Board and Committee Training & Development Policy

Policy Statement
This document describes our arrangements for providing the training and development required by Board Members, to equip and enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

We are committed to ensuring excellent standards of governance throughout OVHA, and in particular to implementing the principles outlined in our Rules, Code of Conduct for Board Members, and the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards.

We recognise that, while several factors will contribute to achieving this, a very important one is the training and development of our Board Members. For further details see the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards.

Legal & Regulatory Framework
This policy complies with Regulatory Standard 6 in relation to the governing body and senior officers having the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.

Scope
This policy applies to all members of the Board of Management of OVHA, including our Subsidiaries groups. It sets out the arrangements for training and development to ensure Board Members are equipped to fulfil their duties in line with the OVHA Rules, the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management, and sector best practice as outlined by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA).

This policy covers all aspects of Board Member training and development, including:
- Induction for new Board Members and co-optees
- Ongoing training and development for all Board Members
- Annual skills and knowledge assessments
- Succession planning and performance review processes

Roles & Responsibilities
The Chief Executive (CEO) is responsible for ensuring Board Members receive adequate induction training and ongoing development. The Chair of the Board plays a pivotal role in leading the Board's development, conducting annual appraisals for Board Members, and ensuring that training needs are identified and addressed.

Board Members are responsible for:
- Actively participating in all relevant training and development opportunities
- Engaging in annual performance reviews
- Support a culture of continuous improvement and shared learning.

The Corporate Support Manager is responsible for maintaining accurate records of Board Member training, supporting the administration of training programmes, and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, including the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

All parties are expected to work collaboratively to ensure the Board maintains the skills, knowledge, and diversity required to deliver effective governance and leadership for OVHA.

Related Policies, Procedures & Documentation

- Board Members Code of Conduct
- Membership of the Association Policy
- Standing Orders Policy
- Entitlements, Payments & Benefits Policy
- Openness and Confidentiality Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Board Members Expenses
- Health and Safety Policy
- OVHA Rules
- OVHA Vision, Mission & Values
- Board Appraisal Policy

Training and Development for Board Members

Training and development will include the following:

- Initial effective induction training following a formal and transparent process for election, appointment and recruitment to the Board, to enable Board Members to exercise their governance responsibilities
- Support and mentoring from an experienced Board Member during a new Member's first 6 months (and longer if required)
- Individual and collective training and development plans to reflect training and ongoing development needs
- An annual review of the collective Board of Management skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity needed to provide capable leadership, control and constructive challenge to achieve OVHA purpose, deliver good service user and tenant outcomes, and manage our affairs
- An annual appraisal for each Board Member

Identifying Training Needs

All new Board Members will receive induction training which will follow broadly the same pattern for each person but may be amended if required to suit the needs and/or experience of the new Member. At the end of each induction programme the Chair and CEO will discuss additional training needs with the new Board Member and where appropriate draw up an ongoing training and development programme for the remainder of that year.

At least once each year the Board of Management will assess the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity it needs to provide capable leadership, control and constructive challenge to achieve OVHA purpose, deliver good, supported person and tenant outcomes, and manage OVHA affairs. This assessment will include consideration of what is contributed by Board Members by way of annual performance reviews.

The information provided through this assessment will be used by the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Chair, to identify appropriate training and development opportunities both for individual Members and for the Board as a whole

General Principles

All Board Members are expected to make a commitment to participating in relevant ongoing training and development opportunities. As part of our overall culture of continuous improvement and development, and in order to meet regulatory expectations.

Board Members are expected to participate in annual performance reviews of their own skills, knowledge

and performance, and to request additional support and training when required.

Nine Year Rule
The Board is required to satisfy itself that any Board Member, that is seeking re-election to the Board, having completed service as a Board Member for a continuous period In excess of nine years, can demonstrate their continuing effectiveness. The ongoing identification of training needs and achievements of identified outcomes will provide evidence to support with the meeting of this requirement.

