

**COMMITTEE**

**RECRUITMENT**

**PROCEDURE**

*(version 19/11/19)*

**Approved by Committee: 28th November 2019**

**Date Due for Review: October 2022**

**1. Background**

1.1 This document describes Ruchazie Housing Association’s procedures for recruiting new members to its management committee, and for their election / appointment as committee members.

1.2 RHA is committed to ensuring that its performance meets the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator’s (SHR’s) Standards of Governance and Financial Management for RSLs. These state that *“The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective”* (Standard 6).

1.3 In order to meet the requirements of Standard 6, RHA must demonstrate that it has a *“formal, rigorous and transparent process for the election, appointment and recruitment of committee members”.*

1.4 This procedure sets out how RHA meets this requirement, and should be read in conjunction with the Committee Recruitment Policy.

**2. Policy Alignment**

2.1 The process for recruiting new management committee members will be supported by policy and documentation in the following areas:

* Committee training and development policy, procedures and other documentation;
* Committee annual review policy and documentation ( including a process for assessing the continued effectiveness of committee members with more than 9 years of continuous service); and
* Succession planning policy and documentation.

2.2 Each year RHA must submit an annual assurance statement to SHR confirming (or not) its compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Framework. Whatever approach is taken by RHA from year to year to reach a judgement on compliance with these requirements, it should always include a review of the effectiveness of the various component parts of this process, including identifying any parts requiring review or upgrading. These improvements can then be included in the work programme for the following year, in time to be included in the next round of committee recruitment.

**3**. **Annual review of skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity**

3.1 Each year, a review of current committee skills, individual and collective committee member performance, and diversity monitoring exercise will take place, culminating in an annual assessment of the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity required to produce a management committee demonstrating capable leadership and effective governance.

3.2 The processes undertaken to achieve this are set out in the Committee Annual Review Procedure. The report to the committee on the outcome of the review should include a Succession Plan and a Committee Training Plan for the following 12 months, and highlight any priorities for recruitment.

3.3 The target month for this report to be presented should be May each year, with individual committee member review meetings taking place at the same time as staff appraisals, during April and early May, taking account of the plans and aspirations set out in the new business plan for the year ahead, approved in February / March.

3.4 The committee should take stock of any recruitment requirements based on whether or not the maximum number of permitted committee members is in place, and any indications from the Succession Plan as to whether any existing committee members will be standing down at the forthcoming September AGM. If appropriate, the committee should initiate a committee member recruitment exercise in June, based on the priorities indicated in the Annual Review report, aiming to fill all current and prospective vacancies.

**4. Recruitment process**

4.1 We will advertise and promote the opportunity to become a member of the management committee through a range of different outlets, including:

* Scottish Housing News and equivalent advertising platforms, including local and community newspapers
* Tenant newsletter and RHA website
* Contact / advertisements with trade bodies who may hold lists of potential committee members, e.g. GWSF and SFHA
* Circulation of information to partner organisations, community groups, and other stakeholders, local training and educational establishments, other voluntary organisations and social enterprises
* Contact by letter with all RHA shareholding members

 In each case enquiries should be invited from interested individuals.

4.2 The process of advertising may be supplemented by personal approaches from members of the management committee and senior staff. Notice should be given of intention to do this at a committee meeting, so that committee members’ endorsement can be given to such an approach. If the approach is positive, contact details should be passed to the Senior Officer.

4.3 The advertisement, or other communication, should highlight the particular skills and areas of experience where gaps have been identified, and where diversity is lacking, and will encourage applications from under-represented groups.

4.4 Everyone who enquires will be issued with a recruitment pack, consisting of the following:

* Information on the background and history of RHA
* Explanatory information on the process of becoming a committee member, and the likely time commitment involved
* Committee member role description
* A description of the skills, knowledge and other qualities sought
* An eligibility checklist
* Application form, which asks for information on the areas of skills, knowledge and experience which the applicant can offer, and for personal information to allow equal opportunities monitoring

4.5 The committee will appoint a Recruitment Panel to consider applications and make recommendations on appointment back to the management committee. The Panel will not exceed three management committee members (one of whom will normally be the Chair). The Senior Officer will provide support and advice (if required) to the Panel.

4.6 Completed application forms and eligibility checklists will be sent to RHA’s office, and the Senior Officer will check the applications with a view to confirming eligibility. Any ineligible applications will be notified to the Panel.

4.7 All eligible applicants will normally be invited to attend an informal meeting / interview with the Panel. If a high number of applicants makes this impractical, the Panel will hold a short-listing meeting to identify the most promising candidates.

4.8 The purpose of the meeting will be to:

* Confirm the applicant’s suitability to become a member of the management committee.
* Establish the applicant’s understanding of the role of committee members, and willingness to commit to the likely time and other requirements.
* Establish the potential contribution likely to be made by the applicant, in the light of the skills, knowledge and experience sought by RHA.
* Answer any questions from the applicant.
* Explain the potential benefits of having an experienced committee member supporting and mentoring the applicant, if successful.

