BUILDING INCLUSIVE MODELS OF GOVERNANCE IN THE HOUSING SECTOR

Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP
Housing Diversity Network

SPEAKERS

Gemma Bell, Partner

🐦 @Gemma_A_Bell

in Gemma Bell

Gemma_A.Bell@penningtonslaw.com

Sharon Thandi, Associate

🐦 @SharonThandi07

in Sharon Thandi

Sharon.Thandi@penningtonslaw.com

Evonne Hudson

🐦 @EvonneHudson11

in Evonne Hudson

Yvonne Davies

🐦 @YvonneHousing

in Yvonne Davies

yvonne@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk

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SETTING THE SCENE

What is diversity?

- **Diversity** refers to the presence of people who, as a group, have a wide range of characteristics, seen and unseen, which they were born with or have acquired. These characteristics may include their gender identity, race or ethnicity, LGBTQ+ status, disability status, and more.

What is inclusion?

- **Inclusion** is where people's **differences are valued** and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which **everyone feels that they belong without having to conform**, that **their contribution matters** and they are able to **perform to their full potential**, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace has fair policies and practices in place and **enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively**.

DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Drivers

- Governance and Financial Viability Standard

- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard:

    "…demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs."

- Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998

- Black Lives Matter

The New NHF Code of Governance

"Principle 1 – Mission and values

The board sets and actively drives the organisation's social purpose, mission, values and ambitions, and through these embeds within the organisation **resident focus, inclusion, integrity, openness and accountability**."

The New NHF Code of Governance

"1.3 Equality, diversity and inclusion: the board **demonstrates a clear commitment** to achieve equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion in all of the organisation's activities, **reflecting the diversity of the communities it serves**. It has **policies and statements** which actively demonstrate this commitment, and **sets priorities and objectives** for the organisation to achieve."

The New NHF Code of Governance

- "(1) The board seeks **regular assurance** about how these commitments and objectives are being delivered in practice, and **tracks progress** against the priorities it has set.

- (2) The organisation **at least annually publishes information** about its work to deliver these commitments and objectives and the progress it has made."

The New NHF Code of Governance

Resident focus: the **views**, needs, safety and aspirations **of the organisation's residents** and other customers are **placed at the heart of the board's decision-making**.

> (1)   There are policies, frameworks and opportunities that enable, encourage and support residents and other c**ustomers to engage with, influence and contribute to strategic decision-making**, and in particular to decisions that affect their interests.

BARRIERS

Positive discrimination vs affirmative action

- Positive discrimination = generally unlawful

- Circumstances where a protected characteristic is required

- Positive action = generally lawful (provided the conditions in s158/159 Equality Act 2010 met)

- The "Rooney Rule"

The Barriers

What would you say is the main barrier within your organisation to achieving inclusive governance?

STRATEGY, GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

The Role of the Board

"It all starts at the board to set the tone for inclusion as a priority both internally and externally."

- Ken Denman, governance and nominating committee chair, Motorola Solutions

Strategy:

- *"Boards don't run the company—they govern. Boards can ask questions about the culture, whether or not it's inclusive, and how to support an inclusive culture with the business strategy. That's the board's job."*

—Director, various *Fortune 500* organizations

Strategy

What to ask	What to do?
What is your organisation's vision for inclusivity? What is your definition of inclusion?	Align Board and management definitions of inclusion. Boards should proactively input to shape inclusion strategies.
How does your business strategy reflect inclusion?	Work on improvements to strategies as necessary.
What does your organisation do to advance the inclusion agenda? Where are you making progress?	Understand your organisation's diversity and inclusion efforts. Obtain information to help address the organisation's gaps.
What are the barriers and enablers?	Stay aware of the barriers and enablers. Evaluate solutions towards promoting enables and breaking down barriers

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Governance

"To truly embody and govern inclusion, the board should reflect the diversity of [the organisation's] customer base in its composition, create an inclusive culture within the boardroom itself, and integrate inclusive thinking and behaviours into all of the ways that the board operates."

—Trudy Bourgeois, founder and CEO, Centre for Workforce Excellence

Governance

What to ask	What to do?
How are decisions made by the Board?	Consider both diversity and inclusion implications when making decisions. Ensure all board members involved are heard and respected.
If inclusion is not already practiced, how can the board foster inclusion through its operation?	Conduct assessments of inclusive governance practices, develop a plan to embed inclusion into the Board processes. Consider forming an inclusion – specific committee of the Board.
Does the data informing the Board come from a diverse and inclusive set of sources and perspectives?	Avoid confirmation bias by challenging management to seek accurate information from diverse sources.

