

COPPERWORKS HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD



COMMITTEE INDUCTION POLICY

Date Approved: September 2018

Next Review Date: September 2021

Committee Induction Policy

1. Purpose

It can be daunting for new Committee members when they join the Management Committee. In order for those members to fully contribute to the work of the Management Committee and not be overwhelmed by the amount there is to learn about the association, it is important that new members are welcomed, supported, provided with relevant information and have comprehensive induction training.

2. Background

2.1 New Committee members join the Committee following election, appointment or co-option. Prior to joining they are likely to have some understanding of the association and its activities, of its Management Committee and/or aspects of its governance. However, new members are likely to be unfamiliar with the detail, complexity and expectations of being a Management Committee member. They may well be uncertain and apprehensive and have questions about the association, their role and responsibilities. Copperworks Housing Association is committed to supporting its new members in order that they can contribute effectively, meet the expectations of being a Committee member and bring value to the work of the association.

2.2 New Committee members need time to settle in to the Committee, get familiar with procedures and better understand the governance and activities of the association. It is important that new members are supported through this process and the association recognises everyone learns in different ways and at different speeds, depending on their previous experience and strengths. The association will ensure that induction is phased over a period of up to a year after becoming a Committee member; the induction will then be complete. Reviews will take place over the induction period to ensure that Committee members feel supported, that training needs have been identified, that they have benefited from training opportunities and are able to contribute at the level required.

3. Induction process

3.1 The induction process will help ensure new Committee members:

- Become familiar with their new role and responsibilities
- Learn how the association operates and the different roles and responsibilities of staff and committee
- Get to know their colleagues on the committee as well as the senior staff
- Develop an understanding of the operating environment
- Understand the main challenges facing the association and its strategic objectives

- Become familiar with the key organisations that are there to support Associations.

The induction process for new Committee members will involve:

3.2 Initial meeting with Chairperson and Director

Following their election / appointment / co-option, new members will be invited to a meeting with the Chairperson and Director. This meeting will take place before the new member attends their first Committee meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to welcome the new Committee member. The Induction process will be discussed and the first part of the Induction Pack (see Appendix 1 for contents) will be provided and briefly explained, including talking about the association and its activities; the Management Committee and its role; the role and responsibility of Committee members; the role of staff, particularly senior staff. It will also introduce the new member to the standards expected of the association and its Committee members. The Code of Conduct will be explained and the new member will be required to sign it. Any interests that could overlap or conflict with those of Copperworks Housing Association will be identified and recorded in the formal Register. The new Committee member will be introduced to the concept of mentoring and offered the support of an experienced member as mentor.

3.3 Papers for the first Management Committee meeting

The new Committee member will be offered the opportunity to talk through the papers for their first Committee meeting with the Director in order that they understand what's in them and identify any initial questions.

3.4 Attending the first Management Committee meeting

When attending their first Committee meeting 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 proved 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.

3.5 Support and Mentoring

New Committee members will be offered the support of an experienced Committee member to act as a mentor who will help the new member settle in and support them through their first year. The Committee member acting as mentor, who will have been provided with clear guidelines to help them in that role, will meet regularly with the new Committee member to provide support, advice, guidance and information on aspects of the association's work.

3.6 Review meeting – 1

After their first Management Committee meeting, the new Committee member will meet with the Chairperson, the Director and the supporting member (if

appropriate). The focus of that meeting is to ensure the new Committee member understands the information contained in the first part of the Induction Pack and to deal with any questions they may have on the Pack or the first Committee meeting. The new Committee member will be provided with the second part of the Induction Pack which will be explained and discussed (see Appendix 1 for contents).

