



St Peter's Scrutiny Panel

Terms of Reference

Tenant-led scrutiny is a system introduced by a social landlord that supports a self-regulation approach to continuously improve services. The system enables tenants to have a formal role to assess and influence the performance, service delivery, plans and behaviour of the landlord. Following the changes to Housing Regulation brought about through the Government, Tenant-led scrutiny is now a significant form of challenge to landlords regarding the delivery of housing services.

The purpose of the scrutiny panel is to scrutinise and challenge St Peter's services to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery to tenants. This will be achieved by working with St Peter's to set, monitor and enforce standards and manage and raise performance.

The scrutiny panel will also be part of the procurement process including considering value for money.

The scrutiny panel operates independent of, and separate from, the Board of Governance. Tenants can be Board members, but the panel allows tenants the opportunity to review service provision in detail and influence policy and strategy.

Aims of the Scrutiny Panel

- To increase tenant scrutiny so tenants have the opportunity to take part in strategic performance monitoring and service reviews
- To consult on property maintenance
- To provide the Board of governance with a tenant's perspective on service matters under consideration.
- To review and assist with procuring contracts including CCTV, cleaning, gardening
- To give the tenant's perspective
- To oversee a range of scrutiny activities that may be run by staff or tenants
- To feedback on performance and use findings to achieve change
- To ensure outcomes feed into operational and strategic decision making
- To support the implementation of the Government White Paper and the new consumer standards

Role of the panel

The panel has the following specific role:

- to scrutinise housing services delivery
- to review and scrutinise implementation of housing-related strategies, policies and procedures and long-term plans.
- Monitor performance
- to review Complaint's performance and customer satisfaction information
- to make recommendations to Board where needed e.g., service reviews to be instigated
- undertake service reviews in areas tenants have identified as a priority
- to review tenant satisfaction from surveys and service reports and Prioritise work on services which show low tenant satisfaction.
- The Panel will produce an annual work plan, which will detail its scrutiny activities. The work plan will focus on a minimum of two topics per year.

Membership

The Panel shall have a maximum of nine members. Membership is open to all tenants but to ensure the association is represented fully, the panel should be made up of a minimum of 2 tenants from each block (OCH, MCH and SCH) and 1 tenant from the houses.

Exclusions will apply where the tenant is a Board member, an employee of the Association or is in breach of their tenancy terms.

Where more tenants are interested than places on the panel then an election will take place within that college/houses to select the panel member(s).

The Chairperson and vice-chairperson will be elected by the panel on an annual basis. The Chair and Vice Chair will be appointed for a one-year term via self-nomination, followed by a closed ballot of panel members. Both posts are eligible for re-election annually.

The scrutiny panel may co-opt additional members (including independents) with no voting rights to the panel if they feel they add a particular skill or expertise that is not catered for on the existing panel.

Scrutiny Panel members will be appointed for a term of three years. Members of the panel will be required to stand down in a rolling programme, of three members each year based on the length of service, starting on the third anniversary of the panel's formation.

Members may be reappointed to the panel through the selection process but may not serve longer than six years.

New members of the panel will participate in an induction training programme to help them fulfil their role. They will also participate in further training as and when required to support them in their role.

Frequency of meetings

The Scrutiny Panel will meet four times per year. Additional ad hoc meetings may be arranged when necessary to deal with identified issues. Meeting times will be flexible to meet the needs of the panel members ensuring maximum attendance.

Agendas and supporting paperwork will be circulated one week before the meeting. Members are expected to read this information prior to the meetings and bring a copy with them for discussion.

The Chairperson will be responsible for leading the meeting and ensuring the agenda and the code of conduct is followed.

The quorum of any formal meeting shall be 50%+1, of current membership of the panel. A quorum must include either the Chair or Vice chair.

The panel will reach decisions by consensus; if this is not possible members will vote on an issue by show of hands, a majority of one will be required to agree a decision. In the event of a tie the motion will not be carried, and the Chair will not have a casting vote.

Scrutiny Panel members will be given the opportunity to declare any interest in any of the activities the panel will be undertaking. This will be recorded at the meeting. If there is a clear conflict of interest the member will be expected to withdraw from scrutiny in that area.

Members will be expected to attend 75% of meetings and not miss more than three meetings in a row. The panel may agree to long term absence based on panel members' individual circumstances.

Accountability

The Scrutiny Panel will report back to tenants regularly through newsletters, the tenants annual report and other forms of communication including the website and social media.

Reports of work undertaken, and any recommendations will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

Access to information

The Scrutiny Panel may request service reports, policies and procedures and other information to carry out its scrutiny activities. The panel may also ask staff to attend a meeting to discuss any issues. All requests for information must be in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

Conduct

All members of the scrutiny panel will be expected to comply with the code of conduct. Tenant scrutiny panel members who do not comply with the code of conduct will be asked to resign by the Tenant scrutiny panel.

Scrutiny panel members must not disclose confidential information to anyone else outside the panel. Members who breach confidentiality will be removed from the panel

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The scrutiny panel will aim to ensure it is representative of the tenants it serves and will encourage applications from all diversities.

The scrutiny panel will consider the impact of equality and diversity in all aspects of its scrutiny work.

Monitoring and Review

Each year a health check of the panel will take place to ensure it is performing its duties effectively. The tenant scrutiny panel will lead the health check. The terms of reference will be reviewed annually as part of the process