

# Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny

## Stevenage Council

### **Aims and Objectives**

The primary goal of the Scrutiny at Stevenage Borough Council is for tenants and leaseholders to actively influence the Council's housing policies, strategies, and other relevant matters.

It is an opportunity for tenants and leaseholders to express their opinions and provide recommendations for improvement to the Executive Housing Working Group and Cabinet.

It also plays a crucial role in evaluating the performance of the Housing Service and offering recommendations based on the findings of scrutiny. These efforts aim to enhance tenant and leaseholder influence in housing strategy, policy, and service delivery.

Guided by principles of Co-operative Councils Values and Principles; scrutiny aims to promote diversity within Stevenage and work collaboratively with the Council, recognising that complete agreement may not always be feasible.

### **Responsibilities and functions of Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny**

- Monitoring progress against agreed customer performance indicators.
- Ensuring that Stevenage Borough Council complies with Consumer Standards as prescribed by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- Reviewing how Stevenage Borough Council provides services – from a resident viewpoint – in order that tenants and leaseholders have a positive experience.
- Holding Stevenage Borough Council to account, ensuring that the full range of residents' experiences are influencing strategic decisions and service design and delivery.
- Proactively monitoring the implementation of actions identified through service improvement projects.

### **Membership**

Scrutiny consists of resident representatives, including tenants, and resident leaseholders, working collaboratively with managers and teams in Stevenage Borough Council.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Committed to equality and diversity, scrutiny ensures fair treatment of all individuals, irrespective of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, marital status, sexuality, age, religion, or any other defining factor.

### **Declaration of Interest**

Tenants and leaseholders taking part in scrutiny must declare interests, personal or prejudicial, refraining from voting on matters where a prejudicial interest is identified.

### **Confidentiality**

Tenants and leaseholders taking part in scrutiny ensure confidential issues are highlighted and either not included in discussions or agree that they will not be shared outside those present.

### **Code of Conduct**

Tenants and leaseholders taking part in scrutiny adhere to a Code of Conduct, emphasising order, adherence to the agenda, punctuality, and collective decision-making on external correspondence.

### **Training and Development**

Group members receive relevant information, support and training as required.

### **Administrative Support**

Stevenage Borough Council provides administrative support for any scrutiny meetings.

### **Role Description**

Scrutiny works alongside Stevenage Borough Council's Housing Teams to help develop its Housing Services and make sure they are delivered to a deliver high quality that meet tenants needs.

Tenant-led scrutiny helps support a self-regulation approach between the Council and the Regulator of Social Housing to continuously improve and challenge our actions/activities as a landlord.

The scrutiny system enables tenants to play a role to assess and influence the performance, service delivery and plans of social housing services.

### **Key tasks and responsibilities**

- Scrutinise specific aspects of housing services delivered to tenants and challenge any weaknesses or concerns.
- Give an independent view of the Council's housing services compared to other landlords.
- Work separately and independently to existing tenant groups
- Prioritise topics on services which show low tenant satisfaction.
- Analyse information and opinions and, when necessary, challenge constructively.

- Hold the team and Senior Managers to account.
- Monitor performance and report on positive experiences and good practice.
- Report findings and recommendations upon completion of each scrutiny review to senior managers.
- Communicate the review's findings and recommendations to tenants (and other relevant stakeholders) on the outcomes through various mediums.

### **Skills and qualities**

- Ability to work as a team and be respectful to others.
- Ability to take an open- minded approach to discussions and take professional advice into account.
- Confidence to have a voice within an independent minded group and can be constructively critical of the organisation.
- Well organised and reliable, members need sufficient time to attend meetings/complete tasks.
- Ability to demonstrate political impartiality during meetings.
- Focused on improving services delivered to all tenants and leaseholders without showing disproportionate attention to particular areas or wards.
- Understanding and appreciation of equality and diversity.
- Confidence, enthusiasm and drive to implement change
- Efficient and conscious of making the best use of resources available.
- Good Interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to actively listen at meetings and prepared to listen to other points of view.
- Innovative approach to problem solving and make effective decisions based on evidence.
- Analytical ability – able to review various information sources and challenge the information in a constructive manner, where required.