

# Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

**10 April 2025**

<b>Subject:</b>	Report of Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group
<b>Director:</b>	Executive Director - Place Alan Lunt
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## **1 Recommendations**

- 1.1 To consider and comment upon the update on the activity of the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group during 2024/25

## **2 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board supports the ongoing development and involvement of the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group in scrutinising the housing service.
- 2.2 The Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board works in partnership with the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group to evaluate outcomes of scrutiny work from the viewpoint of affected tenants and leaseholders on a biannual basis.

- 2.3 The update on the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group contributes to the demonstration of meeting legislative and regulatory requirements as required by the Regulator of Social Housing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords>

- 2.4 More specifically it contributes to the Housing Consumer Standards relating to Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard:

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transparency-influence-and-accountability-standard>)

### **3 How does this deliver objectives of the Council Plan?**

Living in Sandwell	<p>One of the principals of the work of the group is as follows:</p> <p>‘To ensure all influence and scrutiny engagement is outcome focused. It is designed to improve services and communities as well as provide value for money and transparency.’</p> <p>Regular scrutiny of the housing service provides challenge to improve services and thus the quality of life of substantial proportion of the residents of Sandwell.</p>
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### **4 Context and Key Issues**

- 4.1 The Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group (TLSG) was established in December 2021 as part of a new model of Engagement.
- 4.2 The group has a membership of 8 tenants and 2 leaseholders who are all volunteers.
- 4.3 The group was established in advance of the introduction of new housing regulations and consumer standards for social housing from 1 April 2024.
- 4.4 The TLSG is a key partner in delivering the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (see 2.4) as set out in the consumer standards
- Registered providers must take tenants’ views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants’ views have been considered.

- Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
- Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services.

4.5 In late 2023 Tpas who are England's leading tenant engagement experts were commissioned by SMBC at the request of members of the TLSG to undertake an evaluation of the group.

Following the evaluation and a follow up workshop with officers and key partners in February 2024 the group has worked with SMBC to review the role of the group and how it operates. A new Terms of Reference for the TLSG was officially adopted in September 2024, see Appendix 3.

4.6 Throughout the past financial year the group has undertaken a number of activities to achieve its purpose. (see Appendix 1) Initially getting access to sufficient data proved challenging for the group, but this has improved significantly throughout the year.

4.7 Going forward the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny group will continue to work with officers to monitor the implementation of plans for service improvement, whilst also working in partnership with the Tenant Audit Group and other tenants to reflect on the extent to which housing services are meeting specified standards.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	There are no specific resource implications arising from this report.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	These are set out in the Regulatory standards for landlords ( <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords</a> )
<b>Risk:</b>	There are no specific risk implications arising from this report.
<b>Equality:</b>	The promotion and further development of the work of TLSG will strengthen tenant and leaseholder involvement. Ensuring a diverse membership will help to address inequalities and challenge the stigma tenants experience
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising from this report

<b>Social Value:</b>	There are no specific social value implications from this report
<b>Climate Change:</b>	There are no specific climate change implications arising from this report
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	There are no specific implications for Corporate Parenting responsibilities from this report

## 6 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Group report.

Appendix 2 – New Resident Engagement Strategy.

Appendix 3 – TLSG Terms of Reference.

Appendix 4 – Presentation.

## 7. Background Papers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/regulatory-standards-for-landlords>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transparency-influence-and-accountability-standard>