Southway | Wythenshawe Community Housing Group

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Board Member Recruitment Pack

Join us!

Gatenby Sanderson

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Join our Board!

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Thank you for your interest in becoming a board member of the new merged organisation to be formed through a partnership between Southway and Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG). This is an exciting opportunity to help shape strategic direction and organisational culture. The merger is expected to complete in early November 2026 subject to the outcomes of customer consultation, lenders consent and the approval of the final business case in September.

Southway and WCHG are both place-based organisations with strong links to the local community. We both provide much more than good quality housing, delivering a diverse range of services that ensure customers' homes are safe and well maintained, and enrich communities, transform lives, and support local community development and economic growth.

The proposed merger presents a compelling opportunity to create a stronger, more resilient and financially sustainable organisation that combines the strengths of both partners while maintaining a strong local and community focus. Through increased scale and alignment, the merged organisation should deliver significant annual efficiencies, enabling greater investment in customer services, communities and new homes, while strengthening long-term financial resilience.

The board of the new organisation will comprise 12 non-executive group board members – nine have been selected from the current Southway and WCHG boards. We now want to recruit three new members who can bring finance, people and technology expertise to complement the skills of those already selected.

We want people who share our values and will bring the skills, knowledge and experience to help us achieve our ambitions. As a member of the group board, you will have a key role in developing the new organisation's strategic direction and supporting our ambition to become a sector-leading provider delivering greater social impact and better outcomes for our residents and communities.

It is crucial that as a board, we collectively retain strong links to our residents and we are striving to ensure that we have a board that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

Thank you for your interest and we wish you all the best in your application.

Nick Crafts

Nick Crofts
Chair designate

J Bowker

John Bowker
Chief Executive designate

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About the new organisation

The proposed merger will create Greater Manchester's largest housing provider, owning and managing more than 20,500 homes across South Manchester. The organisation will retain a clear local focus while using its increased scale to deliver more for customers, communities, colleagues, partners and stakeholders.

The spirit of the merger is a partnership of equals. We will have a new name, identity, and brand so that it looks and feels like a genuinely new organisation with a refreshed opportunity to push forward on achieving our shared objectives.

The guiding principle for the new organisation is Large and Local. This means combining the advantages of scale, resilience, and capacity with a deep understanding of local places, customer needs and community priorities.

Housing providers are operating in a challenging environment. In parts of South Manchester there are areas of acute deprivation where a strong, local housing partner can make a meaningful difference. The new organisation will have the scale and financial strength to meet these challenges and to deliver more for our customers.

The key benefits of the merged organisation identified through the outline business case, approved by both boards, in May 2026 are:

- Delivery of improved services to customers
- Increased investment in communities creating greater customer outcomes
- Building more homes
- Generating improved financial and organisations strength and resilience
- Having a greater stake and influence in the City and Greater Manchester region
- Being an employer of choice, attracting and retaining the best talent
- Creating increased capacity for improvement and innovation and be sector leading

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Stronger together - a shared culture

Our shared vision and purpose

There is significant synergy between Southway and WCHG's statements of vision and purpose.

Southway Vision - To provide excellent customer service and quality homes, where communities thrive.

WCHG Purpose - To provide good quality homes and services to our tenants and leaseholders, and to play a leading role in creating safer, healthier communities.

We both have a clear focus on the quality of homes and services and on recognising the critical community investment contributions that we make.

Our shared values

Through the merger process we've recognised our value statements, while using different words, share common sentiments.

Southway Values

Respect
We treat everyone with respect and dignity, valuing our differences.

Equity
We're fair and inclusive, ensuring everyone can be heard, with equal access and opportunities to succeed.

Ambition
We set high standards and are committed to continuous improvement and growth.

Compassion
We show empathy and concern for others, providing help and support where we can.

Honesty
We're open, truthful, and sincere. We hold our hands up if we get something wrong and do the work to put it right.

WCHG Values

One team
Be kind, inclusive and collaborative, celebrate success and build strong partnerships that support colleagues and deliver for our customers.

