

# Board Member Recruitment & Selection Policy

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We monitor local and national guidance and legislation to ensure that the health and safety of our customers, staff and partners are paramount.

Our Policy and Procedures are regularly updated however there may be occasion where external factors (e.g. COVID-19) impact upon our compliance.

When such instances occur, it is important that we are responsive to these factors. This may mean that we need to amend our compliance with Policy and Procedures as we adapt our service delivery to be consistent with Government guidance. We will always seek to do this in a way that does not disadvantage our customers and we will take every measure to ensure any disruption or alterations to service is kept to a minimum.

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# **Board Member Recruitment & Selection Policy**

## **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 This policy is aimed to encourage best practice in Board Member recruitment and selection within South Essex Homes to ensure a consistency of approach, to improve the quality of selection decisions which will have a lasting impact upon the strategic direction of the Company, and to advise all those responsible for Board Member recruitment of their obligations under South Essex Homes' Policy on Equal Opportunities.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to assist those in the selection and recruitment of Board Members. It is not exhaustive and further advice is available from the Corporate Services Team.

## **2 Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all aspects of recruitment for all Board members.

## **3 Principles**

- 3.1 High standards of professional recruitment practice are essential for South Essex Homes to thrive and to act within the law.
- 3.2 All Board members should be treated fairly and consistently in accordance with the provisions of South Essex Homes Equal Opportunities Policy. The Company fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and firmly opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, citizenship, those with dangerous transmittable diseases (e.g. Hepatitis & HIV), ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexuality, age, disability, trade union membership, religious belief, offending background and gender reassignment.
- 3.3 Effective application of the policy requires that those responsible for its application will be supported through advice, training and development.

## **4 Legislative Background**

- 4.1 Current legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of sex/race/colour/religion/maternity/disability. It also provides remedies for individuals who have been discriminated against.
- 4.2 Positive action is permissible under the relevant legislation and the opportunity exists for those responsible for recruitment to take steps to redress imbalances in the profile of South Essex Homes Board membership.

This might include methods for encouraging more applicants from under-represented groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, the disabled etc) or by providing training specifically for those groups in order to enable them to become more competitive in the selection process. Advice should be sought from the Corporate Services Team before placing an advertisement containing a positive action statement.

## **5 Board Member Role**

- 5.1 Having determined that a Board Member vacancy needs to be filled, the Board member role profile must be completed describing the purpose and responsibilities of the role. It should be written to ensure that it is free from irrelevant discrimination.
- 5.2 Consideration should be given to the design to ensure, for example, that the needs of any potential candidate can be accommodated, whether disabled or not. Under the Disability Discrimination Act we are under an obligation to make reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate disabilities.
- 5.3 It must be clear that the role of the Board Member does not include a requirement for a disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

## **6 Person Specification**

- 6.1 Each role must be accompanied by a detailed Person Specification, which is a definition of the attributes considered essential or desirable for the applicant to possess in order to fulfill the responsibilities of the role. It should distinguish between the minimum acceptable essential attributes and the desirable attributes. This, with the Board member role profile, will form the basis of any selection decision.
- 6.2 Care is needed in both the Board member role profile and Person Specification preparation to ensure that all aspects are justified and are not likely to exclude potential applicants from under-represented or disadvantaged groups; e.g. a statement such as "must be mobile" may discriminate against persons with a disability.
- 6.3 Many potential applicants may have the necessary qualities for the effective performance of the job but lack experience or educational achievements through not having suitable opportunities. Care should be taken, therefore, in the specification of requirements to ensure that statements about length and type of experience, and training requirements, are necessary and relevant.

## **7 Advertising the Position**

- 7.1 In principle, to ensure that South Essex Homes moves towards addressing imbalances in the profile, Board Member roles should be open to applications from any candidate who meets the basic requirements of the role. This means that all roles must be advertised in the public domain and consideration should be given to advertising in specialist journals/locations where they will come to the attention of members of under-represented groups.
- 7.2 The advertisement, which should be closely based on the Person Specification, must identify South Essex Homes and may, where appropriate, contain specific encouragement for members of under-represented groups.

## **8 Applications**

- 8.1 Full Board Member Role Profiles and Person Specifications must be sent to all applicants with the Recruitment Pack. All applicants must complete the standard application form, which has been designed to elicit information relevant to the Person Specification. It is essential that all potential applicants receive the same information whether received electronically or by mail.
- 8.2 Where the role might be particularly suitable for a person who has a specific disability or for whom English is not their first language, consideration should be given to finding alternative methods for communicating the information and the format for the applications.
- 8.3 Applicants should be invited to take part in Equal Opportunities monitoring, the responses to which will be handled separately from the application and short-listing process. This monitoring allows South Essex Homes to profile the Board membership against the profiling of the resident base.

