



# **BURY COUNCIL – HOUSING SERVICES SCRUTINY POLICY**

**Author: Claire Rogan – Head of Performance,  
Assurance and Improvement**

<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>22/05/2026</b>
----------------------	-------------------

## **1. Purpose**

### **Tenant Scrutiny and Service Improvement Policy**

This policy sets out a structured approach for tenants to review and influence Bury Housing Services. It promotes transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement by enabling tenants to assess performance, raise concerns, and suggest constructive changes. Importantly, this policy has been developed in collaboration with tenants, ensuring it reflects their priorities, experiences, and expectations.

The policy will be delivered through the following commitments:

#### **Tenant Involvement**

- Provide a range of opportunities for tenants to engage in scrutiny of housing and related services
- Gather tenant views on service standards and delivery

#### **High-Quality Service Delivery**

- Ensure services are delivered to a consistently high standard
- Place service users at the heart of decision-making and service design

#### **Independent Tenant Review**

- Support independent tenant-led reviews of service delivery and performance
- Encourage objective monitoring and feedback

#### **Learning and Improvement**

- Highlight examples of good practice
- Report findings and make recommendations for service improvements

#### **Communication and Engagement**

- Keep tenants and service users informed
- Encourage active participation and feedback

#### **Accountability and Follow-Through**

- Monitor and review agreed action plans
- Ensure progress is tracked and communicated

## 2. Key Principles

Effective tenant scrutiny is built on the following principles:

- **Independence** - Tenant scrutiny must be free from undue influence.
- **Inclusivity** - All tenants should have the opportunity to participate.
- **Positivity** - Scrutiny should focus on constructive improvements.
- **Constructiveness** - Findings should lead to actionable recommendations, with tenants acting as a critical friend.
- **Purpose** - Scrutiny should align with service improvement objectives.

Effective tenant participation is built on the following principles: *(Aligned with TPAS guidance)*

- **Clear Information** - Tenants should receive timely, relevant, and accessible information to support meaningful engagement.
- **Trust and Respect** - Participation must be built on mutual respect and strong partnerships between tenants and landlords.
- **Time to Reflect** - Tenants need adequate time to consider issues and contribute thoughtfully.
- **Influence in Decision-Making** - Tenants should be empowered to shape decisions, not just consulted.
- **Positive Relationships** - Open and responsive working relationships between staff and tenants are essential.
- **Inclusive Engagement** - All tenants—including those in rural or underrepresented groups must have equal access to participation.
- **Equality and Diversity** - Engagement must reflect and respect the diversity of the tenant population.
- **Recognition of Tenant Groups** - Tenant organisations should be valued, supported, and acknowledged for their contributions.
- **Resources and Support** - Adequate resources must be provided to enable effective and sustainable tenant involvement.

## 3. Scrutiny Process Overview

### Step 1: Identifying Key Issues

- Tenants highlight concerns based on feedback and Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).
- Performance reports are reviewed quarterly to determine priority areas for scrutiny.
- Focus Areas:
  - Identify key issues based on tenant feedback and scrutiny findings.

- Prioritise areas requiring action, such as repairs, communication, and service accessibility.

### **Step 2: Tenant Scrutiny Panel Formation**

- A diverse group of tenants is selected to assess specific service areas.
- Training is provided to ensure scrutineers understand the process and expectations.

### **Step 3: Evidence Collection**

- Surveys, case studies, and tenant meetings are used to gather insights.
- Benchmarking against best practices helps evaluate performance.

### **Step 4: Analysis and Recommendations**

- The panel reviews findings and develops recommendations for improvement.
- Reports are submitted to Heads of Service, Housing Advisory Boards (HAB), and council scrutiny groups.
- Develop Improvement Strategies:
  - Create actionable solutions based on scrutiny panel recommendations.
  - Define timelines, responsible teams, and necessary resources.

### **Step 5: Implementation and Review**

- Agreed recommendations are actioned by the Housing Services.
- Monitoring ensures sustained progress and effectiveness.
- Implement Changes:
  - Communicate action plans to staff and tenants.
  - Execute changes, such as service enhancements, policy updates, or training programmes.

### **Step 6: Communicating Outcomes**

- Findings and changes must be publicised so tenants can see the impact of scrutiny.
- Monitor Progress & Measure Impact:
  - Regularly review performance using Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).
  - Gather ongoing tenant feedback to assess effectiveness.
- Report Findings & Adjust Plans:
  - Share progress reports with tenants and regulatory bodies.
  - Adjust strategies based on new insights and continuous scrutiny.
  - Publicise outcomes acknowledging tenant recommendations and use previous scrutiny communications to recruit future scrutineers.

## **4. Scrutiny Methods**

We take a flexible and inclusive approach to tenant participation, offering a variety of opportunities for tenants to get involved in scrutiny activities. These opportunities are designed to suit different interests, experiences, and levels of commitment, ensuring that every tenant has a chance to contribute meaningfully to service improvement.

### **Task and Finish Groups**

- Short-term scrutiny sessions involving tenants who have experienced the service. For example, a short information gathering exercise on a specific area, like complaints or ASB process.
- Can provide varied volunteers each time for relevance, though recurring participation is welcomed.

