



The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair

# The Barnet Group Ltd.

## Recruitment of Chair

### Recruitment Pack

March 2013



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

Dear Applicant,

### **The Barnet Group - Chair**

Thank you for your interest in this position. Enclosed is some of the information you will require to assist you in applying for the role.

To apply please can you:

- Provide an up-to-date CV;
- Write a supporting statement detailing how you meet the requirements of the person specification;
- Indicate if you cannot attend any of the interview dates.

Applications should be e-mailed to [melissa.baxter@russam-gms.co.uk](mailto:melissa.baxter@russam-gms.co.uk)

\*and copied to [emma.kynoch@russam-gms.co.uk](mailto:emma.kynoch@russam-gms.co.uk)

**Applications must be received by 5pm on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013.**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**Melissa Baxter**  
**Russam GMS**  
March 2013



## The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair

### CONTENTS

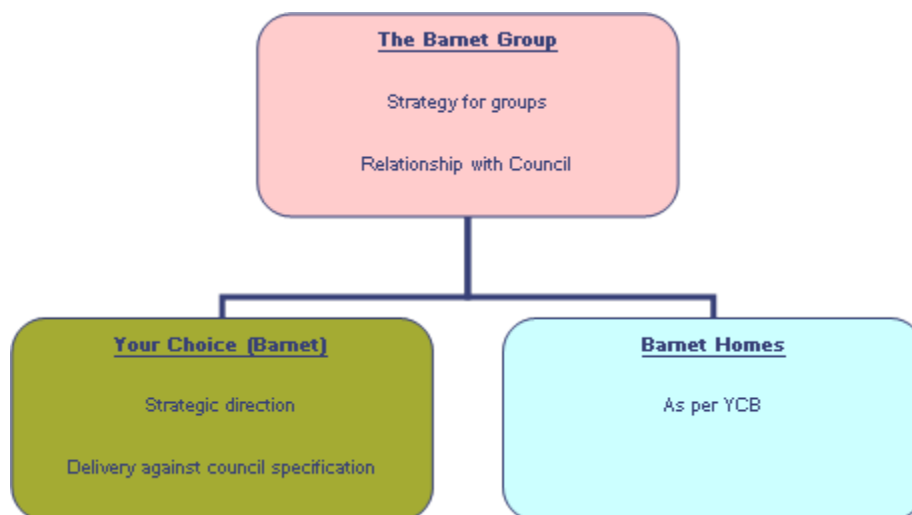
|   | Page |
|---|------|
| About The Barnet Group                    | 4    |
| The role of the Board and Board Members   | 5    |
| Involvement required                      | 7    |
| Role and responsibilities of the Chair    | 8    |
| Person specifications                     | 12   |
| Board composition                         | 14   |
| Principal terms and conditions of service | 15   |
| Timetable                                 | 16   |



## The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair

### About The Barnet Group

Created in February 2012, The Barnet Group is a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) owned by Barnet Council. The Barnet Group sits as the parent company to Your Choice (Barnet) Ltd. and Barnet Homes. Your Choice (Barnet) is responsible for the provision of learning disability and physical and sensory services. Barnet Homes is the Council's arms length management organisation (ALMO) which is responsible for the management of the Council's housing stock. This is an innovative venture establishing a new relationship with citizens in the borough whilst providing a more flexible and efficient service.



The Council is looking to recruit a single Chair who will oversee all three Boards.

Barnet Homes was created as an arms-length management organisation (ALMO) in 2004 to manage the borough's 15,000 council homes on behalf of Barnet Council.

That includes responsibility for repairs and maintenance, major works, caretaking, voids and lettings and offering support to residents to help them live independently.

It is committed to offering great service at great value to its residents and prides itself in involving residents in all that it does.

In the spring of 2011 it completed a £185million programme to bring almost 9,000 homes up to the Decent Homes standard. It is now seeking further opportunities to attract new business and build on its record of combining business efficiency with rising resident satisfaction.



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

### **THE ROLE OF THE BOARD AND BOARD MEMBERS**

#### **The role of the Board**

The Board has ultimate responsibility for the governance of The Barnet Group which is the parent/holding company of the ALMO and Your Choice (Barnet). The Board's role is to:

- set the vision – *where is the organisation going and what are its goals;*
- set the objectives – *Set out the key objectives which need to be met in order; to realise its vision*
- define the strategy – *the details of how the organisation will deliver the objectives;*
- define the core values – *how should the organisation act and behave.*

Officers are responsible for implementing the strategy and report to the Board. Board members should not get involved in day to day management issues but should remain strategic.

