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<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Committee Member Recruitment and Induction</b>
<b>Policy Author</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Approved by Sub Committee</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative will provide this policy on request at no cost, in larger print, in Braille, in audio or other non-written format, and in a variety of languages. Please contact the office.

## **Regulatory Standard 6**

The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective

### **Guidance**

6.1 The RSL has a formal, rigorous and transparent process for the election, appointment and recruitment of governing body members. The RSL formally and actively plans to ensure orderly succession to governing body places to maintain an appropriate and effective composition of governing body members and to ensure sustainability of the governing body.

6.2 The governing body annually assesses the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity it needs to provide capable leadership, control and constructive challenge to achieve the RSL's purpose, deliver good tenant outcomes, and manage its affairs. It assesses the contribution of continuing governing body members, and what gaps there are that need to be filled.

6.4 The RSL encourages as diverse a membership as is compatible with its constitution and actively engages its membership in the process for filling vacancies on the governing body.

### **1. Introduction**

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative (WWHC) is a fully mutual housing Co-operative with charitable status. In a fully mutual housing co-operative all tenants are members, and only tenants, or prospective tenants, can be members.

Members can be nominated, stand for election and be elected to the Management Committee, as long as they meet the eligibility criteria in the rules. The recruitment process described in this policy recognises this important principle and also seeks to introduce an early opportunity to discuss the role of a Committee Member with potential candidates. This is to ensure understanding of what the responsibilities are and to explain the focus of the business discussed at Management Committee meetings. It is also an opportunity to describe the requirements of the Code of Conduct, which must be signed before anyone can become a member of the Management Committee.

1.1 Only Co-operative members can become Committee Members unless they are:

- Appointed by the Scottish Housing Regulator or

- Co-opted by the Management Committee (until the next AGM)

WWHC has a clear process for recruitment to the Management Committee.

1.2 WWHC Management Committee has the important responsibility of directing and controlling the affairs of the Co-operative.

As a registered social landlord and a Scottish charity, it is essential that WWHC has people with the right skills, knowledge, diversity, objectivity and experience that it needs for its decision making.

1.3 To do this, we will:

- Identify skills required and annually assess the skills and experience which current Management Committee 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:

- Training and development programmes for the Management Committee as a whole and/or for individual Committee 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 Committee members, to protect and enhance the skills and experience held by individuals in the event of their departure from the Management Committee
- Support the work of the Committee to make the most of the contributions made by voluntary Committee members

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

1.5 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 Committee

## **2. What we are looking for**

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

- A commitment to supporting the community that WWHC 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 WWHC'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: awareness of the housing and wider community needs, awareness of concerns facing WWHC's customers, knowledge of local issues in the housing sector and the needs and priorities of the people who live in the area
- Business skills and knowledge: previous Committee experience, strategic and business planning, personnel issues, financial planning and control, monitoring and control of performance, public relations, information technology, 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, 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 Committee Members, but a lack of specialist 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 Co-op and who can offer relevant knowledge and/or experience; we will ensure that Committee members, once on the Committee, 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 underrepresented in public life or who are currently under-represented on our Management Committee. 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:

Disability; Marital status; Pregnancy and maternity; Race; Gender; Sexual orientation; Gender reassignment; Religion or belief; Age

## **2. What Management Committee members will get from their involvement?**

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

3.2 In return for their time and commitment Committee 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 Co-op 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 others with a shared commitment
- The satisfaction of contributing to an organisation committed to improving the quality of life of its customers and communities

## **4. Recruitment to the Management Committee**

4.1 Shareholding members of the Co-op have the right to seek election to the Management Committee at the AGM. The Co-op will publicise how and when members can stand for election and will encourage all members to participate in the election of their Management Committee

4.2 In addition, we will seek to recruit to fill any gaps identified through

the skills audit and annual Management Committee 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 Committee) or the filling of casual vacancies left by the retirement of existing Management Committee members.

4.3 We will also seek to identify any current groups, which are under-represented on the Committee in pursuit of our commitment to equality and diversity.

4.4 We will promote the opportunity to become a member of the Management Committee using:

- Articles and adverts in the Co-operatives quarterly newsletter
- Information on the WWHC website / Social Media platforms.
- Circulation of information to Members of the Co-operative
- Promotion information in AGM notifications
- The process of promotion may be supplemented by personal approaches from members of the Management Committee and staff to individuals who are identified as being able to make a potential contribution.

In the event of such an approach being positive, the details of the individual will be submitted to the Director and Project Officer, who will discuss the process with the prospective committee member and issue recruitment information as follows:

- Information on background and history of WWHC
- Management Committee Members Guide
- Management Committee member role description which includes an estimation of the time commitment involved
- Committee Code of Conduct
- Remit of Management Committee from Standing Orders
- Eligibility (in line with Rules) declaration form to complete.

