

Regional Customer Voice Forum

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Regional Customer Voice Forums (the Forums) are established to ensure that customer voices from across Amplius' operating regions, North, Central and South, are heard, valued, and acted upon.

The Forums provide structured opportunities for customers to influence how services are designed and delivered at a regional level and contribute directly to decision-making processes, consultations, and continuous improvement.

The Forums support Amplius' commitment to transparency, influence, and accountability, and feed into the work of the Customer Influence Panel.

Objectives

The Forums aim to:

- provide regional insight and intelligence to the Customer Influence Panel on local priorities, service performance, and customer experience
- enable customers to influence decision-making, contribute to service design, and help shape policies
- promote a culture of continuous improvement by reviewing feedback and service data, and proposing solutions to local challenges
- ensure communication is clear, accessible, and inclusive, with opportunities to participate both online and offline
- support fair and equitable outcomes by addressing the diverse needs of customers across the region
- contribute to Amplius' assurance of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard.

Responsibilities

The Forums will:

- draw on insight and feedback from local engagement activities, customer groups, surveys, complaints, and compliments
- monitor and discuss regional performance information, including customer satisfaction, service standards, and key trends
- escalate concerns or areas of customer non-assurance regarding the Consumer Standards to the Customer Influence Panel

- contribute insight from Service Improvement Working Groups and other locality-based initiatives
- support consultation and co-creation of services and policies, reflecting customer priorities
- provide recommendations for improvement based on lived experience and evidence gathered regionally.

Operating protocols

- The Forums 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 Forums will follow a documented protocol which will include:
 - a scheme of understanding with the Amplius Board
 - communication and reporting protocol with the Amplius Board
 - Code of Conduct and Confidentiality statement.

Membership

- Membership of the Customer Influence Panel is open to all customers living in a property managed or leased from Amplius.
- Members will be drawn from a diverse mix of tenures, backgrounds, and lived experiences.
- 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 group.
- Members of the Forum can also be members of one other working group.
- The Chair of the Forum 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 Forum 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 Amplius 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
- Members are expected to:
 - respect others' views and maintain confidentiality where appropriate
 - commit to attending Forum meetings and participating in discussions
 - follow Amplius' Code of Conduct for involved customers.

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

- Each Forum will meet at least four times a year, in person or virtually depending on accessibility and regional preferences.
- Meetings will be facilitated by an Engagement Officer and supported by Amplus colleagues.
- Additional task and finish groups or service-specific workshops may be convened as needed.

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.
- The term of the appointment to Chair and Vice Chair roles will be for three years.
- The Chair will be provided with updates in terms of group 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

Forum members will receive:

- a full induction and ongoing training
- reasonable expenses reimbursed (e.g. travel, printing)
- support from the Customer Engagement Team to carry out their role effectively.

Communication and Accessibility

Amplus 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 Forums 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.
- Forum members will recognise the existence and importance of the different lifestyles within our communities. The Forum 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, Customer Engagement and Experience Officer.

Programme of Work

The Regional Customer Forum 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:

- regional performance reports
- local customer involvement
- regional satisfaction survey feedback
- Working Group updates
- Amplius web page
- Voice.

Training and development

- 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.
- Forum members will be required to participate in an annual reflection meeting with the Chair and the Customer Engagement and Experience Officer.

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

- member feedback
- impact of Forum recommendations

- representation and diversity of the group
- findings will inform improvements and be shared with the Customer Influence Panel.

Confidentiality

- Members of the 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.
- Forum members will be required to sign the Code of Conduct and confidentiality statements as part of their appointment.

Accountability

- Each Forum is accountable to the Customer Influence Panel, with meeting summaries and key themes submitted after each session.
- The Forums contribute to the assurance provided to the Customer Experience Committee and the Board that customer views are being captured, considered, and acted upon.
- When required, the Forum may request the Chair of the Customer Influence Panel to attend their meeting.
- In the event of customers having concerns about the Forum's compliance with these Terms of Reference, representatives from Amplius will meet with the Forum 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 Forum Chair and Vice Chair will review these Terms of Reference annually.