



Head of  
Governance

# Welcome

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Head of Governance.

Advance is an award winning provider that exists to transform the lives of people with a disability or mental health condition by providing the best quality housing and support services - to enable them to live the lives they choose, achieve their personal goals, feel valued and know their voices are heard. Together we transform lives. Everything we've ever done was because someone, somewhere, wanted something different and better out of life and we were determined to support them to make it happen.

The Head of Governance plays a critical role at Advance. Ensuring we maintain the highest standards of governance at all times is central to our ability to deliver outstanding quality, and safe care for our customers and provide assurance to our partners and commissioners. Reporting directly to me but partnering across the Board and Executive Team, you will provide strategic corporate governance advice and act as Company Secretary. Not only will you provide challenge across the organisation to ensure we meet our regulatory and constitutional requirements, but you will drive through a collegiate way of working between the Board, its Committees and the Executive. We are immensely proud of our work yet constantly striving for improvements.

In 1974 we supported four people coming out of institutional care who had a dream of living independently in the community. Back then, our solution was to buy a house on a city street, fill it with furniture, and help them settle in. Since then we've learned to do things a bit differently, and our solution doesn't stop at a front door and a comfy sofa. These days we support thousands of people at home and in the community – people who start from a position of disadvantage due to their health or their disability and who want more choice, more control and more opportunities. Where we don't have the knowledge to support people we learn, so that we can get it right; where we can't provide a solution, we'll find a local partner who can.

As we look to evolve, grow and adapt to the needs of our customers, this role will ensure we do so in the best way possible. We are looking for an insightful and rigorous Board advisor, who is comfortable providing challenge to the Board and across an organisation. An individual who doesn't like to just accept what has been, you will seek to offer new ways of working and fresh thinking to ensure excellent governance. You will bring sound knowledge of corporate governance, with experience of relationship management both internally and externally. Ideally you will come from the housing or social care sector. However, we are open to a range of backgrounds as long as you bring strong corporate governance expertise and are a qualified company secretary. It goes without saying that you will be well used to operating within a heavily regulated environment. Importantly, you will share our passion for our customers and ensure their needs are at the heart of everything we do.

I very much look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes

Julie Layton  
Chief Executive

# About Us

Advance Housing and Support Limited is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and a Registered Housing Provider. We provide housing, support and other community related services, specialising in supporting people with learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

We provide a number of different types of services, including small-scale residential care homes, supported living services, shared ownership homes and community support services. Our support services represent approximately £14m of our overall turnover of £37m. We operate over a large geographical area across the Midlands, London, South East and South West. We have offices in Witney (Oxfordshire), London, Leicester, Cornwall and Dorset; we also have a number of smaller offices.

Our vision is to transform the lives of people with a disability or mental health condition by providing the best quality housing and support services. We want to enable our customers to live the lives they choose, achieve their personal goals, feel valued and know their voices are heard.

At the end of March 2020 we completed the last year of our Strategic Plan 2017-20. We made considerable progress against each of our strategic objectives. Staff and customer satisfaction have remained strong throughout. We have enabled more people to own a home through shared ownership and developed new rented properties. We have opened new housing and support services and won contracts to deliver more support, based on a strong reputation for good quality services. We delivered our value for money commitments while investing in technology, the quality of our homes and the development of staff.

Our strategy for 2020-23 builds on the progress we have made over the last three years. It was based on feedback from staff, customers and stakeholders. Our Vision and PRIDE values remain the same. The achievements and improvements made in 2017-20 set the foundations to deliver a more ambitious and challenging set of objectives. The new strategy for 2020-23 will therefore see us focus on:

- Delivering Quality Homes and Services - which make a difference to peoples' lives.
- Sustainable Growth - so that more people get to benefit from our services.
- High-Performing Organisation - being the best organisation we can be.

## Our Values

The five PRIDE values set out below are embedded across the organisation. They form the basis of the way we work together to support our customers.

