



## Appendix **A**

### **Central Bedfordshire Council Tenants Scrutiny Panel**

#### **Terms of Reference**

#### ***Vision Statement: Question, Understand and Improve***

#### **1. Aims and Objectives**

The Tenants Scrutiny Panel will work on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) tenants to ensure that CBC delivers housing services of the highest standard to all, by providing an independent view on all aspects of housing services.

To ensure that CBC complies with the new regulatory framework in the way it delivers services by monitoring and challenging standards and performance.

To ensure that CBC provides a high quality housing service that places tenants at the heart of the organisation.

#### **2. The Role of the Tenants Scrutiny Panel**

Gather data and other information to enable housing services to be scrutinised.

Examine data and other information and make recommendations for service improvement.

Scrutinise the efficiency of strategies, policies and operations.

Report recommendations to Councillors and Senior Management.

To agree and monitor action plans.

#### **3. Membership**

There will be a maximum of 12 Panel members.

Any person living in property owned by CBC is invited to apply for membership to the Panel.

Members will be recruited through a rigorous and comprehensive process to establish that they have the relevant skills and experience.

The membership will be for 3 years, after which members will be able to re-apply.

If, due to loss of members, the Panel drops below 8 members there will be another recruitment campaign to increase numbers to 12 members.

All members will be expected to abide by the Code of Conduct, which is drawn up between CBC and the Tenants Scrutiny Panel.

#### **4. Work Programme**

The Tenants Scrutiny Panel will develop its own programme of work, considering all areas of housing services.

The Tenants Scrutiny Panel will consider various sources of evidence to assist in identifying and planning its work.

The Tenants Scrutiny Panel will write reports on all topics discussed and work with CBC to publish the results.

#### **5. Procedure and Frequency of Meetings**

The Tenants Scrutiny Panel will meet as frequently as the members think necessary and will agree the dates, times and locations of meetings.

A Quorum will consist of over 50% of members.

A Chair and a Vice-Chair will be elected and will hold the post for 1 year. Elections will be held each year.

Each formal meeting will be recorded and a copy of the meeting minutes sent to all interested parties.

All minutes are to be signed off by the Chair and 2 other members of the Tenants Scrutiny Panel.

#### **6. Training and Development**

All members of the Tenants Scrutiny Panel must undertake an initial session of training enabling them to perform their role to a high standard.

Training will be continued at intervals to bring the Tenants Scrutiny Panel up-to-date with any regulatory changes and other identified training required to help them in their tasks.

Appraisals will be undertaken annually.

#### **7. Equality, Diversity and Principles**

The Panel is committed to respecting the values of all members of the community it represents and will take active steps to ensure that it does not inadvertently discriminate on grounds of any of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

#### **8. Access to Information**

Panel members will comply with the Access to Information Protocol

#### **9. Communication**

The Panel members will comply with the Communication Protocol.

The Panel will be expected to work with CBC to promote its activities, this may include writing an Annual Report published in 'Housing Matters' and on CBC website.

### **10. Reporting**

The Panel will prepare regular reports to Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

### **11. Support**

The Tenants Scrutiny Panel will have the support of the Tenant Involvement Officer at CBC who will provide, as necessary, procedure support.

The members of the Tenants Scrutiny Panel are un-paid; however expenses will be reimbursed in line with the existing CBC expenses policy.