



Board Member Information and Recruitment Pack

**Prepared by Carol Cooper
Executive & Governance Manager
Corporate Services Team
August 2023**



OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- South Essex Homes manage almost 6,000 affordable homes, 600 leasehold properties and 90 hostel units on behalf of the residents of Southend City Council.
- As part of our drive to achieve excellence and create a sustainable future for our business, we plan to provide services to a wider range of customers. The services we provide include:
- Comprehensive housing management for residential accommodation with expertise in:
 - Income Management
 - Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Tenancy Sustainment
 - Facility Management
 - Telehealth
- Mobile Caretaking Services operating 7 days a week, 365 days a year through British Institute of Cleaning Sciences Accredited Caretakers offering a fully responsive service. Our Caretaking Service also offers a rapid response Bulk Refuse and Graffiti Removal Service
- Our Tenancy Management Team and Community Safety Patrol are Community Safety accredited with Essex Police working with other partnership agencies.

- The delivery of high-quality repairs and maintenance services through effective contractor management, asset management and quality control. We are among the best in the country at managing Gas Safety. All our asset management, stock condition surveying and engineering expertise is delivered through our in-house team.
- Our CarelineSoS service provides emergency response telephony-based services to a wide range of people in the community. As well as providing services to residents of Southend City Council properties. CarelineSoS provides passive response and telecare services to other organisations and private homeowners, allowing people to stay in their own homes longer and enjoy an enhanced quality of life.
- Specialist accommodation for vulnerable people including older people as well as people experiencing homelessness.
- Community Engagement Services which allow residents to be involved in a wide range of ways both collectively and individually such as our Resident Scrutiny Forum, focus groups, telephone-based surveys, and residents' associations. Through our Digital Hubs we provide support and training to a wide range of residents in the city.
- As well as the service we deliver to our customers directly we also have a team of specialists in:
 - Specialist Income Management
 - Governance
 - Performance Management
 - Health and Safety
 - Finance
 - Supported Housing

OUR MISSION & AIMS

Since our creation South Essex Homes has been an ambitious and creative organisation driven by a desire to involve residents, use resources effectively and make a real difference to local people. This is captured in our mission statement:

**Working Smarter Together
in partnership with Southend City Council**

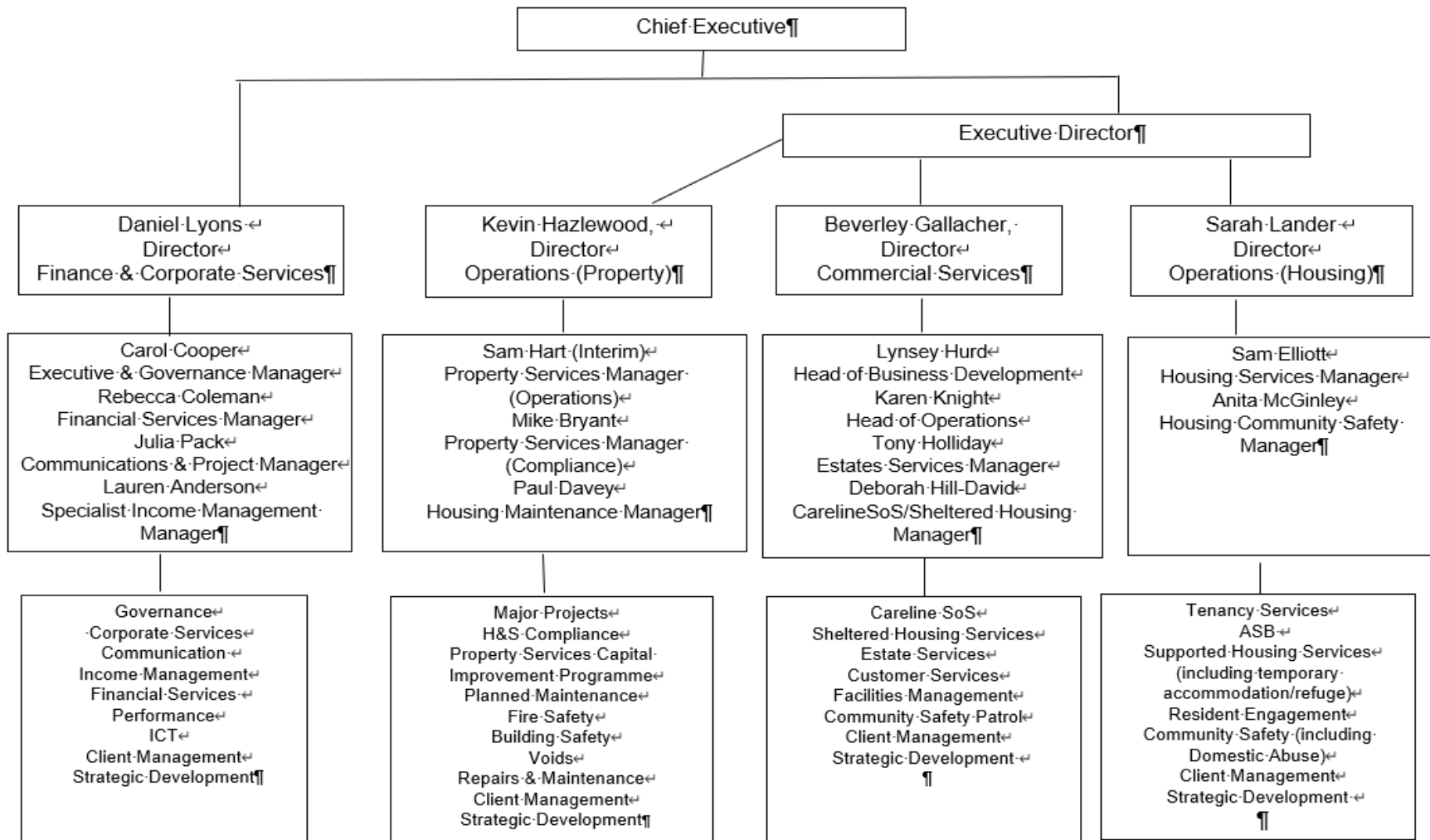
**We will:
Provide excellent services
Ensure our sustainability**

