

Example: Succession Plan for Customer groups

Amend to suit!



S Net April 2015

1. Introduction

The Panel has a responsibility to lead on XXXXX and it is therefore crucial that Panel members have the right skills, knowledge and behaviours for today's activities and also for future changes and challenges. The Panel acknowledges that the skills, knowledge and experience required to lead will change in response to the regulator, the landlord's corporate plan and risk management plans.

This plan sets out the actions necessary to retain, develop and recruit Panel members and by reviewing the plan each year we can be assured that when we recruit we know what the Panel requirements are, what course of action we plan to take, when actions will be taken and how.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Succession Plan is to:

- a) Ensure that we take a strategic approach to continuity
- b) Demonstrates how we will plan for the future when dealing with Panel member recruitment, retention and development
- c) Ensure that effective and efficient governance of the Panel is assured at all times through the panel and its members
- d) Deliver this in such a way to support the continued passion and commitment for tenant empowerment, involvement and consultation
- e) Support the landlords prosperity objectives in the Corporate Plan
- f) Support the panel and the involvement team to bring forward interested residents to join their Panel and other Panels to prepare them for a future in volunteering

3 Succession objectives.

- a) To possess the right skills, knowledge and behaviours to enable the Panel to carry out its role effectively. This relates to annual appraisal and continued development of Panel members and focussed recruitment addressing any skills and representation gaps. It also relates to our annual skills audit collectively of the Panel – our Panel effectiveness review.
- b) The Panel is representative of the customers and communities it serves. This demonstrates our commitment to customers and the neighbourhoods where they live in all that we do.
- c) Existing and potential Panel Members receive appropriate learning and development. This recognises that additional skills might be required for panel members and demonstrates the commitment of the panel to providing the team and individual development opportunities.
- d) Raise the profile of the Panel in the organisation, in both its importance for the future of the customer involvement and the support it can bring to improving landlord services. This recognises the need to stimulate interest in people wanting to put themselves forward for panel membership, for which training will be funded and support will be given
- e) Raise the profile of Panel through open and accountable processes for recruitment and resourcing in neighbourhoods to promote and encourage interest in future Panel Membership.

4 Why Succession Planning is Important

As our environment changes, the panel will need to change to meet new challenges. An effective Panel is key to the success of customer input and challenge.

It can also support the landlord's Board to be assured that service delivery is being challenged by customers and plans for improvement are being agreed to increase overall customer satisfaction with services.

The Panel must have the skills, knowledge, experience, and drive to lead the strategic delivery assurance and critical friend challenge of the organisation's mission and objectives.

To deliver our mission and objectives, we need to be well run and well managed. The panel must be led by a Panel chair and Panel members who understand its assurance and challenge responsibilities and demonstrates its commitment to achievement through actions.

The Board has ultimate responsibility for setting the overall strategic direction of the organisation. The Board's central role is to direct the landlords work and to make decisions that are in the best interests of the organisation and its current and future customers.

The Panel therefore needs the right people and they need support to retain good members and to continually develop the members as individuals and as a panel.

The landlord will encourage, identify and encourage support and membership for new panel members from staff to enable them to contribute to the work of the Panel. The Panel will work with the staff to identify and advertise openly the potential for Panel nominations, and provide the funding to enable the fulfilment of skills. This will happen as a matter of course, but in particular more urgently when there are imminent retirements, or where we can foresee a member is in their last term of office.

The Panel and the landlord have a determination to have a panel that is representative of the stakeholders and has a high level of knowledge and awareness of local issues that affect our diverse communities.

The Panel seeks to maintain an appropriate balance of skills and experience and ensure there is refreshed thinking and challenge on the panel to avoid the unhelpful entrenchment of practices. Succession planning offers an opportunity to address any under-representation in the panel's diversity or skills.

The lead customer involvement officer will undertake the initial skills audit with the Chair of the panel and will review the optimal panel composition annually and discuss this with the panel.

Each year the Panel will then follow this with a review of panel effectiveness

This matter will be handled sensitively for those members due for re-election and retirement who will be supported by the Chair and the lead officer

Once skill gaps are identified, recruitment will start in **month** each year, enabling training and development up to interviews in **month** each year and buddying and further training before the interview takes place.

A Committee of the Panel along with members from the staff/board will be identified to oversee preparations for succession and recruitment ensuring the information is available for the Panel to make decisions in a timely manner.

5. Board Development

We will make sure that our Panel is equipped with sufficient expertise and knowledge to exercise capable leadership. We are committed to developing the knowledge and capability of our panel members and those who are considering a position on the panel

Panel members will undergo a comprehensive induction programme, which includes personal development in their roles and responsibilities. The Panel has an annual learning and development plan and the landlord will deliver training to meet the needs of the individual.

The panel has a Buddy Scheme in place for new board members through existing members and outgoing members.

Panel member appraisal is an integral part of succession planning. This is a valuable tool in reviewing and monitoring the performance of individual members and the Panel as a whole. The appraisal process is carried out every other year by the Chair of the Board, and in between these times by an independent external person. We value the challenge that an external perspective can bring.

The Chair of the Panel is appraised every other year by a panel of board members made up of the vice chair and another member, along with the staff member who is the landlords representative supporting the panel.

6. Succession planning and performance

The terms of reference (TOR) for the Panel, encourage membership similar to that of the Board – with no more than 2 x 3 year term of office.

