

CANDIDATE BRIEF

For the position of Look Ahead
Subsidiary Board Member



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About the Look Ahead Group

Look Ahead is a specialist housing association and provider of tailor-made care, support and accommodation services. With a workforce of over 1,000, we support thousands of people across London, the Home Counties and the South East with a diverse range of needs, helping them to make individual choices, achieve goals and take control of their own lives. In 2019-20 Look Ahead acquired two Learning Disability businesses, Proactive Development (Blythson Ltd) in Kent and Kingswood Care Services in Essex. These are separate legal entities within the Look Ahead group structure with their own Boards and governance arrangements.

Established for over 40 years and with a turnover of £69 million, our core purpose is to work in partnership with local authorities and the NHS to provide an integrated housing, support and care service across our four core client groups: mental health, learning disabilities, young people and people experiencing homelessness. We do not provide general needs housing, therefore all existing and new accommodation run by Look Ahead is linked to a carer support package.

Our mission

Working with people to make choices, achieve goals and take control of their lives through high quality care, support and housing. We do this by working with over 30 local authorities and health trusts to deliver integrated health, social care and housing services. We support around 6,500 people each year to bring about positive changes in their lives, by creating tailor-made plans for each individual which promote their independence and self-reliance and enable them to achieve their goals.

Our services

We are specialists in delivering the following services:

- Mental health
- Learning disabilities
- Homelessness and complex needs
- Young people and care leavers

Our strategy

Look Ahead will be a leading provider of specialist support and care services for people with complex and multiple needs, bridging the gap between social care, health and housing. We will have an excellent reputation as a growing, solution-focused social care business that draws on the best of the public and private sectors. We will work in partnership, embrace digital innovation and maximise our property assets to deliver high quality, outcomes-based services in line with our values.

Our key strategic aims are:

- We will collaborate and innovate to deliver an excellent customer offer that delivers positive, sustainable change
- We will maximise opportunities for growth in existing and new service areas
- We will be financially strong, enabling investment in our services, properties and people
- We will develop an agile, diverse workforce, harnessing talent from within

With regards to our growth agenda, we recently completed our second acquisition, Kingswood Care Services, a learning disability and support business based in Essex. Set up as non-regulated subsidiaries, this business and our first acquisition Proactive Development (Blythson Ltd) based in Kent, are critical to ensuring we continue to deliver exceptional services, whilst also driving up our operating surplus. We aim to acquire a further business in the next 12-18 months.



Our values

We have four values that express and represent our shared understanding of the principles that are important to us as an organisation. Developed in partnership with our staff, customers, and their families and carers, they set out the things we aspire to be as an organisation and that underpin everything we do. They are:

Excellence

We are committed to excellence in everything we do. The success of our organisation and, crucially, the successes and outcomes of the people who use our services, depends on our ability to deliver consistently excellent services that exceed expectations.

Aspiration

We are aspirational – for our customers, staff and organisation. We aim high, seek out opportunities and do not shy away from the challenges we face. We believe in identifying, nurturing and developing potential and creating a culture of recognition and celebration across the organisation.

