

# aaeh

australian  
alliance  
to end  
homelessness

## Australian Alliance to End Homelessness Limited

The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) is an independent champion for ending homelessness in Australia.

## Board Charter

## **1. Introduction to Board Charter**

“A board charter is defined as a written policy document that clearly sets out the respective roles, responsibilities and authorities of a board of directors and management in setting the direction, the management and the control of the organisation” (Australian Institute of Company Directors).

Governance For Good, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission’s (ACNC) guide for charity board members, notes that: The governing body of a not for profit organisation is the group of individuals who together are ultimately responsible for overseeing its operations and making sure it is working towards achieving its purpose in a way that also meets its ethical, legal and financial obligations.

This document provides a framework for the AAEH board in which to operate.

## **2. Vision**

The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness works to end homelessness in Australia through the use evidence based, data informed policy, programs and practices.

We understand that the community, business and government need to work together to achieve this vision.

## **3. Mission**

The AAEH supports Australian communities to individually and collectively end homelessness. Specifically, we work with local communities at all levels to ensure everyone has access to safe and sustainable housing services and that any incidents of homelessness that do occur are rare, brief and non-recurring.

## **4. Objects**

The AAEH objects (as stated in the Constitution) are to pursue the following purpose(s):

- Identifying programs that have proven results in decreasing homelessness and facilitating adoption of these programs;
- Undertaking research, raising awareness and education;
- Advocacy and promotion of policies and programs to minimise homelessness and improve the lives of those experiencing homelessness or at risk.

For the purposes outlined above, the Directors may:

- Formulate policies
- Make rules in connection with any policy; and
- Revoke or amend and policy or rules and formulate others

## 5. Values

- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Evidence informed
- Respect
- Participation
- Rights
- Inclusion and diversity
- Social justice.

## 6. Guiding Principles

In working nationally to end homelessness, we affirm that:

- Housing is a human right and that all Australians have a right to safe, affordable, secure permanent housing
- National and State governments' policies on housing and homelessness should be evidence based and focus on housing and support solutions for people who experience homelessness
- Collaborative, local community responses to homelessness are essential to ending homelessness. They need to focus on good local homelessness data and matching people experiencing homelessness with housing and support (if support is needed). Local communities should also focus on developing local housing solutions
- Equity of access to safe secure housing is critical, acknowledging the impact of age, gender, economic status, disability, sexual orientation, culture and religious belief or lack of religious belief

The AAEH endorses the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

## 7. AAEH Background

The AAEH was established as a legal entity in 2013. It built on an existing collaboration of organisations which had come together to advocate for and support the development of permanent supportive housing in Australia. The Australia Common Ground Alliance (2008-2012) worked to support organisations in Queensland, NSW, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania to develop Common Ground models of permanent supportive housing in each of these states.

Following on from the work focussed on permanent supportive housing and through the leadership shown by Micah Projects in Australia, it was agreed that the answer to ending homelessness had to include more components than supportive housing. Using data informed local collaborations to link people experiencing homelessness with housing and support combined with advocacy for housing supply and improved homelessness policies – the group that had previously been the ACGA formed a legal entity, the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness Limited.

The AAEH continues to advocate for and provide leadership on permanent supportive housing and the use of local collaborations and campaigns to end homelessness using evidence-based tools and data informed approaches. The AAEH facilitates the Australian and New Zealand Common Ground Community of Practice, which was established in 2013.

The AAEH is co-ordinating the nation Advance to Zero campaign. Micah Projects is managing the data base on behalf of the AAEH (see MOU).

## **8. Collaborative Leadership**

The AAEH is committed to a shared leadership and collaborative governance model reflecting social justice principles and organisational goals.

The AAEH works with a range of stakeholders including government agencies, not for profit agencies, researchers, the housing and homelessness sectors nationally and internationally, businesses, local communities, supporters and other participants.

Many individuals with a range of expertise, wisdom and knowledge have informed, encouraged and enabled the AAEH to develop and assisted it to grow.

Collaboration is central to the work of ending homelessness and is therefore a central tenet of the AAEH's work and of how the Board operates.

## **9. Governance**

AAEH is a company limited by guarantee. The primary governance document for the AAEH is the Constitution. The Constitution is essentially a contract between the organisation's members and its directors. It provides the rules by which the Board of Directors operate and defines the board's relationship with the organisation.

The Constitution states that the board has ultimate responsibility for the operation of the AAEH. The board currently fulfils this by understanding the responsibilities of governance and delegating defined responsibilities and projects to individual Directors, the Chair, Secretary or contractors.

## **10. Governance Standards**

As a company limited by guarantee the AAEH is accountable to the Australian Security and Investment Commission (ASIC).

ASIC administers the *Corporations Act 2001* which imposes responsibilities on the organisation. These responsibilities include:

- Having a current registered office – A company must have a current registered office in Australia and must inform ASIC of its location.
- Having a principal place of business – A company that operates a business from a location different from the registered office must inform ASIC.

- Disclosing personal details of directors – A company must inform ASIC of the name, date of birth and current residential address of directors.
- Keeping financial records – A company must keep up-to-date financial records that correctly record and explain transactions and financial position. Larger companies have additional obligations to lodge financial reports with ASIC.
- Notifying ASIC of key changes – Whenever there are certain key changes to the company’s details (e.g. registered office, principal place of business, directors), ASIC must be notified.
- Paying relevant fees to ASIC – For example, the annual review fee.
- Checking annual statements – A company’s details on the ASIC register must be accurate and up-to-date.

## **11. Governance Roles and Responsibilities**

The board focuses on two (2) key governance roles and three (3) key governance responsibilities.

Key governance roles for the AAEH board:

- Act in the best interest of the organisation
- Act in the best interest of all internal and external stakeholders.

Key governance responsibilities for the AAEH board:

### a. Provide strategic leadership

The board is responsible for the development of the strategic direction of the AAEH. The Board ensures the development and regular monitoring of the Strategic Plan and ensures regular strategic discussions are scheduled throughout the annual program of work.

### b. Ensure compliance

The board ensures that the AAEH is compliant with relevant local, state and commonwealth legislation and regulations, industry standards and quality standards. The board ensures compliance with any current or future AAEH funding agreements and partnership agreements.

### c. Roles of Directors.

**Chair:** Oversight and co-ordinate all functions of the AAEH, develop meeting agendas and chair meetings.

**Secretary:** Ensure all compliance matters are reported to ASIC and the AGM is held within the statutory time frame. Ensure resolutions agreed by the Board are recorded.

Other directors: May from time to time play a leadership role in the activities of the AAEH Allied Networks.