

**Committee:** Scrutiny

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 26 November 2013

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**Title:** Tenants' Regulatory Panel

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Item for information

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## Summary

1. Following a presentation to the Scrutiny Committee in June 2013 and a request from the Committee for further updates, this report provides a summary of the work of the Housing Tenant's Regulatory Panel to date.

## Recommendations

2. For information only.

## Financial Implications

3. Limited. Through scrutiny reviews the Panel may identify and recommend cost efficiencies or propose investment opportunities within the Housing service:

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Localism Act 2011.

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Tenant Regulatory Panel members were recruited through a consultation process. Regular updates on activities are given through the Housing News publication.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	All tenants were able to apply to become members of the Panel. Interviews were conducted to select members. Equalities training will be given to all Panel members.
Health and Safety	None

Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Panel supports the self-regulation principles outlined in the Localism Act (2011).
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

## Situation

6. The Tenants' Regulatory Panel has now been in existence for a year having been formed in November 2012. The group consists of 3 analysts, 4 inspectors and a Chairperson. The key aim of the group is to scrutinise identified housing processes and procedures whilst acting as an independent body on behalf of Uttlesford District Council's tenant base. Their work and time commitments are on a voluntary basis.
7. The Panel completed in-depth Scrutiny training as part of their formation and have been attending relevant Tenant-based training or information sessions to further develop both the team and individual members. The Panel are also still being supported and guided by an external consultant as they complete their initial review. The Housing Business and Performance Manager remains the Panel's main communication point with the Housing Service, but due to the requirement for the group to remain as independent as possible, this contact is minimal.
8. The first review that the Panel has undertaken is that of Void properties (the time that a property remains empty between re-lets). They have conducted extensive research and have spent time gathering information regarding this process and its current performance levels within Uttlesford. This has involved meeting and interviewing staff at various levels within the organisation as well as conducting site visits to empty properties.
9. The Panel are currently finalising their formal recommendations report which will then be presented to both the Tenant Forum and officers of the council towards the end of January 2014. Once this presentation has been made, the Panel will take their recommendations to the Housing Board for formal member approval.
10. The panel are also currently drafting and prioritising a schedule of work for future reviews.

11.

## Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That UDC are unable to retain and re-recruit Panel members	2 – some risk or impact	Independent Housing Scrutiny activities would be limited	Ensure the work of the Panel is regularly communicated and promoted and that these activities emphasise the importance of the group
That Tenant Scrutiny work is not undertaken	2 – some risk or impact	The housing Service would not be adopting some of the key principles of self-regulation	Panel fully supported by officers to ensure work is undertaken

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.