OUR VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

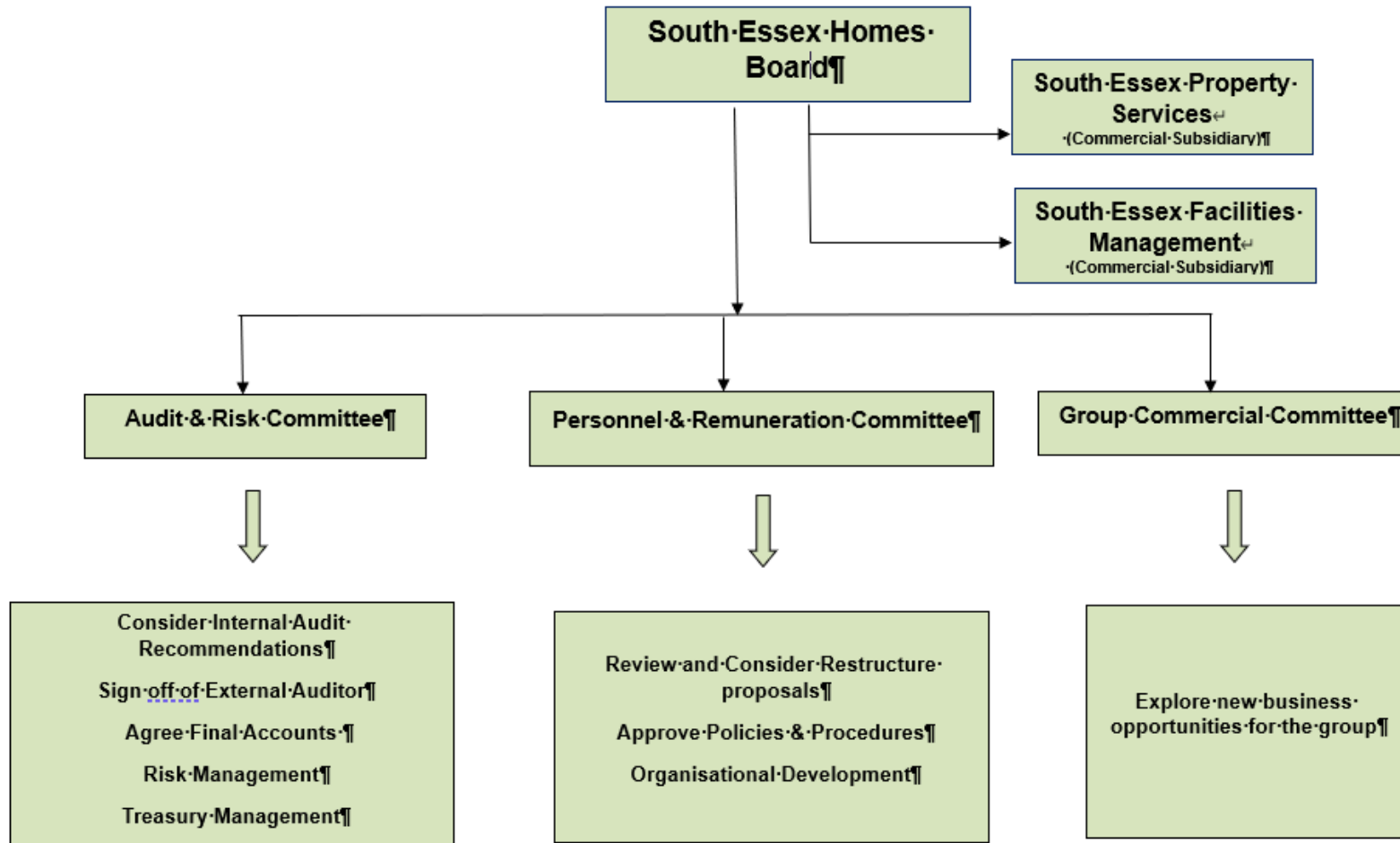
Having the right behavioural environment for our staff to work in ensures that we work collaboratively towards our goals, both with each other, our customers, and our stakeholders. Staff have worked together across the organisation on developing our corporate values and behaviours and are proud to say they own the values and behaviours. These are set out below:

