

# Customer Voice Policy



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<b>Approved by:</b>	Board
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<b>Equality Impact Assessed:</b>	8 March 2024
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## Checklist

Required check	Completed
The policy aligns with relevant legislation, regulation and the strategic objectives of Plan A 2022/25.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The policy has been informed as appropriate by transactional and/or amplified customer voice.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The policy has been impact assessed and any appropriate mitigations identified implemented.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The policy is fully aligned with and complements other related policies.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The procedures underpinning the policy have been updated as required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The PMF/risk registers have been updated to reflect the policy's assurance framework.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out the approach to involving and engaging with customers to ensure their views inform decision making and how they can influence and inform decisions and scrutinise our strategies, policies and services.

## 2.0 Purpose

2.1 Our aim is to enhance relationships, partnerships, aspirations, and capacity between and within our communities. We will be open and honest and ensure that opportunities for involvement and engagement promote fairness and respect and address stigma. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Have a clear, accessible and outcomes focused approach to involving and engaging with customers that influences decisions and results in improvements to our services
- Ensure we provide a wide range of accessible and meaningful opportunities for customers to influence and scrutinise our strategies, policies and services

## 3.0 Principles

3.1 The principles underpinning this policy are aligned to Livin's values of trust, respect, innovate and working together:

- Trust – being open with customers and enabling them to influence decisions about services and feeding back to them
- Respect – recognising the diverse views of customers and providing accessible ways for them to meaningfully influence decisions about how services are delivered
- Innovate – continuously improving and tailoring our approach to engagement to create impactful improvements
- Work together – working in collaboration with customers to review and scrutinise services

## 4.0 Definitions

4.1 The key terms used in this policy are defined below.

<b>Customer voice</b>	Customer voice is the insight we receive from customers via transactional and amplified methods of data gathering and analysis, and scrutiny of services
<b>Customer</b>	Customers are defined as tenants, prospective tenants, those living in our homes and residents in our communities
<b>Involvement</b>	Involvement is where customers actively participate in activities that scrutinise services and shape how they are delivered
<b>Engagement</b>	Engagement is about how customers interact with us to provide feedback and this data is used to inform and improve services

## **5.0 Scope**

5.1 This policy applies to all Board members and employees working on behalf of Livin and all customers of Livin.

## **6.0 Contribution to Plan A**

6.1 The voice of our customers is an integral part of our service delivery and is woven into our Plan A objectives ensuring we listen to and act upon tenant's views about their homes, places and services they receive. The Transforming customer experience and digital services chapter of Plan A sets out our customer experience vision of *'seamless, reliable and convenient services that customers can influence and trust to ensure their aspirations are met'*.

6.2 We are committed in our strategy to delivering an effective framework for customers to engage and influence that is meaningful, open and honest to continuously improve services. This policy supports the delivery of those commitments by setting out our framework for customer voice, involvement and engagement.

## **7.0 Legislative and regulatory framework**

7.1 The Transparency, Influence and Accountability (TIA) Standard sets out the following required outcomes which social housing providers must deliver in relation to engagement with tenants:

### **Engagement with tenants**

Registered providers must take tenants' views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered.

### **Information about landlord services**

Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.

### **Performance Information**

Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services.

7.2 The TIA Standard also sets out the importance of treating people with fairness and respect. This should be central to all services including customer voice. The TIA Standard expects landlords to provide accessible support to tenants to scrutinise and influence policies, procedures, strategies and services in a meaningful way. This policy also ensures compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Code of Practice in relation to engagement with tenants.

## 8.0 Policy statements

### Customer Voice approach

- 8.1 We will ensure that we give genuine consideration to the views of tenants and enable them to influence decisions at different levels about how services are delivered. Our overall framework for customer voice is outcomes focused and based on different levels to ensure a proportionate approach is adopted:

**Level 1: The InsightXchange “actionable insight”** - a programme of service reviews commissioned by Board where we work with our InsightXchange to jointly review and scrutinise the services, gaining actionable insight that informs how we bring about larger scale improvements to services, policies, and standards

**Level 2: The amplified conversation** – data led amplified customer voice where existing customer data is further enhanced by targeted and segmented customer voice data to gain a more in-depth understanding to inform the development of policies, procedures strategies and services

**Level 3: The continuous conversation** – existing transactional and customer satisfaction data that is routinely gathered and used to inform service improvement. This is done via transactional customer satisfaction gathering, the Tenant Satisfaction Measures annual perception survey and data gathered via customer interactions

### Level 1 - InsightXchange

- 8.2 We will be accountable to our tenants and provide meaningful opportunities to help them to independently scrutinise us on the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services. Our InsightXchange is our forum for tenants to work in collaboration with us to review and scrutinise services.
- 8.3 Using customer voice data we will work with our Board to determine priority areas for the InsightXchange to work with us to jointly review and scrutinise in a meaningful and genuine way. We will work in partnership with the InsightXchange to develop outcome focused, meaningful improvements to services informed by wider customer voice insight.
- 8.4 The work of the InsightXchange will enable actionable insights to come from tenants to the Board to provide assurance on how tenants’ views have been sought and considered as part of decision making and how this has influenced the way services are delivered.
- 8.5 We will monitor the outcomes achieved through our collaborative approach to scrutiny and review progress annually with the InsightXchange to make sure we give feedback on the impact their influence on decision making is having. Outcomes will also be reported to the wider customer base, as appropriate.

