

Board Member Job Description

Horizon was established in 1988 with a mission of providing and managing integrated housing for disabled people, particularly wheelchair users. In 2009, we joined Link group, a positive step taken to increase our capacity to improve services for tenants, opportunities for staff and to work with and influence others in providing homes and which support and sustain independent living for disabled and older people.

We are committed and passionate about people being able to live full and independent lives in a home and inclusive environment that meets their needs. As a result, we provide accessible, affordable houses and services owning and managing 860 properties across 12 Scottish local authorities.

A partner in Link Group, our voluntary Board always works in the best interests of our tenants and everyone who uses our services, championing the need for accessible services and independent living to support people who have a range of different needs. Quite simply – we need many more homes suitably designed for **ALL** needs and we want those who are equally passionate to join us.

Board members' key responsibilities:

1. ensuring Horizon maintains and focuses on its clear vision, mission and strategic direction
2. being responsible for performance and supporting the culture of the organization
3. making sure we comply with all our legal and regulatory requirements
4. acting as guardians of Horizon's assets
5. ensuring Horizon's governance is of the highest standard, including understanding and managing its financial health, viability and risks.
6. supporting a culture of inclusion, innovation, and creative thinking

Main duties:

- 1. Working as part of the Governing Body:**
 - 1.1 Making sure Horizon complies with all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements, abides by its Rules and meets standards laid down by the Scottish Housing Regulator and other relevant bodies including Link.

- 1.2 Provide **collective leadership** with the Chief Executive Officer and other senior staff to support and deliver Horizon's vision, mission and strategic plan, making sure these are commonly understood by Board members and staff.
 - 1.3 Make sure the **business, operational and other plans and policies support the vision**, mission and strategic priorities and are regularly reviewed, and measured against agreed targets.
 - 1.4 Make sure there are effective mechanisms **for listening to and engaging with tenants** and other service users and gathering their views, and that these are considered regularly by the Board.
 - 1.5 Effectively **control of Horizon's financial affairs**, making sure they are not open to abuse by unscrupulous associates, employees or volunteers; and that the systems of control are rigorous and constantly maintained through regular evaluation and improvement.
 - 1.6 Make sure **the major risks** to which Horizon is exposed are managed effectively and reviewed annually.
 - 1.7 Ensure Horizon has an **appropriate governance structure** which reflects its size/complexity, stage of development, and its charitable objects, and it enables Board members to fulfil their responsibilities.
 - 1.8 Make sure Horizon **Board maintains the balance of skills, experience and diversity** to govern Horizon well, and has access to relevant external professional advice and expertise.
 - 1.9 Reflect annually on the **Board's performance** and your own performance as a trustee.
 - 1.10 Make sure there is a systematic, **open and fair procedure for the recruitment** or co-option of Board members.
 - 1.11 Ensure there are **succession plans** for the Chair and the Chief Executive.
 - 1.12 Make sure major decisions and board policies are made by the **trustees acting collectively**.
 - 1.13 Act reasonably, prudently and collectively in all matters relating to Horizon and **always to act in the interests of the Association**.
 - 1.14 In conjunction with Link's Chief Executive, appoint the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), agree his/her terms and conditions and hold him/her to account for Horizon's management and administration and make sure he/she receives regular constructive feedback on performance in managing the organisation and achieving targets or objectives.
- 2. Working as an individual:**
- 2.1 **Act with personal integrity** at all times, declaring any interests, abiding by our Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members, Rules and standing orders, and maintaining the interests and good name of Horizon.

- 2.2 Treat all information gained by virtue of being a governing body member in **strictest confidence while promoting an ethos of openness and accountability.**
- 2.3 Abide by and promote Horizon's commitment to **equality and diversity.**
- 2.4 **Attend Board and Sub-committee meetings**, participating in discussions and decision-making and abiding by the decisions made.
- 2.5 **Read all reports and papers in advance of meetings** and to raise questions about any areas which require clarification or further information.
- 2.6 **Participate in individual and collective development and training** of Board members and to otherwise keep abreast of general policy developments related to the Association's work.
- 2.7 **Promote the Association's objectives, work and good name.**
- 2.8 **Support all decisions taken by the Board.**
- 2.9 **Reflect annually on your own performance** as a Board member
- 2.10 Abide by the **code of conduct for Board members.**

Essential skills and competencies

- Commitment to equality and diversity
- Understanding of and commitment to Horizon's purpose and values
- Strategic thinking
- Working together
- Good verbal communication
- Problem solving and reasoning
- Ability to challenge objectively and constructively
- Self aware
- Ability to make the time commitment to attend and contribute to Board meetings

These are the personal qualities and competencies required from all Board members.

Desirable skills, experience and competencies

(areas where we have current gaps or wish to boost the skills of the current Board are highlighted below.)

- Strategic social care and/or health care sector experience
- Commercial and business skills
- Marketing and media/influencing policy and practice
- Experience and perspective of being a social housing tenant or sharing owner
- Financial reporting and governance
- Legal skills, experience
- Equalities and human rights
- Social enterprise and investment

Time commitment and practical considerations

We estimate an average monthly commitment by Board members of 6 hours, plus potential travel time to Board or Sub Committee meetings for those not held virtually.

- The Board meets around eight times per annum, with ordinary Board meetings are being held online at the moment and at other times in our Livingston office. We meet at 10am
- The Audit, Finance & Risk Sub-Committee meets four times per annum at 10 am.
- The Employment Sub-Committee meets approximately three times per annum at time to suit members.
- In addition, Board members are expected to attend the AGM, extraordinary or special meetings and annual strategy and governance development events.

In summary:

Attendance at up to 8 Board meetings per annum, including special meetings	2 – 2.5 hrs per meeting
Reading and preparation for Board meetings	Approx 2 hrs each meeting
Audit Sub-Committee (up to 7 Board members)	Approx 2 hrs per meeting
Employment Su-Committee (up to 5 members)	Approx 1 hour per meeting
Reading and preparation for sub-committee meetings	0.5 - 2 hrs per meeting
Annual strategy and governance development events	1 - 2 days
Attendance at the AGM	2-3 hrs
Attendance at in-house information and briefing sessions	1 hr per session, held after some Board meetings
Other training and conference attendance (optional)	1 - 2 days per annum

Reimbursement

These positions are voluntary but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed quickly, including travel, childcare or care of dependent relatives.

Comments from our current Board Members

There are many things beyond financial reimbursement to be gained from being a Board Member. Core to these is a sense of giving something back and using your own personal

and individual skills and knowledge to try and contribute towards helping people improve their lives.

Some of our current Board members have **described what motivates them to remain involved** as a Board member. Their feedback includes:

“...benefit from feeling that I am doing something of value connected to something that I believe in.”

“...I have had opportunities for personal and professional training and development.”

“It is good to have the chance to attend events and conferences and to share experiences with others.”

“I have gained confidence and knowledge that I carry forward into other aspects of my life and work.”

June 2020

Horizon Housing Association Limited is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, Registered Number: 1827 R(S), Registered Office: Leving House, Fairbairn Place, Livingston, EH54 6TN. It is a Charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number: SC011534; a Registered Social Landlord with the Scottish Housing Regulator, Registration Number: HAL 128; and registered as a Property Factor Id: PF000385. Part of the (c) Link group 2017.

