

## **Terms of Reference for Sanctuary in Rochford Committee**

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Rochford Committee (the Committee) is to monitor overall operational performance and compliance with the Rochford Charter for Rochford district residents.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 The committee's objectives are to:

- focus on continuous improvement to local services provided by Sanctuary Group (the Group) and its agencies;
- monitor and hold the Group to account for landlord services and investment in new homes within Rochford district;
- promote good communication between Sanctuary and its stakeholders;
- actively seek residents' views and promote resident engagement;
- monitor spend and ensure services continue to offer good value;
- work with and support Sanctuary's operations nationally, whilst also paying due consideration to the objectives of Rochford District Council and other key local partners; and
- influence and recommend improvements to the way local services and neighbourhood/community initiatives are delivered.

### **3. SERVICE DELIVERY**

- 3.1 To meet the objectives, the committee will monitor standards of service by Sanctuary and its contractors relating to the following aspects of housing and maintenance:

- Tenancy management
- Estate management, including grounds maintenance
- Management of empty homes, lettings and allocations
- Day-to-day repairs
- Planned maintenance and reinvestment, including the 'Rochford Standard'
- Arrears and rent collection (not rent setting)
- Tenancy breaches including anti-social behaviour
- Resident engagement
- Customer services (including complaints)
- Leaseholder services
- Retirement living
- Resident communication
- Progress of the affordable homes programme locally

- Such further or other services as are necessary or agreed or required by law, which are provided from time to time
- 3.2 Sanctuary will advise and consult with the committee before implementing any major changes to services, service levels or the costs thereof.
- 3.3 Sanctuary will advise and consult with the committee on future strategy and policies affecting service delivery within the Rochford area.
- 3.4 The committee will be responsible for monitoring performance for all Sanctuary properties situated within Rochford district.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 The committee will comprise of up to 10 members made up of five residents (tenants or leaseholders) living within Rochford district (in homes owned by or, in the case of a leasehold property, where the freehold is owned by, Sanctuary Group), three members nominated by Rochford District Council and two independent members.
- 4.2 The committee may co-opt a maximum of two members for a period of no more than 24 months to fill identified gaps in skills and knowledge amongst the existing membership.
- 4.3 When a vacancy arises amongst the membership it will be filled as follows:-
- (i) Where the vacancy is for a resident or independent member expressions of interest will be sought by local advertisement
  - (ii) Where the vacancy is for a Rochford District Council nominee application will be made to the Council to nominate a new member as soon as possible
- 4.4 With the exception of Council nominees, recruitment to vacancies will be by an interview selection process undertaken by three designated members of the committee (to include the Chair and Vice Chair) and a member of staff who will act in an advisory capacity. Appointment will be by majority decision.
- 4.5 New members will be subject to a six month probationary period, with confirmation of appointment by resolution of the committee.
- 4.6 All appointments and nominations will have due regards to Sanctuary's equality and diversity policy and reflect the community the committee seeks to serve.
- 4.7 All members will comply with Sanctuary's Code of Conduct for members.
- 4.8 If a member is absent from three consecutive meetings of the committee without special dispensation from the committee, they will cease to be a member.
- 4.9 No one can become or remain a committee member if they:

- (a) become bankrupt;
- (b) become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her property affairs;
- (c) are subject to a custodial sentence imposed by a court in the UK in respect of any criminal act or omission unless the committee otherwise determines;
- (d) were a tenant at the date he/she became a member but subsequently ceases to be a tenant;
- (e) become a Local Authority appointed person on the Committee (if they are a tenant or resident member);
- (f) are a tenant and become subject to an order for possession of the property of which he/she is the tenant;
- (g) resign in writing from the committee;
- (h) are removed by a resolution of the committee; or
- (i) become deceased.

## **5. CHAIR**

- 5.1 Members will elect from the committee a Chair and Vice Chair every 12 months, with the retiring Chair and Vice Chair able to stand again for election.
- 5.2 The election shall be by self-nomination followed by a closed ballot of members of the Committee.

## **6. MEETINGS**

- 6.1 Meetings of the committee shall be called by the Chair or by three members upon written Notice to all members of at least 14 days.
- 6.2 The committee shall meet bi monthly or at least six times per year.
- 6.3 The committee may establish, from time-to-time, sub committees of members to carry out some of its functions.
- 6.4 The committee will aim to reach decisions by consensus but, where this is not possible, a vote will be taken and the motion carried by simple majority.
- 6.5 Minutes shall be kept of all committee and sub committee meetings, copies of which shall be provided to members and to the Group Housing Committee.
- 6.6 The committee will undertake an annual review of its own collective performance and this will be reported to the Group Housing Committee.
- 6.7 The Chair can escalate concerns or issues on behalf of the committee to Kate Still, Director of Housing Operations, where a local resolution can not be found. If they remain dissatisfied, issues should be raised with the Chair of the Group Housing Committee.

## **7. QUORUM**

- 7.1 The quorum for any formal meeting shall be six members, with at least one tenant, one council-nominated and one independent member in attendance.

## **8. SUCCESSION**

- 8.1 Committee members will be appointed for a term of up to three years, with an option for a second term of not more than three years if re-selected. Any member who serves a second term must stand down for a minimum of 12 months at the end of their term, after which they will be eligible to reapply.
- 8.2 For the first cycle it is proposed that one resident member stands down at the end of the first year and that one independent and two resident members stand down at the end of the second year. This is to be determined by lot. Following this, retirement will be based on length of service, with those who have been on the committee for the longest being selected for retirement first.

## **9. TRAINING**

- 9.1 A skills analysis will be undertaken by the Chair and a nominated representative of Sanctuary on an annual basis to identify the training needs of members. A budget will be available to provide internal and external training as required.
- 9.2 All new members will participate in an induction programme.

## **10. SUPPORT**

- 10.1 Professional expertise and a reasonable level of administrative support will be provided by Sanctuary to help service the committee. Such administrative support includes arranging meeting venues, preparing and distributing agendas and taking action points. A nominated representative of Sanctuary will facilitate meetings.