

Guidelines For The Annual Tenant Elections Of Tenant Representatives To The Board Of PCHA

Amended By the Tenants Consultative Forum June 2008

Introduction

These guidelines cover the procedures and rules governing the election of tenant representatives to the Board of PCHA.

The aim of this procedure is to ensure that:

- An election is held, on an annual basis, leading to the filling of any vacancies, for elected tenant representatives, on the Board of PCHA.
- The outcome of the election is known before the AGM of PCHA shareholders.
- Every qualifying PCHA permanent tenant is given the right to stand, and cast a vote, in the annual election process.
- All the tenants standing in the election must have the necessary skills and attributes required to serve on the Board of PCHA or have the ability to acquire such skills in a relatively short period of time.
- That the Ballot process be conducted independently of PCHA.

Responsibility for the smooth running of the election process will be with the PCHA Residents Involvement Manager.

These guidelines cover:

- The Election process.
- The Rules covering the election process.
- Guidance for candidates' interviews.
- Information to be provided to candidates at interview.
- The skills required by candidates to stand in the election.

The Procedure

The PCHA Managing Director will inform the manager of Resident Involvement Manager of the date for the shareholders AGM and the number of Tenant Members vacancies to be filled 14 weeks prior to the dates of the shareholders' meeting.

If there is no natural vacancy arising then the longest serving elected tenant member shall stand down. If this should result in two or more members qualifying for re-election then the vacancy will be determined by the drawing of lots.

The Residents Involvement Manager will arrange for a ballot to be held, to fill the vacancies, the results of which must be with the Company Secretary no later than 17 days before the PCHA AGM.

The Residents Involvement Manager will then run the election as follows.

Table One: Election Procedure

Week Number	Event
1	Resident Involvement manager to confirm number of vacancies to be filled in liaison with the PCHA Managing Director and Company Secretary. The results of the ballot to be available to the company secretary at least 17 days before the PCHA AGM.
2	Prepare text to advertise the election, and invite nomination from all qualifying PCHA permanent tenants. Liaise with Genesis Research and Information Department for notification of the election to appear in the Tenants Newsletter or another suitable alternative.
3	Copy of text to printers, appointment of independent ballot servicing organisation and ordering of tenant address labels.
5	Notification of Election to all tenants.
5 – 9	Time for tenants to notify PCHA of their wish to stand and receive help to fill in their nomination papers and election statements.
10 – 12	Interview of candidates by a representative/s of the PCHA Board, and Tenants Consultative Forum, together with Manager of Resident Involvement and the Company Secretary, to inform candidates about the role and duties of the Board and its members, answer any questions and confirm that the candidate has the necessary skills to serve as a PCHA Board member or has the ability to gain such skills.
12	Address labels and candidates details to the Electoral Reform Ballot Society.
13	Ballot forms out to tenants.
14	At the end of week 14, giving tenants 14 days to return their ballot papers, the close of ballot and count will take place.
14	PCHA Managing Director, Secretary of Genesis, Deputy Director Housing Services and all candidates informed of election results.
15	Text for next Tenants Newsletter, informing all tenants of the ballot result, to Research and Information.

Rules Covering The Election Process.

The rules governing the election process are as follows:

- 1 The election will be held on an annual basis and be completed at least 17 days before the Shareholders AGM.
- 2 The purpose of the election is to fill any tenant vacancies on the PCHA Board. If there are no such vacancies then the longest serving tenant Representative shall retire. This person may stand for re-election. Therefore there will be at least 1 vacancy on the Board each year.
- 3 All PCHA tenants, over the age of 18 years, are eligible to stand for And vote in the election process.
- 4 Notification of the election will be sent to all households via the PCHA Tenants Newsletter, or a special mailing arranged for that purpose.
- 5 Tenants will be given 2 weeks to return their completed nomination forms and must provide the following information:
 - Their name address and contact details
 - Their date of birth
 - A signed Declaration that if elected they would be willing to sign the PCHA Code of Conduct and Declaration Disclosure of Interest Forms. A copy of the Code of Conduct and Declaration Disclosure of Interest Form will be sent to all tenants requesting a nominations form.
 - Any further information required for Equal Opportunities monitoring purposes.
- 6 Candidates will be given the opportunity to provide an election statement, which will be sent out with the ballot forms, of up to 400 words. Candidates will be given assistance in preparing this statement if they request it. Candidates will be given a least one-week to provide this statement. Whilst candidates will be permitted a considerable degree of latitude in the style of their statements, PCHA reserves the right to edit any statement which, in its view, is libellous, racially or sexually inflammatory or otherwise likely to bring the Association into disrepute.
- 8 Candidates will be invited to an interview with representatives of the Board of PCHA and the Tenants Consultative Forum. Attendance at the interview will be compulsory. Part of the interview will be used to assess if the candidate has the skills, or the capacity to develop the skills, required by a Board member. If the candidate is unable to do this then they will not be able to stand in the current election and subsequent 3 elections.
- 9 Perspective and accepted candidates must not contact members of the interview panel before or after the interview to discuss any matters relating to

the election process. Candidates who break this rule will disqualify themselves from standing in the current, or future, elections.

