



Chair of Board Information

Recruiting for:

1 x Board Chair

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Key dates:

Closing date	12 April 2021
Interview date	tbc
Observe the way we work	tbc

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Welcome from the Chair of our Board

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of New Outlook.

We are a housing association based in Birmingham, but our interest is in people more than bricks and mortar. We support people with a range of needs, particularly sight loss. This reflects our historic origins as part of Birmingham Royal Institute for the Blind (BRIB), but we have been a freestanding organisation for more than twenty years.

For the past few years New Outlook has grown and evolved, with a philosophy based on valuing and engaging every individual Customer. We have an ambitious but realistic plan for further development and growth.

New Outlook's Board is the governing body of the organisation. We make sure that we comply with legislation and regulations, set the strategic direction, and support – and occasionally challenge – the excellent staff team led by our Chief Executive.

Our Board is a strong team of people with different backgrounds and a shared commitment to what New Outlook is trying to achieve. We are looking to fill forthcoming vacancies and strengthen the skills and experience of our Board.

Having completed six years as the Chair of the Board I am deeply proud of what we have achieved but feel that the time is right to hand over the role to someone new who can take the Association through the next stages of its growth and development. The role description is included in this pack, but what we are looking for is someone who shares our commitment to a person-centred approach and who want to work with others to help New Outlook go from strength to strength.

Please look through this pack. If you think that you could help us achieve our ambitions, please put in an application. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Simon

Simon Wilson
Chair of New Outlook

New Outlook, Mill House, Mill Lane, Bromsgrove Street, Halesowen, B63 3JP

About us

New Outlook has been providing services to people with a sight loss for over 170 years. Starting out in 1846 as the Birmingham Royal Institute of the Blind (BRIB), New Outlook has undergone several transformations to become what it is today – a professional, reliable and committed provider that strives to promote independent living to people with a sensory or specialist need.

New Outlook was created in its present form in 1997 and has established itself as one of the key providers of services for both older and younger adults with sight loss.

New Outlook's business over the years has grown slowly and whilst the majority of our service users continue to have a sight loss, we have developed expertise in working with adults with other specialist needs including acquired brain injury, learning disabilities and autism.

Today we support more than 180 people in a range of services including Care Homes; Sheltered Accommodation; Extra Care and Supported Living as well as people who live in their own homes.

Our Vision and Mission

Making a difference to people's lives through the provision of aspirational services for people with sensory and other specialist needs.

Our **core values** summarise what we ASPIRE to achieve:



A pproachable	→	<i>friendly and easy to talk to</i>
S upportive	→	<i>understanding and encouraging</i>
P rofessional	→	<i>capable and skilful</i>
I nnovative	→	<i>inventive and adaptable</i>
R eliable	→	<i>consistent quality and performance</i>
E mpowering	→	<i>confident and strong</i>

Strategic Priorities for 2020-2025

The strategic priorities for 2020-2025 have been identified as the result of development work undertaken by the New Outlook Board during 2019 with input from the Executive Team, alongside consultancy work commissioned from the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN).

There are four overarching priorities which provide a framework for all activities of the Association. These are:

- *Quality and Compliance*
- *Culture and People*
- *Sustainability and Viability*
- *Development and Growth*

The four priorities provide a robust framework for the future direction of the Association while maintaining its culture and values and remaining true to its original aim to support people with sight loss or visual impairments.

Quality and Compliance

We want to ensure that we continue to offer high quality services and maintain compliance. This is not only because we want to achieve quality outcomes and keep people safe but also because we are registered with both the Housing Regulator and Care Quality Commission.

Culture and People

New Outlook recognises that the culture sets the tone for everything that happens across the Association and especially the quality of service that people receive. We strive to create a culture which is open and transparent based on continual learning. We want to ensure that we attract and retain the best employees possible and strive to create a supportive, enabling work environment in which every colleague feels valued for their contribution.