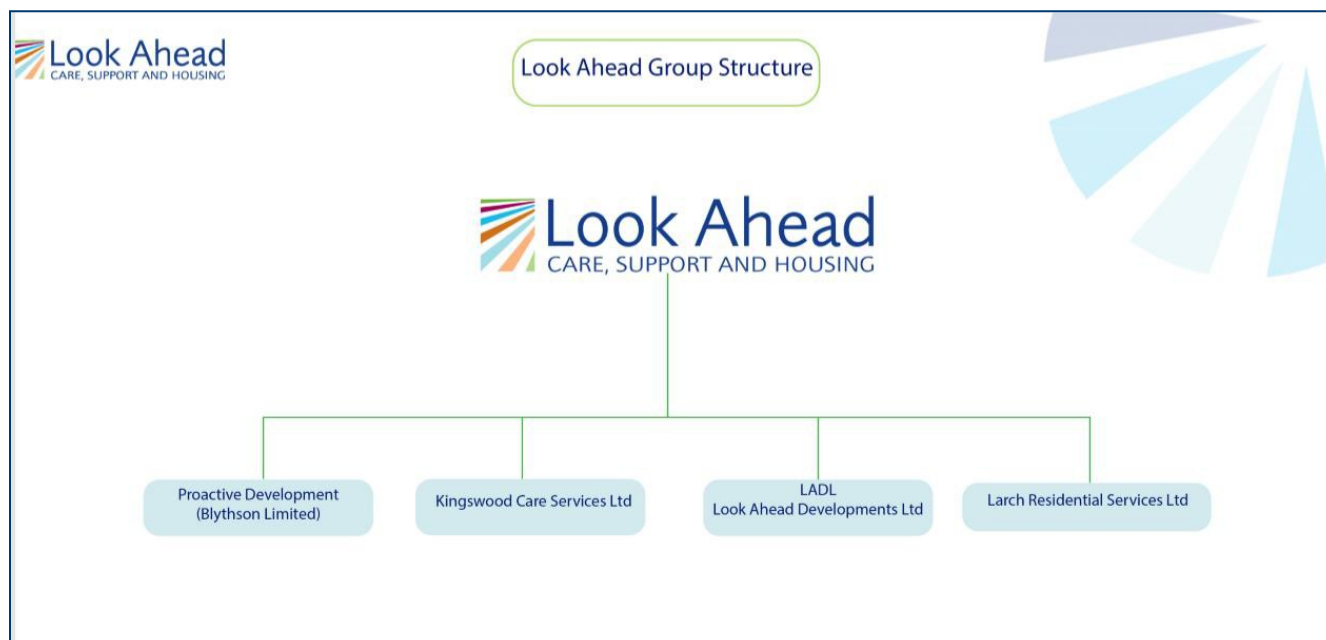
Partnership

We know our organisation is stronger when we work in partnership with stakeholders, commissioners and – crucially – customers. Partnership between staff and people who use our services informs and influences everything we do. Through working together at every level, customers and staff will together design and deliver flexible, personalised and better services.

Trust

We will be an organisation with a strong social purpose. We will be trusted by our commissioners and funders to deliver the services we say we will. We will behave with integrity and transparency. We will be trusted by our customers to deliver on our promises and by their loved ones to deliver safe and consistently high-quality services.

Group structure



Proactive Development (Blythson Limited)

In 2019 Look Ahead, a leading provider of learning disability and autism services in London and the South East acquired Proactive Development (Registered name, Blythson Limited). Both organisations share the same cores values and objectives, to deliver person-centred services and work collaboratively with the people we support to establish high quality outcomes that promote independence and choice.

Proactive Development's services are located exclusively in Folkestone, Kent. Situated at the eastern end of the North Downs.

We provide four small-group residential care services and a supported living service to a around 30 people in their own homes. Our residential homes have been developed for people with moderate to severe learning disabilities and complex needs who presently need intensive support.

Typically, though not exclusively, the people living in our supported living service previously lived in our residential homes but who, because of the progress they made, no longer need such intensive support. The Supported Living model enables us to provide people with care and support with even greater personalisation and flexibility and in a way that promotes their independence while ensuring their safety

We have recently added four new flats to our supported living service as part of our plan for natural and sustainable growth while continuing to create the intimate, friendly atmosphere that makes our services feel like home to the people who live in them. The Board have recently agreed a plan to deliver three more supported living services over the next five years.

All of our services are registered with the CQC and all are currently rated overall Good and Good in all five key areas.

Kingswood Care Services Limited

Kingswood Care Services provides personalised residential and home support for people with a Learning Disability in five residential homes close to Basildon in Essex. Look Ahead acquired Kingswood Care Services in September 2020 and the Board has recently approved a strategy to deliver three new care homes over the next five years as part of the plan for natural and sustainable growth. All five homes are registered with the CQC with one overall outstanding rating and four Good ratings.

Subsidiary boards

Proactive Development and Kingswood Care Services are subsidiaries of the Look Ahead group and each have a Board. Look Ahead are seeking to appoint an independent Board member to serve both Proactive Development and Kingswood Care Services' Boards. The meetings are generally held consecutively on the same day, four times a year.

The role

The appointed subsidiary board member will work as part of the subsidiary boards to set strategic direction for the Subsidiary, ensuring it is within the framework of the Group's strategic vision and monitor and evaluate the progress against strategic aims, objectives and financial. This will involve sharing responsibility for Board decisions, performing to the highest personal standards in line with the Board's expectations and acting in the interest of the organisation as a whole.

This is an exciting time to join the subsidiary Board of Look Ahead, as we continue to drive growth and efficiencies across the organisation. This role calls for an experienced operator with an 'eye for detail' who can guide us through the regulatory landscape and act as an anchor for the organisation; challenging our business strategy and engender the right behaviours in the boardroom.