- 10 The decision of the interview panel will be final and not subject to appeal.
- 11 The postal ballot process will be conducted by an organisation, which is independent of PCHA. Tenants will be given at least 2 weeks to cast their vote and be provided with a stamped addressed envelope in which to return their ballot papers.
- 12 Where only one nomination is received this person will be elected by default.
- 13 In the case of a tie the winner will determine by the drawing of lots.
- 14 In the case that no-one comes forward for the ballot then the vacancy will be filled by way of co-option by the PCHA Board in consultation with the Tenants Consultative Forum, or any other body which the PCHA Board believes to be representing the interest of PCHA tenants.
- 15 Inviting the unsuccessful candidate who gained the next highest number of votes to join the committee, subject to the agreement of the Board of PCHA, will fill casual vacancies, occurring between elections.
- 16 Any candidate who fails to sign the required Declaration or Disclosure of Interest Forms, within 21 days of election, with out exception or amendment will automatically disqualify himself or herself from holding office notwithstanding the results of the ballot.
- 17 The decision of the Board of PCHA regarding the interpretation of these rules will be final.

Guidance For Candidates Interviews

It will be compulsory for all candidates to attend this interview as part of the qualification criteria to stand in the election. The aims of the interview are as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for candidates to gain a better understanding of their potential responsibilities as Board Members and what assistance will be available to them to help them successfully fulfil this role.
- For an assessment to be made which will ensure that the candidate has the skills, or the ability to gain the skills, required by a successful Board member.

Representatives of the PCHA Board and Tenants Consultative Forum, with the support of the Tenants Initiatives manager and Company Secretary, will carry out the interview.

The interview will be held in a relaxed and informal manner.

If it is felt that the candidate does not have, or would not be able to reach the minimum skill level required, in a relatively short period of time, then the candidate would not be allowed to go onto the ballot paper for this and 3 subsequent elections.

Perspective and accepted candidates must not contact members of the interview panel before or after the interview to discuss any matters relating to the election process. Candidates who break this rule will disqualify themselves from standing in the current, or future, elections.

The decision of the interview panel will be final and is not subject to appeal.

Information To Be Provided to Candidates At Interview

During the course of the interview candidates should be provided with the following information:

An explanation of:

- The role and responsibilities of a Board member
- The Role of the Board and its committees
- The number and format of Board meetings
- The support available to Board members

Skills Required By Candidates Wishing To Stand In the Election

The Housing Corporation criterion for the performance of Housing Association Boards covers many skills and competency requirements. Some of these skills are required by all Board members while others skills may be simply enjoyed by some individual Board members. When devising the minimum skills required from a potential new Board member consideration has been given to the Corporation

Performance Standards. It is important to note that candidates standing do not need to demonstrate that they have already gained the full range of skills required by Board members. However, as a minimum they must be able to demonstrate that they have the potential to gain the minimum skills required in a relatively short period of time.

After the interview process the following form should be completed. In order to qualify to have their name placed on the ballot paper the candidate must be able to demonstrate that they have/or are likely to have at least 4 of the skills listed in the form. Two of the Four skills must include “ to be able to work as a team member” and “To be able to be an effective committee member”.

Skills [or competencies]	What Does It Include?	Does this person have the skill or the ability to gain this skill?
To be able to work as a Team Member.	Develop and maintain constructive working relationships with colleagues.	
To be able to assess own training needs.	Identify skills and knowledge required. Identify own strength's and weaknesses.	
To be able to plan and review activities.	Agree work objectives. Plan activities. Contribute to decision making. Review progress.	
To be able to assess options.	Obtain and assess information. Decide on a course of action	
To be able to contribute to consultation process.	Identify people who need to be consulted. Identify appropriate methods of consultation. Ensure consultation is organised effectively. Evaluate and review events.	
To be able to exercise financial control.	Evaluate and review financial information. Contribution to the implementation of financial policies. Monitor and control activities against budget.	
To be able to be an effective committee member.	Time and commitment to attend meetings. Commitment to read papers in advance and evaluate information provided. Make effective contributions to the decision process.	
To be able to develop housing policies.	Identify housing policy issues. Assess relevant information. Discuss housing policy options. Decide housing policies.	
To be able to negotiate and	Set objectives. Interpret performance data.	

monitor housing services.	Review performance.	
To be able to present information – written and spoken.	Organising and presenting information.	
To be able to Establish and maintain working relationships with other organisations.	Identify and contact other organisations. Develop working relationships. Deal with conflict.	
To be able to understand the legal framework of the Board.	Operate within the Constitution. Raise matters in an appropriate manor.	
Ability to develop Human Resources Policies.	Identify human resource policy issues. Assess relevant information. Discuss options. Decide policies.	
Ability to contribute to Marketing and Communication Strategies.	Identify marketing opportunities. Take part in marketing activities. Actively help to promote PCHA.	

