



Report to the Board 20 March 2014

Title: Board Time Limited Task Group – Induction Process and Independent Director Application Form

Report of: Managing Director

Purpose of Report

1. To agree an updated Board Member Induction Process and Independent Director Application Form following recommendations by a Board Time Limited Task Group.

Background

2. The Audit Committee, at its meeting on 13 March 2013, recommended to the Board the adoption of the National Housing Federation: Excellence in Governance as the Company's Code of Governance. This was subsequently adopted by the Board, at its meeting on 21 March 2013 and it was agreed that the Audit Committee would receive updates on progress meeting the actions identified in the Action Plan.
3. The Audit Committee received an update at its meeting on 16 October 2013 and agreed a number of recommendations which were subsequently endorsed by the Board.
4. One of the outstanding actions was that a Board Time Limited Task Group meet to consider the current Board Member Induction Process and also to look at the current Independent Director Application Form.
5. A Board Time Limited Task Group met on 6 February 2014 and the outcomes are detailed below.

Board Induction Process

6. The current Board induction process has been in place since the Company was established. On appointment, new directors are provided with a comprehensive Induction Pack, a mentor is identified and training needs are identified. In addition, new directors have an informal meeting with the Chair of Board after six months of service to see how they are settling in and whether they have any issues.
7. The Group were satisfied with the current Induction Pack provided.

8. It did suggest however that the individual induction between the new director, the Managing Director and Governance and Risk Officer should be more tailored in advance towards the known needs of that director, for example if they have a limited knowledge of Gateshead or the workings of an ALMO.
9. It was also suggested that more emphasis be made on the identification of a mentor and offering the new director the opportunity to observe Company staff in action.
10. It was also noted that directors were not invited to any TGHC events and it was suggested inviting them to relevant involvement events organised by the Company.
11. There is a further report elsewhere on this agenda suggesting the formalising of Board Champions and this would be an opportunity to address this.

Independent Director Application Form

12. At the Audit Committee on 16 October 2013, it was considered that the Company had appropriate mechanisms in place for recording and declaring any interests and agreed that there was no need to amend the Recruitment Policy to reflect this.
13. The Committee did consider however that the application form for the appointment new Independent Directors should be reviewed.
14. The Group felt that the current Board Monitoring Form that applications were required to complete was too onerous and should be removed. Instead, it was felt that the application form should focus on why that person wants to be a director and what skills they could bring to meet the specification. It should also be stipulated that a CV would be acceptable.
15. The Group felt that the Board Monitoring Form was still a useful tool for identifying gaps in skills and should be updated annually by all directors.
16. The old and updated application forms are attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

Link to Values

17. This report links to the following company values: -
 - Being a listening and learning organisation
 - Being honest, accountable and transparent
 - Being motivated, trained, and committed

Risk Management Implications

18. Failure to manage effective corporate governance has been identified as a strategic risk of the company and the adoption of the Code of Governance will mitigate further this risk.

Financial Implications

19. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

20. There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

Health Implications

21. There are no health implications directly arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

22. There are no environmental implications directly arising from this report.

Value for Money Implications

23. There are no value for money implications directly arising from this report.

Consultation carried out

24. The Board Time Limited Task Group met on 6 February 2014 and its recommendations are outlined throughout the report.

Impact on Customers

25. There is no impact on customers as a result of this report.

Recommendation

26. It is recommended that the updated Board Member Induction Process and updates to the Independent Director Application Form outlined throughout the report be approved.

GATESHEAD HOUSING COMPANY

Application to be an Independent Director

Please answer every question on this form. Use continuation sheet(s) if necessary.

When completed, please return this form and its attachments to the Company Secretary, The Gateshead Housing Company, Keelman House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Fifth Avenue, Team Valley Trading Estate, Gateshead NE11 0XA

YOUR DETAILS

1. Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms etc) _____

2. Name in full _____

2. Date of Birth _____

3. Home Address _____

5. Work address (if you work, or have a place of business, in Gateshead)

6. Telephone Number (Home) _____

(Work) _____

YOUR BACKGROUND

Please give a brief outline of your personal details/history that you think relevant to your application. There is no need to duplicate information provided on the Board Monitoring Form.

To the best of your knowledge are you related to an employee of Gateshead Housing Company or to a director of that company? Yes/No*

If so please give details: _____

* delete as required

I have read the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Code of Conduct for Directors and confirm that if appointed as an independent director I agree to abide by those documents' requirements and meet my obligations to the Board and the Gateshead Housing Company.

Applicant's signature: _____

Date: _____

GATESHEAD HOUSING COMPANY

Annex: Board Monitoring Form for New Directors

NAME:	DATE:
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1. Skills and Experience

The Board needs to ensure that collectively its members have the skills necessary for it to manage the company. Please indicate your own assessment of your skills and experience against each of the headings below by ticking the appropriate box and completing the evidence/comments section. If more space is required, then please use a separate sheet.

Levels of Skills and Experience			
Good – A	Reasonable – B	Some – C	Little/None - D
Meaning:			
Good	Understand the area well having had personal experience of it, up-to-date on current issues and developments and able to take the lead in any discussion on the area.		
Reasonable	Understand the area and able to contribute to discussions with knowledgeable observations and questions.		
Some	Understand generally the area and able to contribute to discussions with common sense and questions.		
Little/None	Unfamiliar with the area and able to contribute to discussions with questions of clarification.		

	A	B	C	D	Evidence/Comments
A. General Business and Management					
• Strategic Decision-taking					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Planning 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Management 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working as an Effective Team 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Governance 					

	A	B	C	D	Evidence/Comments
B. Local Authority Housing					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Issues in Gateshead 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs and Aspirations of Residents and the Community 					

• Tenant Empowerment					
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	A	B	C	D	Evidence/Comments
C. Specific Areas					
• Community Relations and Needs					
• Equal opportunities					
• Management of Property and Contracts					
• Finance and Treasury					
• Legal					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Information Technology 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Relations and Presentations 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Local Authorities 					

2. Other Skills

Do you have other skills/experience not listed above which you think would be useful in your role as a director?

If so, what are they and how do you think they could be used?

3. Qualifications

Please list your qualifications below

GATESHEAD HOUSING COMPANY

Application to be an Independent Director

Please answer every question on this form. Use continuation sheet(s) if necessary.

When completed, please return this form and its attachments to the Company Secretary, The Gateshead Housing Company, Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent, Street, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE8 1JN

YOUR DETAILS

1. Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms etc) _____

2. Name in full _____

2. Date of Birth _____

3. Home Address _____

5. Work address (if you work, or have a place of business, in Gateshead)

6. Telephone Number (Home/Mobile) _____

(Work) _____

YOUR BACKGROUND

Please give a brief outline of why you want to become a director and what skills you bring to meet the specification (please attach a separate CV if you wish)

To the best of your knowledge are you related to an employee of Gateshead Housing Company or to a director of that company? Yes/No*

If so please give details: _____

* delete as required

I have read the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Code of Conduct for Directors and confirm that if appointed as an independent director I agree to abide by those documents' requirements and meet my obligations to the Board and the Gateshead Housing Company.

Applicant's signature: _____

Date: _____