



To: Executive Councillor for Housing
Report by: Director of Customer and Community Services
Relevant scrutiny committee: HMB 08.01.13
Wards affected: All

Update on Resident Involvement Facilitator post
Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 In September 2011, a report was brought to HMB outlining recommendations for providing an Independent Tenants' Voice. This report was written by an external consultant and included a thorough review of past and existing Resident Involvement arrangements, plus a number of recommendations.

1.2 The report was complimentary of the Council's existing arrangements for tenant involvement and engagement, but recommended areas where this could be strengthened or improved.

1.3 One key recommendation from the report, approved by the Executive Councillor for Housing at the September 2011 HMB, was the creation of a 'Resident Involvement Facilitator' post. This new role was designed in conjunction with the tenant and leaseholder reps on HMB and was recruited to in August 2012. This report will provide an update on that post and outline the specific work being carried out and planned for the new role.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

2.1 To approve the 2013 Resident Involvement Facilitator work plan (developed in consultation with the HMB tenants and leaseholder reps), set out in appendix 2

3. Background

3.1 Prior to 2011, City Homes had outsourced some of its tenant and leaseholder engagement work to an external organisation - The Cambridge Federation of Tenants, Leaseholders and Residents. This work was funded by a grant of £75,000 paid to the Cambridge Federation annually. Following service delivery issues, the SLA with the Cambridge Federation was reviewed and the grant funding was withdrawn in July 2011.

3.2 This situation left a gap in some of the grass-roots, neighbourhood outreach that had been provided by The Cambridge Federation through the allocated grant funding. A

steering group comprised of councillors and tenant & leasehold representatives on HMB was set up to advise the Director of Customer and Community Services on the appointment of an external consultant, and to consider the consultants report and recommendations for presentation at HMB. Colin Wiles of Wiles Consulting was appointed following a tender and evaluation process, and delivered a report and recommendations.

3.3 The Wiles report (see appendix 1) was presented to HMB in September 2011. The report was complimentary of the Council's existing arrangements for tenant involvement and engagement, but recognised areas where this could be strengthened or improved.

3.4 One key recommendation from the report, approved by the Executive Councillor for Housing at HMB, was the creation of a 'Resident Involvement Facilitator' (RIF) post. This new role was designed in conjunction with the tenant and leaseholder reps on HMB and recruited to in August 2012.

3.5 The 3 core requirements for the new role are to:

- I. Facilitate an independent voice allowing residents to be actively involved with their landlord
- II. Take forward the Council's approach to the localism agenda and neighbourhood working across the city
- III. Support Council managers in engaging residents and groups through Local community involvement projects

3.6 Following the appointment in August, HMB residents worked alongside the new RIF to plan the work and objectives for the year (using the headings of the job description as detailed below) and seeking new ways to achieve desired outcomes:

- I. Local Residents' groups
- II. Neighbourhood resident involvement
- III. Recruiting
- IV. Outreach to 'hard to reach' residents
- V. Residents' Forum

3.7 Specifics detailing the work being carried out under each of these headings is included in appendix 2: Resident Involvement Facilitator work plan 2013

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The work/projects detailed in this report will be delivered within the current budgetary provision of £78k for tenant involvement outreach and engagement, previously provided as a grant to the Cambridge Federation. The salary and overhead costs for the newly created role (Resident Involvement Facilitator) have already been deducted from this, leaving approximately £47,000 that will be divided up into the general Resident Involvement budget, in order to fund the various projects and initiatives mentioned.

(b) Staffing Implications

The new Resident Involvement Facilitator post was created in August 2012 and funded from the £78k budget allocation, referred to above.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out prior to the original independent report, identifying the importance of tenant involvement work, engaging all sections of the community.

(d) Environmental Implications

The proposal has no direct climate change impact.

(e) Consultation and communication

The Resident Involvement Facilitator (RIF) post and the accompanying job description was designed in conjunction with the tenant and leaseholder reps on HMB. In addition HMB and HRP representatives formed the interview panel for the RIF post along with Robert Hollingsworth (Head of City Homes) as the appointing officer.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

A review of Resident Involvement and options for an Independent Voice for Residents (also included as Appendix 1)

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: A review of Resident Involvement and options for an Independent Voice for Residents

Appendix 2: Resident Involvement Facilitator work plan 2013

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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