Supporting Documentation

- Letter to tenants seeking to be candidates.
- Application form to prospective candidates.
- Equal Opportunities Monitoring Information.

Election of Tenants Representatives To PCHA Board

Thank you for requesting a nomination form to stand in the above elections. Please find enclosed a nomination form together with a stamped addressed envelope for its return.

You should complete the form and return it to the above address no later than midday on 22ND June 2009

If you would like to make an election statement, which will be sent to all the tenants voting in this election, this can be arranged. Simply attach your election statement must be no longer than 400 words. It would normally give a little background information about the candidate and why they are standing for election. It must not contain anything, which is libellous or racially or sexually inflammatory.

Your statement can be hand written or typed but must be in a legible form. If you would like any help in preparing your statement I would be happy to arrange this. If this should be the case please contact me on the above telephone number and I will make all the necessary arrangements. If I should be out when you call leave a message on my answering machine, with your phone number, and I will return your call as soon as I can.

As part of the election process you will be given the opportunity to meet a representative of the PCHA Board, and a member of the Tenants Consultative Forum. At this meeting you will receive information on the duties of a Board member and what help is available to support Board members. It is also a good chance to answer any of your questions. All candidates standing in the election must attend this meeting.

One of the key purposes for the meeting is to ensure that any candidate going forward to the ballot has the necessary skills, or ability to develop these skills, to become a successful Board Member.

By the end of the meeting the PCHA Board and Tenants Consultative Forum members will decide if you have the required skills. If it is felt that you do not then your name will not go forward onto the ballot paper and you will not be eligible to enter the election process for 3 years.

For further information about this meeting and the election process in general, please refer to the attached Rules covering the election and Guidance for Candidates Interviews.

The Electoral Reform Balloting Service will run the election process. The ballot forms will be sent out to tenants in July and the results made known in August. The Electoral Reform Balloting Service will inform you of the ballot result, in writing, on or about that date.

Please note that interviews for potential candidates will take place on **Thursday 9th July at PCHA's head offices in Willesden**. We can offer you an early evening appointment if required.

If you have any questions, or feel that I can help you in any way, please get in touch.

Yours Sincerely,

Angela Ellis
Resident Involvement Manager
0208 4518080

Nomination Form For Tenant Representatives To The PCHA Board

**Please fill out this form and return it to Residents Involvement
Manager 192, High Road, Willesden, London, NW10 2PB, in
the envelope provided.**

BY 22ND JUNE 2009

I am a tenant of PCHA and I wish to stand as a tenant representative to the
Board of PCHA

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Post code.....

Day Time Telephone Number.....

Evening Telephone Number.....

Date of Birth.....

If elected I agree to abide by the PCHA Rules and sign a Code of Conduct
and Declaration Disclosure of Interest Forms

[A copy of this is available on request from Company Secretary
Genesis Housing Group, Capital House, 25 Chapel Street, London NW15DT
telephone 020 7563 0157

I am / am not attaching an election statement with this application form.
[Please delete as necessary.]

Signed..... Dated.....

Please turn over the page as there is more information overleaf.

Diversity Monitoring Form

As part of PCHA's commitment to diversity, we ask that tenant Board member applicants fill in our monitoring form. We are committed to ensuring that all tenants have full access to involvement. This form is one way for us to analyse how effectively we are doing this right now.

Any information which you give to us will be treated as strictly confidential.

Q1. Please indicate your gender. PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY
Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>

Q2. Do you have a disability that PCHA should know about to effectively communicate with you? PLEASE TICK ✓ ALL THAT APPLY
No <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf <input type="checkbox"/> Partially sighted <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted movement <input type="checkbox"/> Blind <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair user <input type="checkbox"/> Hard of hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Learning difficulty <input type="checkbox"/>

Q3. Is your first language English? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY
Yes - GO TO Q8 <input type="checkbox"/> No - CONTINUE TO Q4 <input type="checkbox"/>

Q4. Do you rely on or need the help of someone to translate or interpret for you? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Q5. If not English, please specify your first language? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY																																								
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Q6. If you rely on someone over the age of 16 to translate for you, please tell us their contact details if you are happy for us to contact them directly.

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Name

Relationship to you

Telephone number

Q7. Do you need our help in interpreting conversations or translating written documents into your first language?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Yes, just for written translations

Yes, just for verbal interpreting

Yes, for both written translations and verbal interpreting

No

Q8. *Optional Question* Which of these best describes your ethnicity?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| White British | <input type="checkbox"/> | Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> | Asian or Asian British other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White other | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or Black British Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or Black British African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed White & Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or Black British other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed other | <input type="checkbox"/> | Middle Eastern | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian or Asian British Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> | East European | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian or Asian British Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Would rather not say / refused | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q9. *Optional Question* What is your religion?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Buddhist Christian Hindu

Jewish Muslim Sikh

None Would rather not say / refused

Other **PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW**

Q10. *Optional Question* Would you mind indicating whether you are...?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Heterosexual Gay Lesbian

Bisexual Transgender Transexual

Would rather not say / refused