



Customer Empowerment Framework 2018 - 2021

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Introduction

As a responsible landlord, Pine Court Housing Association (PCHA) understands the importance and value of promoting effective customer engagement in service delivery and strategic planning.

This framework, which has been developed in consultation with customer representatives, sets out:

- Customer Empowerment Aims
- The support and resources that PCHA will make available to promote effective engagement
- The different methods of involvement and empowerment that are available that reflect the level of commitment required by the customer
- Our future goals
- Framework review

Customer Empowerment Aims

In providing support and active promotion of involvement opportunities PCHA will ensure it achieves the following aims:

- It is high-performing, competitive and achieves value for money
- It meets individual needs / expectations of a diverse range of customers
- It meets the requirements of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing
- It sets challenging targets and continuously improves
- Action and resources are focused on customer priorities
- There are effective methods for addressing complaints and dissatisfaction

Support for Customer Empowerment

PCHA will provide specialist training and individual mentoring for customers that want to access empowerment opportunities at the high and medium levels (see table below). Each group has a Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct which clearly outlines the standards and expectations for each role.

The training will be tailored according to the type of involvement the customer wishes to participate in but in general will aim to build confidence, knowledge and skills so that they get the most out of the involvement experience and feel empowered to make telling contributions.

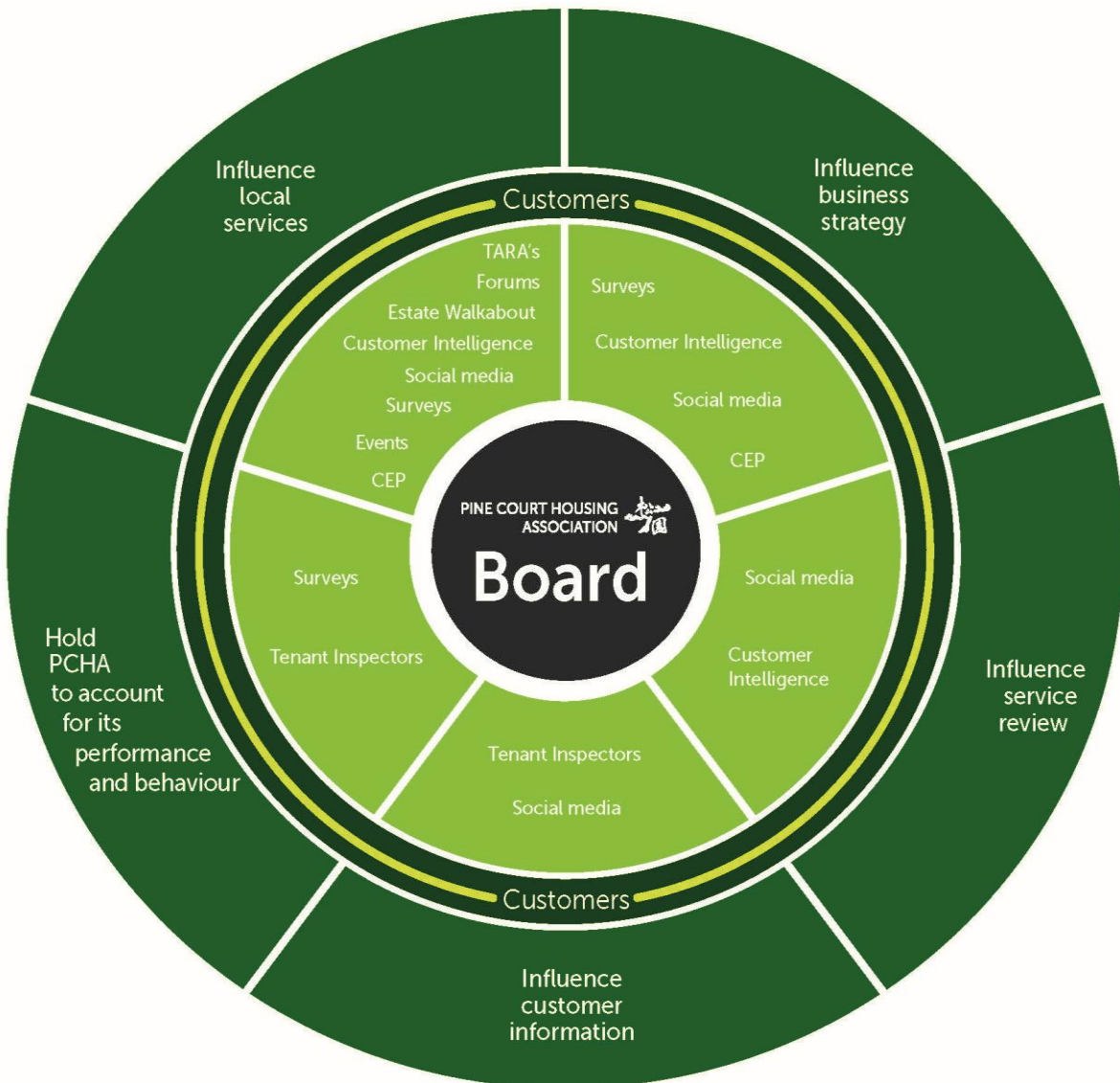


PCHA will cover all out of pocket expenses for those that take part in the higher forms of involvement including paying for travel to and from meetings and providing catering for meetings that span meal times.

PCHA will also support those that want to get involved in residents groups through the provision of training, assistance with sourcing venues for meetings, constitutional and committee advice and assistance in accessing funding opportunities, if required.

Wheel of Involvement within PCHA

The structure within our organisation was developed in consultation with PCHA customers through the Customer Empowerment Panel (CEP). The structure provides an opportunity for customers to move around the structure and to choose the level of involvement they want and at a level they feel comfortable with. The structure is captured within our 'Wheel of Involvement', outlined below:



PCHA Customer Empowerment Framework - Involvement Opportunities			
Involvement Level	Type of involvement	What commitment is involved?	Outcomes
High (Regular / scheduled attendance at meetings and specialist training provided)	PCHA Board Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview and selection criteria based on skills and experience for any vacancies that arise in paid positions for General Board Members – (note there are no longer reserved positions for Tenant Members) • Regular attendance at Board meetings, training events and away-days • Adherence to the adopted Governance Framework, Company Rules and Board Code of Conduct documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board has responsibility for high level strategic oversight of the business including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Setting and approving vision, mission and values ○ Effective risk management ○ Maintaining reputation, viability and regulatory / legal compliance ○ Approving constitutional changes ○ Approving high level investment decisions, acquisitions and disposal of assets