Induction Training
New Board Members will receive an Induction Pack comprising:

- OVHA Rules
- Governance documents, including, but not necessarily confined to:
  - Organisational structure chart
  - Current Business Plan
  - Schedule of dates for the current year's Board meetings and meetings of any Sub-Committees

An induction programme will be delivered to each new member as agreed by the Chair and CEO and in agreement with the new Board Member. The programme will include, but not restricted to:

- An introduction to the role and responsibilities of a Board Member
- A review of the Board Members Code of Governance and Code of Conduct
- OVHA aims and values
- An overview of OVHA operations and performance
- An overview of the roles of the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator, and the Health and Safety Executive
- An introduction to OVHA finances and the financial information produced for the Board
- Equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights, as they apply to OVHA activities
- OVHA role and responsibilities as a landlord
- OVHA role and responsibilities as an employer, together with introductions to key staff (CEO and Management Team) and an overview of the communications process between Board Members and staff

The aim will be that by the end of the induction programme the new Board Member has gained a broad understanding in these areas, plus knowledge of what is required of OVHA and of the remit of senior staff. Additional items may be included, either at the request of the new Board Member, or because it is recognised by the Chair or CEO that the subject(s) would be beneficial.

The new Board Member will review their progress with and experience of the induction programme at regular intervals, with the Chair and/or CEO. The Chief Executive will ensure that the results of any reviews feed into the production of future programmes, as appropriate.

Ongoing Training & Development Requirements
The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for identifying suitable conferences, courses, seminars etc. to meet the identified training needs of individual Board Members. Other members of the Executive and Management Team may also suggest suitable training opportunities and Board Members themselves will be expected to look out for information on suitable events.

All decisions in relation to ongoing training and development will be influenced and informed by the outcome of Board Members' inductions, annual performance reviews and through discussion and agreement with the Chair and CEO. All bookings for conferences, seminars etc. and any related travel and accommodation arrangements will be handled by the Corporate Support Team.

Training and development opportunities will cater for a range of preferred learning styles and individual abilities. We encourage a culture of 'shared learning' and expect Board Members to provide brief reports on conferences, seminars and other training events attended, sharing information that is relevant to OVHA and how other organisations are dealing with the challenges we are currently facing. Members will also be expected to make any conference materials etc. received available to other Board Members.

Annual Board Members Skills & Knowledge Assessments, Succession Planning and Performance Reviews
The board appraisal process is designed to ensure compliance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Standards of Governance and Financial Management,

The board appraisal will apply to all Board members, including the Chair and will be undertaken annually.

The appraisals will focus on individual contributions, skills, adherence to the Code of Conduct, and identifying training needs. The appraisals will be carried out annually and include self-assessment questionnaires and one-to-one discussions with the Chair, CEO or appointed consultant, if required.

The key aspects of the Board appraisal are:

- To improve organisational performance, ensure the board has the necessary skills, and satisfy regulatory requirements.
- Involves a self-assessment questionnaire completed by each Board member, where each member reflects on their individual contribution, training needs, and the overall effectiveness of the board.
- Assess their individual performance against specific role descriptions, person specifications, and the Board Member Code of Conduct.
- The reviews will normally be discussed between the individual Board member and the Chair, with assistance from an external consultant if required.
- The collective results will be used to inform training and development plans.
- Provide a view and assessment of the performance of the Chair. The Chair's performance will be based on feedback and assessment questionnaires completed by individual Board Members and will normally be reviewed by the Vice-Chair, and through a dedicated board-level discussion.
- Development of training plans,
- Identification of Board members abilities and aspirations in relation to succession planning in order to support, encourage and enhance their Board Members self-development in relation to ongoing effectiveness and in respect of succession planning.
- Identification of skills gaps and Board recruitment requirements to achieve the appropriate balance and composition of skills, knowledge and expertise on the Board.

Monitoring
The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Corporate Support Manager This includes maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of all Board Member training and development activities and ensuring that identified training needs are addressed in a timely manner. Where required, the Board will receive regular reports summarising training undertaken, outstanding requirements, and any emerging skills gaps.

The outcomes of annual Board Member appraisals and collective skills assessments will be used to inform future training plans and ensure compliance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

Policy Review
The policy will be formally reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, regulatory requirements, or best practice.

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