RESIDENT VOICE

ISSUE 02 - QUARTER 1 2026/27 (APRIL–JUNE 2026)

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for and on behalf of the Scrutiny Panel

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scrutiny Panel is pleased to report continued progress in resident engagement during Q1 2026/27. Residents have welcomed increased participation from service managers, improved information sharing, successful leaseholder engagement activity, and greater opportunities to contribute to discussions that affect housing services.

Residents recognise the commitment shown by officers, Housing Services and the Resident Empowerment Team (RET) to strengthen resident engagement and improve communication with tenants and leaseholders.

Whilst these improvements are welcomed, residents have identified three key priorities for the coming quarter:

- strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of the Scrutiny Panel through recruitment and training
- supporting the continued development of resident-led scrutiny
- improving visibility of how resident feedback contributes to service improvement and resident outcomes

The Scrutiny Panel asks HRA Operations Group to note the progress made during Q1, support the timely delivery of recruitment and refresher scrutiny training, and provide assurance that arrangements for resident-led scrutiny independence will be clearly defined and communicated during Q2.

EVIDENCE AND RESIDENT FEEDBACK REVIEWED

The findings contained within this report are based upon:

- Scrutiny Panel meetings held during Q1 2026/27
- Resident feedback received through engagement activities
- Special Interest Group (SIG) discussions
- Leaseholder Forum feedback
- Housing Service engagement meetings
- Resident observations during scrutiny and engagement activity

The report reflects resident perspectives and experiences gathered during the reporting period.

WHAT HAS GONE WELL

IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT WITH SERVICE MANAGERS

Residents have seen a noticeable improvement in engagement with Housing Services through increased attendance by service managers at meetings and resident groups. This has provided residents with direct access to decision-makers, improved transparency, and enabled more informed discussions.

Residents particularly value the opportunity to ask questions directly and receive responses from the officers and managers responsible for delivering services.

RESIDENT LEADERSHIP

The continued use of resident co-chairs across Panels and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) is viewed positively and supports meaningful resident involvement in housing governance activities.

LEASEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Residents welcomed the recent Leaseholder Forum and the focus placed on issues directly affecting leaseholders. Positive feedback from attendees demonstrated the value of targeted engagement events and resident-focused discussions. The time for the meeting also proved the effectiveness of having evening engagement events to facilitate higher attendance opportunities for residents.

IMPROVED INFORMATION SHARING

Residents have noted improvements in both the quality of information provided and the openness of discussions between residents and service owners. This has contributed to a more constructive and collaborative environment.

These improvements are welcomed by residents and provide a stronger foundation for more effective resident scrutiny and engagement.

WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT

The Scrutiny Panel continues to believe that refresher scrutiny training remains essential to supporting the Panel's effectiveness and independence.

This remains one of the key actions carried forward from the previous Residents Voice report and is still outstanding. Residents have consistently expressed an interest in undertaking formal scrutiny activity since the original TPAS Scrutiny Training was delivered in July 2025, and many original members and staff are no longer part of the scrutiny panel. However, scrutiny activity progressed more slowly than anticipated and members had limited opportunity to apply and build upon the learning gained through that training. The panel also notes that the current chair of the Scrutiny panel has also not had formal TPAS scrutiny training.

The Panel welcomes the progress now being made towards establishing a more formal recruitment process, including the development of a dedicated Scrutiny Panel job description and plans to advertise opportunities more widely. This is viewed as a positive step towards creating a sustainable and suitably skilled Scrutiny Panel.

The current Scrutiny Panel was originally formed largely from existing resident groups and SIG members. Since the original training was delivered:

- a formal scrutiny review is now underway
- two new members have joined the Panel without receiving scrutiny training
- existing members have had limited opportunity to apply the training received in August 2025
- recent scrutiny meetings have highlighted the value of refresher training for both new and existing members.

Members understand that refresher training is currently linked to the recruitment of additional panel members and support the principle of ensuring new recruits can participate in future training. However, no clear recruitment or training timeline has yet been communicated. Meanwhile, scrutiny activities continue to be undertaken by members and supporting officers who have not yet received formal scrutiny training.

The Panel remains concerned that continued delays to recruitment and training may affect its ability to operate as a fully effective and independent scrutiny function. Maintaining a trained and appropriately resourced Scrutiny Panel is important to ensuring that resident scrutiny remains independent, evidence-based and capable of providing constructive challenge where required.