### **Partnership:**

We work in partnership with our customers and build better relationships with others that help us serve our customers better.

### **Respect:**

We treat our customers, colleagues and others as we would like to be treated.

### **Innovation:**

We are keen to try new things - especially when we can make things better for our customers.

### **Drive:**

We do the right thing at the right time and everything we do is driven by our customers' needs.

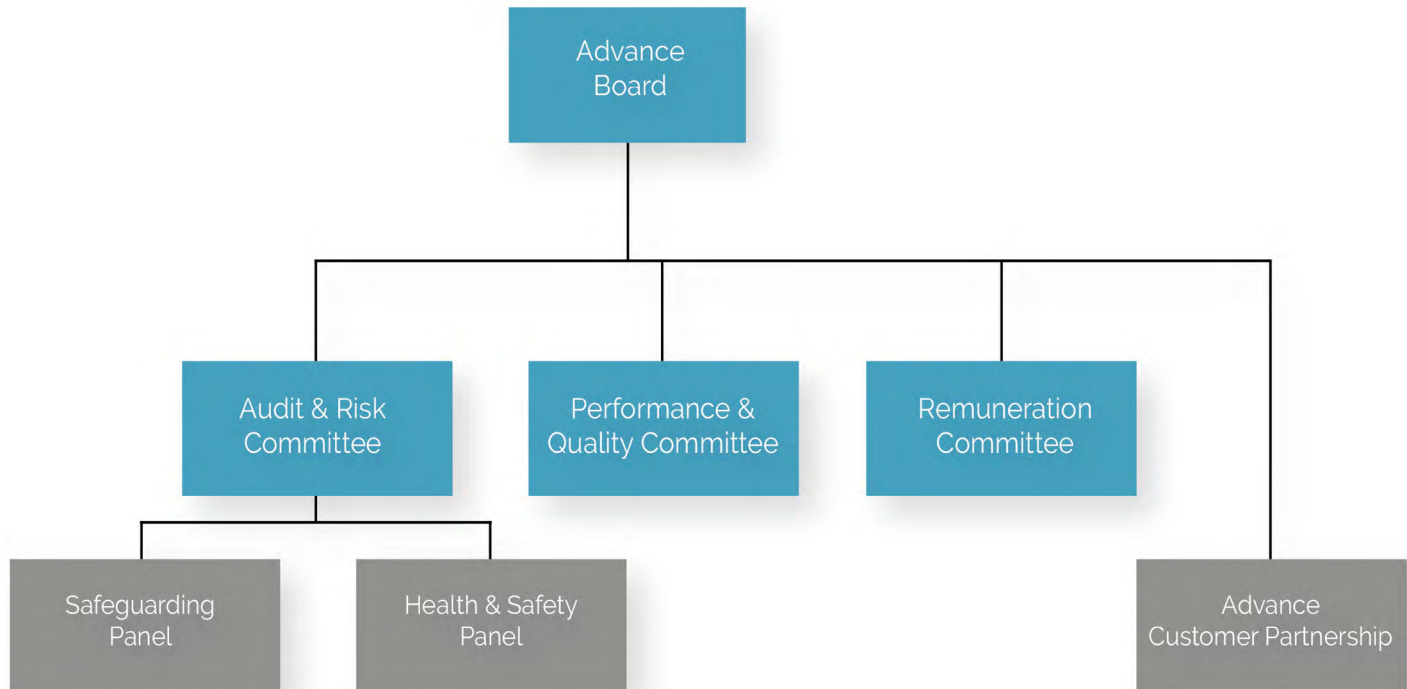
### **Efficiency:**

We make the best use of our resources, maximising efficiency, so we can deliver the best services for our customers.

# Board Structure

The Head of Governance reports directly to our Chief Executive, working closely with our Chair, Marie Li Mow Ching, our Board and across our Executive Leadership Team, comprising of the Executive Director of Resources, Executive Director of Support Services and Executive Director of Housing.