Integrity
Be honest, respect boundaries and do what's right, build trust with colleagues and customers.

Aspiration
Stay curious, share knowledge and create space for growth, so we can thrive and better serve our customers.

Courageous
Speak up, take informed risks, and stay resilient, especially when it's tough, because our customers count on us and we count on each other.

Practical
Take pride in solving problems, keep it simple and maintain the highest standards.

We are currently working with all colleagues across both organisations on the culture for the new organisation. From this we will develop a new set of values that underpin the way we work going forward.

What this means for the new organisation

The board of the merged organisation will start with clarity on what is important to develop a revised organisational purpose and vision – why we exist and what we are aiming to achieve.

The values of the merged organisation will provide a strong foundation for an organisation that is large enough to deliver more, but local enough to remain close to customers and communities.

Our strategic priorities

We will take our early strategic direction from the final business case (due to be approved in September 2026) but the board will develop a new corporate plan for approval in April 2027, working in an open and inclusive way with our customers, colleagues and stakeholders.

The priorities are expected to include:

High quality, safe and secure homes
All homes will be safe, secure, and warm, achieve EPC C by 2030, and meet Decent Homes and other legal and regulatory requirements. We will define with customers a refreshed property standard.

Excellent services to customers
Improved service outcomes for customers including enhanced digital self-serve options for all key services, more visibility of colleagues and a highly efficient customer contact centre, all supported by improved systems and processes.

More affordable new homes
Using increased scale and capacity to build more homes and pursue larger or more complex development opportunities, making an even more significant contribution to meeting housing need.

Being an employer of choice
Attracting and retaining talented colleagues, creating career pathways and supporting professional development. By employing over 750 colleagues, the new organisation will be a major local employer and contribute to the economic strength of the local economy.

Investing in customers and communities
We will develop revised neighbourhood plans, working with customers and other residents, local partners and stakeholders to attract additional investment and extend the quality and range of community-based services in the locality.

Enhanced financial and organisational resilience
The initial combined financial plan provides evidence that the new organisation will generate efficiency savings and economies of scale in its early years which will improve financial resilience. The new organisation will be better placed to absorb operational and market risk, with additional financial capacity to deliver strategic growth and investment priorities.

A strong, flexible and dynamic partner
Our increased size and scale will make us an attractive local, regional and national partner; and generate more opportunities to foster productive high value relationships for the benefit of customers, communities, and the partners we work with.

Investment in technologies, systems and processes
Improving systems to support customer experience, colleague productivity and operational efficiency through continuing investment in ICT transformation programmes.

