

Leeds Housing Board

Terms of Reference

ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Leeds Housing Board will have a dual focus - firstly to provide regular oversight and review of the management of Council Housing services and secondly to oversee the delivery of the Leeds Housing Strategy.

The Leeds Housing Board is authorised to discharge the following functions:

1. **Housing Operations** - to review and advise on the delivery of the Housing Service's landlord functions – receiving regular performance information, assurance of compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing regulatory framework / other legislative requirements including the 2022 Building Safety Act, ensuring an evidence based approach which is open and transparent and hears the voice of customers, advising on policy and strategy etc.
2. **Housing Strategy** - to provide collaborative leadership to the development and delivery of the Leeds Housing Strategy and sub strategies, including the Homelessness Strategy, ensuring that strategic housing priorities are aligned to Council priorities and that partner organisations are working collaboratively to deliver the strategy's outcomes. To also consider the Leeds Housing Strategy within the context of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy.

MEETINGS

The Board will meet up to six times a year, with meetings dedicated to either operations or strategy:

- **Housing Operations** – will meet 4 times a year in January, April / May, July and November
- **Housing Strategy** – will meet twice a year in March and September

A forward plan of meeting dates and times, including agendas, papers and minutes will be published on the Leeds City Council website. Agendas and papers will be sent to members of the Board at least seven days before the date of the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP / ARRANGEMENTS

Five Elected Members will form the core membership of the Leeds Housing Board covering both Housing Operations and Housing Strategy. Four Elected Members will be from the current Administration and one from the largest opposition group. Membership will be reviewed on an annual basis. The respective Group Whips will nominate their group's representation (excluding the Chair).

The Chair of the Board will be the Executive Board Member with responsibility for the city's housing functions.

The remaining membership will differ for each sub-strand:

Housing Operations – four tenants of Leeds City Council.

Housing Strategy - one representative from a Housing Association and one representative from the Third Sector.

In relation to the Housing Strategy sub-strand of the Board, where there is a significant update to the Board for a strategy priority which is overseen by a different Executive Member, then the relevant Executive Member will be invited to the relevant Board meeting. Other senior officers of LCC or partner organisations, including Homes England, may be invited to specific meetings to support a strategic discussion in relation to specific themes.

The tenant, Housing Association and Third Sector Membership will be reviewed once every two years. The Tenant Members who will attend the Operational sessions will initially be selected following a recruitment process which will involve inviting expressions of interests from members of the new Tenant Voice Panel. As each representative's two year term draws to a close a recruitment process will be carried out.

The Housing Association and Third Sector members who will attend the Strategy sessions will be recruited via a process where suitable organisations are approached and requested that interested suitable candidates submit applications which will then be evaluated. Like tenant representatives, the HA and Third Sector representative membership will be reviewed after two years.

Each tenant representative will be supported to champion a current (and any new) regulatory Consumer Standard.

Tenant representatives will be expected to sign up to the Resident Involvement Code of Conduct, to encourage inclusive and respectful behaviours and other requirements (including confidentiality) to ensure the effective working of the Board. Elected Members of the Board will be expected to adhere to the Councillor Code of Conduct.

The Board will be responsible for deciding the Board's work programme and the reports it receives. Agendas and minutes of the meeting will be published on Leeds City Council's website for reference. The public will be invited to submit issues for consideration by the Board via the webpage which also hosts agendas and minutes. Initially the Board will be held online, but there is the flexibility to develop in person/hybrid meetings as determined by the Chair.

One Board member, in line with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, will also be supported to have lead responsibility for complaints, building up their knowledge to support a positive complaint handling culture. This most suitable Board Member to fill this role will be identified and supported accordingly to fulfil this role.

Board members are expected to attend as many meetings as possible during the year. If any Board members are unable to attend multiple meetings the Chair may request that the Member is removed from the Board part way through the year and a replacement Board member sought.

RELATIONSHIPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board will not have decision making powers; it will provide oversight feedback and advice alongside decision making in line with the Council's governance arrangements. The work of the Leeds Housing Board will be subject to scrutiny via the Communities, Housing and Environment Scrutiny Board.

Key relationships of the Housing Board will be as follows:

- Housing Operations – with tenants, ensuring that the Housing Service is able to evidence that it is hearing the voice of tenants and its accountability to tenants. Particularly important is the Board's relationship with the Tenant Scrutiny Board and Tenant Voice Panel – this will be achieved through the tenant representation on the Board and regularly reporting tenant feedback into Board.
- Housing Strategy – the Leeds Strategic Housing Partnership will remain as a key relationship, ensuring that there is regular dialogue across the housing and related sectors to identify issues and seek support in delivering Housing Strategy priorities. A programme of periodic

workshops will be held as required with partners throughout the life of the strategy to discuss issues and agree a collaborative delivery approach. Another key relationship is the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership. It is important that the Leeds Housing Strategy is progressed with an understanding of the West Yorkshire Housing Strategy, so as details / progress with the West Yorkshire Strategy's ambitions will be considered at the Leeds Strategic Housing Board and fed into the West Yorkshire Board as appropriate.

REVIEW

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.