

## **Customer Voice Committee Terms of Reference V.4**

### **Purpose of the Committee**

The Customer Voice Committee will seek and provide assurances that we are listening to our customers and acting on customer feedback and voice we receive. The Committee will seek assurance that our services are accessible and open to all and that as decisions are made, the impact on customers is understood.

### **Overview of the Committee**

The Customer Voice Committee brings our customers closer to our decision making within Aster. This Committee provides a golden thread for customer insight and feedback to flow through our committees and governance structure. The Committee bring together wider customer groups and committees to scrutinise, provide assurance, bring customer voice into our decision making and ensure the best use of customer feedback tools, such as codesign, to improve services for customers.

### **What do the Customer Voice Committee do?**

- Provide assurance that customer voice and customer culture is embedded across Aster Group
- Act as an advisory and scrutiny panel on our approach and effectiveness to customer voice and the areas and methods we use to engage, communicate and understand our customers.
- Identify gaps and new areas of customer voice and codesign activity to drive improved customer experience.
- Provide assurance to the Overlap Boards that recommended customer activity takes place and is evidenced in our change and decision making.
- Review Aster's RSH Consumer Standard's self-assessments in line with current and any future consumer standards and ensure that it reflects current service and future improvement plans are in place
- Instruct deep dives where assurance has not been provided on how customer voice and insight will be used for decision making, and where there are areas of risk around performance impacting our customers to understand the action plan.
- Bring together insight and priorities from customer groups to influence Board and Executive agendas and discussions, and manage any delegations from Board where there are areas of customer impact to be understood further.
- Consider horizon scanning to look at what may impact our customers and how we can design our services for future customer needs.
- Regularly review learning from good practice both internally, in sector and out of sector on customer voice and culture and how this could be embedded at Aster.

### **What outcomes would we want to see?**

- Overlap Boards are assured through the work of the Customer Voice Committee through updates and items from customer group discussions, how customer impact is considered and sought through the Committee's work

- Evidence that the Customer Voice Committee have had genuine influence over Aster's decision making
- Stronger link between committees and flow of customer insight
- That the voice of the customer is more visible within Aster's governance groups
- Increased customer codesign and engagement on a wider span of the organisation

## **Membership**

Membership remains as current Customer Community Network members and chair until a formal transition plan and skills assessment/recruitment has taken place. The aim is to transition to the below membership in line with Aster's governance framework.

- Chair – Customer Chair (remaining as Overlap Boards' member NED until recruited)
- 2 Aster Group Limited Board representatives from the following:
  - o A NED
  - o Designated Member Responsible for Complaints
  - o Chief Executive
- 7 Customers, where possible, representative of our diverse customer groups, recruited based on skills assessment and tenure length.

## **Attendees**

Whilst not members expected to attend each meeting, there will be some who attend meetings on a regular basis, however, some may only be for their update or agenda item.

- Customer services operational team representative
- Customer voice representative
- Representative of Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP) and Designated Complaints Panel (DCP)
- Other Aster Group colleagues, as required

Quorum – 3 customers and 1 Aster Group Limited Board member

- Each member will be appointed for an initial one-year period and then onto a cyclical three-year term with a maximum term of office of three successive terms of three years.
- The maximum tenure for any member is nine years.
- The chair will be nominated and approved at People and Culture Committee on an annual basis
- Aster Group Limited Board representative (NED) will be reviewed every two years.
- Should a customer member cease to be a customer of Aster, their tenure on the committee will come to an end.
- A skills assessment will be conducted to ensure participation and effectiveness, in line with the Governance Framework.
- Meetings will be held quarterly with ad-hoc meetings arranged outside of quarterly cycle where necessary.

## **Remuneration**

An annual remuneration package for each Customer Voice Committee member (in line with the Board and Committee Remuneration and Expenses Policy and Framework)

## **Some of the key areas the new Customer Voice Committee will specifically look at:**

### **Approve:**

Customer annual report (D026.1) – review content, language and final approval.

Housing Ombudsman annual self-assessment (R068) against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

Annual complaints performance and service improvement report (D003.1).

### **Consulted:**

Audits – influence plan for Customer Service audits, consulted during audit process and opportunity to receive overview of customer services audit outcomes and progress.

Support work of Group Risk & Assurance Committee, focusing on customer impact audit actions and progress.

### **Scrutinise:**

Customer Services Policies – Annual policy update to enable opportunity to challenge customer influence and effectiveness of the policy methodology and cyclical review process. Ensure that the process for approving policies has included customer consultation and evidence of how this has shaped Astar Group policy.

Consumer Standards – scrutinise Astar Group's self-assessments against each standard, working with Executive Board to ensure a balance of organisational and customer focus met in review plans and arrangements for delivering key outcome requirements. Review progress against improvement actions identified during annual self-assessment process.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures – influence the methodology and approach to surveying customers, in-line with the technical requirements, to ensure representative response. Scrutinise performance across all Tenant Satisfaction Measures and review progress against agreed improvement actions.

Operational performance – where performance may impact customers, assurance this is being looked at with influence identifying activity for further scrutiny, with deep dives or where customer engagement is required. Discuss case studies of successes and challenges and current and emerging risks.

Customer Voice – that customer voice activity is undertaken, employing effective methods to engage a wide group of customers and there is a forward plan for future opportunities. Consider areas that customer voice would inform and shape future plan, including deep dives within the organisation to consider impact of the customer in service delivery.

Complaints – Seek assurance on complaints performance and that learning from complaints has been actioned and embedded operationally.

Modernisation and change plans – outcomes, recommendations and implementation of service reviews, monitoring the impact of these.

### **Bring together customer groups and wider committees:**

**Overlap Boards, other committees and Executive Board:** Influence the Corporate Strategy through engagement at Board and Committee strategic away days and the

development of the future ambition of the organisation, including business planning and the role of customers in Astar Group's direction of travel.

Champion a customer centred culture to influence all governing bodies in the use of customer voice. Leading on how customer voice and insight can be considered during the decision-making process, and how governing bodies can maximise the opportunity to do this.

**Local panels:** monitor the local panel pilot against measures of success and be consulted on the future rollout and accountability of those panels.

**Customer Scrutiny Panel:** assured that scrutiny outcomes reports and recommendations have been acted on and that the activity of the Customer Scrutiny Panel has been effective and meaningful, and where possible links in with audit planning. The Committee will identify and recommend areas for the panel review where applicable.

**Designated Complaints Panel:** assured that the Designated Complaints Panel activities are effective including activity related to the Housing Ombudsman and that complaints learnings are challenged. The committee will delegate responsibility to the Designated Complaints Panel to focus on specific areas or tasks related to complaints.