

## Longhurst Group Customer Forum

### Terms of Reference

**Purpose** The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will support the Longhurst Group Board by providing customer based assurance that the consumer standards of the 'Regulatory Regime for Social Housing in England' are being met; and that service delivery is in line with Longhurst Group's vision of 'improving lives'.

**Responsibilities** The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will develop and maintain a strong and influential relationship with the Longhurst Group Board to ensure that they and the Longhurst Group Board work together effectively.

The Customer Forum will contribute to the assurance of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard and aspects of other consumer standards as deemed appropriate.

It will do this by:

- Ensuring that the customer involvement structure delivers on the consultation and review of landlord services
- Monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from Longhurst Group's Performance Management Framework along with other information identified through customer feedback and insight.
- Identifying areas of customer assurance and escalating areas of customer non-assurance with the consumer standards to the Longhurst Group Board.
- Agree a programme of scrutiny reviews that are linked to service performance and customers' priorities using the defined matrix.
- Monitor the implementation and outcomes of service, scrutiny and policy reviews
- Produce an annual review, to be reported to the Longhurst Group Board and to all Longhurst Group customers and staff, detailing the impact of its activities.

**Operating protocols** Longhurst Group Customer Forum will produce formal minutes of each meeting, including items for escalation, which will be reviewed at Longhurst Group Board.

In addition, Longhurst Group Customer Forum will follow a documented protocol which will include

- A scheme of understanding with the Longhurst Group Board

- Communication and reporting protocol with the Longhurst Group Board
- Code of Conduct and Confidentiality statement

**Membership**

- The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will consist of a maximum of 12 eligible members.
- Individual members will be appointed for a period of three years.
- Members can voluntarily resign at any time during their tenure.
- If a Longhurst Group Customer Forum member ceases to be Longhurst Group customer, they must resign from the Longhurst Group Customer Forum.
- Members will serve no more than two consecutive terms of three years.
- Members can be asked to step down without notice if they are seen to be in breach of the Code of Conduct

**Quorum**

At least five or more members must be present at a meeting for it to be quorate

**Meetings**

The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will meet monthly; to include 4 performance meetings, 3 spotlight sessions and 2 training sessions and any other meetings that are deemed necessary.  
All members are expected to be fully prepared for all meetings.

**Attendance**

Longhurst Group will monitor attendance at the Longhurst Group Customer Forum through the meeting minutes.

Failure of a Longhurst Group Customer Forum member to attend three consecutive meetings, without providing a reasonable reason, will be investigated by the Longhurst Group Customer Forum Chair in conjunction with the Customer Engagement and Experience Manager. Failure to attend might result in the member being asked to step down from their role.

**Chair and Vice  
Chair**

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 Forum only.

Both appointments can be for up to a period of three years with succession planning identified after two years of tenure.

**Support and  
Servicing**

The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will be supported by the Director of Housing and Customer Service.

The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will also be supported by the required level of staff and other resources to ensure it can operate effectively.

**Applications  
and  
Appointments**

All Longhurst Group customers are eligible to apply for vacancies (Subject to eligibility as detailed in the person specification).

Applicants will be interviewed for vacancies by the Chair, Vice Chair and Customer Engagement and Experience Manager.

**Review of  
effectiveness**

The Longhurst Group Customer Forum will, on an annual basis, review its effectiveness by reviewing the key achievements and impact of its work and reporting these to the Longhurst Group Board and Longhurst Group customers.

**Training and  
Development**

Longhurst Group Customer Forum 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.

**Annual  
Appraisal**

Longhurst Group Customer Forum members will be required to participate in a reflection meeting with the Customer Forum Chair and the Customer Engagement and Experience Manager. Once completed feedback will be discussed with Vice Chair and a training programme will be developed.

**Equality and  
Diversity**

Longhurst Group Customer Forum encourage fair and equal treatment for all, regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, physical or mental disability, appearance, political affiliation, sexuality, age or class.

Longhurst Group Customer Forum will identify obstacles that may prevent customers from contributing to its work, and find the means to remove those obstacles.

Longhurst Group Customer Forum will annually review membership with the aim of creating a body that is representative of the diverse communities in which Longhurst Group operates.



Longhurst Group Customer Forum members will abide by Longhurst Group's policies on equality and diversity and complete equality and diversity training as part of their induction training; followed by annual update training.

**Confidentiality** Members of the Longhurst Group Customer Forum will have access to information, which will be of a sensitive or confidential nature. Any information shared as part of the Forum's meetings that is of a confidential nature must not be disclosed to anyone outside of the meeting.

Longhurst Group Customer Forum members will be required to sign the Code of Conduct and confidentiality statements as part of their appointment.

**Review of Terms of Reference** Longhurst Group and the Longhurst Group Customer Forum Chair and Vice Chair will review these Terms of Reference after one year of operation to ensure they are fit for purpose; and annually thereafter.