



Resident Scrutiny Panel - Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference (TOR) sets out the aims, objectives, rights and responsibilities of the North Lincolnshire Homes (NLH) Resident Scrutiny Panel. The TOR was re-drafted in July 2011 with Scrutiny Panel members.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that NLH provides high quality housing services which retain residents at the heart of the business
- To work on behalf of tenants and leaseholders to ensure that NLH provides housing services that meet residents' needs and are of the highest standard.
- To ensure that NLH embeds the new Tenant Services Authority (TSA) framework on delivery of both organisational and local offers by monitoring and challenging these standards
- To form an effective but independent part of the management structure together with the NLH Board and Executive Management Team
- To ensure that NLH is a well managed, viable organisation which places residents at the heart of its business delivery through resident led scrutiny
- To provide an independent check of services and where required, provide a challenge to existing service delivery in order to shape, influence and drive up standards and performance

The Role of the Resident Scrutiny Panel

- To take an independent view of NLH service delivery
- To establish priorities for reviewing NLH services' based on a number of triggers (see programme of work section 4)
- To oversee all scrutiny activities
- To assess NLH performance against expected standards through its organisational service standards and local offers
- To hold NLH to account where services fail to meet expected standards
- Use best practice from other organisations as part of the scrutiny reviews to ensure NLH delivers excellent services including national standards and accepted best recognised practice
- The resident scrutiny panel will abide by the NLH Equality and Diversity Policy and will undertake equality and diversity training as part of the annual training programme
- Inform other residents what the panel has achieved and encourage other people to get involved in scrutiny

Remit

The resident scrutiny panel's remit will extend to the following areas of business:

- Service quality and performance
- Organisational and local service standards
- How the service is delivered
- Improvements to existing services

Thus the remit of the resident scrutiny panel will consider all areas of service delivery and its' performance.

The remit is set around a number of core standards. These are:-

- To be accountable to the wider resident body

- To act with transparency and integrity
- To reflect the priorities, needs and aspirations of the resident body
- To make recommendations based on robust evidence

Programme of Work

The resident scrutiny panel will develop an initial programme of scrutiny work and review this each subsequent year. The priority areas for review will be decided using feedback from all available information including:

- Performance indicators and benchmarking with other housing providers (unrestricted access to)
- Issues raised through Service Review Groups, Tenant Inspectors, Mystery Shoppers, Community Voice, complaints, focus groups, shared interest forums, service specific groups and estate based groups
- Customer feedback mechanisms e.g. Resident Satisfaction surveys, complaints
- External assessments, peer reviews of NLH services
- The scrutiny panel may supplement its programme of work by considering requests for scrutiny reviews from the NLH Board/executive team and from requests for scrutiny review from the wider resident population, e.g. Community Voice
- The programme of work undertaken by the scrutiny panel will be based on SMART objectives (specific, measurable, accountable, realistic, time bound) and a project management framework

Accountability to Residents

The resident scrutiny panel will refer to a wide range of both formal and informal sources of intelligence to inform its work programme and priorities. One formal route for residents to bring matters to the attention of the resident scrutiny panel is by raising a 'Request for a Scrutiny Review' via a group of residents. The resident scrutiny panel will then consider if an existing programme of work would be revised to take account of this request

Accountability/Powers to and from the North Lincolnshire Homes Board and Executive Management Team

- The resident scrutiny panel will consider 'Request for Scrutiny' from the NLH Board/Executive Team
- The resident scrutiny panel will have an annual schedule of scrutiny reviews which will be based on areas identified in their programme of work, any requests for scrutiny review by the organisation and any request for scrutiny review by the wider resident population which the scrutiny panel have decided to take on
- A formal duty on the NLH Board /Executive Team to respond appropriately and in a timely manner to the scrutiny panels requests and recommendations
- The resident scrutiny panel can commission additional evidence findings if and when required to help with its review
- The resident scrutiny panel can call any member of NLH staff to attend its meetings to present evidence
- The resident scrutiny panel will use a standard reporting template which is based on SMART objectives (specific, measurable, accountable, realistic, time bound)
- The resident scrutiny panel will present the draft report to the Executive Management Team for comments. The scrutiny panel will have the final decision on whether the report will be amended
- NLH Board and Executive Management Team will consider all reports of the resident scrutiny panel and where the resident scrutiny panel has concerns regarding service delivery or performance, the resident scrutiny panel will make a formal request for a response to its recommendations
- A member of the resident scrutiny panel will be in attendance to present the report
- The Board will consider the formal request at the next programmed meeting and will agree a programme of work to bring about improvements from the scrutiny panel recommendations through an action planning process with timescales
- Following NLH Board approval the Panel shall agree a timetable for implementation of its recommendations with the service area(s) affected. Consideration will also be given to the provision of subsequent regular progress reports
- If in the event that the resident scrutiny panel is dissatisfied with the Board response, the resident scrutiny panel can set out its concerns to the Board. The Board should consider this at its next programmed meeting and respond in an agreed timescale of the meeting. If the resident scrutiny panel remains dissatisfied it may take its concerns to the Tenant Services Authority
- The resident scrutiny panel will have its own webpage on the NLH website and will publish its annual programme of work, all of its reports and action plans for improvements to ensure transparency
- The resident scrutiny panel will produce an annual report of findings which it will report to the Board, to Community Voice and to the annual tenants' conference and be available on the web page and a summary within the NLH tenants' newsletter

