Community Voice
Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference identify and formalise the authority and responsibilities of Community Voice as an independent group.

Chair	The Chair will be elected by Community Voice members via a vote. Nominations and votes will be triggered by the expiry of a term and/or the resignation of the Chair. Any member interested in being a Chair will express an interest themselves and require two supporting nominations from Community Voice members. The term of the Chair is five years, with a maximum of two terms to be served. Once the maximum term is reached, the Chair can sit as a member of the Community Voice. The Community Voice shall have a Vice Chair. The term of the Vice Chair is five years. Expressions of interest and votes will be triggered by the expiry of a term and/or the resignation of the Vice Chair. The maximum of two terms served by the Chair and Vice Chair do not have to be consecutive. The Chair is responsible for: • Working with ForHousing to approve the agenda for the meetings • Ensuring smooth running of the meeting in a fair manner • Ensuring that members of the committee are adhering to the involved tenant code of conduct and treating both members and colleagues with respect • Speaking to members in regard to attendance and conduct if required • Undertaking an annual discussion with members alongside the ForHousing support officer • ForHousing will work alongside the Chair to facilitate these responsibilities Chair will be supported at quarterly check in by the lead officer.
Membership	There shall be no maximum numbers for any Community Voice. The minimum number will be six. .

	The membership of the Community Voice must be resident in the area in which they represent, with the majority of members ForHousing tenants. There is no maximum term for a member but members will agree to participate in an annual check in with the Chair and lead officer. All members agree to abide by the involved tenant code of conduct. If there are concerns about a members conduct this will be addressed via the Chair and lead officer. Members agree to prepare for the meetings and not to use the meeting as a forum for raising personal issues. If unable to attend, members agree to send apologies at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting, unless there are mitigating circumstances. Members will be recruited following an open recruitment process, which will be undertaken at least every two years, or if the minimum number of members is reached. This will be led by the Community Voice and supported by ForHousing.
Quorum	The membership shall be quorate at 50% of members attending. This will include the Chair and Vice Chair and is pro-rata to the tenant/resident mix.
Regular Attendees	Head of Communities and Engagement- ForHousing Tenant Engagement Manager - ForHousing Communities and Engagement Assistant- ForHousing Regional Neighbourhood Manager- ForHousing A member of the Customer Committee will be invited to give an update on a six monthly basis Officers from other organisations, such as, but not inclusive of, the Local Authority, Police and Fire Service will be invited to attend when required. To include local Councillors. Scrutiny Partners will be invited to attend when required.
Actions and Decisions	As part of the Forward Planner key issues that are discussed and/ or decided upon in the meeting are to be brought back and updated upon at the following meeting. This might be via the action tracker, or as an agenda item. If urgent items are discussed, updates can be issued via email, but will still be logged in the action tracker.

	Actions to be logged in the action tracker with updates at every meeting. If meetings are inquorate decisions can be ratified by email, telephone or video conferencing. Decisions to be made regarding Community Fund applications on a monthly basis, via email. Queries can be raised via email. If there are no applications to the Community Fund, the Community Voice will be informed via email. Decisions to be made regarding Local Improvement Fund applications on a monthly basis, via email. Queries can be raised via email and the monthly surgeries. If there are no applications to the Local Improvement Fund, the Community Voice will be informed via email. On the occasion where decisions are required at short notice for Community Fund an email will sent to the Chair for approval, with the application attached.
Escalations and referrals	Escalations to ForHousing Officers raised in the meeting will be recorded and updated via the Community Voice Action Tracker. Escalations and requests for a scrutiny exercise will be referred via the Head of Communities Engagement. The referral will be considered by the Scrutiny Partners as part of their 'Trigger' process. Community Voice will be notified via email and the decision recorded in the Action Tracker. Escalations to the Customer Committee will be referred via the Head of Communities and Engagement. The referral will be considered by the Customer Committee and detailed in the Customer Committee key activity report. Community Voice will be notified via email and the decision recorded in the Action Tracker. Any outcomes to be communicated to the Community Voice via the Customer Committee standing agenda item. A standing agenda item (Forward Planner) will be created to agree escalations, which are recorded Action Tracker and in the Minutes. Referrals can be made to Customer Reviewers to mystery shop services where issues are identified. Wellbeing issues can be raised via the Chair and/or Lead Officer, Safeguarding concerns to be logged via the ForHousing's formal safeguarding processes.