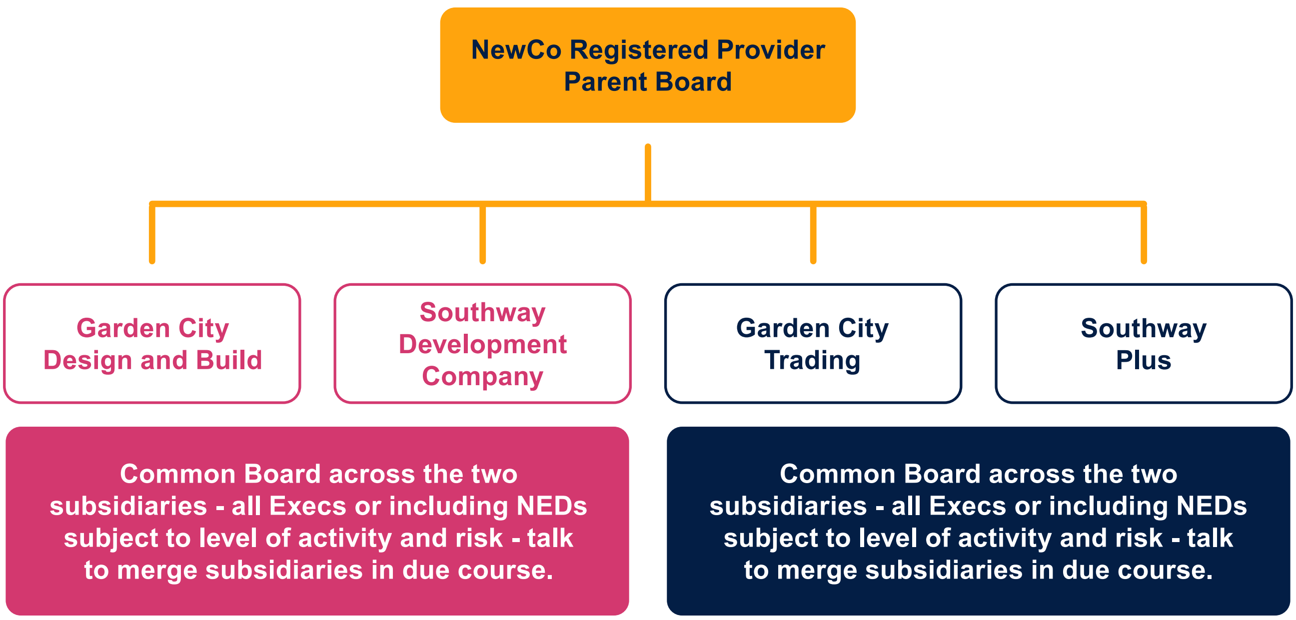
A culture of innovation and empowerment
Development of an open and empowered culture that encourages greater innovation so that the new organisation can work at pace to deliver its strategic objectives. Inclusivity will be key to this success with differences respected and celebrated, enabling colleagues to bring their best and whole selves to work to deliver the best possible customer service.

Governance - Group Board

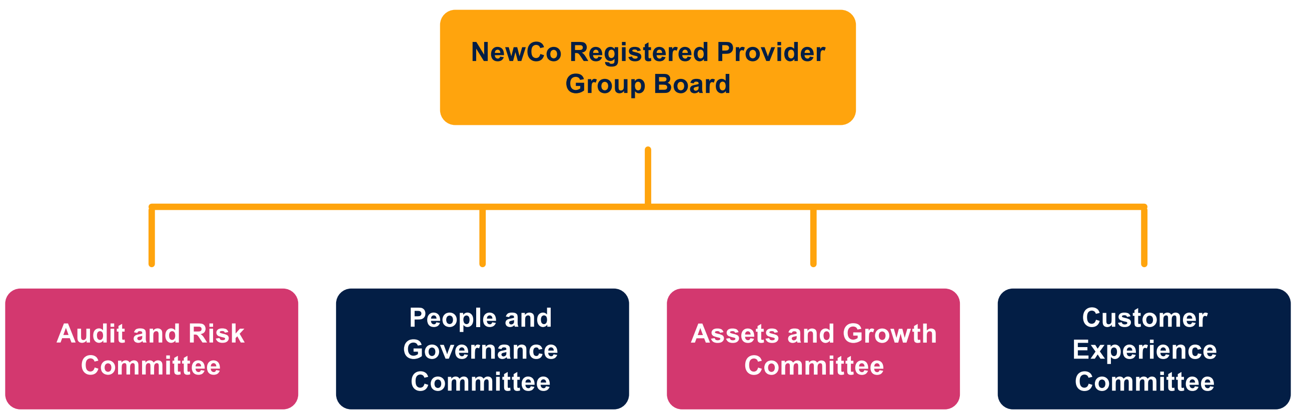
The merged organisation will be a charitable community benefit society registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.

The group board will comprise twelve non-executive board members and will be responsible for managing the affairs of the group.

There will be four subsidiaries, two from each organisation (non-charitable development company and development services company), so they are broadly aligned in terms of activities. They will be governed by two common boards.



There will be four standing committees of the group board:



The group board's purpose and that of the four committees are included at Appendix 1.

Governance - Group Board

The current selected group board members will be:

Nick Crofts - Chair
Nick brings more than a decade of senior leadership experience in social housing, including roles as Deputy Chair of Cobalt Housing and Chair of Venture Housing. He is Chief Executive of the Co-op Foundation and previously served as a Liverpool City Councillor for ten years. Nick became Chair of the WCHG Board in March 2022.