The main responsibilities of the board are set out below:

- Approve and own the strategic direction for the Subsidiary ensuring it is within the framework of the Group's strategic vision and monitor and evaluate the progress against strategic aims, objectives and financial targets.
- Take responsibility for the governance and management of the subsidiary whilst delegating operational management to the Operational Director
- Provide a business case on purchase of property to Look Ahead's Investment and Treasury Committee for authority to purchase up to the value of £2 m and to Look Ahead's Board for buildings valued over £2 m.
- Advise the Operational Director on the management of sensitive, complex or contentious issues
- Monitor the conduct and maintain oversight of the operational activities in the region in which the subsidiary operates
- Scrutinise and comment on the management accounts and budget and accounts for the Subsidiary.
- Comment and contribute on the merit of growth/acquisition opportunities within the regions the Subsidiary operates
- Review key policies where appropriate in relation to the provision of services within the regions in which the Subsidiary operates
- Regularly review and maintain the risk register and internal controls for the Subsidiary for onward consideration by the Group Board and the Group's Audit and Risk Committee, maintain oversight of quality assurance and internal audit.
- Ensure that the subsidiary functions within all relevant legal and financial requirements
- Regularly monitor the context and operating environment and address any emerging issues that may impact on strategy, implementation of plans or reputation with key stakeholders, whilst ensuring that there are good relations with the local community, local policy and decision makers within the regions in which it operations
- Agree to recommend any extension of the Subsidiary's activities into new business or any decision to cease to operate all or any part of the Subsidiary's business to the Group Board
- Ensure that the processes of governance are carried out effectively and in line with the Group's code of conduct and governance policies and procedures, e.g:
 - Changes to the structure, size and composition of the Board are carried out in accordance with the articles
 - Board Director selection, induction and review is carried out and a mix of governance skills and a diversity of membership is ensured
 - Evaluation of the performance of the Board is carried out annually and
 - Board meetings are held regularly and are minuted.

- Provide advice and guidance in subject areas where Directors have particular expertise to the Board and Senior Management Team where appropriate.
- Follow the Group Code of Conduct
- To report any systemic or structural changes in delivery of service which results in a safeguarding issue immediately to the Group Chair on behalf of the Board. It will be the responsibility of the Operational Director to immediately report any changes to the Subsidiary Chair who will in turn report to the Group Chair.

The individual

We are seeking a senior professional to join our Subsidiary Boards. You will help guide the Board through interactions with the Regulator and act as an 'anchor' for the organisation; providing appropriate challenge and support to an organisation with an appetite for growth and progression.

Essential criteria

- A demonstrable track record as a non-executive director, or ample experience of working with non-executive boards as a senior executive.
- Significant executive experience in a comparable learning disability business. Candidates must bring corporate breadth and inspire confidence in their ability to positively interrogate key business decisions.
- Excellent credentials in the health and social care sector and exposure to the learning disability community.

Style and approach

- An authentic and proactive leader, with confidence and integrity.
- Risk aware, with a sense of entrepreneurial spirit aligned with that of the Look Ahead group.
- A good listener and communicator, who works collaboratively as a board member.
- A champion of open and frank discussion.
- A tenacious person who will positively challenge and ask the tough questions, but also provide support and willingly offer their expertise.
- Intellectual curiosity and the time to invest in understanding the business and ensuring good governance prevails.

Terms

- There are four Board meetings a year. Meetings tend to be held on different dates, but usually on Mondays or Thursdays. Over the last 18 months meetings have been held remotely and there is a possibility this will continue depending on social distancing measures. When it is safe to do so, face-to-face meetings will be held in Central London.
- Allowing sufficient time for wider meetings and preparation, you should expect a time commitment of 6-8 hours per month (allowing for natural spikes in activity).
- The role is remunerated at £2,000 per annum, per Board, or £4,000 per annum in total.

How to apply

Key dates

The closing date for applications is Thursday 24 June 2021 at midday.

Following a long list meeting of the Selection Panel, successful candidates will be invited to attend preliminary interviews with Look Ahead w/c 19 July & w/c 26 July.

How to apply

Application is by CV and a cover letter; please outline the reasons for your interest in the post and why you believe yourself to be suitable, paying particular attention to the experience section of the role specification.

The preferred method of application is online here.

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist Look Ahead in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political

opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

Contact details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

Clare Luxton - Head of Governance and Compliance
ClareLuxton@lookahead.org.uk

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AlisonWestbrook@lookahead.org.uk

We are committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact AlisonWestbrook@lookahead.org.uk.

Also, if you have any comments and/or suggestions about improving access to our application processes please don't hesitate to contact us
HumanResourcesAdmin@lookahead.org.uk