The Panel would welcome support from HRA Operations Group in helping establish and communicate a clear timeline for recruitment and refresher training so that the Scrutiny Panel can continue to develop as an effective and independent resident body.

SCRUTINY PANEL INDEPENDENCE

The Scrutiny Panel greatly appreciates the support provided by the Resident Empowerment Team during the development of the current scrutiny exercise. Residents recognise that this support has

helped the Panel establish its approach, understand the scrutiny process and maintain momentum whilst the Panel develops its capability.

As the Panel continues to mature, some members have expressed a desire for scrutiny activity to become increasingly resident-led. Residents believe this is an important part of maintaining the independence of the scrutiny process and ensuring that reviews are driven by resident evidence, findings and recommendations.

Whilst support from officers and RET will continue to be important; members would welcome greater clarity regarding the distinction between supporting a scrutiny exercise and participating or leading in a scrutiny exercise. Residents believe maintaining this distinction will strengthen both the independence and credibility of future scrutiny reviews.

The Panel is not seeking to reduce officer support, but to ensure that roles are clearly understood so that scrutiny remains independent, constructive and resident-led.

RESIDENT RISKS IDENTIFIED

Risk	Rating	Potential Consequence
Delay to Scrutiny Panel recruitment	High	Reduced scrutiny capacity
Delay to refresher scrutiny training	High	Reduced effectiveness of scrutiny activity
Lack of clarity regarding scrutiny independence	Medium	Reduced resident confidence
Limited visibility of resident influence	Medium	Reduced resident engagement and trust

The Panel considers these risks manageable but believes they require continued monitoring and timely action.

COMMUNICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Communication and accessibility remain important priorities for residents.

Themes raised during the quarter included:

- difficulties contacting the Council through the Contact Centre
- uncertainty regarding who to contact for specific issues
- communication gaps when officers change roles or leave the organisation
- challenges accessing information and services

The Panel would welcome updates on how these issues are being addressed and how progress will be communicated back to residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

RESIDENT IDEAS AND INITIATIVES FOR SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

- Formalise a 30-minute surgery after each Special Interest Group session, providing residents with direct access to service owners and supporting timely discussion of service issues.
- Develop a single Action and Feedback Log for the Panel to review, enabling residents to track issues raised, monitor responses and identify potential subjects for future scrutiny. The log should be co-designed with Scrutiny Panel members, reflect good practice and be backfilled from June 2024 where possible.
- Explore the development of local Anti-Social Behaviour panel surgeries to support residents in raising community safety concerns, improving access to relevant officers and strengthening feedback on local issues.

TOPICS OF INTEREST FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY

Residents identified several areas that may benefit from future scrutiny activity including repairs performance, contractor performance and procurement, policy implementation, and most importantly, resident empowerment activities and the outcomes achieved through resident engagement.

PRIORITIES FOR Q2

1. Delivering agreed improvements to strengthen Scrutiny Panel capacity, training and resident-led scrutiny.
2. Improving communication and accessibility
3. Increasing visibility of service improvements resulting from resident feedback
4. Reviewing contractor performance and procurement processes
5. Strengthening participation across resident groups and engagement activities
   Establishing a single database of all resident feedback across all services to monitor and scrutinise service performance against promises made

SCRUTINY PANEL STATEMENT

The Scrutiny Panel welcomes the positive progress made during Q1, particularly improvements in information sharing, direct engagement with service managers and the continued development of resident-led approaches across housing engagement activities.

Guidance and direct involvement from the Head of the Service Improvement Programme has been greatly appreciated, as Scrutiny Panel members valued the opportunity to raise concerns directly and receive constructive responses from senior management. Residents would welcome continued involvement from senior managers to support open two-way dialogue. This would help ensure engagement sessions feel collaborative, resident-led and focused on shared learning.

Looking ahead, the Panel believes that maintaining a suitably trained, resourced and resident-led Scrutiny Panel remains essential to its continued effectiveness. Residents welcome progress

towards a more formal recruitment process and would welcome greater clarity regarding future timescales and next steps.

The Panel would also welcome greater visibility of how resident feedback contributes to service improvements so that tenants and leaseholders can clearly see the difference their involvement makes.

The Panel remains committed to working constructively with officers, the Resident Empowerment Team and HRA Operations Group to support continuous improvement, strengthen resident-led scrutiny and improve outcomes for tenants and leaseholders, with the hopes of achieving a C1 grading.