

West Norfolk Property Limited

Recruitment of Board Director

Candidate Information Pack



February 2025

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

West Norfolk Property Limited

West Norfolk Property is a company limited by shares wholly owned by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. It currently lets 74 homes in King's Lynn at market rents, managed by a third party managing agent selected for their customer (tenant) focus.

Company Objectives

West Norfolk Property's focus is on increasing the supply of high-quality rented homes to meet the needs of a growing population in the King's Lynn & West Norfolk area.

The company aims to offer diversity in tenure – for those where ownership is not appropriate (e.g. because of employment/education mobility), and where there is no access to social housing due to eligibility or lack of supply.

It aims to improve the general private rented sector offer through increased competition – in essence raising the bar in terms of quality, professional management, and a tenancy term appropriate to household circumstances.

The company is a commercial, for profit, enterprise and aims to provide an income back to the Council to create new revenue streams that can support the Council's wider strategic objectives.

Our Business Plan

The company has developed a business plan which sets out that the company will seek to achieve the above objectives by

- Acquiring new build homes delivered on the Council's developments
- Exploring opportunities to bulk purchase off the shelf housing units from private developers
- Acquisition of second-hand homes, being mindful of its objectives to provide high quality accommodation and energy

performance requirements as well as the potential maintenance costs.

- Ensuring that acquisitions respond to demand within the sector
- Continuing to monitor performance of the company's managing agent

The West Norfolk Property Limited Board

The Board currently consists of:

- 2 Borough Council Elected Members
- The Borough Council's Assistant Director, Regeneration, Housing and Place who also undertakes the role of Chief Operating Officer

Within the various Director roles the aim is to ensure a mix of professionals, skills and backgrounds to compliment the Board. We are also keen to ensure that the Board is representative of the diverse communities living within West Norfolk.

Director Responsibilities

As a Director, you are responsible for ensuring the company complies with its responsibilities, including sending information to Companies House to set deadlines, such as annual accounts and details of changes to the Company's officers.

The Companies Act sets out seven duties which Directors must perform, which are to:

- follow the company's constitution and articles of association
- promote the success of the company
- use independent judgement
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
- avoid conflicts of interest
- not accept third party benefits
- not benefit from transactions the company makes

More information on these duties can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/being-a-company-director

In addition, Directors must not misuse the Company's property and must apply confidentiality to the Company's affairs.

If you consider that there is a potential for a conflict of interest it is important that this is declared within your application.

Board Meetings

The board will meet approximately 4 times per year.

Board Members are expected to take an active interest in all aspects of the Company/Board's activities.

Board meetings will usually be held at one of the Council's buildings in King's Lynn. There is some flexibility to enable hybrid meetings to take place, with a mix of attendance in person or online. However, it is expected that new Board Members will attend meetings in person initially. There is also an expectation that Board Members will attend all meetings.

Board papers are distributed electronically. Therefore Board members are expected to have access to suitable technology, and the skills to use technology effectively, in order to access agendas, minutes, reports etc.

Factors which prevent someone becoming a Board Director

Some people are disqualified by law from acting as a Board Director. You cannot be a Board Director if you:

- are currently declared bankrupt, subject to bankruptcy restrictions or a debt relief order
- have an individual voluntary arrangement to pay off debts with creditors
- have previously been removed/disqualified as a Board Director

Please note that a current Elected Member or officer of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, which wholly owns WNPL, will not be considered sufficiently independent to apply for this role.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Board Director

Overview

Board Directors are Directors of the company and members of the company Board, responsible to the Board Chair for the strategic and policy direction of the organisation, including ensuring that the statutory requirements of the organisation are being implemented.

This is a voluntary role, although reasonable expenses will be met.