	Tenant Management Organisations (TMO's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants within specific areas or blocks taking control of specified housing management functions e.g. repairs and maintenance • TMO's will only be permitted where committees undergo extensive training and demonstrate a level of competence, there is a positive vote of a majority of the tenants within the block or area and are subject to Board approval • Where approval is granted, legal agreements on the terms and conditions of the transfer of management functions are drawn up known as 'Modular Management Agreements' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant led organisations take budgetary and management control of service delivery that would normally be the responsibility of PCHA, on a voluntary basis (i.e. non-paid positions) • TMO's are responsible for upholding legal and regulatory standards, reporting requirements and compiling all performance information for the properties and services they manage



	<p>Customer Empowerment Panel (CEP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved customers receive training to be able to carry out detailed assessments on PCHA service areas identified as being a priority by dips in performance or escalations of complaints. The assessments are programmed and a minimum of two reviews will be carried out each year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where performance information indicates there is a concern with a service area, the CEP will carry out an investigation from a Tenants perspective and make recommendations for improvement CEP will have full access to back office functions and cooperation from PCHA staff in their investigative processes
	<p>Customer Empowerment Panel (CEP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved customers meet with PCHA staff on a scheduled basis to discuss all performance information and customer feedback including complaints received about: Housing Support Services including: Community Safety, Customer Access, Neighbourhood Services, Independent Living Repairs and Maintenance including: Repairs, Void Works, Compliance, Communal Cleaning, Grounds Maintenance, Home Improvement Works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Group agree and asses performance against a suite of performance indicators and service standards The Group can expect explanation and remediation plans where performance or service delivery does not reach the expected standards or targets The group can recommend investigation by the Scrutiny Team for a failing service area
	<p>Tenant Inspectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained involved customers work alongside PCHA Officers or independently, to reality check service delivery and processes, on a programmed basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback provided from the customers perspective, highlighting both examples of good practice and areas for improvement, and reports are feedback via the SRG

