



## **CHISEL MEMBERSHIP POLICY**

### **1. Policy Context**

- 1.1 CHISEL LTD (the Association) is incorporated registered under the Co-operative and Benefit Societies Act, formerly the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965. The Rules provide for a shareholding membership whose powers include the election of the Board, the appointment of auditors and the amendment of the Rules.
- 1.2 All shareholders agree to be bound by the obligations on them as set out in the Rules and in this policy. When acting as shareholders they will act at all times in the interests of the association and, for the benefit of the community, as guardians of the objects of the Association.
- 1.3 No shareholder may hold more than one share and each share shall carry only one vote.
- 1.4 A share may not be held jointly except by nominees of an unincorporated body.
- 1.5 The Rules of the Association require the Board to review and publish its policies and objectives for admitting new shareholders. This policy is designed to meet this requirement.

### **2. CHISEL as a Neighbourhood Housing Association**

- 2.1 CHISEL is a small housing association formed for the benefit of the community and recognises that its activities will have an impact on an and could make a positive contribution to the local community. CHISEL recognizes that people in areas where housing demand far outstrips supply have few housing choices in the way that other consumers do. Against this background CHISEL as a provider of homes in the local area, wishes to be accountable to its tenants and local people in the areas where it provides homes.
- 2.2 The Association therefore aims to involve tenants and other local people in influencing decisions about its housing services and standards and recognises that shareholding membership of the Association may be one of the ways for achieving this. Becoming a shareholding member means that you buy one share in the association. Being a shareholder provides an opportunity for tenants and others with an interest in the association's work to have a say in the control of the organisation.
- 2.3 As a shareholder, you are entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting and any other general meetings of the association which take place. At these meetings you can participate in discussions and vote on proposals. You can also nominate and vote for yourself or any other shareholder to become a member of CHISEL's Board.

2.4 Shareholders can also call special general meetings of the association on matters of concern, provided that at least 10% of shareholders support calling the meeting.

### **3. Purpose of Shareholding Membership**

3.1 The Association's objectives in admitting new shareholders are:

- to provide an active pool of people who have expressed an interest in the Association and from whom new Committee Members can be drawn;
- to allow local people to express support for and a commitment to the Association without playing an active role;
- to allow tenants of the Association to play a formal part in the affairs of the Association and generally, to further the aims set out at para 2 of this policy.

### **4. Who can become a shareholder**

4.1 All applications for membership of the Association will be considered by the Board. Applications shall be required to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The applicant has a long term interest in and support for the Association e.g. tenant of the association;
- The applicant has the appropriate skills, experience and availability to make a significant contribution to the Association by becoming a Member of the Board, either at the time of application or in the future, if not;
- The applicant has the commitment and relevant skills and/or experience to make a positive contribution to the Association without becoming an active Board member;
- The applicant's membership would help improve the representation of local communities within the Association's shareholding and/or Board membership;
- The applicant's membership would contribute to achieving a balanced mix within the Association's shareholding and/or Committee membership.

4.2 Any person aged 18 or over can apply for a share in CHISEL Ltd. Organisations can also apply. If the organisation is unincorporated, it must nominate an individual to become a delegate member on its behalf. An incorporated organisation can appoint a deputy to represent it at meetings and vote on its behalf.

4.3 Applications from CHISEL tenants will automatically be agreed, unless the tenant is known to be in breach of their tenancy agreement.

### **5. Exclusions**

5.1 The following may not be admitted as shareholders:-

- A minor;
- A person who has been expelled as a shareholder, except as authorised by special resolution at a general meeting;
- An employee of the Association,
- A person, who has been an employee of the Association within the 12 months prior to their application, or a close relative of such a person.

- A person whose membership of the Association and/or its Board would result in an unacceptable conflict of interest, either due to a personal relationship or employment with another organisation, for example another housing association which could be regarded as a competitor.

## **6. How to become a shareholder**

- 6.1 Any person or organisation wishing to become a shareholder must complete the application form, which can be obtained from the Secretary at the CHISEL office. The completed form should be returned with the sum of £1, which is the cost of a share. No-one can buy more than one share in the association and you cannot earn interest or receive a dividend on your share.
- 6.2 All applications are considered by CHISEL's Board at the next meeting following their receipt.
- 6.3 The applicant will be notified in writing within one month of the Board's decision. If the application is unsuccessful, the £1 will be refunded.
- 6.4 If the application is successful, the shareholder's name will be entered in the Register of Members and they will be sent a share certificate and copy of the rules in due course. Once admitted to membership, the £1 paid for the share will not be refunded in any circumstances.

## **7 Ending of Shareholding Membership**

- 7.1 A shareholder can resign by giving one month's notice in writing to CHISEL's Secretary.
- 7.2 If an unincorporated body decides to change its delegate member, the share will be transferred into the new delegate's name. The former delegate will then cease to be a member.
- 7.3 If a shareholder fails to attend the Annual General Meeting of the association for two years running, without giving apologies, their membership will come to an end.
- 7.4 A shareholder may be expelled if they take any action considered by the Board to be detrimental to the association. To expel a shareholder, the Board must convene a special general meeting of members giving the shareholder threatened with expulsion at least one month's written notice. The shareholder can attend the meeting to present their case if they wish, but the meeting can go ahead even if they are not present. If the meeting agrees the expulsion, it takes effect immediately.

**Review Date: May 2017**