

Tenant Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is a group of tenant volunteers who investigate and challenge our performance and influence our policies and services.

What the panel will do

Panel members may use a variety of information, tools and activities to investigate and scrutinise specific topics such as:

- Anonymised tenant satisfaction data
- Mystery shopping
- Desk top investigations
- Instigate focus or task and finish groups
- Conduct surveys amongst other tenants
- Site visits

Topics investigated will be drawn from a variety of sources such as:

- Investigation into tenant satisfaction data
- Housing performance data
- Suggestions from other tenant involvement groups
- Topics requested by other tenants
- Suggestions from a head of service or senior officer

The panel will work alongside officers to make sure tenants views are considered during:

- Reviews of policies and procedures
- Implementation of new policies and procedures
- Procurement

Panel members will agree a schedule to keep tenants informed of their work including:

- A written schedule of work showing upcoming topics chosen for scrutiny
- Participation in the annual report of recommendations and associated outcomes
- Attending other tenant involvement opportunities where appropriate
- Regular updates published on our website and in the tenant's newsletter

Recommendations made by the Panel

The tenant scrutiny panel will work together as a group to form recommendations following investigation into each chosen topic. These will be drafted and sent in writing to the service lead or manager responsible for the relevant area.



TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS
tpas
member 2025-2026

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The council shall review and fairly assess all recommendations made by the scrutiny panel. Functions of the council are determined by law, finances and Cabinet. Where recommendations cannot be implemented, a reason along with associated information will be provided to the panel.

Officers will then have up to three weeks to respond to the recommendations in writing, which will be shared with all panel members before the next meeting.

Management of the Scrutiny Panel

Meetings will run monthly with a minimum of 10 sessions each year.

Panel members will be expected to attend 70% of all meetings, however if requested, an agreed absence period can be agreed by panel members.

Members will be invited to join on the panel for a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years.

A Chair will be elected by panel members to coordinate group activities, facilitate involvement and produce robust recommendations based on the findings and ideas of everyone on the panel. A chair is elected for a one-year term and members of the panel can nominate themselves.

Agreement shall be reached by consensus. Where a consensus cannot be reached, agreement can be formed by a majority vote.

Members of the panel must agree and adhere to the code of conduct. Members who do not adhere to the code of conduct will be asked to leave the panel.

Code of Conduct

Any information provided in confidence to you in context with your work on the panel must not be shared with any person or organisation or discussed outside the panel meetings.

Panel members must not use their position on the panel to advantage their own or another household's individual situation, housing or need. Members should therefore not instigate discussion or investigation resulting from or attempting to resolve a personal experience or anecdotal experience of another tenant.

Any conflict of interest a panel member has with a topic or activity must be declared. Members of the panel with a conflict of interest may be asked to abstain from a discussion, investigation or decision based on the wider panel's agreement.

Panel members shall treat each other, other tenants and council officers with respect. Panel members should therefore not use offensive, derogatory, patronising or discriminatory language. Violence, bullying, or threats will not be tolerated and will be reported to the police immediately.



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Monitoring and accountability

This document, Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference, will be reviewed, and where necessary updated, every six months by the panel.

Meetings will be recorded by audio or video. The recording will be held until the written minutes are documented and agreed and shall not be held or used for any other purpose.

All recommendations and associated outcomes will be published, on our website and in our newsletter, annually. Approved recommendations may be published throughout the year to keep tenants informed of changes.

Recruitment of Scrutiny Panel Members

Where possible, the group will maintain an odd number of members between 5 – 11 to facilitate a majority when voting. Applications to join shall therefore be open if there are less than 7 panel members.

Tenants will not be eligible to join the panel if applicants:

- are more than four weeks behind on your rent without an agreed repayment plan in place
- have been warned about unacceptable, abusive or aggressive behaviour towards council officers, it's elected members or other tenants in writing
- are in breach of their tenancy agreement during the time of assessing the application
- are the subject of a fraud or antisocial behaviour investigation, order or proceedings

Training and Development of Skills

To allow the panel to make robust recommendations, induction training will be provided to give panel members an understanding and overview of:

- Laws we are governed by
- Our budget and financial opportunities
- Elected Members and Cabinet

Panel members and officers will have the opportunity suggest or request other relevant training opportunities which will benefit the panel, the decision to put the request forward to the council will be agreed by the panel as a group. The council shall support and finance relevant training opportunities and will be approved where budget and staff time allows.

Last reviewed: April 2025

Review due: October 2025



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