

Board Recruitment, Support and Succession Policy

Category	Governance
Lead	Governance Officer
Committee / Approver	Board of Management
Action	Review & Approve
Review Date	August 2026
Review Due	August 2030
Purpose	To outline how Board Members are recruited and, supported and how succession is planned and managed over time
Internal/External	External

Introduction

The Association wishes to ensure that it continues to have a wide breadth of skills, knowledge, experience and background within its Board of Management.

This policy sets out the processes to support Board Members over the course of their role. This covers recruitment, induction, support, and succession planning. This includes:

- How the Association uses a clear, fair and consistent process for the recruitment of Board Members that strengthens the Association's overall governance by recruiting in the best interests of the Association and its customers
- Compliance with the Association's rules, other related policy and legislation and the regulatory requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)
- Increased awareness of the benefits of voluntary service and ensuring applicants fully understand the role, responsibility and commitments to our Board of Management.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be viewed in terms of the Association's:

- Membership Policy
- Role Descriptions for Board Members and Office Bearers
- Board Code of Conduct
- Automatic Disqualification Policy (Board)
- Entitlements, Payments and Benefits (EPB) Policy
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy
- The Association's Vision and Values

Recruitment for Good Governance

The Board of Management leads, directs and oversees the operation of the Association's activities. The Board of Management comprises Board Members who are accountable to each other, the Association's stakeholders, service users and regulatory bodies. The role of Board Member is unpaid, and we are required to have between a minimum of seven and a maximum of fifteen Board Members under the Association's Rules.

In order to ensure that Board Members deliver compliance with the Regulatory Framework, they are required to perform their duties in line with the Board Code of Conduct. Board Members are expected to develop their knowledge and skills through ongoing training and undertake annual appraisals.

Board Recruitment Process

Board Recruitment is a continuous process which is informed by the needs of the Board of Management and Angus Housing Association. All Board Members are required to undertake annual appraisals and the information from the appraisals sets out the approach to Board Recruitment for the next year. This can result in either ongoing or targeted advertising for new Board Members when there are gaps in knowledge or skills, or as a part of succession planning.

Advertising

Information about becoming a Board Member is displayed on Angus Housing Association's website:

<https://www.angusha.org.uk/corporate/become-a-board-member/>

All information about the process, background, and wider recruitment documents will be available on that page. If a broader advertising campaign is necessary, adverts may be posted to appropriate recruitment sites, local and housing sector press, tenant forums and newsletters, or by word of mouth. If specific or targeted recruitment is required, the Association may engage recruitment specialists (i.e. consultants or agencies). All prospective Board Members will be directed to the Become a Board Member page on Angus Housing Association's website. The Association are keen to ensure that the Board of Management has a balanced demographic mix and will consider this when planning how to advertise Board recruitment.

Application

Applications will be considered from existing members of the Association and non-members. The recruitment pack will be available on the Become a Board Member page on Angus Housing Association's website. The pack is available as a series of links on the page which detail Background Information, Application Forms and relevant policies. All prospective Board Members must complete a Board Member Application Form and send it For the Attention of the named person to the specified registered office address.

Following receipt of the application form, the application will be reviewed by Chief Executive Officer and / or the Governance Officer. Attention will be paid to the Automatic Disqualification Criteria section, and the reasons for application. The prospective Board Member is then screened using the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)'s Record of Removed Persons to assure the Association that the person has not been disqualified from being a Board Member by the Court of Session. The prospective Board Member will be invited to an informal interview to discuss the role in more detail. This meeting will be with any combination of the following: Chair, Vice Chair, Chief Executive Officer, or Governance Officer.

Informal Interview

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Confirm eligibility to act as a Board Member
- Establish that the prospective Board Member understands the role including the likely time commitment involved
- Establish the potential contribution likely to be made
- Answer any further questions
- Explain the induction process and support available
- Confirm timescales

At this stage, it is made clear that being a Board Member specifically prevents individual or personal matters being pursued other than through the procedures that are available to all tenants and service users. The prospective Board Member will be advised of the outcome within a reasonable timescale. The outcome will confirm if they are to proceed or not and will include details about the progression route.

Progression Routes

If the outcome is to proceed, one of the following progression routes will be used:

Casual Vacancy

If there are under fifteen Board Members, they can be approved by the Board of Management as a casual vacancy. The prospective Board Member needs to be a member of Angus Housing Association in accordance with the Membership Policy. The only exception is when the prospective Board Member is the Auditor; they can fill a casual vacancy if it is not at an AGM or SGM (Rule 73). If an application for membership is received 14 days before the AGM or SGM, it cannot be progressed until after the AGM or SGM (Rule 7.3). When the prospective Board Member has become a member, they will be invited to the next Board of Management meeting as an observer and their application will be moved to a vote at the end of the meeting.

Nomination

Members of Angus Housing Association receive the AGM / SGM papers no less than 28 days before the meeting. A nomination form is included with these papers, and the prospective Board Member can complete and submit this no less than 21 days before the AGM / SGM.

Co-option

The Board of Management can appoint someone to be a Board Member if they consider them suitable. Co-optees are not required to be members and can sit on the Board of Management until either the next AGM or when dismissed by the Board of Management. This route is used when a prospective Board Member is under 18, if an appointment is urgent, or specific skills are needed over a short period. Co-optees cannot participate in discussions around membership, the Rules or the election of office bearers. Co-optees cannot stand for election, nor be elected as an Office Bearer.