4.5 The Project Officer will check the membership eligibility and invite the prospective Committee member to attend an informal meeting to discuss the role. This will involve at least one member of the Committee (normally the Chair or another office-bearer) and an officer who supports the Management Committee.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Confirm the candidate's eligibility to act as a member of the Management Committee
- Establish the candidate understands the role of Committee members, including the likely time commitment involved.
- Establish the potential contribution likely to be made by the candidate, in the light of the skills, knowledge and experience described in the Committee Member profile
- Answer any questions from the candidate
- Explain the induction process and support available

4.6 Members will then be invited to attend the non-confidential items at the next suitable Management Committee meeting as observers before their appointment is confirmed/they stand for election. There will be opportunities to observe more meetings if required.

4.7 Following the meeting, the prospective Committee Member will advise if they wish to proceed.

4.8 At the next Management Committee meeting, the Management Committee will make a decision as to whether to co-opt or appoint the prospective Committee Member.

## **5. Supporting and Developing Committee Members - Induction**

Regulatory Standard 6.5

The RSL ensures all new governing body members receive an effective induction programme to enable them to fully understand and exercise their governance responsibilities

The aims of our approach are to:

- Support new members in getting up to speed quickly.
- Help new members understand the responsibilities of their role, including their responsibilities under the law and the Co-operative's Code of Conduct.
- Help new members make effective contributions
- Help ensure that the Management Committee as a whole has the skills and knowledge needed to carry out its role.

5.1 When new members are first elected or co-opted to the Management Committee, they will be required to take part in an induction process which will be flexible to take account of personal circumstances.

5.2 The Project Officer will co-ordinate the delivery of the induction process:

<b>Part 1</b>	On confirmation of their election/appointment/co-option, new members will be invited to a meeting with the Chairperson and the Director to welcome the new member, give an introduction to WWHC's governance arrangements, to discuss confidentiality and to be given Information pack 1, which includes essential reading.
<b>Part 2</b>	<b>Information pack 1 (paper and/or electronic format to suit members' preferences)</b> Most recent annual report Standing orders Staff structure chart Committee meeting schedule Fair processing notice and Committee sign off documents including Code of Conduct and Declarations of interest Policy review schedule
<b>Part 3</b>	New Committee members will be invited to a meeting with the Project Officer to gain an overview of the Co-operative, how it is organised and governed, and the personal responsibilities of Committee Members including declaration of interests and code of conduct. Any initial induction training needs will be identified and an individual training plan commenced.
<b>Part 4</b>	As part of familiarisation of the Co-operative's work new committee members will be invited to attend informal briefing sessions with relevant staff members, to learn about the Co-operative's work and current priorities. The sessions will cover overall priorities and individual service/activity areas (for example, housing management and maintenance, asset management, finance, community regeneration work).
<b>Part 5</b>	<b>Information pack 2 (paper and/or electronic format to suit members' preferences)</b> Social Housing Charter Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management Business Plan Equality and Diversity Policy Committee Expenses Policy Risk Management Policy
<b>Part 6</b>	<b>Review</b>



	The Director and Project Officer will meet with the new member, to review the induction process and what ongoing support or further information is required.
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5.4 The new Committee member will be offered the opportunity to talk through papers for their first Committee meeting with the Director or Project Officer in order that they understand what's in them and identify any initial questions.

5.5 When attending their first Committee meeting after election or co-option, the new member will be formally welcomed by the Chairperson and will be introduced to other members of the Committee and staff in attendance.

During the meeting the Chairperson and Director will ensure that background is provided and terminology explained and new Committee members will be given the opportunity to ask questions.

At the end of the meeting the Chairperson will ask the new member for any feedback on the meeting and on the papers and answer any questions they may have.

5.6 New members can contact or arrange to meet the Chairperson, Director or Project Officer, if they have any questions or concerns, or if they just want to discuss informally how things are going.

5.7 Participation in the annual Committee appraisal process and training plan will follow.

## 6. Review

This process will be reviewed following the next new committee member induction to ensure feedback is taken on board.

We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people in our work. In implementing this Policy, we will provide a fair and equal service to all people, irrespective of factors such as gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes.

## Appendix 1

### Checklist of knowledge, experience, skills and other qualities

#### 1. Knowledge, experience and understanding

We are looking for people with some of the following:

- Understanding of the needs, aspirations and concerns of WWHC tenants, members and the local community
- Working as a member of a committee 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. Skills

We are looking for people with some of the following:

- Ability to work as a member of a team – with other Committee 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 WWHC's success as a business

### **3. Qualities**

We are looking for people with some of the following:

- Upholding the values, objectives and policies of the Co-operatives
- Contributing ideas and new perspectives
- Respecting confidentiality
- Making sure that personal relationships or agendas do not influence
- Willingness to keep knowledge up to date including by attending relevant learning and development events
- Contributing to and accepting collective responsibility for decisions
- Representing the organisation positively
- Commitment to the co-operative's values
- Willingness to devote time to carry out responsibilities.
- Willingness to ask for support if needed.
- Have a desire to see the community of West Whitlawburn thrive.