Main Purpose of Role

In conjunction with fellow board members to:

- Set and ensure compliance with the values, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the organisation, ensuring its long-term success
- Ensure the integrity of financial information, including approving each year's budget and business plan and annual accounts prior to publication
- Establish, oversee and review annually a framework of delegation and systems of internal control
- Establish and oversee a risk management framework in order to safeguard the assets of the organisation

Principal Accountabilities

Board Members are responsible for:

- Establishing policies and plans to achieve the organisation's values and objectives
- Ensuring that the organisation operates within agreed policies where appropriate. Where such policies create significant financial risk to the organisation, or affect issues of principle, to agree alternative policies/make appropriate decisions on the way forward
- Monitoring the organisation's performance in relation to these plans, budget, controls and decisions
- Satisfying themselves that the organisation's affairs are conducted in accordance with generally accepted standards of performance and propriety

- Taking appropriate advice to ensure they understand the constitutional and legislative framework as it applies to the Board, and act within its powers
- Contributing to and share responsibility for the Board's decisions, including its duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and independent judgement
- Preparing for and attend meetings, training sessions and other events
- Preparing for, attending and participating in reviews linked to the performance of the Board
- Declaring any relevant personal interests and avoiding conflicts of interest
- Respecting confidentiality
- Providing constructive challenge to the Board to facilitate the achievement of the strategic objectives
- Establishing a framework of delegation and ensuring that prudent and effective controls, which enable risk to be identified, assessed and managed, are in place
- Approving the annual business plan, ensuring that these support the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organisation

This role description accurately reflects the requirements of the role at the time of writing but may be subject to change from time to time.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Board Director

Note to Applicants

Whilst criteria on the specification are important those marked 'E' are essential requirements. To assist with the selection process it would be helpful if you should pay particular attention to these points and provide examples of meeting them.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Full professional qualification or considerable practical experience in a professional role, at a senior level within an organisation	✓	
Degree level or equivalent		✓
Business/Management qualification		✓
Knowledge/Experience		
An understanding of strategic management and experience of contributing to the strategic direction of an organisation	✓	
A relevant qualification in or at least two years work-related experience of financial management	✓	
Experience in one or more of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Management • Property Development • Finance • Business/Financial planning • Housing • Law • General Business • Health • Architecture/Construction • Planning/Building Control • Health and Safety 	✓	
Knowledge of local and national housing policy		✓

Previous experience of working in a housing setting		✓
Ability to translate professional knowledge/experience effectively in order to contribute to/enhance the performance of the Board	✓	
Experience of monitoring performance against agreed standards/objectives		✓
Previous experience of working with Boards/Committees		✓
Ability to interpret financial documents including accounts and balance sheets	✓	
Understanding of budget setting and monitoring processes	✓	
Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of the Director role	✓	
Understanding of corporate governance		✓
Understanding of risk management		✓
Personal Qualities		
Ability to commit sufficient time and effort to the role	✓	
A genuine commitment to the provision of good quality affordable housing within West Norfolk	✓	
A willingness to develop/maintain an understanding of local housing needs and priorities	✓	
Ability to demonstrate personal effectiveness, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting ethically • Punctual • Regular attendance at Board meetings • Reading Board papers in advance of meetings • Commitment to personal development 	✓	
Ability to work effectively as a member of a team	✓	
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
Good judgement	✓	

Ability to assimilate and analyse information	✓	
Ability to question, and challenge, proposals/reports/presentations in a constructive manner	✓	
Ability to respect confidentiality	✓	
Commitment to promoting equalities and diversity	✓	
Commitment to attending Board meetings in person whenever possible, and when this is not possible to participating in Board meetings by video link or some other means	✓	
Willingness to attend training when required	✓	
A strong commitment to West Norfolk	✓	

APPLICATION PROCESS

If you are interested in becoming an Independent Board Director for West Norfolk Property Limited please forward a copy of your CV with a covering letter outlining your reasons for applying for the role to personnel@west-norfolk.gov.uk or by post (marked 'private and confidential') to:

Personnel Services
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Chapel Street
Kings Lynn
Norfolk
PE301EX

Within your application you should provide evidence of your ability to undertake the key responsibilities of the role and outline how you meet the criteria outlined in the personal specification for the position. Please also declare any potential conflicts of interest (as explained above).

Applications should be returned by **midday on Monday 24th February 2025.**

Selection Process

Following the closing date for applications all applications received will be considered via a shortlisting process.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview on within three weeks of the closing date to determine the successful applicant.

If you would like any further information on West Norfolk Property Limited and/or the role of Board Director please contact Duncan Hall, Assistant Director, Regeneration, Housing and Place by e-mail to Duncan.hall@west-norfolk.gov.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information pack; we look forward to receiving your application.