Anna Bishop
Anna is Chief Executive of South Liverpool Homes and has over 25 years in the housing sector. She is passionate about tackling inequality and has a strong track record of improving services by ensuring customers' views and experiences shape decision making.

Faisal Butt
Faisal joined the Southway Parent Board in September 2023. He also serves on the Remuneration Committee, Southway DevCo and chairs the Audit and Risk Committee. He has experience of working as a Senior Manager at a national registered provider. Previously, he served as Vice Chair of a housing association in East London.

David Hampton
David is a tenant member of the Southway Parent Board and Audit and Risk Committee. He has been a Southway customer for more than five years. His background is in finance and performance management, and he has also worked as a carer. He is part qualified as a counsellor.

Alice Hemsley-Myers
After holding positions in risk management for the Bank of England and Morgan Stanley, Alice led two real estate finance businesses for BLME and for Puma Investments. She now works across specialist residential asset classes and also serves on the Board of Honeycomb Group and chairs Honeycomb Charitable Services.

Darren Jones
Darren is a Chartered Surveyor with more than 35 years' experience across development and asset management. He is Senior Development Director at Cityheart and has previously held senior roles with Orbit Development, Nikal Developments and Oldham Council. He also serves as a Trustee of Hamblin Education Trust.

Group board members continue on the next page.

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Governance - Group Board

Shefali Kapoor
Shefali is a member of the Southway Parent Board and chairs both the Customer Voice Committee and the Remuneration Committee. She is Director of Communities at Manchester City Council and has over 18 years' experience across local government, including project delivery, stakeholder engagement and partnership working.

Michael O'Doherty
Michael is a Senior Director and Head of Housing Delivery at Local Partnerships LLC (owned by HMT, LGA and Welsh Government) leading national housing and regeneration programmes. He has held senior housing and sustainability roles across both local and national government and is a long-standing member of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Steve Wilson
Steve is a member of the Southway Parent Board and the Southway Plus Board. He is Treasurer of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and previously combined this with the role of Acting Executive Lead for Finance and Investment at Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership. He has more than 25 years' experience in public sector finance.

This could be you!

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Leadership - Executive Board

The group will be led by an executive board, structured as follows:

Chief Executive

- **Executive Director** Customers and Communities
- **Executive Director** Homes and Property
- **Executive Director** Finance and Development
- **Executive Director** People and Governance
- **Executive Director** Transformation and Technology

All posts have been filled through a rigorous selection process, and they are currently meeting as the shadow executive board.

The executive directors will be:

John Bowker - Chief Executive
John joined Southway as Chief Executive in July 2024 and has worked in housing for more than 30 years. Before joining Southway, he was Executive Director of Operations at Stockport Homes Group, where he led property and neighbourhood services. He is Chair of JV North and leads Greater Manchester Housing Providers' housing standards work.

Paul Butterworth - Executive Director of Homes and Property
Paul has worked in the housing sector for more than 25 years across a number of large housing providers in the North West, with experience spanning development, maintenance and compliance. He is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH).

Paul Howes - Executive Director of People and Governance
Paul joined Southway in 2025 from Stockport Homes, where he led a wide range of corporate services including marketing and communications, technology and digital transformation. He is also the executive lead responsible for Consumer Standards.

Executive board members continue on the next page.

Leadership - Executive Board

Paul Seymour - Executive Director of Customers and Communities
Paul has worked in the housing sector for over 30 years, building experience across organisations in England and Wales. Alongside his executive role, Paul is Chair of the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership (MHPP) and serves as a Non-Executive Committee Member at Riverside Housing.

Shahida Latif-Haider - Executive Director of Transformation and Technology
Shahida is a Chartered Accountant with more than 30 years' experience in the housing sector. Alongside her executive role, she serves as a Board Member and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee at Irwell Valley Homes.

