



Solihull
Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Feb 2024

- Independent Board member
- Recruitment Pack





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Your application

Thank you very much for your interest in the role of independent Board Member at Solihull Community Housing (SCH). Our independent members play an important role in our governance, working alongside tenant and council colleagues.

On the following pages, you will find details of the role and the selection process to assist you in completing and tailoring your application.

You will no doubt do your own research but do read this pack carefully as it will provide you with a good overview of the organisation and role. After you have done that, please feel free to get in touch with us, so that we can talk through your offer and get a sense of how that aligns to what SCH is seeking.

To apply, we will need the following from you:

- A CV. Make sure this confirms your current/ most recent roles (you can sum up earlier roles, say before the last 15 years). Tell us about your achievements so we get a picture of your skills and experience, and try to keep it to two pages or three at most;
- A personal statement. We want to hear about your motivation, why this role/SCH is attractive to you, and you will also want to evidence how relevant your offer is to the role specification; again ideally in two to three pages.

Please submit your completed application documents to our Company Secretary Paul Edwards, via email at paulewards@solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

The role closes at 12 noon, Monday 11th March 2024.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview with the Chair of the Board, together with Board and Council representatives. There will be an opportunity as part of the process to have an informal discussion with SCH colleagues and stakeholders, as well as an accompanied housing stock tour.

If you would like to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact Paul at the above email address or call on 07990 648392.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Fiona

Fiona Hughes | Chief Executive

Welcome to Solihull Community Housing

The Board and I are very pleased that you are taking a look at this opportunity to join our team.

My Solihull roots run deep and I can see how much things have changed, some definitely for the better, but like any other region we also have our issues. As the main provider of social housing in Solihull, SCH plays an important role across this landscape. We are creating and responding to opportunity, but also focused on tackling challenge that impacts upon the wellbeing of customers, the neighbourhoods they live in and the communities they are a part of.

Our strong local presence means that we have a close relationship with our customers and our Council partner, as well as other key agencies and organisations. If you join our Board, which includes independent members, Council colleagues and customers, you will get to see and be a part of the impact that we make.

I find that really rewarding, and hope that you would too. It is important that we remain a Board which is not distant from the front-end of service delivery. So, if you believe in that principle, this role could be for you:

We seek someone from a social housing background, with strong understanding of housing management, neighbourhood and place-shaping services, with a focus on the customer journey. Prior non-executive director experience is not strictly necessary for this post, so this may suit someone seeking to develop and take up their first Board role.

We operate in one of the most diverse regions of the UK, and I am keen to ensure our Board reflects the diversity of our staff, customer and community base. We are a Board team who welcome different perspectives and you can be assured on bringing your whole self to this Board. We are also a Board which works collaboratively. Our values are aligned, so debate is welcomed and we take joint responsibility for collective decision-making.

I also find the variety of what we do thought-provoking. From assessing environmental sustainability in our business, to exploring how we can further improve digital and financial inclusion for our customers; and from thinking about investing in the development of our staff, to investing in the development of new homes. So if you like variety, but with purpose and impact, then we could be the right place for your talent and contributions.

Do read on to find out more about this opportunity. I shall look forward to getting you know you better in this process.

Warm regards

Richard

Richard Hyde | Chair of the Board



About Solihull Community Housing

SCH is the Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up in April 2004 to run the housing service on behalf of Solihull Council, which retains ownership of the property portfolio.

We manage just under 10,000 tenanted homes, around 1,000 leasehold homes, 5,000 garages and a small number of shared ownership properties. We also manage around 100 temporary accommodation units, supplemented by private sector leasing properties.

The Council is the company's single shareholder and the Board takes oversight to ensure SCH works to deliver our strategic vision for creating better homes and thriving communities.

Our values are: honesty, excellence, achieving together, respect and transparency.

You can find out more by reading our:

- [Strategic Vision 2020-25](#)
- [Delivery Plan 2023-24](#)
- [Annual Report 2022-23](#) (*digital animation*)
- [Accounts 2022/23](#)

You will be able to get a strong sense that we are not just concerned with what we do, but also how we do things.

Our [Board](#) and [Executive team](#) lead our organisation and keep us focused on our strategic aims which are:

- Creating homes
- More than bricks and mortar
- Strengthening communities
- Excellent customer service and
- Passion in people

We care deeply about Solihull, and play a crucial role in supporting the Solihull Council Plan which includes six priorities under the aim of a borough with opportunities for all.

1. Improving outcomes for children and young people
2. Improving life chances and health outcomes
3. Good quality, responsive and dignified care and support for adults
4. Enhance our natural environment
5. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing
6. Develop and promote the borough's economy



Role profile - Board member

Role purpose:

Board members have ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of SCH ensuring it is solvent, well run and delivering the outcomes for which it has been set up.