The structure of our Board and Committees is below:



# Job Description

**Job title:** Head of Governance

**Responsible to:** Chief Executive

**Purpose:**

Provide strategic corporate governance advice and operational company secretarial support to both the Board and the Executive, establishing and maintaining the highest standards of governance at all times.

**Responsibilities:**

**Governance**

- Oversee and periodically review the overall governance framework for the organisation; ensure it is fit for purpose and provides clearly accountable decision making and oversight.
- Ensure compliance with constitutional and regulatory requirements for the organisation.
- As the Company Secretary, provide governance advice and guidance to the Board and the Executive, ensuring that Advance heeds governance legislation and best practice at all times. Guide on legal and constitutional matters, including the application of standing orders, and correct and proper conduct of business and meetings. Arrange and brief external legal advice where necessary to ensure the efficient and effective resolution of issues.
- Assist the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive in fostering a collegiate way of working between the Board, its Committees and the Executive.
- Provide advice on Board / Committee design and schemes of delegation.
- Support the Chief Executive in fulfilling their corporate responsibility with respect to good governance and in maintaining the highest standards of prudence and propriety.
- Lead the authoring and updating of a suite of corporate governance tools (e.g. internal governance codes and frameworks) that assist Advance with embedding and driving forward good governance at all times.
- Provide advice to the Board and Executive on skills criteria for Board membership, identifying any gaps and supporting the recruitment, selection, induction and appraisal of Board members. Advise on the retention and refreshment of skills.
- Manage the electronic meeting system used to publish papers and information resources to Board Members, and be responsible for ensuring appropriate electronic and paper records are kept of Board and Committee minutes, agenda papers and resolutions.
- Maintain Board Member records including attendance registers, declarations of interest register, DBS checks and learning and development records.
- Be responsible for the maintenance of registers, including sealing, contracts, hospitality and gifts, shareholders, whistleblowing, fraud and other registers as allocated from time to time.
- Develop performance information and KPIs on governance and compliance for the Board and Executive Team.

**Risk and Assurance**

- Support the development of the Group's Risk Management Strategy and Policy.
- Own the mechanisms used by the Board and the Executives to identify the key areas of business risk and assist in the regular review of risk. Manage the corporate risk register and ensure that all steps to mitigate risks are documented and continually updated. Advise Department Heads and Managers on Advance's risk management policy and risk review procedures.
- Support the development of the corporate assurance framework and lead on feedback and learning.
- Support the Executive Team in the annual Directors Assurance Statement process.

# Job Description

## Board and Committee

- Ensure that the Board and its Committees are properly constituted, operated and supported, according to standing orders and the regulatory framework.
- Ensure that Committees operate in accordance with their Terms of Reference.
- Ensure that the Board and Committees conduct their business in compliance with applicable legal and regulatory frameworks and associated codes of governance and practice.
- Arrange secretariat attendance at all Board and Committee meetings, ensuring the provision of advice to the Chair and the members on governance and regulatory matters, taking excellent minutes, drafting resolutions and following up of actions as required, ensuring decisions are communicated to the relevant stakeholders.
- Personally take excellent minutes, ensuring complex debate is accurately summarised and decisions are accurately captured.
- Oversee the compilation and circulation of Board and Committee meeting packs, ensuring all papers are of a high standard.
- Assist the Chief Executive and Board and Committee Chairs with agenda planning and ensure that the Board and Committee Forward Plans are maintained and adhered to.
- Assist the Chief Executive and Board Chair in the planning and management of Board Away Days.

## Statutory and Regulatory

- Provide advice and information on regulatory, statutory and corporate governance matters, ensuring the business remains compliant and proactively managing new requirements on an ongoing basis.
- Maintain oversight of the frequency and content of regulatory returns required by key funders, regulators and other stakeholders, ensuring timely accurate submission.
- Be responsible for all filing arrangements and the completion of annual returns to the FCA.
- Be responsible for custody of the company seal and ensure the correct process is followed for the signing and sealing of documents in line with the governance framework.
- Scrutinise and report to the Board all regulatory developments and assess the governance implications of papers put to the Board.
- Assist with the Statistical Data Returns.