- Communicating Effectively - Giving information or instructions in a clear and concise manner that understands and appreciates the needs of the receiver
- Being Consistent - Ensuring a consistent approach is taken when we make decisions or give advice, to tenants or staff, making certain there is equity
- Being Respectful and Professional - Treating everyone as they would wish to be treated, so they feel their needs are valued. Acting with integrity and a high professional standard and being sympathetic to customers' needs
- Having Ownership with Empowerment - Taking responsibility for work from start to finish. Management providing staff at all levels the freedom to make decisions, where appropriate, whilst supporting them throughout
- Having a Positive Can-Do Attitude - Looking for solutions rather than excuses. No blame, no surprises
- Being Collaborative - Sharing consistent goals and being supportive of each other

South Essex Homes' Group Senior Management Team



South Essex Homes' Group Board and Committee Structure



OUR OBJECTIVES

Taking into account the national context, the local pressures and our aims, we have identified the key strategic objectives to be achieved over the next 5 years.

These objectives are:

- Improving the Customer Experience
- Improving our Organisation
- Meeting our governance objectives
- Innovating commercially
- Developing sustainable communities

DELIVERING OUR OBJECTIVES

Within the environmental context described and the framework of our aims we have identified key strategic objectives to be achieved over the next 3 years. These are set out below and are supported by specific strategic targets and projects in the following sections of the plan.

Improving the customer experience.

Vision – We will provide reliable, consistent services that meet the needs of our diverse tenant base including ensuring we provide the right support at the right time to those that are most in need.

We must continue to ensure we meet our vision by:

- Improving the quality and reliability of our services that meet customer expectations by involving residents in shaping service delivery, monitoring performance and prioritising resources.
- Ensure staff are visible and services are accessible, giving customers excellent services that are right for their needs at the time they need them.
- Ensure the services we provide can evidence Value for Money giving our customers and effective and efficient service at the lowest cost.
- Where possible, resolve all issues at first point of contact giving customers fast resolution to any problems they face.
- Build 'Active Engagement' with our customers to ensure that services are designed to meet their needs and expectations in line with the Resident Engagement Strategy.
- Maintain a high level of satisfaction by undertaking transactional and annual perception surveys and learning from the feedback.
- Improve our ICT systems to maximize efficiency and ensure staff time can be well spent ensuring a great service is provided to our customers and we are able to focus on things that matter most.

- Maintain high rent collection rates ensuring we continue to maximize revenue for Southend on Sea City Council.
- Build a strong, collaborative partnership with Southend on Sea City Council.

Improving our organisation

Vision – We will drive our Values and Behaviours through the organisation creating a modern, inclusive housing organisation. We will build leadership and ensure that our staff have access to the correct development opportunities to achieve and thrive.