Accountability and Performance

"[Driving] inclusion has to be a shared responsibility, but the roles are different. Management executes and advances the [inclusion] mission, and the board holds management and the organization accountable to that mission."

—Sheila Penrose, chairman, Jones Lang LaSalle Inc. and director, McDonald's Corporation

Accountability and Performance

What to ask	What to do?
What metrics are in place to measure performance?	Influence the types of metrics used to track progress and outcomes. Prioritise inclusion on Board agendas regularly. Schedule time during Board meetings to discuss and monitor diversity and inclusion progress and goals
How are inclusive behaviours and outcomes rewarded, recognised and celebrated?	Purposefully celebrate improvements in inclusion and reward individuals who embody inclusive leadership. Develop corrective actions and plans to correct non-inclusive behaviours
How are you pursuing constant improvement (remember diversity and inclusion isn't a one time tick box)?	Identify best practice and peers in the sector, measure against best practice, share learning.

MODELS OF INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

The Sports Sector

- Sport England and UK Sport – Diversity Plan 2019
- Arose from findings from Diversity in Sport Governance report.
  - Increase in representation of women -30% requirement
  - Seeking pool of senior board candidates from diverse backgrounds to help with recruitment
  - By December 2020 140 potential candidates will be involved in the programme, increasing to 160 by mid 2021
  - Candidates receive personalised support package
  - Review of the Sports Governance Code

The NHS

- Equality Act duties
- The Empowering People and Communities Taskforce
- NHS Citizen
- The Equality and Health Inequalities Team
- The Diversity and Inclusion Team
- The WRES Team
- NHS Youth Forum
- Older People's Sounding Board

Models of inclusive governance

- Community Gateway Model
- Designated board roles e.g. under 30
- Shadow / junior boards
- Equality and diversity working group(s)
- Placing value on lived in experience
- Digital inclusion
- Unconscious bias training
- Reverse mentoring
- Impact assessments

Supporting the Diversity of Boards

Yvonne Davies, HDN Associate

October 2020

The Quest for HDN

A Diverse group of Board Members who:

- Understand strategic and operational performance

- Hold us all to account

- Are open to creativity and finding new ways of working

- Maintain their diversity of thought, skills and experience Exercise sound judgement and leadership

- Are supported to build their capacity built and capability

- Would be an asset to any organisation

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Upskilling – HDN Board Excellence Programme

- **EXTERNAL mentor for all participants**
  4 one-to-one sessions with mentor

- **4 one day facilitated Group Development workshops**
  (**now 12 on line**)
  Sector speakers (including Regulator, NHF, NFA, TPAS, CEOs and BM

- **One-to-one support**
  360 assessment and Personality Profile (Impact and Influence)

- **Peer networking** with other Board Members, Sector facilitators and shared learning

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Group Development Workshops for Board Members

- Governance and regulation (including IDAs)
- Government policy, strategy and impact
- Growth - strategic partnerships, mergers, new homes etc
- Understanding finance, financial assurance and treasury management
- Business Diversification and Project Appraisal
- Diversity of thought and using your skills in the Board Room
- Role of Audit and Internal Controls Assurance
- Value for Money
- Customer Engagement - hearing the customer voice
- Health and Safety Assurance
- Business transformation and the digital agenda
- Managing your assets
- Housing with Support

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Mags Bryant, Acting Committee Chair, Board Member and Tenant, Salix Homes

"The Board Excellence Programme was invaluable in preparing me for the many aspects of being a member of Salix's Board.

I came to this programme with no knowledge of the housing sector, but the structure and content of this programme made it straightforward in learning the skills necessary to become a valuable member of the board and to be able to contribute in a meaningful and knowledgeable way.

Building on my existing skills it was easy to be able to relate to all modules of the programme, which were presented in an engaging and accessible way.

The added bonus was meeting other people in the same situation as myself chatting and exchanging experiences.

When I attend board meetings now, I feel more confident, the knowledge that this programme has given me has not only enhanced my experience at board meetings but has the benefits of transferable skills in other aspects of my working life."

