

# ASTER GROUP

## Customer Scrutiny Panel

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Annual report 2016-2017</b>
<b>Date:</b>	April 2017
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### Summary of Key Points

This report provides the Housing Leadership Team (HLT) with an overview of the areas scrutinized over the past year by the Customer Scrutiny Panel. It also covers membership and recruitment in addition to budget information, the panel is very mindful of costs incurred by the panel and of value for money.

### Customer Engagement:

The Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP) itself meets the co-regulation requirement for landlords to support effective independent scrutiny by tenants of its landlord's performance.

## CSP- Annual Report. 2016-2017

### 1. Overview

The Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP) have operated well throughout the year with all planned scrutinies being completed and the majority of recommendations made in the completed reports accepted by Asters Housing Leadership Team (HLT)/ Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Recommendations made in the reports are being actioned by service areas, feedback on these recommendations are reported to the CSP and are ongoing.

The CSP has also completed an internal review of its own processes identifying the strengths and potential weaknesses of the group, difficulties that may prevent the group from giving an excellent service and what opportunities can be identified to ensure continuous improvement. An action plan to take forward identified actions and improvements has been drawn up.

Several staff have asked to attend the quarterly meetings to gain an insight into how the CSP works, this has been of great benefit to the CSP to see that staff are interested in how the panel works and staff feedback has been very positive. CSP members have also been invited to attend staff meetings to give an overview of the CSP.

### 2. Membership and recruitment

During the year 2 members left the panel for personal reasons. Barry Hodgson who had been the Chair since the panel was formed gave his experience and insight unstintingly to

the team and Jo Cooper who gave insights into scrutinies from a customer perspective. Both were committed members of the team.

The CSP requested a recruitment drive through the customer engagement team and currently have several customers who have shown an interest in the CSP and may wish to visit as an observer at a CSP quarterly meeting to see if this is what they are looking for in terms of personal customer involvement. Several customers have shown an interest in attending.

The CSP have a clear recruitment process which will ensure that prospective members will understand what is expected from them as a member of the panel including time and workload commitment.

To enable the CSP to gain feedback from fellow customers it is planned to visit current customer groups to give a presentation about the CSP and use these opportunities to encourage customers to propose which service areas should be considered for a scrutiny, giving reasons why this should be actioned by the CSP.

An outline of the CSP and the work it undertakes on behalf of all customers was provided to leaseholders via the leaseholder online forum and a request was made for ideas on scrutiny subjects and comments they may wish to make on the CSP itself. Leaseholders were also invited to consider joining the CSP either for a one-off scrutiny or to apply to become a full member. Several comments were received relating to scrutiny subjects and the CSP will be taking these into consideration when planning future scrutinies.

### **3. Scrutiny projects completed 2016 –17**

Customer involvement and digital inclusion  
Right to buy process  
Hoarding  
Responsive repairs service  
Former tenant arrears

A total of 19 recommendations were made overall and the CSP continue to receive updates on the progress of these.

Summaries of the CSP reports are available on the Aster group website.

### **4. Staff support**

The CSP wish to thank all members of management and staff for their support and giving their time and expertise so openly.

The CSP especially wish to thank Julia Bottwood, Customer Engagement Administrator who has recorded minutes of our meetings and supported CSP members in many other ways, too numerous to mention.

### **5. Forward plan of proposed scrutinies 2017-18**

- Aster Living service provision
- Aids and adaptations service
- Service charges

- Planned maintenance including procurement of products and services
- Complaints service

## 6. Budget 2016-2017

The CSP have a budget allocated by Aster on an annual basis, this budget covers:

- Hire of venues/refreshments
- Travel costs
- Any stationery costs
- Subscriptions to housing publications

The budget was underspent again this year as the panel continue to ensure that Value for Money is considered throughout their actions, a proposal from the CSP to Aster is to reduce the budget allocation for the next financial year.

**CSP budget for 2016 – 2017      £24,000.00**

Total Expenditure                      £ 13,838.19

Remaining                                    £ 10,161.81

## 7. Summary

The CSP have completed the year with confidence and a strong team spirit and look forward to the next year with renewed enthusiasm and to welcoming new members.

The CSP will continue to work on behalf of all customers and Aster striving to provide scrutiny reports that recommend service improvements and to highlight a service area when it is giving an excellent service.