#### **The duties and functions of The Barnet Group Board include:**

- define and ensure compliance with the values and objectives of the organisation;
- ensure compliance with the Contract, between TheBarnetGroup and the Council;
- agree a Business Plan with the Council;
- define and ensure compliance with the Business Plan through the agreement of:
  - Policies and action plans;
  - Budgets;
  - A framework of delegation and system control;
- monitor the organisation's performance in relation to these plans, budgets, controls and decisions;
- approve each year's budget and accounts prior to publication;
- ensure arrangements are in place for urgent decisions to be made in between meetings;
- agree policies and make decisions on all matters that might create significant financial or other risk to the organisation, or which raise material issues of principle;
- appoint (and, if necessary, dismiss) the Chief Executive and Company Secretary;
- satisfy itself that the organisation's affairs are conducted lawfully and ethically, within the terms of its constitution and within generally accepted standards of performance and propriety;



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

### **The role of Board members**

All Board members take a collective responsibility for decisions made by the Board.

Each member should act only in the interests of the organisation and not on behalf of any constituency or interest group.

**Board members must at all times comply times with the duties imposed by the Companies Act 2006 including:**

- the duty to act within the powers of the Company;
- the duty to exercise independent judgement;
- the duty to promote the success of the Company;
- the duty to exercise reasonable skill, care and diligence; and
- any other directors' duties set out in the Act as updated or amended from time to time.

### ***Directors are also expected to:***

- comply with the Company's policies, procedures and standing orders as set and amended from time to time by the Board;
- act in accordance the Constitution;
- uphold and promote the core policies, purpose, values and objectives of the Company (including its commitment to equal opportunities);
- contribute to and share responsibility for decisions of the Board and/or any Committee of which you are from time to time a member;
- attend induction, training and performance review sessions and other such sessions or events as are reasonably required by the Company;
- read Board and/or Committee papers (as applicable) before meetings;
- represent the Company when requested;
- act in the best interest of the Company at all times.

Each Board member will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct and service agreement specifying the Board member's obligations, and should sign a copy to indicate acceptance.

The Board will regularly review the effectiveness of their own Governance arrangements.



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

### **INVOLVEMENT REQUIRED**

Being a Board member would require:

- participation in an induction programme in order to become familiar with the business and workings of the Board;
- regular attendance and preparation for Board meetings;
- regular attendance and preparation for Sub-group meetings;
- attendance at a residential Board 'away day' at least once a year;
- attendance at significant company events e.g. AGM, annual Open Day, etc;
- participation in appraisal and review – on a one to one basis with the Chair/ Vice Chair and also with the whole Board;
- attendance at development events (based on Board and individual needs).

At the time of drafting, it is estimated that the commitment for the Chair is:

- Chair – c.20-30 days per year



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

### **Role and responsibilities of the Chair**

#### **1 Role Description – Chair**

- 1.1 The role of the Chair is pivotal to the success of the Board. In general there is a strong correlation between the quality of the leadership by the Chair and Chief Executive and the success of the organisation. Conversely, where an organisation is not delivering, then questions can legitimately be asked about the quality of the Board leadership.

#### **2 The key responsibilities of the Chair are:**

- 2.1 Leadership of the Board, ensuring its effectiveness on all aspects of its role and setting its agenda;
- 2.2 Ensuring the provision of accurate, timely and clear information to directors;
- 2.3 Ensuring effective communication with tenants (in connection with Barnet Homes), staff and stakeholders including service users/Your Choice customers;
- 2.4 Arranging the regular evaluation of the performance of the Board, its committees and individual directors;
- 2.5 Facilitating the effective contribution of non-executive directors and ensuring constructive relations between executive and non- executive directors; and
- 2.6 Effective liaison and engagement with shareholders.

#### **3 Leadership**

- 3.1 As leader of the Board, the Chair has the overarching responsibility for ensuring that under his/her guidance the organisation meets its planned objectives for service delivery and has a clear understanding of its culture and its values.
- 3.2 Whilst the Chair leads the Board, the Chief Executive leads the executive team and takes responsibility for their achievements. A strong and appropriate relationship between the Chief Executive and the Chair is therefore essential to the performance of the Board and the organisation. The Chair needs to be a source of support for the Chief Executive, both in their personal development and in the development of the organisation.





## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

3.3 However at the same time, the relationship must accommodate constructive debate and challenge and should not become a “cosy” partnership that becomes impossible for non- executives to question.

3.4 A suitably skilled and effective Vice Chair should also be appointed for the purposes of business continuity and to provide cover in the absence of the chair.

### **4 Setting the agenda for the organisation**

4.1 It is the duty of the Chair to ensure that the Board has a delivery plan and strategies in place, which properly reflect both the Local Authority and The Barnet Group’s ambition for delivering high quality services, decent homes, sustainable communities and service improvements. Such plans should be informed by service users needs and aspirations.

### **5 Keeping the Board informed**

5.1 The Board can only be effective if it is well informed. The Chair needs to facilitate the proper flow of information between the parent authority and shareholders, and between Barnet Homes and Your Choice.

5.2 Chairs are in a special position because of their greater involvement with the Chief Executive and knowledge of the organisation. They should use their position to ensure that the non-executives receive all the information they need to make informed decisions on forward plans and strategies. The Board also needs to receive assurances that the control systems are in place and are working effectively and will need to agree a reporting cycle for its finance and performance, audit and risk management committees.

5.3 It is for the Chair to ensure that Non-executives receive regular updates on the results and outcomes of performance and strategies. It is essential that such information is timely and sufficiently comprehensive, but without including unnecessary detail that the Board does not need and which would only serve to waste the time and resources of the company.

### **6 Performance review**

6.1 It falls to the Chair to conduct the annual performance review of the Chief Executive and the non-executive board members. This should be a formal annual responsibility for which the Chair should receive training to enable these reviews to be conducted in a fair, consistent and supportive way. An effective performance review enables individuals to understand their performance, identify training and



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

development needs, and thereby increase their contribution to the organisation. For chairs and non-executives good performance is critical to their reappointment.

- 6.2 The Board as a whole should develop a framework for formally reviewing the effectiveness of its business management and the work of its committees. This will, in part be through annual reporting mechanisms, but it is often useful for the Board to step back from these mechanisms and take an overview of the added value, which it brings to the organisation.

## **7 The Board Meetings**

- 7.1 It is the Chair's responsibility to ensure that the Board meeting agendas takes account of the full business of the Board and reflects the proper role of the Board and its members.
- 7.2 It is particularly important that the agenda concentrates on proper issues of strategy and review and does not take up Board time on operational issues that are properly the responsibility of the executive team. Trust needs to be developed to enable the non-executives to let the executive team take forward the work programme, safe in the knowledge that proper governance procedures are in place to monitor and safeguard the interests of the Board. Trust will also enable the executive team to appreciate the non-executives as partners in an enterprise, which is why the assurance processes are so important. It is also important for the Board to be clear how reports from external auditors and inspectors are to be dealt with as part of the assurance process.
- 7.3 Thought should be given to the balance between reporting and analysing past performance – what happened and why – and examining the critical levels which a Board has open to it to influence the future –“what do we need to do and when do we need to do it?” Boards at the forefront of improvement, modernisation and change recognise they need to ask themselves a different set of performance questions to those traditionally asked.
- 7.4 The Chair needs to facilitate and encourage scrutiny and debate by the Board. To do that, he or she needs to ensure that they are fully informed, have enough time to discuss the issues, and are brought into the debate with proper consideration given to their views. They should not feel that they are forced into rubber stamping proposals from the executive team which they have neither the knowledge nor time to understand or debate. Neither should the Board become engaged in matters of operational details, which should properly be left to the executive team.
- 7.5 Good chairing skills are essential in enabling the Board to feel less inhibited about discussing contentious or controversial issues in either public or private forums.



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

- 7.6 The Chair should also be careful to ensure that his or her supportive relationship to the Chief Executive does not obstruct effective scrutiny by the board.
- 7.7 In addition to the responsibilities of a general Board member the Chair must:
- 7.7.1 Ensure efficient conduct of Board business and General Meetings ensuring the appropriate involvement of all Board members.
  - 7.7.2 Establish a constructive working relationship and provide support to the Chief Executive including carrying out an appraisal where delegated by the Board.
  - 7.7.3 Where delegated by the Board to take urgent decisions in between meetings considering advice of the Chief Executive and consulting with Board members as appropriate.
  - 7.7.4 Ensure the Board receives professional advice.
  - 7.7.5 Maintain an overview of the composition of the Board recommending action to remedy deficiencies.
  - 7.7.6 To represent The Barnet Group and its subsidiaries as appropriate, particularly in respect of the Group Shareholder, the Council.