3.7 Skills audit and Personal Development Plan

After attending their second Management Committee meeting, the new Committee member will be given a learning & development self-assessment form as used at appraisals to complete, this will be based on the skills etc. required by the association as described in the recruitment pack. This will form the basis of discussion at a meeting with the Chief Executive which shall take place before the new Committee member attends their third meeting. The meeting will discuss the Committee member's experience, skills and other qualities they bring to the association and identify any training and/or development they may require. This will be used to inform the preparation of a Personal Development Plan for the new Committee member, setting out the training and development priorities for the following year. This will take the same form as the Personal Development Plans prepared for every Committee member as part of Copperworks Committee member Development Plan, and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

3.8 Introductory training & development

Within six months of joining the Committee, the new member will be expected to undertake training on the Roles & Responsibilities of being a Committee member and introductory sessions on housing associations, finance, housing management & maintenance. These may be run in-house, by an external organisation or through e-learning.

3.9 Committee member Development Plan

The new member will be expected to take part in any training identified in the Development Plan. This will be for the whole Committee and is designed to develop knowledge and understanding and the effectiveness of the Committee. The new member will be invited to participate in any Committee review and planning events which take place during the year.

3.10 Review meeting – 2

After six months there will be a second review meeting with the new Committee member, the Chairperson, the Director and the supporting member (if appropriate). The focus of this meeting is to provide support, deal with any concerns, answer any questions arising from the second part of the Induction Pack, to make sure the new member understands their role as a Committee member and to discuss any training the new member has been on. At this point the third part of the Induction Pack will be provided and explained (see Appendix 1 for contents).

3.11 Meetings with staff

In order to help the new Committee member understand the work and structure of the association, meetings with senior staff will be organised at the association's office. As well as providing the new member with information and the opportunity to ask questions, they will be given a tour of the office and introduced to staff in the various sections / departments.

3.12 Visits to the housing stock

Ideally within the first month and certainly before the end of three months, new Committee members will be provided with the opportunity to visit the association's housing stock (this may be with other Committee members). This will help the new Committee member gain a better understanding of the stock, some of the issues faced by the association and of their responsibility in ensuring tenants and other service users receive quality services. Where possible the new members will be introduced to tenants and other service users to hear first-hand their experience of the area, their homes and of the association.

3.13 Review meeting – 3

At the end of the first year, a third review meeting will take place with the Chairperson, Director, the supporting member (if appropriate) and the new Committee member. This will:

- Review the Induction process and the information provided
- Review the contribution of the new Committee member over the year at Committee and any other meetings
- Discuss the relationships between the new member, other Committee members and senior staff
- Review any training / development carried out over the year
- Review the Personal Development Plan and roll it forward for the following year
- Review the support and mentoring arrangements
- Identify any further learning, development and training needs
- Answer any further questions.

This is likely to form part of the committee member's first annual individual appraisal and, at this point, the induction programme can be drawn to a close.

Appendix 1

Induction Pack

Part 1

- Committee member Role and Responsibilities
- Committee member Code of Conduct
- Remit of Management Committee and Sub-Committees
- Standing Orders
- Meeting Calendar
- Committee Contact Details
- Business Plan
- Annual Report
- Performance Information (Annual Report to Tenants; SHR Landlord Report)
- Staff Organisation Chart
- Policy on Committee member Induction
- Two most recent newsletters
- Minutes of previous two Committee meetings
- Jargon Busters (EVH)

Part 2

- Protocol for declaring interests and managing conflicts of interest
- Policy on Committee Member Expenses (and Forms)
- Policy on Committee Member Development and Support
- Policy on Entitlements Payments and Benefits
- CHA Rules
- Policy on Association Membership
- Policy on Equalities and Diversity

Part 3

- Committee Handbook (which may be electronic) containing all governance documentation and access to operational policies, to replace the Induction Pack, but highlighting;
- Policy on Health and Safety
- Policy on Information Disclosure

- Detection of Fraud and anti-bribery and corruption Policy
- Policy on Whistle Blowing
- Donations Policy
- Disaster Recovery Policy
- Policy on Risk Management
- Policy on Conference Attendance