

# CITIZEN CUSTOMER ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Customer Assurance Committee (“the Committee”) will support Citizen Housing Group Board (“the Board”) in meeting its requirement to comply with the consumer standards of the ‘Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England’; that value for money is being achieved in service delivery to all Citizen customers and is in line with Citizen’s vision ‘to provide homes that are a foundation for life’.
- 1.2 The Committee will ensure arrangements are in place so that the “customers voice” is heard and acted upon in all matters relating to the Consumer Regulatory Standards. The Committee will ensure the voice of the customer is represented and this information is used to inform decisions of the Board.
- 1.3 The Committee has been established to ensure that agreed service delivery standards to all customers i.e. licensees, tenants, shared-owners and leaseholders is being achieved and that Citizen Housing meets the expectations and outcomes of the Consumer Regulatory standards:
  - Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
  - Tenancy Standard
  - Home Standard
  - Neighbourhood and Community Standard

### 2. Accountability

- 2.1 The Committee is established as a standing Committee of Citizen, the functions set out in these Terms of Reference have been delegated by the Board.
- 2.2 The Committee will report to the Board following each meeting.
- 2.3 The Chair of the Committee will ensure that key issues are promptly brought to the attention of the Board and they have the right to attend and speak on matters of concern at any Board meeting.
- 2.4 The Committee will present a report annually to the Board on its work, in an agreed format.

- 2.5 The minutes of Committee meetings should set out the reasons for decisions taken and should be presented to the Board.
- 2.6 At all times, the Committee and its Members shall observe the law and the constitutions of Citizen and its subsidiaries, including relevant Rules, Articles, Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Scheme of Delegations and Financial Regulations. Any issue of interpretation of these Terms of Reference shall be in accordance with those documents and be undertaken by the Citizen Board Chair with the assistance of the Company Secretary.
- 2.7 In accordance with Citizen's adopted Governance Code, the Committee shall review its effectiveness annually and undertake an in-depth review every three years. Individual Committee Member appraisals will be conducted annually.
- 2.8 The Board is accountable for approving any changes to these Terms of Reference, which are subject to annual review.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1 The Committee will consist of up to 12 members as follows:
  - (a) The Chair who shall be appointed by the Board from the membership of the Citizen Board
  - (b) Up to one additional Board representative: and
  - (c) Up to ten additional members, who shall not be members of the Citizen Board or any Subsidiary Board
- 3.2 Executives and other staff of Citizen shall not be Members of the Committee, even if they are Board Members. However, Executives and other staff may be in attendance if requested to present relevant Committee papers / reports but are not permitted to vote on any matter.
- 3.3 The Chair shall not be the Citizen Board Chair nor the permanent Chair of any other Board or Committee.
- 3.4 In the event that the Chair is not able to attend a meeting, the Committee must appoint the other Board representative as Chair for that individual meeting.
- 3.5 Appointment of Members of the Committee shall be in accordance with Citizen's Board and Committee Member Recruitment Policy and procedure.
- 3.6 The appointment of Committee Members shall be for a period of up to three years and all appointments are subject to the approval of the Board. The Board may remove any member of the Committee.
- 3.7 The Committee will annually consider the skills of its members and ensure that suitable skills are present in its membership.
- 3.8 From time to time the Committee will undertake or commission scrutiny reviews into service issues giving cause for concern. A sub group will be established to oversee such Scrutiny activity and a Chair appointed from the independent members of the Committee (For clarity a Board Member of Citizen should not be party to the scrutiny role of the Committee)

## **4. Meetings**

- 4.1** The Committee will meet at least six times per year with additional meetings if required to consider significant events and two Away Days. Notice of all meetings will confirm venue, timings, agenda and associated papers no later than seven clear days before each meeting.
- 4.2** The quorum for Committee meetings will be three Members, including at least one Board Member and two independent committee representative.
- 4.3** In the case of an equality of votes at Committee meetings, the Chair of the Committee shall have a second or casting vote.
- 4.4** The Committee Chair may invite any Board Member to attend Committee meetings as an observer, they may be invited to speak and comment, but do not have the right to vote on any matter.
- 4.5** Any Committee Member who has been absent for two consecutive meetings, without notifying a reason for the absence to the Committee Chair or Company Secretary, will automatically relinquish their position as a member of the Committee.

## **5. Authority and Access**

- 5.1** Subject to any overriding legal or regulatory requirements the Committee has unfettered right of access to all relevant and appropriate information within Citizen and the active co-operation of any of Citizen's staff.
- 5.2** The Committee has the right to meet without Executives being present and may obtain independent professional advice and secure the attendance of others with relevant experience and expertise, within a pre-set budgetary limit, to assist in fulfilling its responsibilities.
- 5.3** In the case of a dispute, a Board decision must override that of a Committee. The Chair of the Committee has the right to report such a decision to the External Auditors (and where necessary to external regulatory bodies) after discussion at Board regarding the proposed course of action.

## **6. Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Citizen Customer Committee are set out below:

- 6.1** Being involved in proposals about how services are delivered, including providing challenge to existing and suggested service standards
- 6.2** Identifying areas of customer assurance and escalating areas of customer non-assurance with regard to the consumer regulatory standards to the Board.
- 6.3** To identify areas of service delivery linked to business objectives and customers' priorities that would benefit from an improvement review for consideration and approval by Board

- 6.4** To undertake or commission independent scrutiny reviews into any service area the Committee have concerns based upon available evidence including but not limited to customer insight, complaints or performance data. The outcome of any Scrutiny review will be reported to the Board at the next available meeting by the independent committee member leading the review.
- 6.5** Producing an annual review, to be reported to the Board and to all Citizen's customers and staff, detailing the impact of its activities.
- 6.6** Agreeing the content of the Annual Report to Customers
- 6.7** Develop and monitor the impacts of:
- The Customer Engagement Strategy
  - The Customer Service Strategy
  - The Customer Communications Strategy
  - The Building Safety Strategy
- 6.8** Monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to customers from Citizen's Performance Management Framework along with other information identified through customer feedback and insight.
- 6.9** Reviewing the issues and trends arising from customer complaints to ensure compliance with Citizen policies and Housing Ombudsman Code of Practice.