



Hawthorn Housing Co-operative

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP POLICY

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST	
Policy Guardian:	Corporate Services Assistant
Author:	Corporate Services Assistant
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KPIs/reporting arrangements implemented:	N/A
Training complete:	N/A
Posted on Website:	Yes
Publicity material issued:	N/A

Hawthorn Housing Co-operative will provide this policy on request at no cost, in large print, in Braille, on tape or in other non-written format, and in a variety of languages.

1. Introduction

This policy has been written in accordance with Hawthorn Housing Co-operative's (Hawthorn) Rules. It clarifies the process of how a Hawthorn member, if eligible, can become a Committee Member if they wish to do so.

2. Eligibility for the Committee

A person must be aged 18 or over and a member of the Co-operative to become a Committee Member (including anyone appointed to fill a casual vacancy) other than a person appointed as a co-optee or appointed by the Scottish Housing Regulator who must be aged 18 or over but need not be a member.

A person will not be a Committee Member and cannot be appointed or elected as such if (under Rule 40.1):-

- He/she is an undischarged bankrupt, has granted a trust deed which has not been discharged or is in a current Debt Payment Plan under the Debt Arrangement Scheme; or
- He/she has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty which is not spent by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; or
- He/she is a party to any legal proceedings in any Court of Law by or against the Co-operative; or
- He/she is or will be unable to attend the Committee Meetings for a period of 12 months; or
- He/she has been removed from the Committee of another registered social landlord within the previous five years; or
- He/she has resigned from the Committee in the previous five years in circumstances where the resignation was submitted after the date of his/her receipt of notice of a special committee meeting convened to consider a resolution from his/her removal from the Committee in terms of Rule 41.5; or
- He/she has been removed from the Committee in terms of Rules 41.4 or 41.5 within the previous five years; or
- he/she has been removed, disqualified or suspended from a position of management or control of a charity under the provisions of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 or the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; or
- A disqualification order or disqualification undertaking has been made against that person under the Company Directors' Disqualification Act 1986 or the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (which relate to the power of a Court to prevent someone from being a Director, liquidator or administrator of a company or a receiver or manager of company property or being involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company); or

- His/her nomination for election to the Committee has been rejected in accordance with Rule 37.3 during the period between the return of the completed nomination form and the commencement of the relevant Annual General Meeting.
- At an annual general meeting, he/she has served as a Committee Member for a continuous period of nine years or more and the Committee has not resolved to permit him/her to stand again or otherwise be nominated for re-election.

3. Composition of the Committee

The Management Committee shall have a minimum of seven and a maximum of fifteen members, including co-optees but does include anyone appointed as an Adviser.

No Committee Member may take office until they have agreed to and signed the Co-operative's code of conduct for Committee Members.

The Committee shall assess annually the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity that it needs for its decision making and what is contributed by the Committee Members by way of annual performance reviews. The Committee must satisfy itself that any Committee Member seeking re-election to the Committee after service as a Committee Member for a continuous period of nine years or more can demonstrate his/her continued effectiveness as a Committee Member before he/she may stand for re-election.

4. Interests

Each of the Committee Members shall, in exercising his/her role as a Committee Member, act in the best interests of the Co-operative, its tenants and service users and will not place any personal or other interests ahead of his/her primary duty to the Co-operative.

If a person serves on the Committee or any sub-committee he/she must declare any personal or other external interests on an annual basis in accordance with the Co-operative's Code of Conduct for Committee Members.

5. Electing Committee Members

Any member of the Co-operative can stand for election to the Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). For more information on Committee Elections please see Committee Elections Policy. If they fail to get elected, or for any other valid reason, then they can be an observer of the Committee and then if accepted, be co-opted onto the Committee as a Co-optee.

6. Vacancies

When there are vacancies on the Committee, the Committee will decide on a strategy for filling these vacancies. This item will be discussed at a Management Committee Meeting. The Co-operative can advertise in the area to fill vacancies and the Committee will make every attempt to keep Committee Membership high.

The Management Committee defines a “casual” vacancy as any vacancy which occurs when an elected Committee Member leaves the Committee between AGMs. Committee can appoint a Member to take their place on the Committee until the next AGM. Any time the number is below fifteen the Committee will consider it has a “casual” vacancy.

7. Observers

Any member expressing an interest in joining the Management Committee, if there is a vacancy, will be invited to attend a Committee Meeting. It will be explained to them that they have to attend three meetings after which they will be asked if they are still interested. If they are still interested, the Committee will decide whether to co-opt them or appoint them if there is a casual vacancy.

Any Member appointed to the Committee in this way must stand at the next Annual General Meeting to continue Committee Membership.

8. Co-optees

The Committee can co-opt to the Committee or to a sub-committee anyone it considers is suitable to become a Committee Member or member of a sub-committee. Co-optees do not need to be Members, but they can only serve as co-optees on the Committee or sub-committee until the next annual general meeting or until removed by the Committee. A person co-opted to the Committee can also serve on any sub-committees.

A person appointed as a co-optee shall undertake the role of Committee Member or member of a sub-committee and accordingly will be subject to the duties and responsibilities of a Committee Member. Co-optees can take part in discussions at the Committee or any sub-committees and vote at Committee and sub-committee meetings on all matters except those which directly affect the Rules, the membership of the Co-operative or the election of the Co-operative's Office Bearers. Co-optees may not stand for election, nor be elected as one of the Office Bearers of the Committee.

Committee Members co-opted in this way must not make up more than one-third

of the total number of the Committee or sub-committee members at any one time. The presence of co-optees at Committee Meetings will not be counted when establishing whether the minimum number of Committee Members are present to allow the meeting to take place and the presence of co-optees will not count towards the quorum for sub-committee meetings.

9. Attendance

Committee Members who miss four Management Committee Meetings in a row or misses 50% or more of Management Committee meetings held within a calendar year, without special leave of absence previously being granted by the Committee either at his/her request or by exercise of the Committee's discretion will result in the Committee Member ceasing to be a Committee Member.

10. Resignations

Committee members can resign if they submit a letter in writing to the Committee.

Any letter must go to a Management Committee meeting for their consideration. Reasons for resignation fall into a number of categories e.g. ill health, work commitments, loss of interest, dispute with the Co-operative or if an individual falls out with another individual on the Committee or the rest of the Committee.

To allow time for thought a resigning Committee Member will be informed of the date of the meeting the letter will go to and that it may be withdrawn prior to that meeting should the member change their mind.

The Committee should be mindful that they may not know or have been told the true reason for someone's action in resigning.

Where a member resigns for a non-personal reason then this is a notifiable event.

Each person should be thanked for serving on the Management Committee in a standard letter, which points out how they can rejoin the Committee, should they wish to. A copy of the letter is attached.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.

Appendix 1 - RESPONSE TO LETTERS OF RESIGNATION

Dear

RESIGNATION FROM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee received your resignation at their last meeting. They have asked me to write on behalf of the Co-operative and thank you for your valuable contribution to the Co-operative, and through it to the local community.

They would also point out that should you wish to rejoin the Committee at any point, there are often casual vacancies occurring throughout the year when Committee Membership falls below 15.

The Newsletter will normally contain details about this or staff/Committee Members can be informed of interest in rejoining the Committee, which they would raise with the rest of the Committee.

Any member can stand for election at the Annual General Meeting when at least one third of the Committee must stand for election. A nomination paper will be contained in the invitation to the AGM and details of what is required are contained on the paper.

Thank you once again for your contribution to the area.

Yours sincerely

Management Secretary.