



**Muirhouse  
Housing  
Association**

**Role Description for a  
Governing Body Member  
September 2021**

## 1. Introduction

*“The Governing Body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.”* Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management, Standard 1<sup>1</sup>

- 1.1 This role description has been prepared to set out the responsibilities that are associated with being a governing body member (GBM) of Muirhouse Housing Association (MHA). It should be read in conjunction with MHA’s Rules and Standing Orders.
- 1.2 MHA is a Registered Social Landlord and a Scottish Charity. The role description reflects the principles of good governance and takes account of (and is compliant with) the expectations of the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management for Scottish RSLs and relevant guidance produced by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).
- 1.3 MHA encourages people who are interested in the Association’s work to consider seeking election as a GBM and is committed to ensuring broad representation from the communities that it serves. GBMs do not require ‘qualifications’ but, from time to time, we will seek to recruit people with specific skills and experience to add to or expand the existing range of skills and experience available to ensure that the governing body is able to fulfil its purpose. We have developed a profile for the GB which describes the skills, qualities and experience that we consider we need to lead and direct MHA and carry out an annual review of the skills that we have and those that we need to inform our recruitment activities.
- 1.4 This role description applies to all members of the governing body, whether elected or co-opted or appointed, new or experienced. It is subject to periodic review.

## 2. Primary Responsibilities

- 2.1 As a GBM your primary responsibilities are, with the other members of the governing body, to
  - Lead and direct MHA’s work
  - Promote and uphold MHA’s values
  - Set and monitor standards for service delivery and performance
  - Control MHA’s affairs and ensure compliance
  - Uphold MHA’s Code of Conduct and promote good governance

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Housing Regulator (February 2020) *Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland: Our Framework* available [here](#)

- 2.2 Responsibility for the operational implementation of MHA's strategies and policies is delegated to the Chief Officer.

### 3. Key Expectations

- 3.1 MHA has agreed a Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members which every member is required to sign on an annual basis and uphold throughout their membership of the governing body.
- 3.2 Each GBM must accept and share collective responsibility for the decisions properly taken by the governing body. Each GBM is expected to contribute actively and constructively to the work of MHA. All members are equally responsible in law for the decisions made.
- 3.3 Each member must always act only in the best interests of MHA and its customers, and not on behalf of any interest group, constituency or other organisation. GBMs cannot act in a personal capacity to benefit themselves or someone they know.

### 4. Main Tasks

- To contribute to formulating and regularly reviewing MHA's values, strategic aims, business objectives and performance standards
- To monitor MHA's performance
- To be informed about and ensure MHA's plans take account of the views of tenants and other customers
- To ensure that MHA operates within and be assured that MHA is compliant with the relevant legal requirements and regulatory frameworks
- To ensure that risks are realistically assessed and appropriately monitored and managed
- To ensure that MHA is adequately resourced to achieve its objectives and meet its obligations
- To oversee and ensure MHA's financial viability and business sustainability whilst maintaining rents at levels that are affordable to tenants
- To act, along with the other members of the governing body, as the employer of MHA's staff
- To ensure that MHA is open and accountable to tenants, regulators, funders and partners

## 5. Duties

- Act at all times in the best interests of MHA
- Accept collective responsibility for decisions, policies and strategies
- Attend and be well prepared for meetings of the governing body and sub-committees
- Contribute effectively to discussions and decision making
- Exercise objectivity, care and attention in fulfilling your role
- Take part in ongoing training and other learning opportunities
- Take part in an annual review of the effectiveness of MHA's governance and of your individual contribution to MHA's governance
- Maintain and develop your personal knowledge of relevant issues and the wider housing sector
- Represent MHA positively and effectively at all times, including in local communities and when attending meetings and other events
- Respect and maintain confidentiality of information
- Treat colleagues with respect and foster effective working relationships within the governing body and between the governing body and staff
- Be aware of and comply with our policy on the restrictions on payments and benefits
- Register any relevant interests as soon as they arise and comply with MHA's policy on managing conflicts of interest

## 6. Commitment

6.1 An estimate of the annual time commitment (virtual or in person) that is expected from GBMs is:

Activity	Time
Attendance at up to 8 regular meetings of the governing body	<b>16</b>
Reading and preparation for meetings of the governing body	<b>12</b>
Attendance at up to 4 sub-committee meetings	<b>8</b>
Reading and preparation for sub-committee meetings	<b>12</b>

Attendance at annual planning and review events (including individual review meeting)	<b>10</b>
Attendance at events such as estate tours, tenant / customer conferences, openings and site visits	<b>8</b>
Attendance at internal briefing and training events	<b>10</b>
External Training and conference attendance (may include overnight stay or weekend)	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>

## 7. What MHA Offers GBMs

7.1 MHA has adopted a n Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy which prevents you or someone close to you from inappropriately benefiting personally from your involvement with MHA., This and related policies also seek to ensure that you are not unfairly disadvantaged by your involvement with MHA. All out of pocket expenses associated with your role as a GBM will be fully met and promptly reimbursed.

7.2 In return for your commitment, MHA offers:

- A welcome and introduction when you first join the governing body;
- A mentor from the governing body and a named staff contact for the first 12 months, with ongoing support
- Clear guidance, information and advice on your responsibilities and on MHA's work
- Formal induction training to assist settling in
- Papers which are clearly written and presented, and circulated in advance of meetings
- The opportunity to put your experience, skills and knowledge to constructive use
- The opportunity to develop your own knowledge, experience and personal skills
- The chance to network with others with shared commitment and ideals

## 8. Review

8.1 This role description was approved by the governing body on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021. It will form the basis of the annual review of the effectiveness of your contribution to our governance. It will be reviewed by the governing body not later than September 2024.