Simon Morris - Executive Director of Finance and Development
Simon has more than 30 years' experience in financial leadership across the private and social housing sectors. He joined WCHG as Executive Director of Finance in 2020, serves on the Boards of First Choice Homes Oldham and Hive Homes LLP, and was appointed Interim Chief Executive of WCHG in May 2026.

The Roles - What we're looking for

We are seeking candidates who bring knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- **Professionally qualified finance professional (CCAB or CIMA)** with strategic leadership experience gained within a regulated sector.
- **Experience of strategic leadership of people and culture functions.** A CIPD qualification is not essential, and experience may have been gained in any sector; however, expertise in organisational change, transformation and people strategy development is essential.
- **Senior technology leader** with experience gained at CIO / CTO or equivalent level. Experience within customer-facing or consumer-focused organisations is essential, together with strategic expertise spanning customer experience, digital transformation, cyber security, AI, and technology governance.

For all three roles, previous non-executive experience is desirable but not essential. For the finance and people-focused roles, there may be future opportunities to chair a committee, dependant on personal development and succession planning. It is anticipated that the successful technology-focused appointee will join the Customer Experience Committee, the successful finance-focused appointee the Audit and Risk Committee and the people-focused appointee the People and Governance Committee.

The role profile and person specification for group board members is attached as Appendix 2.

Appointment

Non-executive directors will be appointed on an initial three-year term, renewable for a further three years by mutual agreement following positive annual appraisals.

Remuneration

£9,174 per year

We also reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by board members in the carrying out of their duties.

Time commitment

Around 20 days a year (see role profile). The schedule of board and committee meetings is yet to be agreed but is likely to include some commitments during standard working hours.

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How to apply

Provide an up-to-date CV which shows your full career history with any breaks explained. Please also include details of all roles that are currently held.

Submit a supporting statement detailing how you meet the key criteria sought, highlighting your most relevant knowledge, skills, and experiences, and critically why you think you would be an asset to the group board. We request that your supporting statement is no longer than two pages.

Applications should be submitted via www.gatenbysanderson.com/job-search

Please provide your phone and email contact details.

You should also provide the names, positions, organisations, and contact details for two referees, one of whom should be for your current or most recent position. We would not approach these referees before the shortlist stage, and only with your permission. If you do not wish us to approach your referees at any stage, please state this clearly.

Should you require a confidential discussion before you apply, please contact our advising consultants at GatenbySanderson:

Simon Wing	07809 195628	simon.wing@gatenbysanderson.com
Nick Roberts	07393 013697	nick.roberts@gatenbysanderson.com
Jude Watters	07594 250060	jude.watters@gatenbysanderson.com

Indicative schedule

- **Closing date:** 9am on Monday 7 September 2026
- **Longlisting:** 22 September 2026
  (we will let you know if your application is progressing to preliminary interview stage as soon as possible after this meeting)
- **Preliminary interviews with GatenbySanderson:**
  Weeks of 21 and 28 September 2026

- **Shortlisting:** 5 October
  (we will let you know if your application is progressing to final interview stage as soon as possible after this meeting)
- **Final interviews in person:**
  Technology role: Afternoon of 14 October 2026
  Finance role: Morning / early afternoon of 19 October 2026
  People role: Afternoon of 21 October 2026

Please let us know of any dates when you are not available or may have difficulty with the indicative schedule. The dates above are subject to change as required.

Appendix 1 - Group Board and Committees Summary

The Group Board's core purpose includes:

- To ensure solvency, viability, long term success and growth of the group.
- To direct and control activities in accordance with the law, the constitution, regulatory standards, best practice.
- To determine the vision and to set a positive culture, with a strong customer focus and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- To develop, review, own and monitor the corporate strategy, financial plan and budgets.
- To agree and oversee the implementation of key policies, standards and frameworks.
- To ensure the delivery of customer services in line with agreed strategies, policies and standards.
- To ensure legal and regulatory compliance and uphold best practice in relation to the health and safety.
- To agree and oversee borrowing and ensure ongoing liquidity.
- To ensure a robust approach to delivering value for money; the identification and management of risk; and performance and compliance across the business.
- To uphold the reputation of the group.
- To establish and maintain appropriate levels of engagement with key stakeholders.
- To establish strong and effective working relationships with the executive board.
- To agree all matters that might create significant financial or other risk, or that raise material issues of principle.