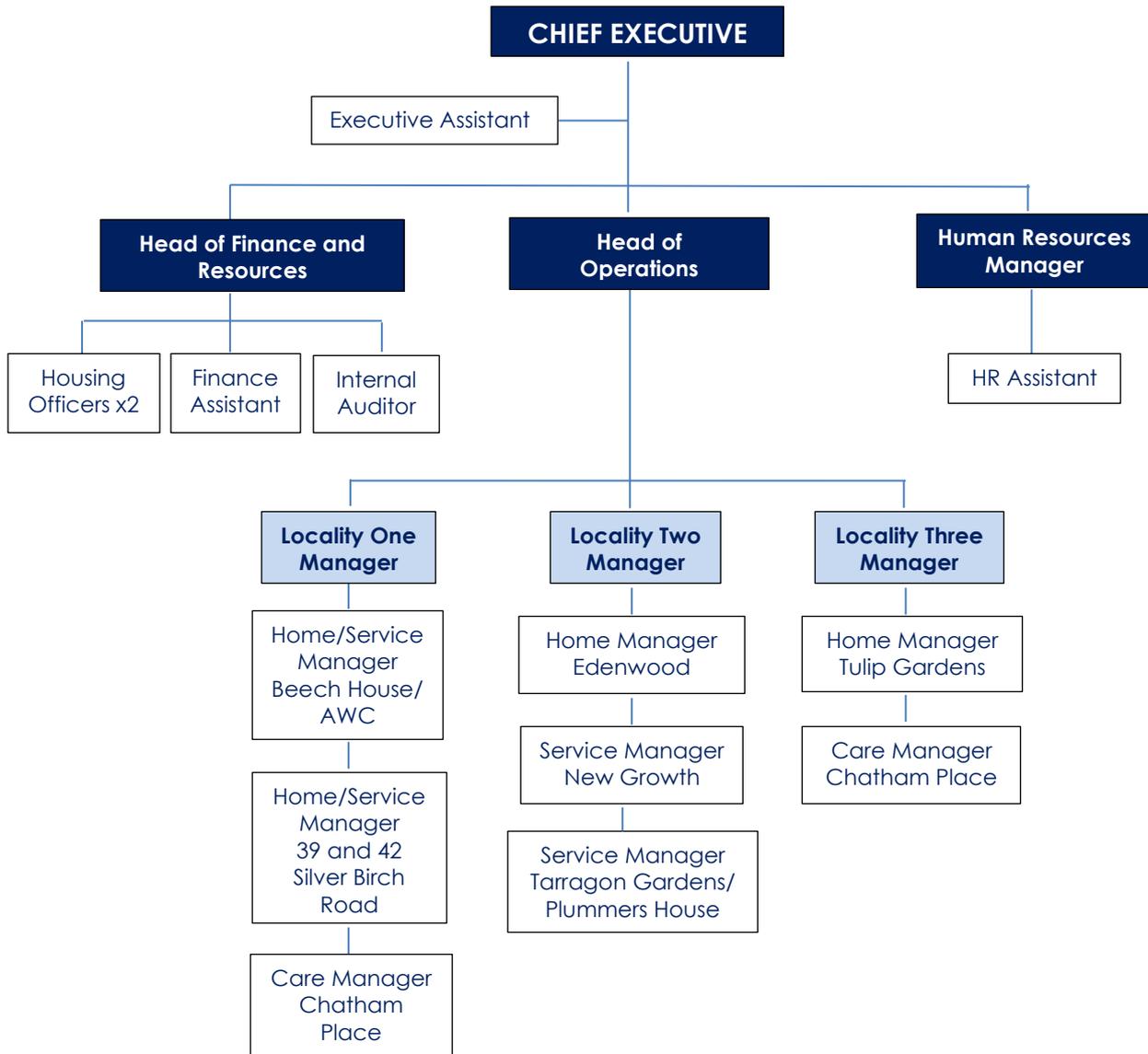
Sustainability and Viability

It is essential that as an Association we remain sustainable and services are viable and therefore able to support people with sight loss in the future. We recognise that this is a dynamic, ongoing process to ensure we continue to deliver the right services at the right price and that future threats and opportunities are identified and responded to.

Development and Growth

New Outlook recognises the need to continually review and adjust its service offer to ensure it always offers good quality services based on current best practice and taking account of technological developments. It also recognises that people's expectations change and its therefore essential we have ongoing dialogue with the people we aim to support and commissioners, so that we understand these changes. New Outlook also recognises that sometimes, to be sustainable and offer the best work environment, it is necessary to grow and diversify its portfolio.

Structure of the Association





Key Priorities for 2020-2025

Quality and Compliance

We need to build on the success of the past few years and continue to ensure that we have systems and processes in place to audit, monitor and evaluate the services we deliver.

