

Terms of Reference

Committee Name	Strategic Planning Committee
Chairperson	TBA
Last Updated	December 2025
Next Review	December 2026

Membership List

- Sarah Benson
- Ailbhe Smyth
- Megan Conway
- Christina Sherlock

Overview

The Women's Aid Board of Directors ("The Board") will establish a Strategic Planning Committee drawn from its members and the organisations senior executive and may establish other associated standing committees and ad hoc committees or working groups.

The Chairperson of the Board will propose the appointment of members to any committee it establishes and may recommend the appointment of persons who are not members of the Board but have special knowledge and experience related to the purpose of the Committee.

The Committee, appointed by the Board, will in the transaction of their business comply with their Terms of Reference (ToR) set out herein and any directions that the Board may give from time to time.

The Board may take advice or consider recommendations from any committee of the Board as set out in the committee's ToR.

Purpose

The purpose of the Strategic Planning Committee is to:

- Oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of 3-5 year strategic plans for Women's Aid.
- Oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of an annual organisational plan to ensure that Women's Aid has the appropriate structures,

systems, staffing and skills to enable it to deliver on its mission, and to meet its strategic goals (per the strategic plan) and comply with statutory requirements and obligations.

- Oversee the preparations for annual Board and SLT strategic meetings.
- Assist and advise the Executive on the development of any new services that the Board has agreed that Women's Aid will provide, as required.

Membership

The Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and will consist of a minimum of 1 Director and the CEO but will normally consist of 2 Directors, the CEO, and a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Membership will consist of individuals who have skills and experience relevant to the work of the committee. Alternates are not permitted. At least one member of the Committee shall have recent and relevant experience in strategy and strategic planning matters. The Chairperson of the Women's Aid Board is eligible for Membership but shall not act as Chairperson of the Governance Committee.

Other members of the Board, Executive or individuals with relevant experience may be co-opted to the Committee as members at the discretion of the Board.

The Strategic Planning Committee Members and its Secretary and Chairperson shall be appointed by the Board Chairperson for a period of 2 years.

Offices of the Committee

Secretary

A Committee Secretary shall be appointed by majority vote at the first Committee meeting of the year. The role of minute taking may be delegated to an attendee from the executive with agreement of the committee.

Chairperson

A Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. The Chairperson of the Women's Aid Board is eligible for Membership but shall not act as Chairperson of the Governance Committee.

Meetings

Frequency of Meetings

The Strategic Planning Committee will meet a minimum of 1 time per year, and more frequently as required.

Attendance

At the request of the committee Chairperson, other relevant persons may be invited to attend the meetings of the committee on a regular or ongoing basis (e.g. for this committee a consultant working with the committee to support development of a new strategic plan, or a relevant member of the Executive Team). These persons are referred to as Attendees. A record of such individual's attendance will be recorded in the minutes of all meetings they participate in.

Guests

Any Women's Aid Director, including the Chair, may attend a committee meeting and may be invited by the Committee to do so.

Other individuals (e.g. experts, auditors, consultants or other external advisers) may be invited to attend for all or part of any meeting, as and when appropriate and usually on a once-off basis.

Members of the Women's Aid Executive Team may be requested to attend meetings periodically.

Notice of Meetings

Meetings shall be convened by the Committee Chairperson, or at the request of The Board of Directors. Meetings may also be summoned at the request of the Organisation's Statutory Auditors.

Advanced meeting notice of at least 7 days will be given to Committee members & Attendees, save in exceptional circumstances.

Governance

Accountability

The Strategic Planning Committee is accountable to the Women's Aid Board of Directors.

Authority

The Strategic Planning Committee is authorised by The Board to investigate any activity within its Terms of Reference. It is authorised to seek information from any employee, and all employees are directed to co-operate with any formal request from the Committee.

The Strategic Planning Committee is authorised by the Board to obtain outside legal or other independent advice to secure the attendance of external advisors with relevant experience or expertise if it considers this necessary.

Reporting

The committee shall make whatever recommendations to the Board it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed.

Recommendations will be submitted to the Board of Directors through the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

Minutes of Meetings

Draft minutes of the Committee meetings shall be circulated to all members of the committee by the Committee Secretary. Once approved¹, minutes will be sent to the Company Secretary and added to the agenda of the next Women's Aid Board Meeting, for information only.

Redacted minutes may be circulated to attendees, as appropriate and at the request of the Committee Chairperson.

Quorum

A quorum necessary for the transaction of normal business shall be 2 committee members, and must include minimum of 1 Women's Aid Board Director.

Duties & Responsibilities

The key duties & responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Committee are to:

- Agree a timetable and key review checkpoints with the Women's Aid CEO for development, implementation, and evaluation of the different plans (strategic, and annual organisational development plans).
- Participate in all scheduled Committee meetings annually and, when applicable, strategic planning meetings for the development of new plans to discuss and explore key issues and considerations.

¹ Approval may be delivered through meeting or via electronic means / email

- Committee meetings will take place at least once per year, and more frequently when required – especially during periods when a new plan is under development.
- Ensure that appropriate and relevant input and proposals from interested stakeholders (for example, staff, funders, other relevant service providers, etc) is obtained.
- Ensure, with input from the Financial Controller, Treasurer and/or Finance Audit & HR Committee as appropriate, that all proposed strategic actions have been properly assessed and costed.
- Ensure all decisions required to move forward are completed in a timely and effective manner.
- Provide advice and guidance to the Women's Aid CEO and the Senior Leadership Team in the development of the plans and in addressing key issues and challenges facing the organisation.
- Make recommendations to Board in relation to the development, implementation and evaluation of these plans.
- Organise with the Women's Aid CEO specific Board sessions (in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team as required) to review and engage in strategic dialogue and action planning in relation to these plans.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Strategic Planning Committee will engage with key stakeholders, consultants and the Senior Leadership of the organisation, where appropriate, during various stages of the planning and development process of all strategic endeavours.

Other Matters

The committee shall undertake a periodic review of their overall performance and will feedback to the wider Board of Directors.

Review

This Terms of the Strategic Planning Committee will be reviewed annually by the Committee, with any recommended changes being presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

Document Revision Control	
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Women's Aid

Date Approved	10/12/2025
Approved by	Women's Aid Board
Next Review Date	December 2026