



**Appointment as Chairperson to the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency**

**Closing Date: 15:00 on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**State Boards Division  
Public Appointments Service  
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stateboards.ie operates under the auspices of the Public Appointments Service and is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

The Public Appointments Service (PAS), established under statute in 2004, provides an independent shared service in recruitment, assessment and selection to organisations across the Civil and Public Services. On 30 September 2014, the Government decided that the PAS should also be given responsibility for putting in place an open, accessible, rigorous and transparent system to support Ministers in making appointments to State Boards. Our dedicated website, [www.stateboards.ie](http://www.stateboards.ie), is the channel through which the PAS advertises vacancies on State Boards. It is also the means through which accomplished, experienced and qualified people, including people who might not previously have been identified as available for appointment, can then apply to be considered for particular vacancies.

## **Membership of State Boards**

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities. Members of State Boards, and the relevant management team, are accountable for the proper management of the organisation.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, subject to the objectives set by Government. In that regard and in accordance with 13.2 of the Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards, "it is advisable that no member of a State Board should serve more than two full terms of appointment or should hold appointments to more than two State Boards."

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016](#) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

## Appointment as Chairperson to the Housing & Sustainable Communities Agency

<b>Location:</b>	Dublin
<b>Number of Vacancies:</b>	1
<b>Remuneration:</b>	€11,970 (It should be noted that in line with the 'One Person One Salary' principle, no public servant will be entitled to receive remuneration in the form of board fees, save for situations that are statutorily provided for e.g. Worker Directors). Travel and subsistence is paid at appropriate civil service rates.
<b>Time Requirements:</b>	Approximately 11 half day meetings per annum. An additional day will be required for preparatory work in advance of each meeting.

### 1. Background

The Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency was established on an administrative basis in 2010, and was put on a statutory basis in 2012 under the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency (Establishment) Order 2012 (S.I. No. 264 of 2012). The role of the Agency is to work with and support local authorities; Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in the delivery of housing and housing services.

The Agency is involved in a wide range of housing related activities, in the areas of research, housing supply and mortgage supports, technical services and in relation to the implementation of the Pyrite Remediation Scheme. The Agency has also been given responsibility, on an interim basis, for regulating AHBs. In 2017 a capital fund of €70m has been provided to the Agency to establish a revolving fund to acquire some 1,600 units over the period to 2020 for social housing use.

### 2. Board Member Responsibilities (as per Terms of reference of the Board)

**Mission:** Board Members should possess a genuine understanding of and desire to both support and advance the Agency's mission. Where possible and/or appropriate, Board members will present new ideas and introduce outside contacts that could assist the Agency in fulfilling its mission.

**Fiduciary Duty:** All Board members have a fiduciary duty to the State body in the first instance (i.e. the duty to act in good faith and in the best interests of the State body).

**Attendance:** Board members are generally expected to try to hold an attendance record of 100% to ensure that they bring their specific knowledge, skills and expertise to the deliberations of the Board meetings and its Committees. Where Board members are unable to attend a meeting, this should be informed to the Board Secretary in writing (or by email).

**Participation and Engagement:** A Board member is expected to participate at Board meetings and Committee meetings, and remain informed of significant matters relating to the Agency and its activities.

**Advocacy:** Each Board member serves as an ambassador and advocates for the Housing Agency in order to promote the missions of the Agency.

**Conflict of Interest:** Board members are to be fully compliant with the Agency's conflict of interest policy.

**Transparency and Confidentiality:** It is the responsibility of the board members to provide a trusting environment for internal deliberation that requires such. In these cases, Board members are expected to maintain absolute confidentiality with respect of all Agency confidential information that may be disclosed, either in writing or orally, to the Board.

### **3. Functions of the Board**

The Board is collectively responsible for leading and directing the State body's activities. While the Board may delegate particular functions to management the exercise of the power of delegation does not absolve the Board from the duty to supervise the discharge of the delegated functions.

The Board should fulfil key functions, including: reviewing and guiding strategic direction and major plans of action, risk management policies and procedures, annual budgets and business plans, setting performance objectives, monitoring implementation and State body performance, and overseeing major capital expenditure and investment decisions. The Board should act on a fully informed and ethical basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, having due regard to its legal responsibilities and the objectives set by Government.

The Board should promote the development of the capacity of the State body including the capability of its leadership and staff.

The Board is responsible for holding the CEO and senior management to account for the effective performance of their responsibilities.

#### **Committees of the Board**

There is one Committee in place, which reports to the Board. This is the Audit and Risk Committee.

Candidate's attention is also drawn to the provisions of the Code in relation to Audit and Risk Committee membership which can be found [here](#).

#### **Board Work Programme**

Each year, the Board Work Programme includes:-

- Review of Strategic Statements;
- Business Planning including resources and budgets;
- Annual Review of the Systems of Internal Control;
- Annual and ongoing review of the Risk Register;
- Annual Self-Evaluation of the Board;
- Approval of draft Annual Report and financial statements;
- Chairperson's Comprehensive report to the Minister;
- Review of the Audit and Risk Committee;
- Annual Declarations of interest under the Ethics in Public Offices Act 2005;
- Review of Governance Framework.

#### **4. Person Specification**

The Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government, invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for the position of Chairperson of the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency.

