and related knowledge:** for example, knowledge of housing management & maintenance, building construction, housing-related legislation, Regulatory Framework for Scottish RSLs, OSCR's requirements, housing finance, procurement, factoring, sustainability, fuel poverty, regeneration, partnership working, equal opportunities, voluntary sector experience, experience as a carer or in raising a family.

2.3 It is not expected that every member will be an 'expert' in all, or even most of, these areas. We aim to have a mix of skills and experience among Board Members but a lack of skills should not discourage interested people from standing for election. We are looking primarily for those who feel they have a contribution to make to the work of the association and who can offer relevant knowledge and/or experience; we will ensure that Board members, once on the Board, have the opportunity to enhance their existing skills and knowledge through development and training.

2.4 We aim to promote equality and diversity and adhere to the equalities legislation by being committed to equal and fair treatment for all and opposed to any form of

unlawful discrimination. We welcome applications from all and are particularly keen to provide opportunities for involvement to individuals who are under-represented in public life or who are currently under-represented on our Management Board. No one will be treated differently or less favourably than others because of any of the protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

3. What Management Board members get from their involvement.

3.1 As a voluntary organisation, we do not provide payment to members of the Management Board. We will ensure that Board members are not unfairly disadvantaged by their involvement with FPHA by ensuring that out of pocket expenses required to carry out the role of Board member are fully met and promptly reimbursed.

3.2 In return for their time and commitment Board members get:

- Clear guidance, information and advice on their roles and responsibilities
- Formal induction to help settling in
- Clearly written and presented papers, circulated in advance of meetings
- The opportunity to use your experience, skills and knowledge for the benefit of the Association and its customers
- The opportunity to develop your knowledge and personal skills
- The opportunity to work in a stimulating and mutually supportive environment
- The satisfaction of helping improve the lives of local people
- The chance to meet and socialise with others with a shared commitment
- The opportunity to stand for one of the office bearer positions

- The satisfaction of contributing to an organisation committed to improving the quality of life of its customers and communities.

4. Management Board skills

- 4.1 Annually, we carry out a skills audit to identify the skills, experience and expertise required to lead and direct FPHA's affairs (these are set out in the checklist included in the schedule to this Policy). Annually we also review existing Board member skills and knowledge. We then identify any gaps between the desired set of skills set out in the Schedule, and the actual skills of existing Board members.
- 4.2 Through recruitment, we will attempt to fill any gaps identified.

5. Recruitment to the Management Board

- 5.1 Shareholding members of the association have the right to seek election to the Management Board at the AGM. The Association will publicise how and when members can stand for election and will encourage all members to participate in the election of their Management Board.
- 5.2 In addition we will seek to recruit to fill any gaps identified through the skills audit and annual Management Board member appraisals. The recruitment will be carried out in accordance with our constitution, and will take the form either of co-option (the number of co-optees is limited to one-third of the membership of the Management Board) or the filling of casual vacancies left by the retirement of existing Management Board members.
- 5.3 We will also seek to identify any current groups, which are under-represented on the Board in pursuit of our commitment to equality and diversity.
- 5.4 We will promote the opportunity to become a member of the Management Board, for example through the use of:
- Articles and adverts in the Ferguslie Park News – the association's quarterly newsletter
 - Adverts in the local press
 - Information on the FPHA website
 - Circulation of information to
 - Members of the association
 - Tenant organisations and community groups
 - Partner organisations and other stakeholders
 - Local business interests and their representatives
 - Educational establishments connected to Ferguslie Park and Renfrewshire

- Other voluntary organisations and social enterprises.
- 5.5 FPHA may also approach SFHA and other relevant representative or trade bodies, including advertising on their websites and in their publications.
- 5.6 Adverts will highlight the particular skills and areas of experience where gaps have been identified, and will invite applications from underrepresented groups.
- 5.7 Those enquiring will be issued with a **recruitment pack**, consisting of the following:
- Information on background and history of Ferguslie Park Housing Association
 - Explanatory information on the process of becoming a Management Board member
 - Management Board member role description
 - Itemised checklist of the skills, knowledge and other qualities sought
 - An estimation of the time commitment involved
 - Application form, which asks for information on the areas of the skills, knowledge and experience, which the applicant can offer, and for personal information to allow equality and diversity monitoring.
- 5.8 The process of advertising may be supplemented by personal approaches from members of the Management Board and senior staff of the association. In the event of such an approach being positive, the details of the individual will be submitted to the Chief Executive, who will issue the recruitment pack as described above.
- 5.9 The Management Board will appoint a Recruitment Panel to consider applications and make recommendations to Board. The Panel will not exceed three members of the Board (one of whom will normally be the Chair). The Chief Executive will provide support and advice (if required) to the Panel. Completed application forms will be sent to the Association's offices, and the Chief Executive will check the applications with a view to confirming eligibility. The Chief Executive will notify any ineligible applications to the Panel.
- 5.10 Eligible applicants will then be invited to attend an informal meeting/interview with the Recruitment Panel. The purpose of the meeting will be to:
- Confirm the applicant's eligibility to act as a member of the Board
 - Establish the applicant understands of the role of Management Board members, including the likely time commitment involved