### Level 2 – The amplified conversation

- 8.6 Where further understanding or enhancement of existing customer and transactional information is needed, we will amplify our approach using a data led approach that focuses on engaging with right groups to ensure representation.
- 8.7 To amplify the customer voice, we will use customer data to identify which customers will be impacted by the policy, procedure, strategy, or service. We will then actively engage with this customer group through more targeted data analysis and engagement to gain a more in-depth understanding of their views and experiences.

### Level 3 – The continuous conversation

- 8.8 We will exploit all our customer knowledge to ensure we meet the needs of our customers. Sources will include customer complaints and feedback, Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) results, satisfaction surveys and service usage. This will be used to inform improvements across all services.
- 8.9 We will conduct regular transactional customer satisfaction surveys and provide accessible ways of providing their views and experiences.
- 8.10 We will undertake an annual perception survey against the Regulator of Social Housing's TSM perception survey questions and we will report these results to our Board and report them to the Regulator and publish them to customers.
- 8.11 The Tenant Satisfaction Measure perception survey will be undertaken by an independent company in line with the technical requirements set by the Regulator. The survey will be designed to maximise participation and representation levels across key groupings. For example, age and locality.

### Policy commitments across all levels of customer voice

- 8.12 On an ongoing basis we will use customer voice data and work with our involved tenants to continuously improve the methods we use to involve and engage with tenants.
- 8.13 We will actively seek and value the views of our customers and proactively encourage and support customers to ensure they are equipped to challenge our services on the issues that matter to them.
- 8.14 We will ensure that involved customers are representative of topic, locality and community of interest, and align involvement based on customer insight and recent experience of our service delivery. We will also make reasonable efforts to engage and involve customers with lower representation levels and adapt our approach, where appropriate.

- 8.15 The customer voice will be heard and driven from real time transactional intelligence, to facilitate quality and meaningful involvement and engagement that is measurable and tangible.
- 8.16 We will exploit all our customer knowledge to ensure we meet the needs of our customers. Sources will include customer complaints and feedback, Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) results, satisfaction surveys and service usage.
- 8.17 We will consider how to improve and tailor the services we deliver as part of customer voice activities, including how customer insight can be used consider adjustments to service delivery based on vulnerabilities.
- 8.18 We will involve customers in plans to achieve value in our services, by considering cost and quality as part of customer voice activities to inform decisions about service standards. We will engage with our tenants in setting our priorities in relation to value for money.
- 8.19 Through our Neighbourhood Policy, we will continue to support existing customers in the formation of new local groups in our communities. Additionally, we will work with and support local groups that aim to improve the local community. We will encourage, support, promote and empower involvement at an individual and community level, and encourage customers to self-help and assist others to do so.
- 8.20 We will support tenants to exercise their Right to Manage, Right to Transfer or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate.
- 8.21 We will consult with tenants and take their views into account if the provider is considering a change in landlord for one or more tenants, or a significant change in management arrangements

#### Transparency

- 8.22 We are committed to ensuring that tenants can hold us to account by providing accessible information about the services we deliver.
- 8.23 We will communicate with tenants how their views have been taken into account when decisions are made about how we deliver services.
- 8.24 Customers will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress, and will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.
- 8.25 We will provide clear, accessible and timely information on issues that matter to our customers including important information on their homes and local community, how we address problems, run the organisation and our performance on key issues.

#### Accessibility

8.26 We will provide a range of ways for tenants to participate in involvement and engagement activities to ensure they have equitable opportunities to scrutinise services and influence decisions. These methods include:

- In person (surveys, focus groups and discussions)
- Via telephone (surveys and discussions)
- In writing
- Email (surveys and discussions)
- Online/text (surveys and discussion)
- Teams/Zoom meetings
- Social media (polls, surveys and discussions)

8.27 Where tenants are unable to access customer voice activities due to a vulnerability or protected characteristic, we will work with them to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to access those opportunities. For example, where tenants experience communication barriers, have additional support needs and are unable to use online services.

### **Communication**

8.28 Digital copies of this policy and related guidance are available on our website and information on this policy is provided to tenants in alternative formats, where they may be unable to access digital services.

8.29 We will report back to tenants on the changes made as a result of their engagement and involvement in customer voice activities, demonstrating to them that they have influenced key decisions.

8.30 We will promote opportunities to be involved in customer voice activities across different channels to increase awareness and encourage a wider pool of tenants to be involved and engaged. This can include on our website, in person, by telephone or by letter.