Any dissatisfaction with the performance of the panel member will be communicated to the Panel chair and lead officer and dealt with through performance review. Such discussions might lead to unplanned removal and replacement of that representative and will be supported through immediate succession planning by the landlord.

The renewal in the TOR plan benefits the panel and the landlord because there is a level of continuity and consistency within the panel at all times yet it provides an opportunity to refresh the panel with people who can bring new ideas, knowledge, skills and experience.

Panel members who are standing down can put themselves forward for re-appointment, if they are eligible to do so within the 6 year rule.

It is the Chair's responsibility to lead the panel and therefore it is essential that the Chair has the right skills, knowledge and behaviours to lead the panel in accordance with its purpose as outlined in the TOR/constitution.

The Chair is appointed by Panel annually at a meeting through secret ballot, which follows a short 5 minutes presentation of what the potential chair can offer the group if he/she is appointed.

7. Supporting refreshment and renewal of Panel

Whilst the contribution of experienced panel members is vital, the panel also need new members who can provide an independent challenge to long standing practices and thinking.

When a panel member has served a total of 6 years, they will be subject to an annual term of office for up to a maximum of 3 years.

During the 3 years of annual review, succession planning will begin and the panel member may be asked to stand down from the panel if a suitable replacement is trained and able to take their place from years 6 to 9.

The lead officer for the panel from the Customer Involvement team will support the panel in the refreshment and renewal of members.

8. Recruitment

Panel recruitment will normally take place as a result of annual retirements, resignations [casual vacancy] or as part of succession planning.

Recruitment may also be necessary where the Panel is of the opinion that there is under-representation from specific groups or members with specific skills, knowledge or experience which could be co-opted to the panel.

In all cases a Role Description/Person Specification will be prepared which will identify the specific skills etc that have been identified/agreed.

The process adopted will include an interview and at all times will be transparent, rigorous and equitable.

The recruitment Panel will include the Chair and/or Vice-Chair/Co-ordinators and one other panel member and the customer involvement manager from the landlord.

The Panel will have full delegated authority to carry out the selection process and make the appointment.

The lead officer from the customer involvement team will support the panel at the interview but will not be able to cast a vote on recruitment.

For unplanned retirements recruitment will begin within 1 month from the vacancy occurring and will begin in the notice period, during which time, the panel may wish to invite a suitable person to be co-opted onto the panel to fill that skill/local knowledge gap.

The landlord will support this, through their lead officer for the panel by actively seeking short courses; offering bespoke training; offering access to training programme and qualifications if required.

As with all panel members, they will act only in the interests of the panel and will set any aside personal interests in items being discussed.

If the panel is unable to appoint, they will provide feedback. Additional support and training might be offered for unsuccessful applicants to fill the existing and future vacancies.

The vacancy will remain empty until the skills level required for Panel has been filled.

Prospective members will be required to complete an Application Form, Equal Opportunities monitoring form and skills self-assessment form should they wish to pursue their membership of the Panel

Prospective members will be invited to attend a Panel meeting as observer and will be offered the opportunity to attend training/briefing sessions on the role of a panel member before an interview for acceptance.

9. Induction

Members come with different experiences and bring different skills. This might require some specialist training to enable the new members to contribute to discussions and decisions taken.

The new member will be expected to attend some compulsory training shortly after they have been appointed to the position including:

- ✓ How the landlord works and the relationship with customers
- ✓ The way the panel works and previous outcomes and outputs from the panel
- ✓ Performance management

- ✓ Regulation and the law relating to the work of this panel
- ✓ Equality and Diversity in this context
- ✓ Data protection in this context
- ✓ The external policy environment as it relates to the functions of the panel

This same training will be offered to future potential panel members if they come forward early enough for the next round of recruitment and a course is already planned.

Existing members may attend this training, either on a compulsory or optional - this will be decided on the annual review of effectiveness.

The design and delivery of the induction programme (and additional training) will be coordinated between the chair and the lead officer for the panel.

10. Learning and development

Individual skills are subject to annual appraisal and individual personal development planning.

Collective skills are subject to a review of skills required by the panel each year and consider the skills needed to deliver the purpose of the panel and to manage the tasks agreed for the year ahead.

Collective skill gaps are delivered through a programme of group and individual training.

Each panel member will have an individual development plan. The panel will set aside an annual training budget and will monitor the effectiveness of its expenditure and monitor its expenditure through the lead officer for the panel.

Group training is put together from the annual effectiveness review, any multiple requests through individual training needs identified, or new and emerging regulatory or legal requirements in the housing sector. This will include updates to previous training, including annual data protection and equality training.

Attendance of college courses, visits to other organisations on topics relevant to the group as identified through skills gaps will be supported to enable members to make the more effective contribution.

Opportunities for training will be a tool used to attract new and retain the skills required on the panel and will link to inclusion strategies of the landlord.

The lead officer for the panel will work with the Chair to suggest an Annual training and development programme.

The lead officer for the panel will also source individual training and agree dates with specific Board Members to attend that training.

11. Annual Succession Action Plan

An annual action plan will set out the issues that have to be considered to implement this policy and the actions to be followed in relation retention, renewal, replacement and appropriate challenge by panel members to enable the panel to deliver their purpose.

Annual Skills audits will occur in **January** of the panel as a whole; individual appraisal in **February** and collective pane effectiveness review in **March** will all determine the actions required.