## General

- Support the Data Protection Officer in meeting the requirements of GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018.
- Ensure Advance has adequate levels of insurance cover.
- Keep up to date with changes in legislation, regulation, good practice within the sector, alerting changes required to Advance's strategies plans, policies etc.
- Carry out all other duties as may be reasonably assigned from time to time, with the level of this job description.
- Communicate and role model the values, behaviours and culture of Advance.
- Maintain the highest standards of personal and professional integrity and conduct.
- Develop and maintain constructive working relationships with professional networks to identify and share good practice.
- Ensure confidentiality at all times.

# Person Specification

## Knowledge and Experience

- A corporate governance expert and professional company secretary. ICSA qualified, or equivalent, or substantial experience as a company secretary.
- Experience of working within a highly regulated environment.
- First class interpersonal skills, including discretion. Used to building credibility with senior figures and managing the relationships between Executives and Boards. Has the confidence to make impactful interventions at Board meetings.
- Experience of working with confidential and sensitive material in a professional manner.
- Significant experience of operating at a senior management level, dispensing accurate and respected governance advice. Able to evidence experience of running a service function highly regarded by its stakeholders.
- Experience of representing an organisation in front of regulators and external stakeholders.
- Highly literate with first class written business English. A competent minute-taker of Board meetings with meticulous organisational skills and attention to detail. Intermediate IT literacy.

## Desirable

- Fully conversant with the National Housing Federation Code of Governance and Regulatory Standards.

## Style and Attributes

- Personally committed to diversity, treating others with dignity and respect, and with a passion for our customers and a commitment to our values.
- Proven ability to challenge, influence and persuade others whilst maintaining relationships and working in partnership (internally and externally).
- Analyse and interpret complex data and provide clear concise reports.
- Takes a pro-active, performance focused approach.
- Ability to work to tight timescales and under pressure.



# Our PRIDE Behaviours

## Partnership

- You work well with others, including customers and colleagues.
- You make lots of new contacts and connections.
- You share your knowledge and learning with others.

## Respect

- You are good at listening to and learning from others.
- You are positive and respond to feedback openly and honestly.
- You want to see things from the customers' perspective.

## Innovation

- You look for new or different ideas or solutions.
- You are willing to change routine ways of working.
- You like sharing ideas with colleagues and motivating them to make changes.

## Drive

- You are punctual and deliver work in a timely way.
- You understand Advance's, your team's and your own plans and priorities.
- You can explain how far you have got with work and can offer realistic timeframes for completion of the work.

## Efficiency

- You plan your work carefully.
- You look for ways to adopt and share 'best practice'.
- You try to save resources wherever possible (e.g. by considering how to save money, being environmentally friendly, using data systems etc.).



# Terms of Appointment

<b>Salary</b>	This role attracts a competitive package. Starting salary will be dependent on experience.
<b>Location</b>	This role supports some remote working, however the postholder will be required to have regular visibility in our Head Office in Witney, as well as travel to London for key meetings as required.
<b>Pension</b>	Contributory pension scheme between 3 -5%.
<b>Annual leave</b>	25 days annual leave + statutory holidays. Holiday entitlement increases by one day for each year of service, up to 5 years.

## How to Apply

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Juliet.Brown@starfishsearch.com or Mark.Crowley@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call.

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/advance-head-governance/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- your CV (no more than three sides)
- a supporting statement that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the Knowledge and Experience criteria.
- we would be grateful if you would also tell us your current salary details (we do not disclose this to our clients without your consent).

<b>Closing date</b>	Friday 24th July 2020
<b>First round interviews</b>	w/c 10th August 2020
<b>Agreement of the final shortlist</b>	End w/c 17th August 2020
<b>References taken up for shortlisted candidates</b>	To follow shortlist
<b>Interviews with Advance</b>	w/c 31st August or 7th September 2020

