

Tenant Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference (May 2022)

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) has been established to provide Board with independent, tenant-led scrutiny of the services WFHA provides to tenants.

2.0 Main tasks

2.1 The main tasks of the TSP are to work constructively with WFHA in scrutinizing the performance, quality and value for money of WFHA's landlord services, having regard for accepted standards and best practice.

2.2 In relation to the above, to:

2.2.1 Agree, publish and deliver an annual Action Plan.

2.2.2 Publish findings in an Annual Report (to be facilitated by the Chair of the TSP, with support from the Head of Governance).

2.3 To ensure that tenants are at the heart of decision making and service provision.

2.4 To hold WFHA to account for poor performance and to influence service improvement.

2.5 To contribute to the development of WFHA's strategic priorities (for example, Business Plans).

2.6 To make suggestions and contribute to efforts to improve communication with tenants and tenant engagement.

2.7 To maximize opportunities to contribute to improved communications with tenants including the content and style of newsletters, annual reports and the WFHA website.

2.8 To participate in the appointment of contractors for tendered services and recruitment of staff, as required.

2.9 To make suggestions regarding the kinds of tenant events on offer.

2.10 To ensure that the work and any concerns of the TSP are shared with the Board of WFHA.

3.0 Eligibility

3.1 All members of the TSP must be current tenants of WFHA.

3.2 Tenants cannot join the TSP, and may not remain a member of the TSP, if they are in breach of their tenancy agreement with WFHA (this includes rent arrears of more than £500 where a repayment plan is not in place or where the agreed repayment plan is breached).

3.3 Tenants who are Board members cannot join the TSP.

4.0 Recruitment

4.1 The TSP and the Chief Executive will share responsibility for recruitment to the TSP.

4.2 Vacancies will be advertised in WFHA newsletters, on the website, through social media and other contacts, formally and informally, with tenants.

4.3 In filling a vacancy, underrepresented groups will be targeted.

5.0 Membership

5.1 Membership is by application form (see Appendix 1).

5.2 A TSP selection panel comprised of one member of the TSP and the Chair of the TSP will review and determine the outcome of all applications within 4 weeks of receipt.

5.3 The TSP will consist of a maximum of ten members.

5.4 Membership is for a maximum of 2 terms of 3 years – 6 years in total.

5.5 Membership commences with an eight-week Induction Training Programme that is organized by the Chair of the TSP.

5.6 Membership may be ended if:

5.6.1 A member asks for their membership to be ended.

5.6.2 A member becomes ineligible (see section 3.0).

5.6.3 An induction period is not completed satisfactorily.

5.6.4 A member misses three consecutive meetings of the TSP.

5.6.5 A member does not meet the expectations of membership, as set out in the role profile and Code of Conduct, despite being supported to do so.

6.0 Administration and facilitation

- 6.1 The Head of Governance provides governance support to the TSP. This includes support to ensure compliance with these Terms of Reference.
- 6.2 The Head of Governance will ensure that a member of WFHA staff is designated to provide administrative support to the TSP. This will include minute taking and circulation of papers.
- 6.3 The Head of Governance will facilitate access to relevant information and services scheduled for review by the TSP.
- 6.4 The TSP may invite members of staff and / or the Board, and / or other parties to attend a meeting of the TSP.

7.0 Meetings

- 7.1 The TSP will meet at least four times in each financial year.
- 7.2 An independent Chair will be appointed by WFHA and arrangements will be reviewed by the TSP, with support from the Head of Governance, on an annual basis.
- 7.3 A minimum of three members of the TSP must attend a meeting in order for that meeting to be quorate.

8.0 Powers

- 8.1 WFHA Board and staff have a formal duty to respond appropriately and in a timely manner, to TSP requests and recommendations.
- 8.2 The TSP have full access to relevant performance data, comparative information and tenant feedback.

9.0 Review of the TSP and Terms of Reference

- 9.1 The TSP will review its effectiveness on an annual basis. This will involve discussion at a TSP meeting using a set of questions, drafted and provided in advance. Discussion items will include the effectiveness of these Terms of Reference and learning from the last year.
- 9.2 Any proposed changes to these Terms of Reference will require Board approval.