We must ensure the organisation is able to build on this by:

- Understanding the skills required across our organisation.
- Embedding our Values and Behaviours.
- Ensuring we have the right people doing the right things.
- Having professional, competent staff delivering excellent services.
- Embedding a service / customer culture throughout the organisation.
- Recognising and rewarding talent and innovation.
- Having strong leadership, developing succession for the future.
- Looking after the wellbeing of our staff, ensuring we focus on the social aspect of work as well as the task.

Meeting our governance objectives

Vision – We will continue to take all of our statutory and regulatory responsibilities seriously and embed a culture of compliance and assurance through all of our processes.

We must continue to take our vision seriously by

- Understanding what changing legislation means for South Essex Homes.
- Ensuring we have appropriate data collection and knowledge management systems, and processes, in place to evidence and comply with legislation.
- Continuing a programme of safety improvements to residents' homes.
- Fully understanding the EPC rating of all properties we manage.
- Taking advantage of funding opportunities to further carbon reduction.
- Exploring ways to reduce costs to our tenants through energy efficiency measures.

Innovating Commercially

Vision – We will aim to maximize the revenue generated through the Group structure, maximizing the return for the group, making surpluses available for use to further enhance our services and supplement the Management Fee.

We must continue to ensure we meet our vision by:

- Supporting the growth of our subsidiaries.
- Collaborating with Southend on Sea City Council to pursue opportunities to deliver services differently across the group.

Developing sustainability communities

Vision – We will aim to add socially to the communities we serve, supporting and implementing measures to support the future of the people of Southend.

We must continue ensure we meet our vision by:

- Supporting our tenants through financially difficult periods.
- Supporting our tenants to sustain their tenancies.
- Giving people in our communities a brighter future.

SOUTH ESSEX HOMES' BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Makeup of the Board

The South Essex Homes' Board consists of 11 members. Board members are elected for a three-year term, after which they must retire and seek re-election, up to a maximum of 9 years in total.

The Board is made up of 3 Council nominated members, 3 residents and 5 independent members, one being the Chair of the Board.

Role of the Board

The South Essex Homes' Board plays an essential role in the development, growth, and sustainability of South Essex Homes.

The Board should reflect the diversity of the communities that they serve and bring a wide range of expertise and skills to assist overall performance, planning the delivery of our longer-term goals.

The main role of the Board is to direct the affairs of the Organisation in accordance with its objectives, i.e., to determine strategic direction and policies.

- Define and ensure compliance with the values and objectives of the Organisation
- Establish strategies, policies and plans to achieve those objectives
- Approve each year's budget and accounts prior to publication

- Establish and monitor a framework of delegation and financial regulations
- Agree policies and make decisions on all matters that might create significant financial or other risk to the Organisation, or which raise material issues of principle
- Monitor the Organisation's performance in all key areas on an exception basis
- Appoint (and, if necessary, dismiss) the Chief Executive and be represented in the appointment of the Executive Directors
- Ensure that, when necessary (e.g., resignation or retirement), the Chief Executive is replaced in a timely and orderly fashion
- Determine the remuneration of the Chief Executive and the Executive Directors and ensure a proper annual appraisal process is carried out with the Chief Executive
- Satisfy itself that the Organisation's affairs are conducted lawfully and in accordance with generally accepted standards of performance, conduct and priority
- Monitor the performance of any subsidiary of the Organisation including South Essex Property Services Limited, South Essex Facilities Management and LocalitE Limited in all key performance areas
- The Board can only delegate its main functions in accordance with Terms of Reference approved by the Board for each of its committees.

THE ROLE OF A BOARD MEMBER

As a South Essex Homes Board member, you will be setting the direction and supporting the Executive Management Team in managing the Company. The Board works as a team and will normally decide matters on a consensus basis. All Board Members need to be able to develop good working relationships with other Board Members. Potential Board Members need a clear understanding of the time investment they must make in order to carry out the role effectively.

All Board members will be expected to

- spend about 1½ to 2 days per month on Board related business
- prepare adequately for meetings by reading, assessing and researching Board reports and papers ahead of the meetings
- understand fully the matters on which they are being asked to decide, seeking clarification where necessary
- take part in an annual appraisal process, to help identify training requirements, attend courses and development opportunities when required

- members may be required to serve on a committee or working group, or represent South Essex Homes at external events
- attend approximately 5 Board and up to 4 Committee meetings per year, generally in the evening, plus Board Away Day sessions and professional development opportunities
- contribute to debates on matters before the Board meetings
- participate constructively in discussions and decision-making (normally by consensus)
- be committed to equal opportunities and diversity
- share responsibility for Board decisions
- abide by the Terms of Reference
- uphold the standards required by the Code of Conduct
- respect the confidentiality of Board papers and discussions
- undertake the duties of a Company Director in accordance with Company Law

ELIGIBILITY

We have completed a significant restructuring programme to ensure that our services meet and exceed the expectations of our customers, however we continue to review our services to ensure they meet our customers' needs. We are looking for Board Members to bring energy to our business and to our ongoing role as a managing agent for Southend City Council's social housing.