- The resident scrutiny panel will produce a statement of completion at the end of each review, showing recommendations in prioritisation order, actions taken by NLH and timescales for completion
- In the event of the Board or Executive Management Team having concerns about the resident scrutiny panel's compliance with its Terms of Reference, representatives from the Board/or Executive Management Team will attend the next programmed meeting of the Residents Scrutiny Panel to raise and discuss these concerns. The Resident Scrutiny Panel will respond in an agreed timescale

Membership

- Up to eight places will be available for membership
- All tenants receiving services from NLH are eligible to apply with the exception of Tenant Board Members who may not be members of the Resident Scrutiny Panel and Board Members at the same time
- Successful applicants will be selected from those considered to best meet the role profile and person specification following a recruitment process
- There is a requirement that any successful applicant will adopt the terms of reference, code of conduct, confidentiality agreement and a commitment to undergo training and development as part of their role
- Terms of office will be for three years. Members who step down at the end of their term of office may be re-selected but will be considered alongside other suitable applicants through the selection and interview process
- The Resident Scrutiny Panel can give consideration to the inclusion of independent/or co-opted members in order to achieve greater balance and/or competence

Frequency of Meetings

As and when required or a minimum of six meetings per year

The Scrutiny Panel may establish task and finish groups to lead on specific activities. Task and Finish groups must report to the Scrutiny Panel at an agreed frequency

Support from NLH and Access to Information

- The Resident Involvement Team will provide support to the Resident Scrutiny Panel and will act as the link between the scrutiny panel and NLH
- The scrutiny panel members will have access to computers/ laptops/internet access/ a meeting room within NLH
- The Resident Involvement Team will provide administrative support as and when the Resident Scrutiny Panel requires it. The Resident Involvement Team will administer volunteer expenses on behalf of the Resident Scrutiny Panel. This will include support to get to and from meetings, e.g. taxis
- The Resident Involvement Team will be the initial point of contact for the Resident Scrutiny Panel in respect of requests for information/reports/staff who may need to be included within a scrutiny review. The scrutiny panel might also want to hear evidence from residents on request
- Where appropriate information is not readily available, the Resident Scrutiny Panel may commission reports. Requests for information must be made via the Resident Involvement Team in accordance with the Access to Information protocol
- The Resident Scrutiny Panel will be provided with the relevant resources to operate effectively. An annual budget will be agreed as part of the NLH annual budgeting process. The Resident Involvement Team will maintain the budget and provide budget reports for the Resident Scrutiny Panel
- Access to Information - the Resident Scrutiny Panel will be enabled to request reports and information from NLH to carry out its scrutiny activities
- The Resident Involvement Team will be responsible to ensure that the scrutiny panel webpage is kept up to date
- The Resident Involvement Team will work with the Resident Scrutiny Panel on the development of a 'Resident Scrutiny' logo that will go on all information, reports etc. that are delivered through the Resident Scrutiny Panel

Training

All new members will undertake an induction training programme and any training and development needs will be assessed. All members will be provided with the scrutiny panel's handbook of information. A training programme will be developed, delivered and regularly reviewed.

Annual individual appraisals of all members will be carried out and an annual team building day which will be facilitated through NLH. This will include a SWOT analysis of the scrutiny panel (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), review of Terms of Reference etc. From this additional training and development

opportunities may be provided to ensure that all scrutiny panel members are equipped with the requisite skills to fulfil their role.

Mentoring

If the Resident Scrutiny Panel wish to engage with an independent mentor to provide advice and support then this request will be put forward to the Resident Involvement Team as and when required.

Recruitment and Succession

Recruitment and succession planning to the Resident Scrutiny Panel will be undertaken by the Resident Involvement Team in conjunction with the Resident Scrutiny Panel. The Resident Involvement Team will assume responsibility for any appeals from unsuccessful applicants regarding the recruitment process.