4.9 Successful applicants will be informed that they are to be recommended to committee for appointment. As part of the process of formalisation, they will be first invited to attend a meeting of the management committee as observers.

**5. Election and appointment of committee members**

5.1 RHA’s Rules identify three possible routes to management committee membership:

* Election of a shareholding member of the association at an Annual General Meeting.
* Appointment by the management committee to fill a “casual vacancy” which occurs when an elected committee member leaves the committee between Annual General Meetings.
* Co-option by the management committee of one or more suitable people to fill any gaps between the actual number of committee members and the total number permitted by the Rules (currently 15).

5.2 RHA’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) is normally held in the second half of September, at least 3 weeks after the date of the August management committee meeting. A report will normally be submitted about the forthcoming AGM to the August committee meeting by the Senior Officer on behalf of the Secretary detailing, amongst other things:

* which elected committee members are scheduled to retire by rotation (one third of the longest-standing members since their last election at an AGM must stand down, but can be automatically re-nominated for election at the forthcoming AGM);
* whether any members who have filled casual vacancies during the year, or been co-opted – who must all stand down at the AGM - wish to be nominated for election as full members at the AGM;
* whether any committee members with more than 9 years’ consecutive service who are retiring by rotation but wish to stand for re-election are to be permitted by the committee to do so.

5.3 If the timings of the Annual Review of Skills, Knowledge, Diversity and Objectivity, and of the conducting of any necessary committee recruitment process, have been as set out in Section 3 above, then the outcome of any recruitment exercise should be ready to be reported to the August committee meeting, and any successful applicants can be asked to attend this meeting as observers. Any application for shareholding membership by any successful applicant who is not already a shareholding member can also be processed at this meeting. The management committee can then note which existing committee members (whether full members, co-optees or those filling casual vacancies) have decided to be re-nominated for election, and make formal decisions about which newly recruited members to nominate, also as full members, at the forthcoming AGM.

5.4 It would be hoped that any shareholding members who have aspirations to become a committee member would respond to the communication to all such members made as part of the main annual recruitment process. However, the Rules provide for arrangements for the seeking and receiving of nominations from shareholding members for election to the committee at each AGM, and these must be complied with.

5.5 These arrangements are set out in Rule 40.2. Nominations must be in writing, give the full name, address and occupation of the shareholding member being nominated, and include a signed statement that they are eligible to become a committee member, and are willing to do so. Any such nomination forms must be received at RHA’s registered office at least 7 days before the AGM.

5.6 A package of information will be sent out to all shareholding members at least 3 weeks before the AGM, including a nomination form, but also a summarised version of the key information sent out to interested parties as part of the standard recruitment process, particularly highlighting the skills, experience, etc. that RHA is currently seeking from prospective members.

5.7 On receipt of any such nominations, an attempt will be made to arrange an informal meeting between the nominee, the Chair and one other committee member before the AGM takes place. The content and purpose of this meeting will be the same as that outlined in the standard recruitment process at paragraph 4.8 above.

5.8 After the meeting the nominee may be given the opportunity to withdraw their nomination, should they wish to do so. However, RHA has no powers or authority to compel any nominee to withdraw, even if they are unwilling to attend the informal meeting, unless they are ineligible to stand.

5.9 The committee can decide at any other stage of the year to recruit for co-option, or to fill a casual vacancy, if the circumstances require it. The process for recruitment will always be as set out in Section4, above.

5.10 When appointment of a new committee member has been confirmed, either at an AGM, or by resolution of the management committee, a letter of appointment will be issued setting out certain commitments which must be fulfilled by the new committee member. This includes the signing of RHA’s Code of Conduct for governing body members as evidence of a commitment to act by and uphold its requirements, and this must be done before a new member can take up their duties as a committee member, and repeated annually after each AGM. The newly appointed committee member will be asked to counter-sign the letter of appointment by way of indicating their commitment to honouring its requirements.

**6. AGM election process**

6.1 The Rules require that notice of an AGM, including a description of the business to be conducted at the meeting, is issued to all shareholding members at least 14 days before the date of the meeting.

6.2 At this stage, because nominations can be received up to 7 days before the AGM, the names of all eligible nominees for election will not be finalised until after the AGM notice is sent out.

6.3 A final set of papers for the AGM, including details of all eligible nominees, will be prepared in time to be issued immediately prior to the meeting. Where it is clear that there are more nominees than places available on the committee, and that a contested election must take place, some further information about each nominee (the content of which should be agreed in advance with the nominee) will be included with the final papers.

6.4 At an AGM where there is a contested election, the Chair may give each nominee the opportunity to make a short, time-limited statement to the meeting in support of their nomination.

6.5 All contested elections will be decided by a secret ballot.