

Customer Influence Panel (CIP)

Terms of Reference

Role

The CIP is a customer led group that purposefully sits outside the formal SNG governance structure. This responds to the strong view of both customers and stakeholders through the design process that customer independence from the work of the business and Board must be achieved. There is however a defined link between the Board and the CIP to ensure that customers are influencing strategic decisions impacting customers. Their role is to:

- Review a wide range of segmented data and insight (by geography, tenure, product, customer segmentation, EDI characteristic, etc.) from wider customers in order to provide evidence-based challenge to SNG
- Commission deep dive reviews (scrutiny) as a result of performance and feedback information.
- Ensure that SNG responds appropriately to recommendations arising from scrutiny.
- Assure the Board that methods of engagement and research informing customer service decision making, policies and strategies are robust and have afforded appropriate levels of influence and scrutiny.
- Promote, collaborate and communicate the work of the CIP to the wider customer group through established or emerging channels.

Membership

- The Panel is made up of at least 12 SNG customers who live in one of our homes including tenants, shared owners and leaseholders. They must not be in material breach of their tenancy or lease.
- A Board appointed nominee will also sit on the CIP as an observer.
- Members aren't representatives; they work as a team to make sure that the voice of customers is heard in strategic decision making and by influencing the quality of service delivery.
- Recruitment of all customer members is based on a skills, lived experiences and competency matrix through an open process. This reflects the needs of the Panel, recognises life skills/experience and maximises the opportunity for the Panel to work as an effective team and offer constructive challenge.
- The term of office is three years. Members will be required to stand down at the end of two terms (six years) and can't return within three years of standing down.
- Initially, four members will stand down at the end of year one, four in year two and four in year three. If they're re-appointed, those standing down in year one will start their re-appointment and can remain for a further two terms.
- Following recruitment, members will have a formal induction and an ongoing individual development plan, alongside a Panel development programme.
- To support individual and Panel development, all members will have an annual appraisal.
- All members are required to comply with our Code of Conduct.

Meetings

- The Panel will meet at least six times a year, aiming to meet two weeks in advance of Board meetings.
- Additional meetings and working groups may be held as and when required.
- The minimum number of meeting attendees (quorum) is eight members.

- If members miss three consecutive meetings, the Chair will review with them the reasons for non-attendance and their continued membership of the Panel.
- To support good communication and understanding, the Panel will meet with the Scrutiny Panel at least twice a year.
- Minutes of meetings will be presented to the Board and internal and external audiences.

Chair

- The CIP Chair and Vice Chair will be selected via a recruitment process. The term will initially be for one year, with subsequent terms of three years. The Chair and Vice Chair cannot serve more than two three-year terms (six years) and can't be re-appointed until three further years have elapsed.
- In consultation with members, the Chair is responsible for planning meeting agendas and making sure that members are kept up to date with relevant issues that may not feature on meeting agendas.
- The Chair leads annual appraisals to improve individual performance and the Panel as a whole.
- The Chair will meet our Board Chair and Chief Customer Officer at least every six months.
- The Chair will be invited to attend Board meetings as an observer.
- The Chair will be invited to attend the Scrutiny Panel as an observer.

Decision-making

- The explicit aim is that the Panel will reach decisions through discussion, consultation and consensus. If there's an occasion when this isn't possible, the Chair may call a vote, with each member having a vote. The Chair has the casting vote.

Resources

- The Panel's budget is agreed by the Board and actively managed by the Panel.
- The Panel will be supported by the Chief Customer Officer and associated SLG (Senior Leadership Group) members.
- SNG will provide support for the minuting of meetings. These will be approved by the Chair a week following the meeting, before being distributed to members. All members will receive a copy of the minutes within two weeks of the meeting taking place.
- The Panel may invite SNG employees or external representatives to attend all or part of any meeting, as agreed by the Chair.
- SNG will provide the tools and training required for individual members and the Panel to operate in an efficient and effective way.
- The Panel will conduct itself as a source of learning and development and will have a training and development budget to support the development of its expertise and effectiveness.

Administration

- Papers will be sent to members at least one week before each meeting. Members are expected to have read papers and prepared for the meeting and to have an informed discussion on the contents.
- Items should not be tabled at meetings unless they're genuinely urgent and with the agreement of the Chair.

Amendment of terms of reference

- The Terms of Reference will be jointly reviewed with the Board at least every two years. The Board may propose a review, or agree a request for review, at any time in response to changing regulatory, statutory or other circumstances.

Confidentiality

- All information should be treated as confidential unless there is a clear reason to share it more widely. Members shouldn't share information about employees' or customers' personal identities or circumstances. If in doubt about whether something's confidential or not, members should clarify with the Chair.
- Information will be managed in line with our Data Protection Policy and shouldn't be discussed outside members of the Panel or involved employees.
- If members come across something that they find worrying, for example fraud or seriously undesirable behaviour, they must tell the Chair who will refer it to the Chief Customer Officer or Company Secretary.

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