Key responsibilities:

- 1. Set and oversee the long term strategic direction for SCH**
 - 1.1 Collectively set the mission, vision, values, strategic objectives and high-level policies for SCH.
 - 1.2 Contribute to establishing a framework for approving policies and plans to achieve those objectives.
 - 1.3 Uphold and promote the core policies, purpose, values and objectives of the SCH.
 - 1.4 Keep abreast of current developments and thinking in the sector including matters relating to housing, social policy, regulation and investment.
- 2. Set the risk appetite and monitor risk**
 - 2.1 Set and keep under review the Board's appetite for risk.
 - 2.2 Ensure major risks are reviewed regularly and an effective risk management framework is maintained.
- 3. Ensure an effective business plan and budget is in place and that the business remains financially viable**
 - 3.1 Satisfy yourself as to the integrity of financial information, and ensure that all loan covenants are complied with.
 - 3.2 Approve each year's accounts prior to publication and approve each year's budget and business plan.
- 4. Ensure that performance is monitored and managed through internal controls and delegation**
 - 4.1 Ensure there are appropriate mechanisms, both internal and external, to verify that the Board receives a balanced and accurate picture of how SCH is performing.
 - 4.2 Ensure that internal controls and systems are audited and reviewed regularly.
 - 4.3 Monitor performance at a strategic level in relation to plans, budgets, controls and decisions.
 - 4.4 Participate in regular reviews of Board performance, and in Board Member appraisal; to participate in Board development and training, and in other learning activities as required.
- 5. Approve key policies and take decisions about matters reserved to the Board**
 - 5.1 Review, challenge appropriately and approve key policies and other decisions about reserved matters brought to the Board.



6. Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of SCH including compliance

- 6.1 Act reasonably and always in the best interests of SCH and comply with its code of conduct to ensure your behaviour as a Board Member models the values of SCH.
- 6.2 Contribute to and share responsibility for decisions of the Board and any committee of the Board of which you are a member.
- 6.3 Work in partnership with the Chief Executive and the Executive team to challenge colleagues constructively.
- 6.4 Satisfy yourself that SCH's affairs are conducted lawfully and in accordance with regulatory requirements and generally accepted standards of performance and probity.

- 6.5 Make sure that equality, diversity and inclusion matters are considered and addressed appropriately.
- 6.6 Engage effectively with key stakeholders as required, particularly customers.

7. Summary of statutory duties (as set out in the Companies Act 2006)

- 7.1 Act within the powers of an NED.
- 7.2 Promote the success of the company.
- 7.3 Exercise independent judgement.
- 7.4 Exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence.
- 7.5 Avoid conflicts of interest.
- 7.6 Not accept benefits from third parties.
- 7.7 Declare interests in transactions or arrangements.

No leadership role profile can cover every eventuality, so the postholder is expected to be flexible in taking on other commensurate duties as required from time to time.

Person specification

- Board member

Experience and knowledge:

- a. Experience in leadership roles as an executive or NED.
- b. Understands good governance principles. Prior Board experience is not essential.
- c. Experience of the wider strategic context for the social housing sector, including regulation, with good insight into housing service delivery and customer needs.
- d. Experience of supporting or designing/ delivering organisational change.
- e. Good financial acumen, can contribute to discussions about budget, expenditure etc.
- f. Experience and understanding of risk management.
- g. A track record of working in a team to deliver strategic objectives and high performance.
- h. A link to the Solihull area and/or the Midlands would be an advantage but is not essential.

Skills and abilities:

- i. Ability to contribute to giving a clear sense of strategic direction.
- j. Skilled at listening to others' contributions, and providing challenge where needed in a constructive way.
- k. Ability to make balanced and informed decisions; supports responsibility for collective decision-making.