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

### **PERSON SPECIFICATIONS**

#### **Chair - The Barnet Group - PERSON SPECIFICATION**

You should be able to demonstrate and provide evidence of the criteria listed under Part One within your written application. These will be tested further at the preliminary interview stage, along with the criteria listed under Part Two

The successful candidate will be able to give evidence of:

#### **Part One**

1. Experience in leading an organisation (public/private/not for profit) with a significant budget and of comparable complexity
2. Being a strong and entrepreneurial leader and strategic thinker, with the ability to lead and empower the board to achieve desired outcomes
3. A portfolio of high level governance and organisational skills including strategic planning, financial management, risk management, performance management and business growth
4. Personal credibility and integrity with strong influencing skills and negotiating skills practices at board level
5. An ability to work effectively as a member of a team and particularly with the Chief Executive while contributing an independent perspective along with experience of drawing together a range of views to achieve agreed decisions
6. Excellent communication skills and proven ability to be an effective advocate and to influence stakeholder opinion
7. An understanding of the context of working in a public sector environment

#### **Part Two**

1. An understanding of, and commitment to, the highest standards of accountability, probity and openness
2. A track record of being able to process detail and to get to the heart of an issue
3. Confident and effective communication skills with a range of audiences
4. A willingness to devote the time and effort required effectively to discharge the duties of this role
5. An ambition to play a leading role in moving the organisation forward in terms of the scale and the quality of its activity



## **The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair**

### **Board Composition**

#### **The Barnet Group Ltd**

Chair (N)  
CEO – Tracey Lees (E)  
Director of Business Services – Troy Henshall (E)  
Director of Operations – Your Choice – Amanda Jackson (E)  
Director of Operations – Barnet Homes – Derek Rust (E)  
Vice Chair – Barnet Homes – Sharon Slotnick (N)  
Vice Chair – Your Choice – Nigel Turner (N)  
Non Executive Director – Cllr Ross Houston (N)  
Non Executive Director – Cllr Brian Schama (N)

#### **Your Choice (Barnet) Ltd**

Chair (N)  
CEO Tracey Lees (E)  
Director of Business Services - Troy Henshall (E)  
Director of Operations – Your Choice – Amanda Jackson (E)  
Non Executive Director – service user (N)  
Non Executive Director – service user (N)  
Non Executive Director (N)

#### **Barnet Homes**

Chair (N)  
CEO Tracey Lees (E)  
Director of Business Services - Troy Henshall (E)  
Director of Operations – Barnet Homes – Derek Rust (E)  
Non Executive Director – resident (N)  
Non Executive Director – resident (N)  
Non Executive Director – resident (N)  
Non Executive Director (N)  
  
Non Executive Director (N)

#### **Key:**

N = Non Executive      E = Executive



## The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair

### PRINCIPAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

(For information purposes only)

**1. Position**

Chair

**2. Remuneration**

Chair £8,000 per annum paid monthly in arrears

**3. Commitment level**

Chair c.3 days per month

**4. Location**

Barnet House  
1255 High Road  
Whetstone  
N20 0EJ

How to get there: Tube: Totteridge and Whetstone (Northern Line)

**5. Expenses**

Board members can also claim business expenses e.g. mileage/ travel to and from board meetings and carer's allowance subject to providing receipts etc.

**6. Other**

Board Service Contract

All board members irrespective of whether they receive remuneration or not, are required to enter into a service agreement with The Barnet Group which sets out the expectations required of the role.

Code of conduct and declaration of criminal offences

All board members are also required to sign the Directors' code of conduct and declaration.



## The Barnet Group Ltd. - Recruitment of Chair

### Timetable

#### Chair

| <b><i>Actions</i></b>   | <b><i>By When</i></b>                            |
|---|--|
| <b>Closing date for applications</b>  | <b>22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013</b>                |
| <b>Candidates notified of whether they will be called for initial interview</b> | <b>w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013</b>            |
| <b>Preliminary interviews</b>   | <b>w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013</b>            |
| <b>Short List meeting</b>   | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013</b>                   |
| <b>Board meeting and psychometrics</b>  | <b>7<sup>th</sup> May 2013</b>                   |
| <b>Final Panel</b>  | <b>8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013</b> |