### **Service standards and performance**

8.31 The following performance measures are monitored to make sure this policy and quality of service is complied with:

- Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views have been listened to and act upon
- Number of meaningful service improvements as a result of customer engagement
- Percentage of tenants satisfied that we treat them fairly and with respect
- Percentage of tenants satisfied that we keep them informed about things that matter to them

8.32 Customers will be informed about how we perform against these service standards through our annual report to tenants and information provided on the website. Information can also be provided in alternative formats, if required.

## Complaints and Feedback

- 8.33 Customers can provide feedback about the services they have received in respect of this policy. If a customer is dissatisfied with the service they have received from us, they can make a complaint to us in line with our Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy.

We define a complaint as:

**‘Any expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, our own employees, or those acting on our behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’**

## **9.0 Roles and responsibilities**

- 9.1 Roles and responsibilities under this policy are outlined below.

<b>Board</b>	Board has overall responsibility for ensuring tenants’ views have been sought and considered as part of decision making and how this has influenced the way we deliver services. They also receive assurance that the policy has been applied in practice through the quarterly performance report.
<b>Housing and Communities Committee (HACC)</b>	The HACC ensure the Customer Voice Forward Plan is being delivered by seeking assurance on progress made during the year including an update on key performance metrics.
<b>Executive Management Team</b>	The EMT has oversight over customer voice performance and will review the progress against the Customer Voice Forward Plan and related performance metrics.
<b>Director of Customer Experience and Insight</b>	The Director of Customer Experience and Insight is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and providing assurance to the HACC and Board on its effectiveness and compliance
<b>Heads of Service</b>	Heads of service are responsible for ensuring this policy is applied across all services within their remit, ensuring they seek customer voice on key decisions that impact customers and implementing improvements resulting from customer voice activities.
<b>Customer Experience Manager</b>	The Customer Experience Manager has responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, ensuring performance metrics are achieving target and feeding back the outcomes of customer voice activities to customers
<b>Managers</b>	Managers are responsible for leading customer consultations within their remit, and ensuring the customer voice is heard in decision making and implementing customer voice led improvements
<b>Employees</b>	A strong culture of fairness, courtesy and respect should be fostered throughout the organisation, where tenants are listened to and can trust us

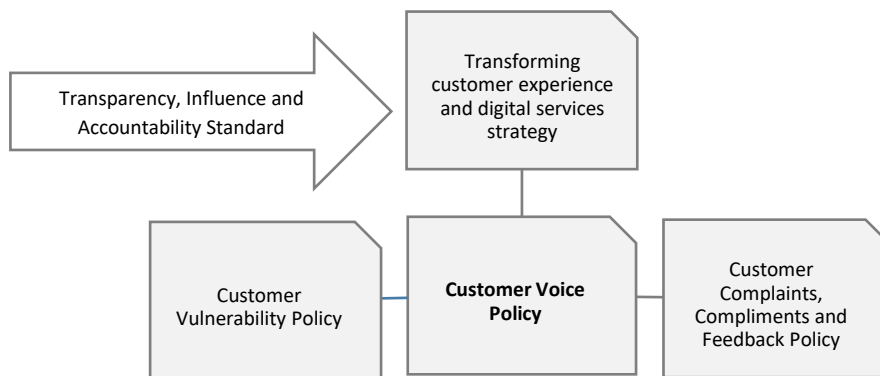


<b>Customer Voice Team</b>	The Customer Voice Team are responsible for working with tenants to deliver the Customer Voice programme in line with the Policy
<b>Customers</b>	Customers who are involved in engagement activities will act in the best interests of Livin and our residents and adhere to our values

9.2 This policy will be communicated to our employees via the Intranet and communicated to customers via our website and other formats where needed. Those who have responsibilities under this policy will be required to formally accept and confirm understanding of the policy and will receive appropriate training, advice, and/or guidance.

**10.0 Related policies and procedures**

10.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the key related documents shown in the graphic below:



**11.0 Monitoring, assurance and review arrangements**

11.1 Assurance will be gained to make sure this policy is being complied with and its purpose is being achieved. Those arrangements are set out in the table below:

Type of assurance	Key source	Frequency
Management assurance	Review of progress against the plan	Monthly
	Feedback surveys from involved tenants post customer voice activity	Monthly
	Monitoring of service improvements and key decisions	Monthly
Corporate Oversight	Performance Management Framework report to board (Level 1 metrics relating to customer voice)	Quarterly
	TSM survey results that relate to customer voice: views listened to and acted upon, being treated with fairness and respect	Annual

	Customer Voice Progress Update to Housing and Communities Committee	Mid-year report
	Customer Voice Report to Board	Annual
Independent assurance	Customer Voice Review by TPAS	Annual
	Audit of Tenant Satisfaction Measures	One-off

11.2 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, unless there is significant development that would require a more urgent review e.g. new legislation or regulation.