# Governance Policy

**Our policy to be an organisation that ensures Governance requirements are understood and adhered to**

## The basics

This policy sets out the guiding principles for how Leeds Federated will ensure a rigorous and effective approach to its Governance.

The policy supports Leeds Federated's social purpose of, 'helping people make a home' and is aligned to our goals: Thrive, Engage and Evolve.

## Our approach

The Regulator of Social Housing sets Regulatory Standards: Consumer Standards (Neighbourhood and Community, Safety and Quality, Tenancy, Transparency and Accountability) and Economic Standards (Governance and Financial Viability, Rent and Value for Money).This policy is informed by the Governance and Financial Viability Standard: Governance and Financial Viability Standard and Code of Practice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

We will:

- Adopt the Nat Fed Code of Governance 2020 – incorporating: a code of governance, a code of conduct and a statement of accountability
- Report to Board when there are any changes in the code requirements and new documents are issued
- Keep Board regularly informed of any governance updates in the Sector via copies of briefing papers or reports to Board
- Ensure that the Association's Rules are considered in any new business proposals
- Regularly review the Board and Committee Terms of Reference
- Undertake an annual survey of the Board's effectiveness and that of the all Committees in line with the NHF code of governance 2020
- Ask all staff and Board Members to complete an annual declaration of any conflict of interest and to update it if there are any changes in circumstances
- Declare all conflicts of Interest at the start of each Board and Committee meeting
- Have a probity policy which staff and Board Members comply with
- Submit regulatory returns as required by the Regulator in a timely manner
- Ensure Governance is considered within the wider transparency and accountability requirements and wider consumer standards

We have a number of policies that support the overall approach to Governance and ensure that the Regulatory Standard in relation to Governance is met:

- Board Recruitment, Tenure and Succession policy
- Board, Committee and Chair Appraisal policy

- Induction and Training policy
- Shareholder Membership policy
- Partnership Working policy
- Transparency and Accountability policy
- Finance Policy
- Risk Management Framework
- Probity Policy

## Specific Areas of Governance

**Board Statement of Composition**
There is an increasingly strong focus to ensure Boards are populated by a diverse group of competent individuals to ensure a broad perspective of views. Leeds Fed includes 3 positions on the Board for tenants.  Board members must have their candidacy addressed against objective criteria which must be applied to all Board Members. Appointments will be made based firstly on skills and experience required by the Board and secondly to maintain Board diversity.

The maximum number of executives from other Housing Associations permitted to be non-executive Board members at Leeds Federated is 4 with no one separate organisation having more than one executive on the Board.  Issues arising with Board Members who sit on the Boards of other Housing Associations will be addressed as a conflict of interest, with appropriate action taken dependant on the specific situation in question.

**Board Member Recruitment and Succession**
We will: Through the Board Recruitment, Tenure and Succession Policy and Board Induction and Training Policy:

- Provide a skills analysis of Board members and review the diversity of Board Members at Governance & Remuneration Committee on a regular basis to ensure the Board has the right mix of skills for the business.
- Review regularly when Board Members are due to retire, identifying any skills gaps which will arise as Board Members step down
- Have a 6 year maximum term of office for new Board Members with the option to increase up to a maximum of 9 years where the Board agreed that it is in the organisations best interest.
- Recruit Members in order to satisfy skills gaps as a first priority & secondly to maintain the diversity of the Board
- Undertake annual Board Effectiveness reviews to inform succession planning and skills gaps
- Provide Members with an induction programme

**Board Remuneration**
We will:

- agree what the 'market' is when comparing remuneration
- set the 'median' level as the target for remuneration with a +/-5% tolerance
- present relevant information to members as part of reviewing the levels of remuneration annually including independent advice on trends, general

economic conditions at the time of review and the level of increase agreed for staff in the year in question.

**Board Appraisals**
We will:
Through the Board, Committee and Chair Appraisal policy

- In accordance with the Service Agreements and NHF Code of Governance carry out regular appraisals of all Board Members
- The form of the appraisal will be determined from time to time by Governance & Remuneration Committee and developed where appropriate
- Identify any training and development needs and where required support Members to develop further skills

**Shareholder Policy**
We will:

- Make the shareholder policy available on Leeds Fed website
- Ensure that the attendance of shareholders is reviewed after each AGM and consider whether shareholders should remain if they have missed more than 3 AGM's without any contact.
- Include shareholders in any decisions for changes to the governance structure of Leeds Federated

**Co-regulation, Customer Engagement and Empowerment**
We will:

- Through our Customer Voice Panel we will actively, and meaningfully, engage our customers in scrutinising service delivery ensuring they hold us accountable and contribute to the continuous improvement of our services in alignment with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- We will provide the Customer Voice Panel with relevant performance, regulatory, and legal information, including compliance with the Governance and Viability Standard 2015 and regulatory standards, enabling members to effectively monitor and scrutinise our performance.
- We will involve customers in the development and shaping of relevant policies, particularly those that directly affect them, ensuring compliance with the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020 and the Consumer Standards.
- We will maintain a clear and robust framework to ensure effective communication between the Customer Voice Panel, relevant Committees, and the Board. This framework will ensure that the customer voice is clearly heard and considered in decision-making processes, as required by the latest regulatory standards.

**Satisfying the requirements of the regulatory standards**
We will:

- Keep abreast of any changes in the RSH's Regulatory Standards
- Report to Board annually with an assessment against each of the Regulatory Standards, drawing attention to any changes and highlighted how the standards are being met
- Report to Tenants via the Annual Report

- Report to Board and the RSH any losses from fraudulent activity
- Complete the requirements of the Governance and Viability Standard via the Finance Policy and Risk Management Framework

## Key points for customers

Our customers are central to the decisions being taken by Board and Committee. We have customers on the Board and ensure their involvement through our Customer Voice panel. Strong Governance arrangements ensure there is transparency and accountability in decision making.

## Key points for board/committee members and the regulator

**Current Grading**

- G1/V2. Last full inspection May 2023. Confirmation of returns is included in the CEX report.

**Board Terms of Reference**

- Section 2.2: Structure, Governance and appointments

**Governance & Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference**

- To ensure that the Board's overall process for ensuring good governance, succession planning, recruitment and selection, Board attendance, appraisal processes are in place and effective and,
- To consider the remuneration packages of the Chief Executive and Senior Management and Board members and make recommendations to the Board.

**Links to Risk Register:**

- 13. Strategic goals not delivered due to Board action / non action.

**Key Regulatory Requirements**

RSH: Economic Standard: Governance and Viability
NHF Code of Governance (2020)
Equality Act 2010
The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing 2012, updated in 2023.
Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)

More information can also be found through: Regulation and Compliance wider reading page on OnePlace.

## Policy updates

The Chief Executive and Company Secretary are responsible for updating this policy.

Policy updated and approved October 2025 by the Governance and Remuneration Committee. Next review due October 2026.