PCHA Customer Empowerment Framework - Involvement Opportunities			
Involvement Level	Type of involvement	What commitment is involved?	Outcomes
Medium (Frequent attendance at meetings, training provided)	Residents Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised groups formed to represent and promote local interests Training and advice provided on forming a committee and adopting formal constitution documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative structures established to meet with PCHA, Statutory Service Providers and other stakeholders to promote local interests Groups that reach certain operating criteria (e.g. constituted, meeting financial rules) can access funding opportunities for local activity / improvement projects/social isolation campaigns
	Customer Empowerment Panel (CEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodic meetings (as required) with customer representatives to review PCHA policies (no formal training required) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer input into policy development and review process All customer facing policies proof read and accessibility checked
	Customer Empowerment Panel (CEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings of trained panel members to independently review complaints that have exhausted PCHA internal Complaints process (at complainants request) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel act as intermediaries between complainants and PCHA Panel can reinvestigate complaints and response from PCHA where the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome (from Two-stage internal investigation process) Panel can make recommendations for alternative course of action or may agree with PCHA's response

PCHA Customer Empowerment Framework - Involvement Opportunities			
Involvement Level	Type of involvement	What commitment is involved?	Outcomes
LOW (No formal training or extensive time commitment required)	Customer Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal, open access events on an ad-hoc basis (at least one event will be held annually) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to promote greater partnership working and involvement options Link into local and national campaigns to raise awareness on issues such as social isolation
	Customer Feedback – Surveys / Market Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone surveys to those that have received a specific services e.g. repairs or on random basis (to reach acceptable response rates) on wider service delivery issues including Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) every Two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer intelligence used to inform contract management, resource planning based on customer priorities and continual improvement through revised target and performance indicator setting
	Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad-hoc meetings on specific topics or projects to meet a need within the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth views and qualitative information gathered to shape service delivery issues
	Customer Empowerment Panel (CEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings held to assess applications for PCHA Community Development Fund (£10,000 available annually) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding distributed to local groups that promote projects that contribute to the following themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and secure communities Promotion and support for cultural projects Engaging local communities



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support and guidance to enable residents to become economically active and financially stable ○ Strategic partnership working
	<p>Other Informal e.g. Suggestions, Neighbourhood Walkabouts, General Feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● General feedback and involvement in PCHA service delivery (without any group involvement or commitment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Informal feedback received on service delivery issues and used to drive continuous improvement



Links with PCHA Governance Structures

The PCHA Board will receive collated periodic reports on all customer intelligence information (similar to that reviewed by the CEP) and will use this to inform business planning, risk management and strategy setting procedures.

Recommendations made by the CEP will also be included in a report to the Group Business Assurance Committee (BAC) that supports the work of the PCHA Board, twice yearly. The BAC will ensure any recommendations that are to be enacted, are assigned to individual PCHA Officers as actions in Service Delivery Plans within the Performance Monitoring System.

Our Future Goals

We are constantly striving to enhance the customer experience of empowerment opportunities and will, over the period of this Framework (2018-2023), look to:

- Increase engagement through digital channels, including use of social media and email for instant feedback on services, projects and target setting
- Make training more accessible at times that are convenient to customers by investing in E-learning
- Develop specialist expertise of involved customers in specific areas of service delivery to work alongside our Performance and Customer Insight Team in an improved approach to service review

Framework Monitoring and Review

The CEP will monitor the on-going effectiveness of the provisions PCHA has in place for customer empowerment. This will include:

- Annual review of the budget available for all customer empowerment activities
- Satisfaction with training provided for high level empowerment opportunities
- Benchmarked information on the total spend on customer empowerment per property
- Monitoring the profile information of involved customers and making proactive recruitment / awareness raising efforts with under-represented groups across all protected characteristics

The CEP will also conduct a review of the Customer Empowerment Framework every three years to ensure that involvement opportunities remain fit for purpose and are effective at achieving the Aims (as set out on Page 2).