The Audit and Risk Committee's core purpose is to support the group board by:

- acting as the audit and risk committee for all legal entities within the group
- overseeing all matters relating to external and internal audit
- establishing a framework for effective internal controls
- scrutinising and advising on the efficiency and value for money of the group's activities.
- overseeing matters relating to risk identification, management, mitigation and assurance
- providing an added level of scrutiny in the monitoring of fraud prevention and detection
- scrutinising and advising on any part of the board's forthcoming agenda as directed by the chair of the group board in consultation with the committee chair.

The Customer Experience Committee's core purpose is to support the group board by:

- developing the group's strategic and policy approach to customer service delivery customer insight and community investment.
- ensuring that the voice of the customer is heard and directed into the group's governance leadership structures.
- monitoring customer-facing performance and key projects to ensure alignment with stated aims and objectives.
- overseeing the development of customer engagement structures and methodology to ensure that insight and feedback is used to inform the review and development of services and investment priorities.
- scrutinising and advising on any part of the group board's forthcoming agenda as directed by the chair of the group board in consultation with the committee chair.

The People and Governance Committee's core purpose is to support the group board by:

- acting as the people and governance committee for all legal entities within the group
- monitoring the cohesiveness of organisational culture in line with agreed values and overseeing programmes for the promoting colleague engagement.
- overseeing matters relating to board and committee member conduct, remuneration, performance review, contracts, skills, training, recruitment, and succession planning
- overseeing matters relating to executive pay and benefits, contracts, coaching and performance review, recruitment and succession planning
- overseeing matters relating to colleague pay and benefits.
- approval of governance and colleague related policies as delegated by the group board
- keeping the group's pensions planning and provision under review
- overseeing matters relating to regulatory compliance including scrutinising the integrity of assurance reporting
- scrutinising and advising on any part of the group board's forthcoming agenda as directed by the chair of the group board in consultation with the committee chair.

The Assets and Growth Committee's core purpose is to support the group board by:

- acting as the assets and growth committee for all legal entities within the group.
- developing the group's strategic approach to the development of new homes and stewardship of existing assets including regeneration and disposals.
- ensuring the efficient procurement and delivery of group's development, regeneration and sales programmes.
- developing the group's strategic approach to asset management.
- monitoring and overseeing the stock condition of the group's properties and ensuring a comprehensive investment programme is in place that ensures legal and regulatory compliance requirements.
- ensuring the efficient procurement and delivery of the group's stock investment programmes.
- scrutinising and advising on any part of the group board's forthcoming agenda as directed by the chair of the group board in consultation with the committee chair.

Appendix 2 - Board Member Profile and Person Spec.

1. Purpose

1.1 Board members are responsible for exercising and ensuring good governance, determining the strategic direction of the group, and ensuring its continuing financial viability.

1.2 In doing so, board members should:

- exercise independent judgment, reasonable care, skill and diligence.
- act in accordance with the rules
- promote the success of the association and its subsidiaries.
- uphold the board members code of conduct.
- be highly accountable to a variety of stakeholders including residents.
- have regard to any relevant advice provided by the executive, work with them effectively and hold them to account for running the group.
- demonstrate commitment to equality and diversity.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 The following summarises the key responsibilities of group board members either acting as individuals or acting collectively as the group board, a committee, a subsidiary board or other body when providing guidance, insight, challenge or decision making.

(a) Strategic leadership

- To help develop the vision and set a positive organisational culture.
- To participate in the development of the corporate strategy, strategic delivery plans, frameworks, and key policies.
- To set and monitor objectives, performance targets and benchmarks for the group.
- To be aware of the external and internal operating environment.