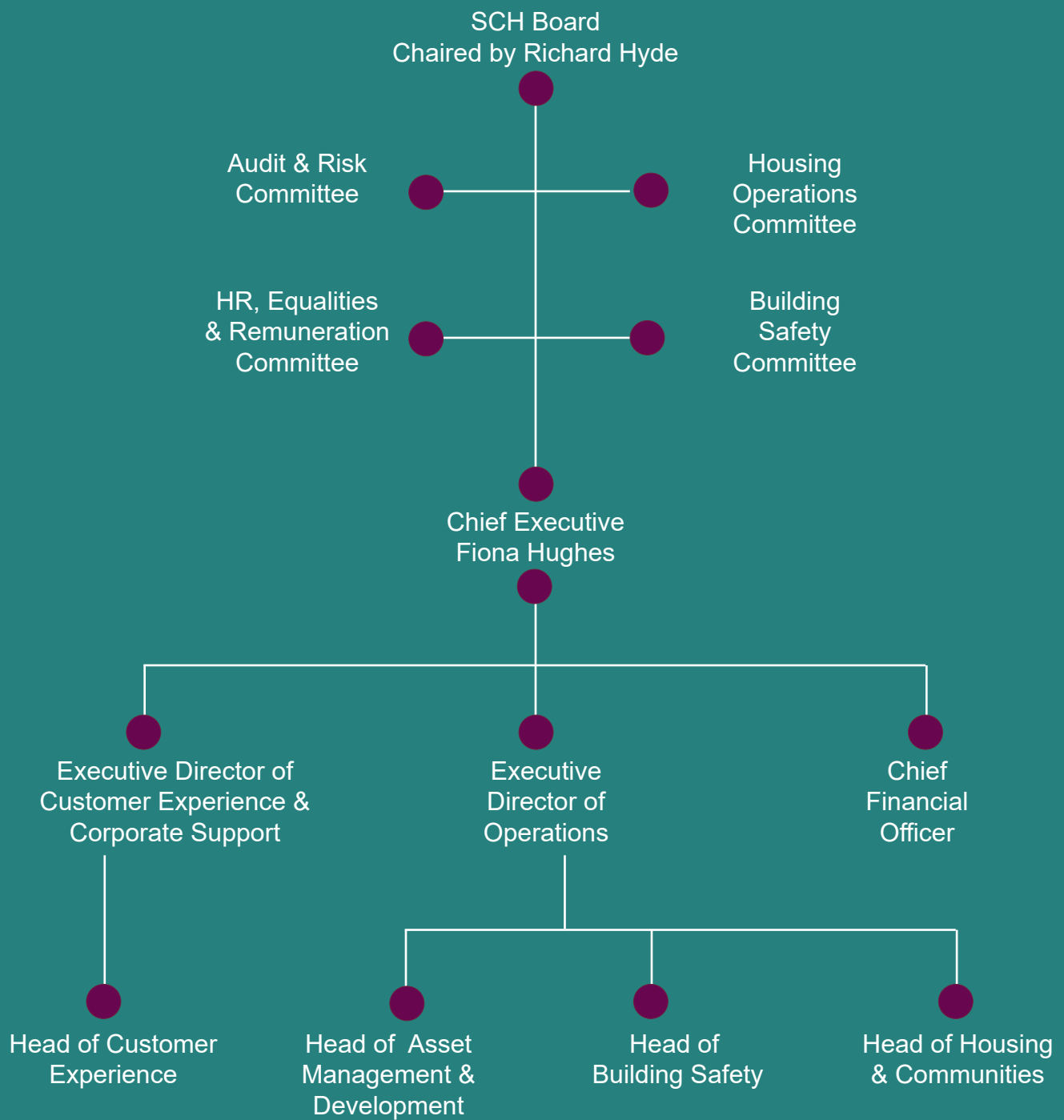
- l. Excellent communication skills; able to read, understand and analyse written and numerical reports.
- m. Builds positive relationships with colleagues that generate confidence and respect.

Personal qualities:

- n. Aligns to the vision and values of SCH, motivated to make a positive impact in this role
- o. Committed to customers having access to high quality homes and services.
- p. Actively demonstrates accountability, openness and transparency.
- q. Champions equality, diversity and inclusion in all you do.
- r. Has personal and professional integrity.
- s. Considers learning for self and others, takes time to reflect to learn.
- t. A collaborative style that engages people at all levels and promotes positive relationships throughout the organisation and its partners.
- u. Has the necessary time commitment and visibility for the role.



Leadership Structure



Key terms and conditions

Remuneration:

- Board member, £4,177 pa

You can claim for reasonable out of pocket expenses associated with carrying out the role.

The appointment:

The term of office for both roles is up to two three-year terms, in accordance with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance which SCH has adopted.

The role is subject to a probationary period of six months.

The appointment will be ratified by the Board at its next meeting; with further ratification by the Council at the AGM in Autumn 2024. We are keen for the postholder to get started straightaway, but the official count on time served starts from the AGM.

The role is an independent post and therefore SMBC members/officers and SCH customers are not eligible. Further details about SMBC and customer roles on the Board can be found on the SCH website.

Time commitment:

The Board member will also be asked to join at least one of the committees in alignment to their skills, experience and interest.

There are typically four full Board meetings each year. The Committees meet quarterly. There is also an annual strategy day and there are likely to be ad hoc events, training sessions and working groups.

We estimate that the time commitment for each role is around 1-2 days per month. This is likely to feel busier at the beginning with induction.

Meetings are generally held on Mondays, generally in the early evening (except Audit & Risk), which is held in the morning.

Location:

The office is at Endeavour House, Meriden Drive, Solihull B37 6BX.

Most Board and committee meetings take place in-person. However, there is some flexibility to accommodate virtual attendance on an occasional basis.

Get in Touch

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