

Scrutiny Panel (SP)

Revised Terms of Reference

9th October 2025

Scrutiny Aims

Scrutiny Panel is the resident scrutiny group operating with The Pioneer Group.

‘We shine a spotlight on Pioneer’s services and recommend how they could be better’.

The role of Scrutiny Panel is to:

- Deliver independent scrutiny of services provided by The Pioneer Group (TPG) (or its’ contractors) to make continuous improvements for residents
- Act as a critical friend, providing constructive, evidenced feedback to TPG
- To ensure that TPG provides good quality homes and services to residents
- Promote better value for money and identify areas of waste where possible
- Ensure that residents influence TPG services and decisions in particular meeting the Regulator of Social Housing’s requirement in the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard of ensuring that tenants have a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlords strategies, policies and services. The scrutiny of their landlord’s performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved’

How Scrutiny will meet its aims

‘Scrutiny Panel will work positively with The Pioneer Group managers, staff, and other residents to:

- Identify, scope, and prioritise services for review, based on a wide range of data including performance information, themes from complaints, and resident feedback
- Carry out focused reviews of services, examining evidence to establish expected standards and performance, how it is working in practice and identify areas of good practice and potential improvement
- Produce reports with recommendations for improvement, agreed with the relevant manager (who will produce an action plan for delivery) and present to the Customer Influence Committee.
- Monitor the delivery of agreed actions and outcomes from previous scrutiny reviews, identifying and communicating outcomes and impact
- Carry out reviews following the completion of scrutiny topics and annually to capture any learning and ensure the group and individuals continue to progress
- Utilise every opportunity to promote scrutiny – sharing activities and outcomes and encouraging engagement from staff and residents
- Following each scrutiny review the group will review its’ approach, review the agreed future workplan and any recruitment activities to attract additional residents to take part where gaps are identified.

‘Scrutiny Panel members commit to:

- Remaining objective, not bringing personal issues into their work with the scrutiny group
- Undertake any training / personal development identified to help with their role
- Uphold high standards of conduct, treating staff and residents with respect, ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion in all activities, listening to all members, and making any decisions by consensus
- Not share any confidential information outside of the group

Meetings

- Meetings will be held in person and will be held every 4-6 weeks
- The quorum of the meeting is 3 members (including the Chair Person)
- If a member fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings and fails to send their apologies they will be asked to resign from the panel.
- Members will adhere to the Code of Conduct during all meetings with the panel.

The Pioneer Group commits to:

- Providing support to Scrutiny Panel to ensure it can fulfil its role including the provision of venues and officer / independent support as required, ensuring access to information and people as needed to carry out a review, providing personal development/training opportunities and re-imbursing any out of pocket expenses incurred by members
- Working constructively with the Scrutiny Panel to agree reviews and recommendations and develop and implement action plans reporting back to the group on progress and outcomes

Governance and Dispute Resolution

Scrutiny Panel will build and maintain strong links with the Customer Influence Committee, reporting findings and recommendations to the Committee. The panel will receive and act on feedback from the Committee

The Head of Customer and Community Engagement and/or Independent TPAS advisor will mediate in any disputes within the group. If issues cannot be managed within the group and the Head of Customer and Community Engagement and/or Independent TPAS advisor, they will be escalated to the Housing and Customer Services Director for resolution.

Membership

Membership requirements of the Scrutiny panel are as follows:

- Up to twelve places are available for membership
- All residents within The Pioneer Group are eligible to apply, with the exception of individuals who have court action against them and Tenant Board Members of The Pioneer Group

- Successful applicants will be selected from those considered to meet the role profile and person specification following a recruitment process
- Two people will interview applicants: one being a member of the Panel and one a Pioneer Group staff member
- There is a requirement that any successful applicant will adopt the terms of reference, code of conduct, confidentiality agreement and a commitment to undergo training and development as part of their role
- If the membership of the SP is full, and a waiting list of successful candidates is in place, then a three-year Terms of Office will be imposed
- Membership of the SP will be reviewed annually in line with this TOR. Members who step down at the end of their term of office may be re-selected but will be considered alongside other suitable applicants through the selection and interview process
- All new SP members will receive an appropriate induction which includes the assessment of future training and development needs
- A training programme for SP members will be developed, delivered and regularly reviewed as required

6. Recruitment and Succession

Recruitment and succession planning to the Scrutiny Panel will be undertaken by the Customer Engagement Team in conjunction with the Scrutiny Panel.