Candidate's attention is drawn to the general details of the role of Chairperson as set out on page 19 of the Code which can be found [here](#). The Principle states:-

- The Chairperson is responsible for leadership of the Board and ensuring its effectiveness on all aspects of its role.
- The Chairperson should display high standards of integrity and probity and set expectations regarding culture, values, and behaviours for the State body and for the tone of discussions at Board level.

Candidates for the Chair of the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency must have:

- Proven track record in a leadership role in a medium size or large organisation;
- Significant corporate governance and compliance experience;
- Proven track record that demonstrates highly effective communication skills;
- Previous experience as a member of a Board or Committee;
- A career history which would demonstrate an ability to understand high level financial data and good financial management practice;
- A career history which would demonstrate the ability to manage relationships with multiple stakeholders, including with the local authority and voluntary housing sector;

In addition to the required skills set out above, the following skills and experience would be considered advantageous:

- Experience which demonstrates that the applicant has knowledge of issues associated with the housing sector, particularly social housing;
- A demonstrable understanding of policy developments at a national and international level that impact on housing policy;
- A demonstrable understanding of the relationship between the Agency and its stakeholders (the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government; Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies);
- Significant corporate governance and compliance experience, and knowledge of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (August 2016);
- Proven track record that demonstrates excellent critical analysis and decision making skills;
- Previous experience as a Chairperson of a Board or Committee.

#### **5. Term of Appointment**

Appointments to the Board will be for an initial period of 5 years with an option to extend the term of engagement for a second term of 5 years, subject to the following:

- The membership of any member of the Board may be terminated by the Minister at any time, on the basis of reasons to be stated by the Minister.

- A member of the Board may resign his or her membership of the Board by notice in writing sent or given to the Minister, and the resignation shall take effect on the day on which the Minister receives the notice.
- Members of the Board shall, subject to the provisions of this Schedule, hold office upon such terms and conditions as the Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, from time to time determine.
- The roles and responsibilities of Board Members are described in the Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016 which is available on the website of the Department of Finance [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies](#).
- A board member shall cease to be a member of the board if he or she is nominated as a member of Seanad Éireann, is elected as a member of either House of the Oireachtas or of the European Parliament; or is regarded, pursuant to section 19 of the European Parliament Elections Act 1997, as having been elected to the European Parliament to fill a vacancy; or becomes a member of a local authority.

## 6. Submitting your Application

Before submitting your application, please review the self-assessment questionnaire which can be found [here](#). This questionnaire is designed to help you in considering whether to submit an expression of interest - you are not required to submit the questionnaire as part of the application process.

Having considered the general suitability criteria for membership of a State Board, you should consider carefully how your background and experience fits with the specific appointment criteria set out in the Person Specification section in this booklet. Please give careful consideration to the possibility of any potential conflict of interest that may arise if appointed to this board.

Your submission should be made via the following link [www.stateboards.ie](http://www.stateboards.ie) together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter** (see Appendix 1 of this booklet for help with the online process).

### IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your application. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you do the following:

1. *Ensure your Cover Letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position(s) specified in this booklet, and*
2. *That you fully answer any supplementary questions which are presented to you as part of our online application process.*

This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to this State Board.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email [info@stateboards.ie](mailto:info@stateboards.ie).

## **7. Assessment Process**

An Assessment Panel (the “Panel”) will be convened by PAS to consider and assess the applications received by PAS. The Panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet;
- assess potential candidates further once they meet the specified appointment criteria by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
  - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
  - Meeting<sup>1</sup>/conference call; and/or
  - Referee checks; and/or
  - Any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate (this may include PAS requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to the bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications)
- arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the Minister.

## **8. Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

## **9. Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003**

Should your name be forwarded to a Minister for consideration, please note that your cover letter and curriculum vitae will be forwarded to the State Board Liaison Officer in the relevant department and may be retained for up to one year.

For further information on Data Protection please follow the [link](#)

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<sup>1</sup>The Public Appointments Service will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

## APPENDIX 1

### Submitting your application:

In order to submit your application, you should take the following steps:

1. Go to [www.stateboards.ie](http://www.stateboards.ie).
2. On the bar at the top of the page click on "Available Appointments".
3. This brings you to a page with all our advertised vacancies. Select whichever position you would like to apply for (you are welcome to apply for more than one position if you wish).
4. On the relevant page please click on the "apply for position" button at the bottom of the page
5. This will bring you to a page on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) and, if you already have a publicjobs.ie account, will prompt you for your username and password. If you do not have an account you will be asked to create one.
6. Once you input your details you will be brought to a page where there is a prompt in the middle of the page which says "apply here". Click on the link to the online application form beside it.
7. A form will appear on your screen, some of the text boxes will be populated with information from your publicjobs.ie profile (Name, address etc.). You will need to complete the rest of the fields and enter your name and the date at the bottom of the form. Click on "continue".
8. You will then be brought to a screen where you should upload your CV and Cover Letter. These are required documents and your application cannot be processed without them. Once you have selected these and uploaded them, please click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page.
9. You will receive an e-mail confirmation (to the address listed in your publicjobs.ie profile) to confirm that your application has been submitted.

You must confirm that you do not have any conflicts of interest or legal impediment which would be likely to interfere with your ability to play a full part on the Board. You must also confirm that you can make yourself available to attend meetings and to carry out the duties of a Board member.