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|  | *Tenants’ Voice* |
|  | Terms of Reference 2025 |
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**1.0 Objective**

***Tenants’ Voice*** is a resident-led group set up to ensure that tenants, leaseholders and sub – letters of the council have their needs, concerns and aspirations listened to, heard and acted upon by LBTH in a manner which is beneficial to all stakeholders concerned.

1. **Remit and powers**

2.1 The role of *Tenants’ Voice* is three-fold:

* Consultative:

To be consulted on proposals affecting the provision of housing services to LBTH tenants and residents including strategies, policies, service design and works programmes.

* Advisory/challenge:

Using performance and complaints data, audit visits to operational services and comparative insights on best practices highlighted by TPAS and resident scrutiny teams across the UK to oversee the operational performance of LBTH housing services for tenants, leaseholders and sub-letters and make recommendations for service improvements.

* Scrutiny:

To undertake scrutiny reviews of identified areas of concern as a panel or task and finish group bringing together residents with ‘lived experiences’ and officers or external bodies and individuals with expertise in the field to review the council’s housing management

2.2 Building safety will be a key area of focus for the group.

2.3 Residents of the *Tenants’ Voice* act as an advisory body and do not have powers on the operational running of the housing service.

2.4 Budgetary decisions and staffing considerations will NOT be within the *Tenants’ Voice* remit though recommendations can be forwarded with respect to residents’ perceived priorities.

2.5 *Tenants’ Voice* will work closely with other resident groups in Tower Hamlets whilehelping to identify means of engaging with some of the borough’s most vulnerable residents who’s voices are often overlooked..

2.6 The *Tenants’ Voice* group has the power to commission/request the following:

* Request service managers to report and attend meetings
* Invite LBTH Directors as well as other external experts to meetings
* Request for more data from service areas
* Commission focus groups with key resident groupsand with residents marginalised because of a lack of mobility, confidence, English language and digital skills;
* Request visits to relevant high performing organisations
* Request relevant expert advice
* Request further training building skills for improved performance as a housing scrutiny panel
* Commission ‘mystery shopping’ of services
* Commission satisfaction surveys
* Members can request a 15min slot, for a private discussion without the presence of LBTH staff, at the start or end of the meeting

2.7 *Tenants’ Voice* will select, on an annual basis, the performance indicators to be presented at meetings.

**3.0 Membership, recruitment, servicing**

3.1 The group will have a maximum of 12 members and will comprise of:

* Eight tenants
* Three leaseholders from amongst residents in Tower Hamlets;
* One tenant of a leaseholder

Initially and in addition an interim independent Chair for a maximum of 6 months – see para 8.1

3.2 The following will not be eligible to be a member of the group:

* Members of any other formal body or committee within the LBTH governance structure
* Members of any formal body within the LBTH tenant and leaseholder engagement structure
* Elected Members
* Anyone holding a formal role [Chair; Vice Chair. Secretary; Treasurer] within a Tower Hamlets Tenants’ and Residents’ Association

3.3 Any tenant or resident who is the subject of a serious complaint or has any previous or current history of anti-social behaviour, will not be eligible.

3.4 Residents may attend *Tenants’ Voice* meetings as observers or co-opted members.

3.5 All decisions made by *Tenants’ Voice* will be based on the overall majority vote. Observers are excluded from this.

3.6 Expressions of interest to participate in the group will be sought. Interested residents will be asked to complete a short form with their details, setting out why they want to get involved and what relevant skills and experience they can offer. As possible, consideration will also be given to ensuring a broad representation of residents from a range of protected characteristics, ages and ethnicities as well as geographic spread across the borough.

Informal interviews will be carried out by a panel made up of one member of the council’s Regulatory Assurance Team, two existing group members and a member of the current administration nominated by the Mayor.

3.7 Meetings will generally be hybrid i.e. facilitating both in-person and on-line participation.

3.8 Agendas and papers will be circulated at least 5 working days prior to meetings. Minutes of the meeting will be circulated within 10 working days. All papers will be published on-line.

**4.0** **Links to LBTH governance**

4.1` The Mayor or Lead Member for Housing will attend a minimum of two Tenants’ Voice meetings per year.

4.2 Recommendations from *Tenants’ Voice* will be considered by the Lead Member for Housing as part of one-to-one meetings with the Corporate Director of Housing Regeneration.

4.3 The Corporate Director of Housing Regeneration will feed back to the Housing Management (Cabinet) Sub – Committee and Housing Scrutiny Committee on recommendations set out by the *Tenants’ Voice* and provide updates to Tenants’ Voice members.

4.4 A written update on the work of the *Tenants’ Voice*, prepared by the Regulatory Assurance Team, will be presented to the Housing Management Sub Committee at every committee. A report will also be provided to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on at least an annual basis

**5.0 Conduct of Tenants’ Voice members**

5.1 Members should treat each other, officers and others with respect in line with the values of the council and the aims of the *Tenants’ Voice* group. They should promote equality, openness and transparency. All members of the group will adhere to a Code of Conduct that covers social media, networking and engagement values. The council has the power to remove any members who are in breach of these values (values are outlined on the council’s website and Tenants’ Voice induction pack).

5.2 Members should work to inform themselves of the needs of a diversity of tenants, leaseholders and sub-tenants so as to better understand and reflect the views of wider residents and, in particular, of those who’s voices are traditionally marginalised from wider public or in-house debate.

5.3 Members must not bring LBTH into disrepute when undertaking their duties and must maintain confidentiality. This includes not sharing or inappropriately using contact details of other members of the group.

**6.0** **Length of Service**

6.1 Members will serve for a maximum of 3 years.

6.2 Members may seek an additional term which will will be considered in line with other applications for membership according to lived experiences and professional expertise, geographic representation, particularly of housing estates not benefiting from TRA representation, and representation of diversity within the profiles of Tenants’ Voice members.

**7.0 Frequency of meetings**

7.1 The group will generally meet every two months. The maximum number of meetings will be six per year, excluding sub-committee meetings and independent panel reviews.

7.2 Members who fail to attend two or more consecutive meetings without appropriate notification will be considered to have resigned from their role on the *Tenants’ Voice.*

7.3 The quorum for the *Tenants’ Voice* is a minimum of 4 members.

7.4 Scrutiny reviews will be scheduled as additional sessions to the scheduled *Tenants’ Voice* meetings.

**8.0 Chair of the *Tenants’ Voice***

8.1 The group will have a dedicated chair for a maximum period of three years. thereafter elections to the post from the membership of the group will be held.

8.2 The group will elect two vice chairs for a maximum period of three years. The vice chairs will be responsible for chairing meetings in the absence of the chair.

**9.0 Annual Work Plan**

9.1 The group will have an annual work plan. The work plan will be agreed in quarter four or at an annual away day.

**10.0 Annual Review**

10.1 An annual review of the effectiveness of the group and the Terms of Reference will be carried out by the Regulatory Assurance Team in conjunction with the Chair who will be supported by a sub- group as agreed by Tenants’ Voice panel members.

**11.0 Training and Development**

11.1 Members may request access to training to support them in their roles. This will be available subject to cost and availability of the training requested.

**12.0 Additional support**

12.1 Support may be provided for childcare needs, to residents with mobility issues and for other reasonable adjustments. Group members should speak to the Regulatory Assurance Team should they require assistance.