Supporting a New Generation of Board Members: HDN Support

- Support the Board with Succession Planning

- Tweaked the recruitment of BMs

- Promotion of vacancies

- Forward Plan for succession, or simply a social value support for improving the diversity of Boards and organisational leadership

- Recruitment and open days

- Programme of activities and support for retention and trainees development

- Support for Board Chair/Board Champion/CEO to ensure impact is lasting

- Leg up for those who have fallen behind

- Annual Appraisals and 6 monthly reviews

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Achieving Board Diversity Programme – Year One

Board Excellence Programme ……..

PLUS………

Trainee Diverse BM Support Programme

- Mentoring contract and personal development plan
- Personality questionnaire – to support influencing
- 6 one-to-one mentoring sessions
- Internal Governance lead contact support
- In organisation Board and Committee observations, inc Board awaydays
- Bi monthly contact (check in, support and leg up) from HDN
- 4 workshops for trainees only – Mock Board meetings, additional training and Personal Development sessions

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Achieving Board Diversity Programme – Year Two

- A more personal tailored programme for individuals
- 4 collective sessions a year
- 6 one to one mentoring sessions
- Support to find Board positions
- Shadow other Boards of HDN members
- Interview and CV skills for trainees

Trainees know from the outset: there are no promises of a Board position at the end– ideally this will be the case, but sponsors of many trainees are spending their social value contribution well, in getting trainees board ready for themselves and others.

Here from our Trainees here:

https://vimeo.com/426773414

Some Achieving Board Diversity Trainees: Fresh thinking

"What diverse people bring is their perspective and insight into the needs of communities, this is particularly important in these times of crisis"

Shazad

"We should stay on line for meetings, send in questions and enable more Board time for quality discussions on outcomes. We need more frequent KPIs which are up to date. We still need face to face meets for team building"

Angela

"How many NEDs understand digital outside the cyber risks? Digital is important in the first instance for what we offer through customer service"

Adam

Are there too many "we already know" BMs recruited? The world is changing, we need to be brave and have BMs with new skills too. Why don't we try a Board Swap Programme in housing?

Rebecca

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Dave Proctor,
Together Housing Group, Chair

"I feel really positive about this programme.

For years I have been on Boards , with full intentions to deliver a more diverse Board. It has all been hot air, nothing changes, its not led anywhere

It's the first project when things have happened that otherwise would not have happened. We are genuinely doing something that works

Everyone should be doing it. Spend a few quid on it – it's easy!

We just recruited the first 2 to our Committee. They have been trained in the right skills and attributes of a BM. They understand good governance and are strong enough to give us new challenges and to maintain that different perspective"

Contact for more information (inc videos)

Board Excellence Programme –recruiting now

https://www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk/mentoring/board-excellence

Achieving Board Diversity Programme – recruiting now

https://www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk/hdn-board-diversity-programme

Contact us for more information to see how we can help you:

yvonne@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk (HDN Associate) 07867974659

boardmentoring@housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk (HDN) on 01484 652606

Thank - you

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The Barriers

What would you say is the main barrier within your organisation to achieving inclusive governance?

The Barriers

The barriers to inclusive governance models	
Knowledge	Occupational segregation
Time	Unconscious bias
Costs	Lack of integration into business management
Recruitment	Lack of consistent ownership
Other needs	Communications barrier
Balancing other regulatory requirements	Resistance to change

Key considerations

Where is your organisation on this journey?

Have a clear message

What does inclusivity mean to your communities?

Is your approach intersectional?

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Key considerations

Who are you attracting by implementing these methods?

Are you reaching your objectives?

How can you promote learning and collaboration?

KEY ACTIONS TO TAKE AWAY

Key Actions

- Is your organisation aware of the barriers it is facing?
- What are you doing to overcome and address these challenges?
- How do you deliver visible inclusivity actions and results?
- How are you reaching out to talent that may not have considered a job in your business or industry?
- How are diversity and inclusion considerations incorporated into business decisions on key topics such as customers, products and location?
- Do you have experiences that you can share with peers in the sector?

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QUESTIONS

Gemma Bell, Partner

🐦 @Gemma_A_Bell

in Gemma Bell

Gemma_A.Bell@penningtonslaw.com

Sharon Thandi, Associate

🐦 @SharonThandi07

in Sharon Thandi

Sharon.Thandi@penningtonslaw.com

Evonne Hudson

🐦 @EvonneHudson11

in Evonne Hudson

Yvonne Davies

🐦 @YvonneHousing

in Yvonne Davies

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