- ✓ *Management Information – we need to ensure that we effectively use our management information to inform actions and practice. We want to further develop our KPI dashboards to make them interactive and responsive so we can effectively interrogate our data.*
- ✓ *External Validation - CQC Compliance – we want to ensure that our services continue to deliver quality outcomes and will use CQC inspections as one measure of this. We therefore want to ensure that all CQC registered services have a GOOD. We will start this process with commissioning external reviews of all services during 2020/21.*
- ✓ *Compliance Framework – we will continue the process of ongoing internal audits commenced during 2019/20 with priorities for these being agreed with the Finance, Audit and Development Committee.*
- ✓ *Health and Safety – Keeping colleagues and tenants/residents as safe as possible is incredibly important to us. We currently commission H&S from an external contractor. We want to ensure that we review this contract to get the most out of the relationship.*

- ✓ *IT systems – We recognise the benefits that our move to Microsoft 365 and use of mobile devices has had especially during the Covid-19 Pandemic. We want to ensure that we are using the best systems and programmes available to us so that we have access to good management information and can utilise the benefits of mobile and flexible working. This will initially start with a review of our HR system and care planning tools.*

Culture and People

Given the priority we have given to develop a good culture and work environment for colleagues we want to ensure that this is maintained as we develop and grow. We also want to make the best use of new ways of valuing our colleagues and making sure we employ the right people with the right values.

- ✓ Recruitment and Selection - We want to introduce new and innovative ways of recruiting and selecting colleagues to ensure we get the right people with the right values. We are piloting telephone and video interviewing, value-based recruitment and considering a staff referral scheme.
- ✓ Retaining quality workforce – We continue to talk to colleagues about what we can do to help retain people. We are continuing to identify ways to improve training and career progression and carefully monitor our turnover rates.
- ✓ Continue to imbed Culture – We want to ensure that the culture and values are embedded across the association and at all levels. We have a bi-annual staff survey which monitors this and continue to be accredited with Investors In people (IiP).
- ✓ Continue to Improve working environment - We continually look at how we can offer the best terms and conditions possible to colleagues and create great places to work. We network with other good providers and use the staff forum for ideas.
- ✓ We prioritise our Learning and Development strategy to address learning and development needs in order to prepare a workforce that is focused on delivering the best service user care and tenant support, where all colleagues are demonstrably fit to practice, and systems are in place to ensure individual competency.
- ✓ Managing a management development programme that seeks to enhance their skills, competencies and knowledge as they play a key and prominent role in meeting our business objectives.

Sustainability and Viability

To ensure that we remain sustainable and that each service is viable in its own right we need to continually ensure that we are accessing appropriate funding, that our costs remain as low as possible and that we are utilising new ways of working to reduce costs.

- ✓ Association remains sustainable and viable – Growth of association to reduce overhead per service and diversify funding sources to new areas and funding streams. KPI for surplus and for overheads.
- ✓ All individual services are viable and make contribution to the surplus – renegotiation of individual fees especially in care homes. Better use of resources including flexible and remote working and use of IT systems.
- ✓ Remain competitive and able to offer VfM – overheads, efficiency, flat structure, new ways of working. Target for overhead costs. Benchmarking group. Partnership working.

Development and Growth

Over time the models of service delivery need to change and adapt to meet changing needs, expectations, and best practice. We also recognise the benefits that can be achieved by growing and diversifying both in the services we have and the areas we deliver them within. Not only does this allow us to support more people with sight loss but also supports the sustainability of the Association and offers the opportunity to offer better terms and conditions and career progression for colleagues.

During 2019 Board reviewed the different areas of service delivery and has agreed a clear strategy for different areas of the business.

Board also recognised the need for all services to be underpinned by best practice and utilise developments in technology to improve efficiency and outcomes for tenants.



Overall Information

Induction

An induction process will be arranged for the new chair and any additional information, briefing or documents will be supplied on request.

Meetings

Meetings are held quarterly usually in February, May, September and November at our Halesowen Office between 5–7.30 pm. There are an additional two half day sessions which are usually held on the same day as a Board meeting.

There is also an option for virtual meetings and attendance.

Remuneration/Expenses

The Chair is paid © £1500 per year plus expenses, and we pay £50 per Board meeting or actual expenses incurred.