(b) Good governance

- To ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance.
- To ensure the integrity of financial and operational performance and compliance data and management information.
- To ensure robust frameworks are in place for financial planning, management of risk, internal controls and the safeguarding of assets.
- To fully participate in the work of the group board and any committee or subsidiary board to which they are appointed.

(c) Effective meetings and decision making

- To fully prepare for, attend and participate in, meetings of the group board and its committees.
- To question/challenge reports constructively to ensure decisions are well founded.
- To avoid disclosing any confidential or commercially sensitive information.
- To uphold the decisions of the group board or committees and ensure they are made in the best interests of the association and the wider group.

(d) Working with colleagues

- To recognise the association's duty of care as an employer.
- To recognise the executive board's responsibilities for management and supervision.
- To be involved in the appointment (and if necessary, the dismissal) of the chief executive and other members of the executive board as required.
- To ensure appropriate succession planning is in place for members of the executive board.

(e) Performance, development, communication and relationships

- To attend appropriate training and other events.
- To participate openly and honestly in collective and individual appraisal meetings, skills audits and succession planning.
- To be open in communication and maintain good working relationships with board members and colleagues.
- To represent the group as required and act as its ambassador.

3. Skills, knowledge and experience

3.1 Each board member is appointed on the basis that they can contribute strengths to the skills, knowledge and experience required on the group board and its committees and subsidiary boards. The extent to which individuals have made effective use of their strengths in skills, knowledge and experience will be considered as part of annual performance review.

4 Organisational culture

4.1 All board members are required to lead by example on organisational culture. The culture of the group is fundamental to its success. Everyone is expected to embrace the group culture and the values that underpin it. Board members are expected to role model the values and will be expected to evidence how they have upheld organisational culture during their annual performance review.

5. Core competencies

5.1 The following core competencies are expected of group board members in terms of their personal effectiveness to lead, inspire and add value to the governance of the group. These core competencies and effective behaviours are used in assessing the performance of board members as part of their annual performance review.

(a) Strategic thinking and direction

- Influences the development of business strategy.
- Delegates responsibility for the delivery of strategy.
- Understands the external and internal operating environment.
- Anticipates and understands risks and consequences.
- Encourages creativity and is open to new ways of working.

(b) Analysis and understanding

- Demonstrates clear analytical intellect.
- Focuses on the key issues and makes them clear to others.
- Understands the sensitivities of key assumptions.
- Satisfies themselves on the integrity of financial information and risk appraisal.
- Possesses confidence to provide appropriate challenge and inquiry.

(c) Decision making

- Shows independent judgement and original thought.
- Signs up to the collective ownership of decisions.
- Applies objective analysis, reasoned and rational judgement.
- Prepared to take difficult decisions and measured risks.
- Respects and is open to the views of others.

(d) Communication and interpersonal skills

- Engages effectively with key stakeholders.
- Builds relationships based on personal credibility and integrity.
- Communicates clearly and persuasively.
- Is self-aware and expects constructive feedback.
- Gets to know individuals and their aspirations.

(e) Organisational purpose and ethos

- Committed to meeting the needs of people in housing need.
- Open to listening to the customer voice.
- Places significant value on trust and reputation.
- Values successful partnership working.
- Demonstrates leadership in equality, diversity and inclusion.

6. Commitment to the role

6.1 Group board members are expected to have the capacity to be able to fulfil their duties and responsibilities as effectively as possible.

6.2 After induction (typically 2-3 days over the first couple of months) board members should anticipate being able to commit the equivalent of around 20 days a year to the role.

6.3 This will include preparing for, attending and participating in meetings of the group board, committees, subsidiary boards (if appointed), working groups and other ad hoc meetings.

6.4 It will also include attending board strategy days and training activities; participating in discussions and electronic communications with other board members and colleagues; and preparing for and attending an annual performance review meeting.

7. Monitoring and review

7.1 This role profile and person specification will be reviewed annually or in line with changes in legislation, whichever is the sooner, updates or recommendations changes will be presented to the people and governance committee for review and to the group board for approval.

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