

# Customer Influence Panel

## Terms of Reference

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### Purpose

The Customer Influence Panel (the Panel) exists to provide strategic insight and constructive challenge to Amplius, ensuring the views and experiences of customers influence decision-making at the highest level.

The Panel will consider feedback from the Regional Customer Voice Forums and other engagement channels and will provide recommendations and insight to the Customer Experience Committee.

The Panel supports the delivery of Amplius' commitment to co-creation, transparency, and continuous improvement in services.

### Objectives

The Panel will:

- influence the strategic direction of Amplius by providing a customer perspective on key decisions
- strengthen accountability by scrutinising performance and holding the organisation to account on behalf of customers
- ensure customer feedback is used to shape services and policies
- promote inclusive engagement by championing diverse and under-represented voices
- contribute to a culture of continuous improvement through collaborative working with staff and other panels.

### Responsibilities

The Panel:

- reports directly to the Customer Experience Committee
- will consider and review themes arising from customer feedback, complaints, satisfaction surveys, Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), and local forums
- make recommendations to the Customer Experience Committee on how services could be improved based on customer insight
- provide customer input on proposed service changes, policies, and strategies
- review the effectiveness of customer communication and recommend ways to strengthen transparency and feedback loops

- champion the voices of diverse customers, ensuring under-represented groups are included in the conversation
- support Amplus to ensure its approach to engagement aligns with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards and Housing Ombudsman expectations.

### Operating protocols

- The Panel will produce formal minutes of each meeting, including items for escalation, and a feedback summary from the meeting, which will be reviewed at Customer Experience Committee.
- In addition, the Panel will follow a documented protocol which will include
  - a scheme of understanding with the Amplus Board
  - communication and reporting protocol with the Amplus Board
  - Code of Conduct and Confidentiality statement.

### Membership

- Membership of the Panel is open to all customers living in a property managed or leased from Amplus.
- Members will receive appropriate training and support to participate effectively.

Membership is subject to the following conditions:

- The maximum number of members is 12.
- Members will serve for a term of up to three years, renewable once.
- There can be a maximum of three leaseholders on the Panel.
- Members of the Customer Influence Panel can also be members of one other service improvement working group.
- The Chair of the Customer Influence Panel will not chair any other customer group.
- The Chairs from the Regional Customer Voice Forums will automatically be members of the Customer Influence Panel.
- Membership of the group will be reviewed annually. If membership fall below 50% (i.e. six customers), the viability of the group will be considered and membership will be publicised.
- Members can voluntarily resign at any time during their tenure.
- If a member ceases to be an Amplus customer, they must resign from the Customer Influence Panel.
- Members can be asked to step down without notice if they are seen to be in breach of the Code of Conduct

## Quorum

- A quorum will be more than 50% of members e.g. if membership is 12, a quorum will be six. Inquorate meetings should be noted, and decisions approved at the next quorate meeting.

## Meetings

- The Panel will meet quarterly (minimum), with the option to convene additional sessions or task-and-finish groups.
- Meetings may be a mix of in-person and virtual formats to maximise accessibility and inclusion.
- All members are expected to be fully prepared for all meetings.
- Amplius will monitor attendance at the Customer Influence Panel meetings through the meeting minutes.
- Failure of a member to attend two consecutive meetings, without providing a reasonable reason, will be investigated by the Chair in conjunction with the Customer Engagement and Experience Manager.
- Failure to attend meetings or to be unprepared for meetings might result in the member being asked to step down from their role.

## Chairing of meetings

- The appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair will be made following expressions of interest and through a voting process by the members of the Panel only or appointed by the Customer Experience Committee.
- Both appointments can be for up to a period of three years with succession planning identified after two years of tenure.
- The Chair of the Customer Influence Panel will not chair any other customer group.
- The Chair will be provided with updates in terms of member attendance and will be responsible for discussing any areas of concern in terms of attendance, contribution to the group, or breaches of the agreed code of conduct.
- The Vice Chair will deputise for the Chair in their absence. This includes dealing with any issues in terms of breaches of the agreed code of conduct.

## Support

- The Panel will be supported by the Customer Engagement and Experience Manager.
- The Panel will also be supported by the required level of staff and other resources to ensure it can operate effectively.

## Communication and Accessibility

Amplius will ensure that all Forum communications are:

- accessible (plain language, available in alternative formats)
- timely and clear
- inclusive of digital and non-digital participants.

Customers may attend with advocates or interpreters if required.

Feedback and outcomes from Panels will be communicated back to the wider customer base to close the feedback loop.

## Equality and Diversity

- Amplius believes in a fair society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination, harassment, and prejudice and recognises that the diversity of our community is an asset.
- Amplius will ensure that no individual is discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- Panel members will recognise the existence and importance of the different lifestyles within our communities. The Panel will work to ensure that no individual will be directly or indirectly discriminated against.
- Amplius will ensure relevant support is supplied so that the membership of the Panel is accessible to all. Members must abide by the Code of Conduct which undertakes to deal firmly and promptly with any cases of discrimination, harassment, or prejudice.
- All members must undertake relevant training.

## Recruitment and Succession

- All Amplius customers are eligible to apply for vacancies (subject to eligibility as detailed in the Role Description).
- Applicants will be interviewed for vacancies by the Chair, Vice Chair and Customer Engagement and Experience Manager.

## Programme of Work

The Customer Influence Panel will identify and develop an initial programme of work for the year ahead and review this at each meeting. The priority areas for review will be:

- performance reports
- reports from staff and other parts of the involvement structure
- customer surveys

- complaints data
- repairs data
- feedback from Regional Forums
- Amplius web page
- Voice.

### Training and development

- Panel members will be required to complete training to ensure their skills and knowledge enables them to effectively carry out their role. Equality and Diversity and GDPR training must be completed annually.
- New appointees will be required to complete induction training.
- Panel members will be required to participate in an annual reflection meeting with the Chair and the Customer Engagement and Experience Manager. Once completed, feedback will be discussed with Vice Chair and a training programme will be developed.

The effectiveness of each Panel will be reviewed annually, including:

- member feedback
- impact of Panel recommendations
- representation and diversity of the group.

Findings will inform improvements and be shared with the Customer Influence Panel.

### Confidentiality

- Members of the Panel will have access to information, which will be of a sensitive or confidential nature. Any information shared as part of the Panel's meetings that is of a confidential nature must not be disclosed to anyone outside of the meeting.
- Panel members will be required to sign the Code of Conduct and confidentiality statements as part of their appointment.

### Accountability

- The Panel is advisory in nature. It does not hold formal decision-making powers but has a key role in influencing strategic decisions and service improvements.
- The Panel can escalate key issues or recommendations to the Customer Experience Committee.
- The Customer Influence Panel will present quarterly updates to the Customer Experience Committee. At the end of each year the group will produce a report on the results of its work.

- The Panel will, on an annual basis, review its effectiveness by reviewing the key achievements and impact of its work and reporting these to the Amplius Board and Amplius customers.
- The actions and all reports of the Panel will be made available on the Amplius website and to any customer on request.
- When required, the Panel may request the Chair of the Customer Experience Committee, Director or Executive Director, to attend their meeting.
- In case of customers or Amplius having concerns about the Panel's compliance with these Terms of Reference, representatives from Amplius will meet with the Panel at their next scheduled meeting. A joint agreement will be put in place to remedy this.

### Budget and expenses

- Any out of pocket expenses will be paid for out of the Customer Engagement budget.
- Members will be awarded £50 shopping voucher annually.

### Review of Terms of Reference

- Amplius and the Customer Influence Panel Chair and Vice Chair will review these Terms of Reference annually, or sooner if necessary.