We are committed to a governance structure that reflects the diversity of our customer base. As we are currently underrepresented within the two diversity strands of disability and ethnic minorities on our Board, we particularly welcome applications from these groups.

People in the following categories will not be suitable to become Board members of South Essex Homes:

- individuals who have been convicted of a serious criminal offence (in particular, any offence involving dishonesty or imprisonment or in relation to the promotion, formation, management or liquidation of a company). Some criminal convictions do not need to be disclosed under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If you are in any doubt, you should seek legal advice or speak to the Citizens Advice Bureau
- individuals who have been barred from being a Company Director by a Court

- someone suffering a mental disorder and either: admitted to hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983 or has a court order made relating to the illness or to appoint someone to look after their property or affairs
- anyone under investigation for Anti-Social Behavior or subject to any measures resulting from an Anti-Social Behavior Order
- if you are bankrupt
- tenants who are in serious breach of the conditions of their tenancy, including their obligation to pay rent
- leaseholders who are in serious breach of their lease, such as non-payment of service charges

INDUCTION & TRAINING

Shortly after your appointment you will undertake an induction program, where you will meet the Chair of the Board, the Vice Chair, the South Essex Homes' Executive Management Team and other key Officers.

This program is designed to provide you with background information relating to South Essex Homes, and the Governance arrangements that are in place to ensure that the Company operates efficiently and effectively and in accordance with the law.

You will also be provided with all the necessary information relating to your role in terms of the Board Member Code of Conduct, Code of Governance, the Organisation's Memorandum and Articles of Association.

An annual appraisal will be carried out by the Chair of the Board, part of which will include identifying any areas where training may be required, to ensure that you have all the skills you require to carry out the role effectively.

BENEFITS

Board members will have a role in shaping and improving the services provided to tenants, clients, organisations and leaseholders. It is also an opportunity to develop your own personal skills. Benefits also include:

- helping to support, promote and improve services to our customers and clients and the communities we live in
- opportunities to connect in a practical way with the customers on whose behalf we manage homes

- the chance to make a very real contribution to the success of South Essex Homes and the achievement of its goals
- professional development as a Board member that can add benefits to other areas of work
- This paid position and can be included on any future job applications and would actively enhance your CV.

CAN BOARD MEMBERS BE DISQUALIFIED POST APPOINTMENT?

You can be disqualified if you.

- cease to be a tenant /leaseholder of Southend City Council
- become bankrupt
- are convicted of any criminal act or omission
- are the subject of a custodial sentence imposed by a court in the United Kingdom in respect of any criminal act or omission, unless the Board determines otherwise
- become incapable, by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering your property and affairs
- are removed by a resolution of the members
- are absent for 6 months from the Board without a special leave of absence
- enter into any activity or conduct which might bring South Essex Homes into disrepute
- are in serious rent or service charge arrears
- are the subject of an order for possession of your tenancy should you be a tenant of Southend City Council.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you want to talk about what being a Board member involves and your experience and skills in complete confidence, please contact Carol Cooper, Executive & Governance Manager, Corporate Services on 01702 212701 or email to carolcooper@seh.southend.gov.uk

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Please return your completed form to Carol Cooper, South Essex Homes, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend on Sea. Essex. SS2 6FY or email to carolcooper@seh.southend.gov.uk.

SHORTLISTING AND INTERVIEW

Candidates will be shortlisted using the criteria listed below. Those who meet the criteria will be invited to attend an interview with a selection panel comprising of a Board member of South Essex Homes, a representative of Southend City Council and a tenant representative.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

We are seeking people who will bring the core skills of:

- Experience of housing
- Legal & Finance Background
- Human Resources

Other supplementary skills and experience that are desirable:

- business planning
- housing management and development
- maintenance and building construction
- information technology
- employment/personnel issues
- public relations/public speaking
- governance and performance management
- housing law such as good understanding of property management
- experience of working or understanding property management
- experience of a customer service environment (eg a contact centre)

- financial awareness including understanding of Financial Statements
- Our aims and objectives
- equality/diversity including a general understanding of the Disability Discrimination Act for example

BOARD MEMBER – JOB DESCRIPTION



TITLE	Non-Executive Director
SECTION	Board of South Essex Homes
PURPOSE OF ROLE	The Non-Executive Director's (NED) role is to provide a creative contribution to the Board by providing independent oversight and constructive challenge to the executive directors.