## **9 Tenant Board Member Selection Process**

- 9.1 Tenants should be represented in the selection of Tenant Board Members, and consequently, a selection panel made up of suitable tenants will be convened. All eligible tenants will be invited to participate in the selection panel. The selection decision is made by the tenant selection panel, one member of the Board as agreed by the Board of South Essex Homes, and the Council Member. These members will make up the selection panel. The Selection Panel should include at least one person who has been trained in selection techniques and equal opportunities, and who understands South Essex Homes' selection procedure. A Chair of the panel will be selected from amongst the members of the selection panel. The role of the Chair of the Panel is to ensure that each candidate receives a fair interview and to ensure that all interview records are maintained and retained. Each constituency of the panel (Tenant, Board and Council) will have one vote in the selection process.

- 9.2 If possible, the composition of the panel should be of mixed gender and/or race. It is essential that all members of the panel prepare for the interview and have read all the relevant material beforehand.
- 9.3 When a Tenant Board Member's term of office expires the position will be advertised and opened to all qualifying tenants. In the case of existing Tenant Board Members wanting to stay on the Board their application will automatically be short listed, as long as they have not already completed 9 years of continuous service on the Board in which case they would not be eligible to reapply.

## **10 Council Board Member Selection Process**

- 10.1 The Council Board members are selected by Southend on Sea City Council in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association for South Essex Homes, following the annual elections held by the Council. South Essex Homes receives confirmation of each appointment by letter. The information is sent to the next available Board meeting to receive formal ratification of the appointment subject to the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

## **11 Independent Board Member Selection Process**

- 11.1 The Selection Panel for all Independent Board Members is made up of a minimum of three Board Members representing each constituency of the Board and either the Chief Executive or the Executive Director (s). The Board selects the members of the Selection Panel. These members will make up the Selection Panel. The Selection Panel should include at least one person who has been trained in selection techniques and equal opportunities, and who understands South Essex Homes' selection procedure. The role of the Chair of the Panel is to ensure that each candidate receives a fair interview and to ensure that all interview records are maintained and retained.
- 11.2 If possible, the composition of the panel should be of mixed gender and/or race. It is essential that all members of the panel prepare for the interview and have read all the relevant material beforehand.

## **12 SEPS Ordinary Board Member Selection Process**

- 12.1 The Selection Panel for all Ordinary Board Members of SEPS is made up of a minimum of three Board Members, these can be from either the SEH or SEPS Boards, along with the Director for SEPS. The Board selects the members of the Selection Panel. These members will make up the Selection Panel. The Selection Panel should include at least one person who has been trained in selection techniques and equal opportunities, and who understands

South Essex Homes' selection procedure. The role of the Chair of the Panel is to ensure that each candidate receives a fair interview and to ensure that all interview records are maintained and retained.

- 12.2 If possible, the composition of the panel should be of mixed gender and/or race. It is essential that all members of the panel prepare for the interview and have read all the relevant material beforehand.

### **13 Tenant Board Member and Independent Board Member Short-listing**

- 13.1 All members of the selection panel should be involved in the short-listing process.
- 13.2 The Person Specification will form the basis of the selection decision. Records should be kept on the extent to which each candidate meets the requirements of each aspect of the Person Specification.
- 13.3 It is essential to guard against personal bias during the short-listing process, in accordance with South Essex Homes' Equal Opportunities Policy. Assumptions must not be made.
- 13.4 Candidates should be given sufficient notice of proposed selection activities, their content, the proposed timetable and names of the selection panel who will be involved in the interview/selection process.

### **14 Interviewing**

- 14.1 Prior to arranging the interviews, all candidates must be asked if they have any special requirements such as lighting needs, wheelchair access etc.
- 14.2 The aim of the interview is to assess each candidate's ability to undertake the role based on information gained from the application form and comparison with the Person Specification.
- 14.3 Since objectivity can sometimes be difficult to achieve through interview alone it may be necessary for a range of selection methods to be established, closely based on the Person Specification for the post.
- 14.4 Interview questions should be discussed and agreed by the panel in advance, chosen with care, and designed to elicit the information covered in the Person Specification. Particular care should be taken to avoid using questions that might convey an intention to take into account irrelevant material. Interview structure and content should be applied consistently to all candidates interviewed. Candidates should be given the opportunity to ask questions to the panel.

## **15 Records**

- 15.1 The Chair must ensure that true and accurate notes are kept on the extent to which candidates are assessed by all members of the panel to have met the requirements of each aspect of the Person Specification.
- 15.2 At the conclusion of all the interviews, the panel must assess and evaluate the evidence. The Chair of the Panel must communicate the decision made to the Board of South Essex Homes, to obtain their agreement to the selection or nomination.
- 15.3 At the next available Board meeting the Board will ask the selection panel to speak to the report to obtain formal agreement from the Board to the appointment of the successful candidate.
- 15.4 The successful candidate will be advised in writing of the appointment to the Board of South Essex Homes or South Essex Property Services and will receive a letter from the Chair of the Board along with an information pack and a detailed induction programme.
- 15.5 The Company Secretary will ensure that legislation surrounding appointments to a Company limited by Guarantee is complied with in terms of appointment of Directors.
- 15.6 Candidates may wish to receive feedback about their performance in the interview process. Such information should only be provided by a member of the panel (normally the Chair).