

Residents' Advisory Panel (RAP): The Facts

Scrutiny is a core activity of the RAP:

- a searching examination
- a detailed and thorough inquiry
- close and continuous watching
- a process to make sure social landlords are providing excellent services

About the RAP Members

- The RAP is totally independent and run by the resident members and replaces in name only the previously known Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP).
- The RAP is made up of up to a maximum of 10 members including 8 tenants and 2 leaseholders who have been selected and appointed via a competency-based recruitment process. - There will always be a maximum ratio of 1 leaseholder to 5 tenants
- Haringey Council officers do not attend meetings unless they are invited by the RAP to answer specific questions or provide evidence, but an open-door policy should be followed.
- The Scrutiny Champion acts as the link between the RAP and Council but does not have an influencing role. The Scrutiny Champion will provide access to information and to support the RAP with corporate updates and act and provides support and advice as detailed in the Terms of Reference
- The RAP operates with a meeting rolling Chair model but if the majority of members vote in the future to have an annual fixed Chair and Vice Chair they would be appointed via an agreed nomination and secret ballot process for a term of one year (they can stand for re-election at the end of their term).
- Membership excludes anyone who has threatened or taken legal action against the RSP and all RAP members through

membership confirm that they will not threaten or take any legal action against fellow past or new RAP members or Haringey Council whilst on the RAP or if they leave

- RSP members agree to follow the RAP Terms of Reference and The Code of Conduct as guidance and this does not constitute a contractual relationship between the RAP member and the RAP or Haringey Council.

Recruitment and training of RSP members

- RAP members are appointed via a competency-based recruitment process.
- To be successful, RAP applicants must demonstrate the basic competencies specified in the RAP Person Specification.
- As part of the recruitment process, applicants are required to attend a recruitment event and participate in a number of competency-based activities and complete a skills audit.
- The skills audit aims to ensure that as a group, the RAP is collectively competent, and is used to shape the RAP's training programme.
- Applicants who are successful following the competency-based recruitment event, will be required to attend an interview to either confirm appointment or direct applicants to other resident engagement opportunities within the resident engagement framework.
- All newly appointed probationary RAP members are required to attend an initial induction session followed by further training.
- Training is essential to enable RAP members to carry out their role with the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding of the needs of residents and the business.

The role of the RAP

- The RAP will hold the organisation to account to its residents through scrutiny and challenge.
- The RAP acts as driver for continuous improvement of Haringey Councils housing services performance by checking and challenging how the organisation operates at all levels

- The RAP is independent and reports directly to the Resident Voice Board.
- The RAP operates within the community and resident engagement structure.
- To act as the critical friend to review all services provided by Housing services



What does the RAP do?

- The RAP carries out detailed and operational and strategic reviews. Reviews may involve carrying out a desktop review of documents and performance information; carrying out surveys, interviews and focus groups; carrying out mystery shopping, job shadowing and observation; and benchmarking with other organisations. A flexible approach to reality checking will be adopted.
- The RAP uses supported evidence and findings to make recommendations that will be included in written reports presented to the Resident Voice Board.
- RAP appoints dedicated monitors to work with service providers to monitor implementation of agreed service improvements (recommendations).
- To verify agreed recommendations have been embedded in the services, the RAP will carry out specific mystery shopping exercises to test and validate.

How does the RAP know what to investigate?

- The RAP decides which service areas to review based on resident feedback, performance information, requests from the Haringey Council, individual employees and the Residents Voice Board. The final decision to agree to carry out a review is made by the RAP.
- All Haringey Council Housing services have to record and report on their performance, and this information may trigger a scrutiny review.

- Feedback on services can also come from mystery shopping, engaged residents, feedback surveys and benchmarking data, etc.
- The RAP does not investigate individual resident complaints but may look at the results from complaints to determine trends, for example if residents have problems contacting the business.

Working arrangements for the RAP

- The RAP works within the guidelines detailed in The Terms of Reference, The Code of Conduct and Working together Protocol.
- The RAP meets for a minimum of 12 times a year. Additional time commitment is required from members for training and carrying out service reviews. The RAP has the right to call additional RAP meetings and training events as required
- RAP members sign a confidentiality and data protection agreement on joining, as much of the information reviewed will be of a sensitive nature.
- Individual members may be affiliated to or be members of a political party or community groups, however, they may not represent that community or political party in their role on the panel.
- The RAP will develop an annual work plan, which feeds into individual project plans and is presented it to the Resident Voice Board for information.
- The RAP may identify and carry out ad-hoc reviews through the year. These will be in addition to the work detailed in the Annual work plan
- An independent mentor provides support, advice, guidance, and on-the-job training. The Mentor will actively engage and assists with planning and carrying out reviews. The Independent Mentor also provides confidential support to individual RAP members on scrutiny-related matters. Meetings are held both face-to-face and virtually and day today communication by email and telephone.

How do we know if the RAP is working well?

- The Independent Mentor will carry out an Annual Impact Assessment to evaluate the outcomes and performance of the

RAP as a whole providing a report to the Residents Voice Board.

- The RAP recommendations may be if requested be presented to the Housing Services Executive and Housing Board for approval.
- Personal development reviews of individual RAP members are carried out annually to identify any additional training needs and to ensure that performance is at the required level. The outcome may determine whether membership is sustained in the longer term.
- Individual members of the RAP will complete a questionnaire to seek feedback on the operating of the RAP and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Evaluation feedback will be sought from all formal RAP activities e.g. training.

Reporting arrangements

- The Scrutiny Champion prior to the service review report being signed off by the RAP will consider the draft RAP report to ensure the review proposal aims and objectives have been met
- Each scrutiny review will result in a final confidential approved report to the Residents Voice Board detailing the reasons for the review, methodology, findings and recommendations. A non-confidential summary report will be produced and be accessible to residents on the website.
- Outcomes from individual reviews will be reported in the resident magazine and may also be shared with other resident engagement groups.
- The annual highlights and achievements by the RAP will be included in the annual resident report.

