

Council Housing Leeds
Local Housing Advisory Panels
Draft Terms of Reference February 2014

1. Purpose of the Local Housing Advisory Panels.

- 1.1 There will be 11 Local Housing Advisory Panels in Leeds, 4 each in the former ENE and WNW ALMO areas and 3 in the former AVH (SSE) ALMO area.
- 1.2 Each Panel will receive agreed funding through the Director of Environment and Housing's delegated powers to fund community initiatives.
- 1.3 The key aims of the Local Housing Advisory Panels are
 - 1.3.1 To understand the needs of local communities and develop, support and invest appropriately.
 - 1.3.2 to ensure that there are high standards of service delivery within each Panel area through monitoring, reporting and influencing.
 - 1.3.3 to perform an advisory role on the quality of service delivery in their area and act as a consultative group about future service provision and investment in their area.

2. Membership

- 2.1 Membership will be open to a maximum of 10 tenants, of which 1 can be a Leaseholder and 2 Elected Members. The Chair of each Panel will always be a tenant or leaseholder.
- 2.2 Members of the Scrutiny Panel will not be eligible for membership of Housing Advisory Panels
- 2.3 The current membership of the former ALMO Area Panels will become the first membership of the Local Housing Advisory Panels.
- 2.4 Panel members will be re-appointed on a 4 yearly cycle. Retirement will be based on the length of service.
- 2.5 Previous years of service on Area Panels will be taken into account when calculating the first recruitment cycle post transfer to Housing Leeds.
- 2.6 If more than two members are due to retire then those to retire shall be chosen by lot. Members will be able to stand for re-selection.
- 2.7 There will be an approved selection process for new tenant members.
- 2.8 Prospective panel members who are in formal dispute with Housing Leeds will not be eligible for membership

- 2.9 Elected Members will be nominated via the Area Committees.
- 2.10 Other individuals may be co-opted to a Panel where it is relevant and would enhance the work of the Panel on a particular subject. Any co-opted member shall attend meetings for an agreed timescale.
- 2.11 Co-opted members will not have any voting rights.
- 2.12 Relevant training will be made available to all Housing Advisory Panel members.
- 2.13 New Housing Advisory Panel Members will undertake a mandatory induction training session.

3. Accountability

- 3.1 The Local Housing Advisory Panels will be accountable to council tenants in their geographical area. Therefore the Panels, supported by officers from Housing Management, must ensure that they can demonstrate that:
- tenants on the Panels are representative of tenants within the panel areas where possible.
 - the views of tenants are being represented where practicable.
 - The Housing Advisory Board and the Director of Environment and Housing will consult with Local Housing Advisory Panels via a meeting of the Chairs on matters relevant and appropriate to the running of Housing Leeds

4. Review

- 4.1 Each Local Housing Advisory Panel will conduct an annual review of its programme of work, working methods and terms of reference. The report of the review will be presented to the Housing Advisory Board.

5. Method of Working and Meetings

- 5.1 The Local Housing Advisory Panels will meet at least bi-monthly, sequenced to precede Housing Advisory Board meetings.
- 5.2 Declarations of interest must be disclosed prior to the meeting. The Chair reserves the right to ask any Housing Advisory Panel Member who declares an interest in an item, to leave the meeting whilst said item is being discussed.
- 5.3 A meeting will be quorate with 50% of current membership of the individual Housing Advisory Panel (rounding up when this is an odd number e.g. 2.5 = 3).
- 5.4 All meetings will be minuted.
- 5.5 Where possible papers for a meeting will be sent to Housing Advisory Panel Members five working days before the date of the relevant meeting, for example

if a meeting is to take place on a Wednesday then papers should be sent on the previous Wednesday.

- 5.6 Reasonable expenses will be paid to members on official Housing Advisory Panel business.
- 5.7 Panels will set priorities for the year with local Housing Management Officers. Panels will then receive reports in accordance with the work programme from the Housing Management Officers.
- 5.8 Chairs will serve a 2 year term. Chairs and Vice Chairs will be elected by other Housing Advisory Panel members and a consistent process will be implemented.

6. Disqualification and Removal of Panel Members

- 6.1 A person shall be ineligible for appointment to the Housing Advisory Panel and if already appointed shall immediately cease to be a Panel member if the relevant individual:-

- Resigns his/her office by written notice.
- Is removed from office by a resolution of other Panel Members following a proposal from the Chair resulting from persistent absence from meetings of the Panel without the permission of the Panel; or
- Shall have been absent without permission of the Panel from three consecutive meetings of the Panel and the Panel resolves that his/her office be vacated;
or
- In the case of a Tenant/Leaseholder he/she ceases to be a Tenant/Leaseholder of Leeds City Council; or
- The Tenant/Leaseholder ceases to be a resident within their designated Panel area; or
- Is a Tenant/Leaseholder and is or becomes an elected member of the Local Authority;
- Refuses to sign or is found to have breached the Code of Conduct for Housing Advisory Panel members;
 - NB: if a breach of the Code of Conduct is alleged then the Panel Member will be temporarily suspended until the issue is dealt with and a conclusion reached.