Non-Executive Directors are appointed to the Board to bring:

- Independence
- Impartiality
- Wide experience
- Special knowledge
- Personal qualities

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The key responsibilities of NEDs

Set the strategic direction

Ensure continuing viability of the business

To provide a creative and informed contribution and to act as a constructive critic in looking at the objectives and plans devised by the Chief Executive and the Executive team.

Monitoring performance

To take responsibility for monitoring the performance of the Executive Management Team, especially with regard to the progress made towards achieving the determined company strategy and objectives.

To take a prime role in appointing and where necessary removing the Chief Executive and/or Executive Directors

Remuneration

To be responsible for determining appropriate levels of remuneration of the Chief Executive and Executive Directors.

Communication

To help connect the business and Board with networks of potentially useful people and organisations and in some cases a NED will be called upon to represent the Company externally.

Risk

To ensure that the integrity of financial information, financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible.

Audit

It is the duty of the whole Board to ensure that the company accounts properly to its shareholders by presenting a true and fair reflection of its actions and financial performance and that the necessary internal control systems are put into place and monitored regularly and rigorously. A NED has an important part to play in fulfilling this responsibility, whether or not a formal audit committee (composed of NEDs) of the Board has been constituted.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

APPLICATION FOR BOARD MEMBER

Please complete all parts in Black or Dark Blue ink or Typed

Post Title & Reference Number:

Non-Executive Director – Resident Board Member

SECTION A – PERSONAL DETAILS

<p>Title:</p>	<p>Full Name:</p>
<p>Present Address:</p>	<p>All Previous Names:</p>
	<p>Mobile No:</p>
	<p>Home Phone No:</p>
	<p>National Insurance No:</p>
	<p>Contact E-mail Address:</p>

SECTION B – CURRENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT

Name and Address of Current or most Recent Employer (if applicable)

Why would you like to be a Board member of South Essex Homes?

What do you feel you have to offer to the Board of South Essex Homes?

What are your views on Equality and Diversity?.....

Name of Course	Full or Part Time	Subject and Level	Grade Achieved

Membership of Professional, Craft or Similar Bodies:

SECTION D – OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

All candidates who wish to be members of the board need to meet certain criteria. Please answer the following questions

1. Have you been convicted of a serious criminal offence (in particular, any offence involving dishonesty or imprisonment or in relation to the promotion, formation, management or liquidation of a company or liquidation of a company) YES NO

2. Are you suffering from a mental disorder and either: admitted to hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983 or have a court order relating to the illness or to appoint someone to look after their property or affairs? YES NO

3. Have you been barred from being a Company Director by a Court? YES NO

4. Do you describe yourself as having a disability in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act? (see guidance notes) YES NO

5. Are you being investigated for Anti-Social Behaviour or subject to any measure resulting from an Anti-Social Behaviour Order YES NO

6. Are you an un-discharged bankrupt? YES NO

1. Are you a tenant with unresolved arrears? YES NO

8. Are you a Leaseholder in breach of your lease, such as non-payment of service charges? YES NO

9. Are you an employee or related to an employee of Southend on Sea City Council of any other Council, Arm's Length Management Organisation, Private Finance Initiative or Housing Association in the United Kingdom? YES NO

PLEASE NOTE YOU MUST NOT BE A COUNCILLOR OF SOUTHEND CITY COUNCIL

SECTION F – MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Are you related to or the partner of any Board Members?..... YES NO

If YES, please give brief details:.....

Such a disclosure will not disqualify you from consideration. However, a failure to disclose any such relationship or the canvassing of Board Members or employees of South Essex Homes in relation to this appointment may disqualify you or may be dealt with under the appropriate procedure.

The information stated in this application, together with any accompanying papers is, to the best of my knowledge, correct. I understand that a false entry may lead to an offer of Board Membership being withdrawn.

Signed..... Date.....

Please return the completed form marked "Confidential" to: Carol Cooper, South Essex Homes, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6FY or via email carolcooper@seh.southend.gov.uk