- Establish the potential contribution likely to be made by the applicant, in the light of the skills, knowledge and experience sought by FPHA
 - Answer any questions from the applicant
 - Explain the potential benefits of having an experienced Management Board member supporting and mentoring the applicant, if successful.
- 5.11 The applicant will be informed of the outcome of their application within 48 hours or as agreed at the interview. The outcome will be what the Recruitment Panel has decided to recommend to the Management Board.
- 5.12 Successful applicants will be invited to attend a meeting of the Management Board as observers before their membership of the Board is confirmed.
- 5.13 Successful applicants will be required to counter-sign a letter of appointment, setting out certain commitments to the role of Board member.
- 5.14 Shareholding members submitting themselves for election to the Board at an AGM will be asked to go through a modified version of the above process. For those who are elected, the term of appointment will normally be for three years, subject to the Rules of the Association, which may require earlier retirement by rotation at an AGM.
- 5.15 Co-opted members of the Management Board are encouraged to become shareholding members of the Association but this is not a requirement. Co-opted members cannot vote on matters relating to the membership of the Association or the election of office bearers; nor can they themselves stand for election as office bearers. They can only serve as co-optees on the Management Board until the AGM following their co-option, at which point they must, if they wish to continue to serve as members of the Management Board, be members of the Association and stand for election.
- 5.16 The recruitment process may also be used to fill casual vacancies left by the retirement or resignation of existing Management Board members during the course of the year. Under the Association's Rules, an individual filling a casual vacancy must first become a member of the Association.

6. Supporting and developing Board members

- 6.1 When new members are first appointed or nominated to the Management Board, they will be invited to a meeting with the Chief Executive and Chairperson in order to find out more about the skills and experience they have to offer; this will form part of the induction programme. We want to make sure that we are able to

recognise and build on what new members have to offer, and to identify any immediate priorities for further training and development.

- 6.2 Thereafter there will be an annual opportunity for each member to update this assessment through an annual appraisal. This will be linked to an assessment of individual contribution and effectiveness to FPHA's governance. On the basis of that interview, we will draw up a structured training and development programme for individuals and for the Board as a whole. Training and development opportunities will be pursued under the terms of our Board Training Policy.
- 6.3 We will monitor the demands being made of Board members as part of the annual appraisal meeting with each Board member, and through regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the Board and its meetings, to ensure that they remain manageable.

Schedule 1

Checklist of knowledge, experience, skills and other qualities

1. In terms of knowledge, experience and understanding, we are looking for individuals able to demonstrate some of the following:
 - Needs, aspirations and concerns of FPHA customers and Renfrewshire communities
 - Working as a member of a Board or team – in a voluntary or paid capacity
 - Strategy and policy
 - Business planning
 - Personnel / Human Resources
 - Service delivery
 - Engagement with tenants / community development
 - Asset management
 - Maintenance, development and/or building construction
 - Procurement and contract management
 - Economic development / regeneration
 - Supporting tenants on low income including welfare rights, financial inclusion
 - Fuel poverty, energy efficiency and/or sustainability
 - Digital inclusion
 - Financial planning and control
 - Risk management
 - Housing finance
 - Current housing practice, policy and legislation
 - Role of Regulators
 - Care, support and the needs of vulnerable people
 - Equality, diversity and human rights
 - Legal issues
 - Health and safety
 - Marketing & media
 - Information technology.

2. In terms of skills, we are looking for the following:
 - Ability to work as a member of a team – with other Board members and with staff
 - Ability to interpret and question information received
 - Ability to communicate effectively, contribute to discussions and decision-making and to challenge constructively
 - Ability to be impartial, objective and strategic
 - Ability to identify what is important for FPHA's success as a business.
3. We are also looking for those able to demonstrate these qualities:
 - Upholding the values, objectives and policies of the Association
 - Contributing ideas and new perspectives
 - Respecting confidentiality
 - Making sure that personal relationships or agendas do not interfere
 - Keeping one's own knowledge up-to date including by attending relevant learning and development events
 - Contributing to and accepting collective responsibility for decisions
 - Representing the organisation positively.