Frequency of meetings	The Community Voice will meet once a quarter, either in person.. Members of the Community Voice will be invited to attend other meetings, such as policy reviews, task and finish groups and special meetings. Community Voice papers to be sent seven days in advance of the meeting. Papers can be returned at the end of the meeting. Members are asked not to circulate papers to external sources. Meeting dates for the year to be set in advance at the start of the calendar year.
Attendance	Members attend a minimum of three meetings over a rolling 12 month period. There are exceptions to this e.g mitigating circumstances. If there are concerns about attendance, this will be discussed with the member by the lead officer and the member may be asked to stand down. Whilst members are encouraged to attend other meetings and focus groups this is not included in formal attendance monitoring. Qualification for the rewards and incentives is linked to a minimum of 75% of meetings attended. This is calculated on a quarterly basis. Mitigating circumstances may apply. Members are expected to adhere to the Involved Tenant Code of Conduct.

1. Purpose (WHAT)

The purpose of Community Voice is to:

1.1. Work alongside ForHousing to raise issues and co-produce solutions. The Community Voice will hold ForHousing to account for the local delivery of services and local performance indicators
1.2. Provide a formal forum for the escalation of issues to ForHousing, the Customer Committee and to Scrutiny.
1.3. Feedback regarding issues and activities in the community
1.4. Make decisions regarding the Community Fund and Local Improvement Grant and Community Group Grant
1.5. Communication of key issues and decisions from CV, Scrutiny and Customer Committee
1.6. Support ForHousing to improve tenant influence and accountability- linking to the objectives of the Transparency, influence and accountability Consumer Standard
1.7. The Community Voice is not a forum to consider individual cases.

2. Core Responsibilities (HOW)

2.1. The Community Voice will raise and escalate issues with ForHousing services and other key issues in the neighbours
2.2. The Community Voice will share what happens in the meetings through the Community Voice round up blogs
2.3. The Community Voice will link to the Customer Committee and escalation routes
2.4. The Community Voice will link to scrutiny through escalating issues for investigation- and Scrutiny will attend Community Voice attend following a review
2.5. The Community Voice will make decisions regarding the Community Fund and the Local Improvement Fund.
2.6. Community voice will escalate issues to tenant reviewers for testing

3. Reporting and Review of effectiveness

3.1. Minutes of the meeting will be recorded and shared with the Chair for sign off within four weeksxxx of the meeting. Once approved Chair will circulate minutes of the meeting to the members.
3.2. An Action Tracker will be created at each meeting to monitor all actions and issues raised and record escalations.
3.3.
3.4. An Annual Report of achievements and the impact of involvement groupswill be produced at the end of each financial year. This report will detail key decisions and achievements. Annual report will be publicised to the community and the Customer Committee.
3.5. Members will attend an annual networking session with other involvement groups to strengthen relationships
3.6. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years alongside the Community Voice.
3.7.
3.8. All members to be given access to 'Cornerstone', ForHousing's e-learning platform to support members to develop their skills and keep up to date with housing legislation and regulation as well as ForHousing Services
3.9. ForHousing will support members with a £15 contribution per month towards Broadband costs, subject to attendance at 75%.

4. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

4.1 The Committee will request and review data and insights that allows them to consider the effects of its decisions on the diverse range of people ForHousing serves and employs, not limited to protected characteristics defined in law. When evaluating options and making decisions, the Committee will evaluate the options available and make decisions conscious of the EDI effects. This will be supported by the Inclusive Decision-Making Framework adopted by ForHousing that any committee member should expect to see.

Approved by Community Voice	Date March 2025
Date of the next review	November 2027