

# Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel Framework

## 1. Introduction

This framework outlines the objectives of Hinckley and Bosworth's Council Housing service's Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel (TI&SP). The TI&SP is intended to empower tenants to hold the council accountable for the quality and delivery of its housing services and to give tenants a voice in the management and maintenance of the council's homes.

## 2. Aims

- **Improved Service Delivery:** Identify areas for improvement across housing services, policies, and procedures.
- **Tenant Empowerment:** Provide tenants with a varied range of opportunities to voice their concerns and influence decision-making.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensure that housing services are transparent and accountable to tenants.
- **Collaboration:** Foster a collaborative relationship between tenants and the council for better service delivery.

## 3. Structure and Composition

- **Membership:** The TI&SP will comprise representative group of tenants from across the council's housing stock. Selection will be through open application or tenant nominations.
- **Size:** The panel should be large enough to represent diverse tenant demographics but small enough to function effectively (no more than 12 members).
- **Scrutiny Roles:** A wide range of opportunities are available to tenants, who can sign up for roles based on their interests and how they would like to contribute. A list of roles can be found in Appendix 1.

## 4. Induction and Training

- **Induction Program:** Provide new members with a comprehensive induction program covering:
  - Council housing policies and procedures
  - The role and responsibilities of the TI&SP
  - Scrutiny methodologies (data analysis, interviewing tenants)
  - Effective communication and reporting skills
- **Ongoing Training:** Offer regular training opportunities on relevant topics, for example:
  - Housing law and regulations
  - Budget and finance
  - Tenancy Scrutiny
  - Offer specific training relating to scrutiny projects.
- HBBC are members of TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) and will regularly share offers of training with tenants, to strengthen skills in tenant involvement activity.

## 5. Structure of the framework

- **Onboarding Program:** New members will receive training including an induction to the housing service. The new members with the Service Development Team and lead housing managers to discuss the terms of reference.
- **Meetings:** The TI&SP will meet regularly to discuss housing issues, review reports, and plan scrutiny activities.
- **Scrutiny Activities:** The panel will undertake various activities, for example:
  - Reviewing council policies and procedures related to housing
  - Analysing tenant satisfaction surveys and complaints data
  - Conducting focus groups or interviews with tenants on specific issues
  - Monitoring the council's performance on repairs and maintenance
  - Inspecting council properties and making recommendations for improvement
- **Reporting:** The TI&SP will prepare an annual report with their findings, recommendations, and action plans for the council.
- **Tenant Involvement Strategy:** Co-create a revised strategy that will incorporate the new consumer standards.

## 6. Resources and Support

- **Dedicated Staff Liaison:** Allocate a dedicated council staff member to act as a liaison for the TI&SP, providing administrative support and facilitating communication with relevant departments. This will be the Service Development Officer, and/or a designated member of the appropriate service area that relates to the activity in question.

- **Service Support:** Ensure the panel has access to relevant information for effective scrutiny. Designated persons from the appropriate services will ensure that communication and requests are responded to efficiently.
- **Budget:** Allocate a budget for the TI&SP to cover training, meeting expenses, and research activities.

## 7. Review and Evaluation

- In an agreed format, there will be regular joint reviews between tenants and the Service Development team, to evaluate the effectiveness of the TI&SP to ensure it is achieving its aims.
- Conduct periodic surveys to gather feedback from tenants and council staff on the panel's performance.

The implementation of this framework will ensure that HBBC maintain a robust Tenant Scrutiny Panel that empowers tenants and contributes to a more positive housing experience.

## Appendix 1

### Tenant Involvement Roles:

**Reading Panel** - receive policies, documents, letters, and early access to web pages to provide feedback on the content. These are communications that will be used by officers to speak to our tenants, so you will be helping us to make sure that the language used, and the tone is appropriate and helpful, whilst delivering our services. This role is carried out in your own time, from home.

**Editorial Panel** – Housing Hub - be part of a team who choose topics or provide images and content for our 6 monthly Housing Hub Tenants Newsletter. This role is carried out in your own time, from home.

**Neighbourhood Champions** - someone who can help promote tenant involvement activities in their neighbourhood. This can be a range of activities from assisting with events we hold, and encouraging others such as your neighbours, to join in. This role will vary depending on your neighbourhood, some aspects may be online, and some may be in community centres or local meet ups.

**Customer Experience Champion** - A really important role where you will receive training and support to advocate for tenants who need help to provide feedback or raise concerns with the council. You could be helping with awareness of all the different ways someone can make a compliment or complaint to us, you may also get more involved by supporting another tenant directly with their complaint or concern. There will be a meeting twice a year, to review housing complaints, and what was done about them. This is a key role in scrutinising how we handle complaints, to ensure that we are fair in our response and that we are doing everything we can to put things right. This role will vary as some aspects may be by phone, in person, or online.

**Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel** - Become a member of our new Scrutiny Panel, where you'll get involved in inspecting and giving feedback on the housing service. The Scrutiny Panel will meet every 3 months, it will either be online or in person - depending on the consensus of the group. You'll have the opportunity to receive training and have plenty of support from our team.

**Void Property Inspector** - Visit void (empty) properties with staff to inspect and ensure they meet the standards and provide feedback. This will take place in the daytime, for approximately 2 hours per month, we can provide transport to and from the empty property and we will meet you there to inspect the property with you.