### **Scrutiny Workshops**

- A one-day intensive session facilitated by an independent expert.
- Includes tenants, residents, and senior leads to agree recommendations on the day.
- Invites sent to a diverse cohort.
- Cost-effective, as findings and reports are agreed and decisions made on-site, in the moment. (requires appropriate senior lead present to do this for sign off)

### **In-Depth Inquiry Scrutiny**

Recruitment targets tenants who have experienced the service in the last 6 months.

- Conducted by a committee or task group
- Generally, takes 3- 6 months
- Focuses on one issue
- Collects evidence in different ways
- Detailed report at the end with recommendations.
- Tenants can join a panel or participate in surveys.

#### *Advantages*

- Gets into an issue in depth
- Gathers different perspectives

Involves people on a one issue basis.

### Challenges

- Takes time and resources:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Planning</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choose and scope the topic Project plan including a timetable</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Investigation</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Understanding the topic. Gathering evidence</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reporting</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reviewing the findings Agreeing the conclusions and recommendations Challenge meeting</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reviewing</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Let people know about the scrutiny Agree how to monitor and track recommendations and impact. Reflect on the scrutiny process.</p>

### 5. Governance & Accountability.

Governance activities will ensure that the scrutiny process is effective.

- Monitoring Group to track scrutiny outcomes and ensure follow-through.
- Action Plans Reviewed Every 6 Months to assess progress.
- Reports submitted to:
  - Head of Service for approval.
  - HAB and Overview & Scrutiny Group for transparency.  
(Reports don't always have to be written they can be in video form or other presented methods; they just need to represent findings and recommendations with opportunity for discussion for Q&A's.)

### 6. Terms of Office

Scrutiny panel members usually volunteer for up to two terms of three years. This helps keep things running smoothly, with experienced members supporting new ones and fresh ideas coming in regularly.

## **7. Incentives**

To encourage participation, tenants involved in scrutiny activities will receive incentives based on engagement levels and aligned with good practice.

### **Additional Incentives:**

- Travel Reimbursement – Tenants can claim transport costs for attending meetings.
- Refreshments Provided – Free snacks and drinks at physical meetings.
- Recognition Awards – Annual awards for the most active tenant contributors.

### **Payment Process:**

- Incentives are paid via vouchers, or direct deductions from rent (if requested).
- Payments are processed within four weeks of participation.
- Tenants must provide proof of attendance or completion (sign-in sheets or digital records).

## **8. Tenant Findings Reporting**

Tenant finding and reports will be provided on a formal report template.

### **Summary of Findings**

- Key Issues Identified: [Brief description of concerns raised]
- Tenant Feedback Sources: [Surveys, meetings, complaints, etc.]
- Affected Service Areas: [Repairs, communication, safety, etc.]

### **Evidence Collected**

- Supporting Data: [Statistics, case studies, tenant testimonials]
- Benchmarking Against Best Practices: [Comparison with other housing providers]

### **Recommendations for Improvement – (action tracker.)**

- Proposed Actions: [Suggested changes based on findings]
- Implementation Timeline: [Short-term, mid-term, long-term goals]
- Responsible Teams: [Teams or individuals accountable for action]

### **Follow-Up & Monitoring**

- Next Review Date: Action plans should be reviewed every 6 months
- Ongoing Feedback Mechanisms: [How tenants will be involved in tracking progress]
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): [Metrics to measure success]

### **Approval sign-off and review date.**

- Signed off by scrutiny group and head of service
- Agreed review date

## **9. Tenant Scrutiny Success Metrics & KPIs**

To ensure tenant scrutiny is effective, measurable, and continuously improving, the following metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) can be used:

### **1. Engagement & Participation KPIs**

- Number of tenants involved in scrutiny activities (target: minimum 20% increase per year).
- Diversity of participants (ensure representation across tenant demographics).
- Retention rate of scrutineers (target: 75% retention over a 12-month period).

### **2. Impact & Implementation KPIs**

- Percentage of scrutiny recommendations implemented (target: 80% of recommendations actioned within 6 months).
- Time taken to implement recommendations (target: within 3–6 months of scrutiny findings).
- Number of service improvements resulting from scrutiny (target: minimum 5 significant changes per year).

### **3. Tenant Satisfaction & Feedback KPIs**

- Tenant satisfaction with scrutiny process (target: 85% positive feedback in post-scrutiny surveys).
- Perceived impact of scrutiny (target: at least 70% of tenants feel their feedback influences services).
- Reduction in tenant complaints related to scrutinised services (target: 20% reduction over a 12-month period).

### **4. Transparency & Communication KPIs**

- Number of scrutiny reports published and shared with tenants (target: quarterly reporting).
- Effectiveness of communication (measured by reach and engagement, e.g., survey response rates and feedback comments).
- Recruitment success for new scrutineers (target: 15% increase in scrutiny panel membership annually).

### **5. Regulatory & Governance Compliance KPIs**

- Adherence to RSH regulatory standards for tenant involvement (100% compliance required).
- Regularity of scrutiny meetings and reports (target: quarterly meetings and reports submitted).

- Evidence of scrutiny influencing housing service decisions (not targeted but aim for at least 3 recommendations formally adopted by governing bodies annually).

### **APPROVAL AND REVIEW**

<b>Document owner</b>	<b>Head of Performance, Assurance and Improvement</b>
<b>Leadership Team Meeting – Director of Housing</b>	<b>Date approved 22/05/2026</b>
<b>Review frequency</b>	<b>3 years</b>