Not to Progress

If the outcome is not to progress, the prospective Board Member will be notified. Whilst the Board of Management has absolute discretion for approving membership, a nomination for election can be rejected by a three-quarter majority on one or more of the following grounds:

- where membership would be contrary to the Association's Rules or policies
- where a conflict of interest may exist which, even allowing for the disclosure of such an interest, may adversely affect the work of the Association
- where the Board considers that accepting the application would not be in the best interests of the Association.

If the prospective Board Member does not progress following competitive election, the Chief Executive Officer and / or the Governance Officer will make contact to consider alternatives to becoming a Board Member at this time. This can include signposting to other organisations, our Tenant Participation Team, or training and development opportunities.

Induction

New Board Members undergo a short induction programme. The aim of this programme is to break down the Board of Management's areas of oversight into manageable sections so the new Board Member can gain a deeper overview of the work of the Association. Following appointment, new Board Members are invited to all sub committees. This usually means that they attend one of each sub committee and two Board Meetings. Following this, they meet with the Governance Officer to review learning and development, identify suitable support resources, and plan short term goals. This process recognises and incorporates feedback that new Board Members are likely to need signposting to resources which are built around an individual plan. Resources are collated and centrally held in Decision Time so all Board Members can access these.

In addition to the individual induction, the main induction pack is held on Decision Time and is updated annually. This includes links to all policies, performance and assurance reports and information for the year, jargon busters, insurance (Directors and Officers Liability), and key documents (e.g. register of interests, expenses).

Other Areas of Support

Meeting with Senior Management Team: All Board Members are encouraged to meet with the Senior Management Team either collectively or individually to discuss ongoing work or to meet staff within departments.

Peer Support: New Board Members can have peer support from an experienced Board Member on request.

Pre-Committee Sessions: Chairs of committees meet with the staff leads prior to papers being issued and new Board Members can request to attend.

Staff and Board Away Days: All Board Members are invited to attend joint away days where the strategy and operational objectives of the Association are discussed

Appraisals: All Board Members are required by the Scottish Housing Regulator to have an annual appraisal. This is an opportunity to review contributions and identify training and personal development opportunities. More information is in the Board Appraisal Policy.

Training

The Association recognises that all Board Members have different skills and experiences. Therefore, it is not realistic to expect that all Board Members will be experts in all areas of the Association's work. This means that a range of training options are provided for all Board Members. Training needs are reviewed annually as part of the appraisal process. The skills and areas of expertise of Board Members are reviewed using the Board Skills Matrix to ensure that any gaps or areas of improvement are identified along with updates to training resources.

Training options include in house training from staff, online courses, external training from partner organisations, conferences, and formal qualifications (e.g. Housing, Governance, or Leadership) where appropriate.

Training logs for Board Members will be held and updated by Corporate Services and reviewed annually as part of the appraisal process. Collective and individual training requirements will be collated, and a training plan drawn up with an appropriate budget.

The Chief Executive Officer or Governance Officer will report to the Chair where members have not undertaken training deemed necessary to the role and on budget spend. As Board Members are volunteers, the Association will ensure that training is focused on matters relating to the governance and regulatory role they undertake and will evaluate the quality and usefulness of the training delivered in this regard.

Succession Planning

The SHR's Regulatory Standard 6.2 states that "The RSL plans effectively to achieve the appropriate and effective ongoing composition and profile of governing body members through ongoing performance evaluation and active succession planning".

Succession planning is an essential component of good business planning; ensuring the Association understands the range of skills, knowledge and experience required to lead and deliver the achievement of the organisation's objectives.

Consideration should be taken of the future landscape of the sector, local issues and the future objectives, anticipating and preparing for change when appointing Board Members through succession. This would be done during the appraisal process annually as part of the discussion is around development and future planning. This includes if a Board Member is considering stepping down, changing jobs, has interest in an Office Bearer or sub committee chair role, or is looking to specialise or undertake training. This process should allow the Association to plan for resignations however there will be situations where circumstances arise, and Board Members resign without prior planning. Board Members will undertake training that not only supports them in their role but that aims to develop their skills to take on future Office Bearer roles.

Annual appraisals will gauge the willingness of Board Members to take on future Office Bearer roles and training and development plans will be developed accordingly. Board Members interested in taking on these roles will be directed to the Role Descriptions for Board Members and Office Bearers. Where an existing Office Bearer indicates that they wish to step down from the role but remain on the committee, or, where they are resigning from the Board of Management, the Chief Executive Officer and Chair will discuss options for filling the role using the role description as the basis for the discussion.

Applications for the Office Bearer post will be invited and applicants for the post will be asked to provide a short statement indicating their skills and experience (including from outside the sector) and what they feel they could bring to the role. It should be noted that applications may be received from members who are not currently sitting on the Board of Management. If there are several applicants, the Board of Management will use the existing voting process (under the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders) for the applicant they feel is best suited to the role. There should be at least a week between submissions for the post and the decision being made by the Board of Management in order to allow full consideration of the applications.



Scottish Charity Number SC020981
Scottish Housing Regulator HAL65
Financial Conduct Authority 1665RS
Property Factor Registration Number PF000129