Governance Framework

New Outlook adopted the National Housing Federation (NHF) Governance Framework 2015. This was reviewed during 2019 and updated appropriately. We believe this provides a robust framework to ensure that the Board is effective and that individual members are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Chair of Board - Role Description

Purpose of the Role

In addition to compliance with the Board Member Role Description, to provide leadership so that the Board fulfils its responsibilities for the overall governance, and strategic direction of NEW OUTLOOK. To ensure the Board works in partnership to contribute relevant experience, expertise and insight to add value in the creation of strategy and policy to ensure the longer-term viability and sustainability of NEW OUTLOOK. To ensure that business decisions are made to facilitate achievement of strategy whilst ensuring that the views and interests of stakeholders are represented at strategic levels

The key responsibilities of the Chair are as follows:

- To ensure the efficient conduct of the Board's business and of NEW OUTLOOK's General Meetings.
- To ensure the Board receives accurate, timely and clear information in order to satisfy it that NEW OUTLOOK's business is conducted lawfully, meets regulatory requirements and achieves associational targets and objectives.
- To ensure that appropriate role descriptions are provided for all Board members
- To ensure that all Board members are given the opportunity to express their views and that appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained in accordance with a Code of Conduct approved by the Board.
- To lead the Board's oversight of the framework of delegation and systems of internal control ensuring the Board monitors the Association's performance in key areas of its work.
- To establish a constructive working relationship with, and provide support for, the Chief Executive and ensure that the Board as a whole acts in partnership with executive colleagues.
- To ensure that the Board delegates sufficient authority to its committees, the Chair, the Chief Executive and others to enable the business of the Association to be carried on effectively between meetings of the Board; and also to ensure that the Board monitors the use of these delegated powers.
- To ensure that the Board receives professional advice when it is needed, either from its senior colleagues or from external sources.
- To ensure that NEW OUTLOOK follows the Code of Governance and the Model Rules (2015).

- To take decisions delegated to the Chair with the support of the Chief Executive.
- To be the escalation point for complaints/colleagues' disciplinary procedures.
- To represent NEW OUTLOOK as appropriate.
- To take the lead responsibility in ensuring that the Board makes proper arrangements to appraise the performance of the Chief Executive and to determine the remuneration of the Chief Executive and of other senior colleagues.
- To ensure that the Board makes proper and appropriate arrangements for its own appraisal and that of Board members, including the Chair's own appraisal and for implementing a succession plan for Board Members.
- To promote learning and development opportunities and tackle any performance issues where appropriate
- To ensure, when necessary, that the Chief Executive is replaced in a timely and orderly fashion.
- To ensure that the level of any agreed Board Member remuneration results from an approved process that minimises the potential for conflicts of interest.
- To ensure the Board agrees the role of the Vice Chair.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

To be Chair of the Board, you must be able to:

Think strategically

Understand the environment in which the Association works, see the bigger picture, think 'outside the box' to see the implications of changing circumstances, and be able to use this knowledge to provide strategic direction to inform the current and future needs of NEW OUTLOOK.

Represent the interests of tenants, customers and communities

Be able to consistently understand and represent the needs and interests of customers and communities.

Guide strategic action

Believe in the core mission and values of the Association and be able to translate this vision into expectations, goals and tangible measures, so that the Association's performance can be delivered and monitored.

Understand the risks inherent in the market conditions in which the Association operates and recognise and distinguish between small and large risks.

Understand the individual and collective roles and perspectives of the Executive Team and of the Board, and use various forms of communication to identify priorities, influence, resolve conflict and provide guidance.

Seek out relevant and critical information

Behave as a critical friend, be proactive, apply your knowledge broadly and have the confidence to ask difficult or challenging questions to enable objective judgements to be made.

Solve problems and make decisions

Prepare thoroughly and at meetings show that you have evaluated proposals, can describe and summarise the key issues clearly and prioritise the main risks and benefits, to help make decisions.

Be sensitive to others

Be self-aware, aware of the needs of others, able to observe and listen well, involve others in discussion and debate, and ask questions in a non-threatening way, as well as being able to admit mistakes.

Work effectively with others

Work constructively to build consensus and regulate and adjust your behaviour according to specific situations or contexts. Network on behalf of the Association with external stakeholders and work with other Board members and colleagues.

Behave as a corporate citizen

Have high levels of integrity and honesty, align your own goals with the values and ambitions of the Association. Recognise and respect diversity and use this knowledge to drive forward wider 'community' objectives, rather than personal agendas, in the context of sound business management and corporate governance.

Build capacity and capability

Provide leadership to create and maintain a 'Learning Board', share and evaluate skills, expertise and experience. Ensure quality time to plan new initiatives and provide a mentoring and advisory role to maximise the effectiveness of the Board.

Be able to demonstrate the following qualities

Commitment and capacity

- Commitment to the Association's Mission and values
- Time to attend meetings of the Board, the Chief Executive, appropriate Committees, strategic debates and ad-hoc discussions
- Undertake training and development as required

Personal

- Energy and enthusiasm
- Honesty and integrity
- Good listener and clear communicator
- Respect diversity and value difference