Resident Scrutiny Panel:
The Facts

Scrutiny is:
• a searching examination
• a detailed and thorough inquiry
• close and continuous watching
• a process to make sure social landlords are providing excellent services

About the Scrutiny Panel Members

- The Scrutiny Panel is totally independent and run by the resident Scrutiny Panel members.
- The Scrutiny Panel is made up of up to 10 tenants and leaseholders who have been selected and appointed via a competency-based recruitment process.
- Homes for Haringey staff do not attend meetings unless they are invited to answer specific questions or provide evidence.
- The Homes for Haringey Scrutiny Champion acts as the link between the Scrutiny Panel and Homes for Haringey but does not have an influencing role. The Scrutiny Champion is there to provide access to information and to support the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel.
- The Scrutiny Panel Chair and Vice Chair are appointed via a secret ballot process for a term of one year (they can stand for re-election at the end of their term).

Recruitment and training of Scrutiny Panel members

- Scrutiny Panel members are appointed via a competency-based recruitment process.
- To be successful, Scrutiny Panel applicants must demonstrate the basic competencies specified in the Scrutiny Panel Person Specification.
- As part of the recruitment process, applicants are required to participate in a number of competency-based activities and complete a skills audit.
- The skills audit aims to ensure that as a group, the Scrutiny Panel is collectively competent, and is used to shape the Scrutiny Panel’s training programme.
All Scrutiny Panel members are required to attend an initial induction session followed by further training. Training is essential to enable Scrutiny Panel members to carry out their role with the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding of the needs of tenants and the business.

The role of the Scrutiny Panel

- The Scrutiny Panel holds the organisation to account to its residents through scrutiny and challenge.
- The Scrutiny Panel acts as the driver for the continuous improvement of Homes for Haringey’s performance by checking and challenging how the organisation operates at all levels.
- The Scrutiny Panel is independent and reports directly to the Homes for Haringey Board.
- The Scrutiny Panel operates outside of the resident involvement structure to avoid any potential conflict of interest but is supported by the Governance Team.

What does the Scrutiny Panel do?

- The Scrutiny Panel carries out detailed strategic reviews. Reviews may involve carrying out a desktop review of documents and performance information; carrying out surveys, interviews and focus groups; carrying out mystery shopping, job shadowing and observation; and benchmarking with other organisations.
- The Scrutiny Panel uses evidence to make recommendations that will be included in written reports presented to the Homes for Haringey Board.
How does the Scrutiny Panel know what to investigate?

- The Scrutiny Panel decides which service areas to review based on resident feedback or performance information.
- All Homes for Haringey services have to record and report on their performance.
- Feedback on services can also come from mystery shopping, tenant inspectors, customer demand, feedback surveys and benchmarking data.
- The Scrutiny Panel does not investigate individual complaints but may look at the results from complaints to determine trends, for example if customers have problems contacting the business.

Working arrangements for the Scrutiny Panel

- The Scrutiny Panel works within the requirements detailed in the Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and Service Review Procedures.
- The Scrutiny Panel meets a minimum of 12 times a year to align with the provision of quarterly performance information. Additional time commitment is required from members for training and carrying out service reviews. The Chair has the right to call additional Scrutiny Panel meetings as required.
- Scrutiny Panel members sign a confidentiality agreement as much of the information reviewed will be of a sensitive nature.
- The Scrutiny Panel is non-political and at no time should personal political bias be expressed or used as part of the scrutiny process.
- The Scrutiny Panel will develop an Annual Scrutiny Review Work Programme and present it to the Board for information.
- The Scrutiny Panel may identify and carry out ad-hoc reviews through the year following notification to the Board.
- The Scrutiny Panel are supported by an independent mentor who provides on-the-job training and assists with planning and carrying out reviews. The independent mentor also provides confidential support to individual Scrutiny Panel members on scrutiny-related matters. Contact is face-to-face and by email and telephone.
How do we know if the Scrutiny Panel is working well?

- The Scrutiny Champion and Independent Mentor carry out an Annual Impact Assessment to evaluate the outcomes and performance of the Scrutiny Panel as a whole.
- Scrutiny Panel recommendations are presented to the Board for approval and the subsequent service delivery improvements are important indicators of success.
- Annual appraisals of the Scrutiny Panel members are carried out to identify any additional training needs and to ensure that performance is at the required level.
- The Scrutiny Panel should be independent of Homes for Haringey but have an effective and open team working relationship with Homes for Haringey staff and other resident involvement groups. The Scrutiny Panel should also have an open and transparent relationship with the Board.

Reporting arrangements

- Each scrutiny review will result in a report to Board detailing the reasons for the review, methodology, findings and recommendations.
- Outcomes from individual reviews will be reported in the Homes for Haringey’s quarterly resident magazine ‘Homes Zone’ and on the website. Outcomes will also be shared with the other resident involvement groups which the Scrutiny Panel will rely on for information, advice and support.
- An Annual Scrutiny Report will be shared with all tenants and leaseholders through the corporate Annual Report.