



To: Councillor Kevin Price Executive Councillor for Housing
Report by: Tom Bremner, Head Of Housing
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 7/3/2017 Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: All wards containing council housing

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2017-2020

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 With scarcer resources in the housing service, Resident Involvement must provide a targeted service that responds to the needs of tenants, the priorities of the housing service and satisfies regulatory requirements.

1.2 A Resident Involvement Strategy (appendix I) offers a clear outcome-based method of ensuring that Resident Involvement continues to provide an effective, value-for-money service that answers the needs of today's social housing climate.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- a) To approve the Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020 (appx. 1)

3. Background

3.1 Resident Involvement has not had a standalone strategy for some years. In the past, there was an expectation to publish a 'tenant compact', which set out the Resident Involvement 'offer' to tenants (and leaseholders).

3.2 However, with the shift in regulators since 2009 (Audit Commission, Tenant Services Authority, Homes and Communities Agency), there have been varying expectations of what Resident Involvement is and how it should be delivered in social housing.

3.3 Locally, the 2016 review of housing services saw Resident Involvement resources reduced by approximately 37%. With fewer resources, it is crucial that Resident Involvement provides a targeted service that responds to the needs of tenants & leaseholders, the priorities of the housing service and satisfies the regulatory requirements of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

3.4 A Resident Involvement Strategy (appendix I) offers an outcome-based method of ensuring that Resident Involvement continues to provide an effective, value-for-money service that answers the needs of today's social housing climate. In designing this strategy, three main resources were used:

- HCA Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
- TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards
- Tenant & Leaseholder Resident Involvement Survey

HCA Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

3.5 The housing regulator (the Homes & Communities Agency) publishes a Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. There are three required outcomes in the standard that social landlords are expected to meet:

- Customer service, choice and complaints
- Involvement and empowerment
- Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

3.6 Each outcome includes details on what the provider should offer in order to meet the required outcomes. The standard also lists specific expectations for each required outcome.

TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards

3.7 In addition, TPAS offer a set of National Tenant Engagement Standards. These are not statutory requirements but are a good example of what a modern Resident Involvement service should be offering in 2017. The TPAS standards also provide a good set of best practice examples that meet the HCA's regulatory requirements.

Tenant & Leaseholder Resident Involvement Survey

3.8 Combined, the HCA and TPAS standards offer a good framework for a Resident Involvement Strategy. In addition to these two resources, Cambridge City Council has also conducted some local consultation with tenants and leaseholders to make sure that the strategy also reflects their priorities.

3.9 The Survey asked tenants and leaseholder for their views on key areas. Full results can be found in appendix II. Headline results include:

Tenant & Leaseholder top three priorities for housing services
1. Building new council housing
2. Repairing your home (and or communal/block repairs)
3. Tackling anti-social behaviour
Tenant & Leaseholder preferred methods for receiving information
1. Open Door magazine in the post
2. Letters in the post
3. Email
4. In person at residents' meetings
5. Via Social Media (i.e. Facebook)
Tenant and leaseholders awareness of tenant/leaseholder representatives already involved with the Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hear enough about this - 36.71% • I'd like to hear more about this - 54.43% • I'm not interested - 8.86%
Tenant & Leaseholder top three Resident Involvement services
1. Surveys to gather tenants' and leaseholders' views
2. Tenants and leaseholders inspecting housing services
3. Elected tenants and leaseholders on Housing Scrutiny Committee

3.10 The survey was conducted by post and online to a sample of 400 tenants and leaseholders. The response rate was 20%.

Resident Involvement Strategy: 2017-2020

3.11 The completed strategy document (appendix I) was developed with the support and input of the elected tenants and leaseholders on Housing Scrutiny Committee. It uses information from all of the above resources and is set out into 6 chapters:

- 1. Housing service priorities**
- 2. Resources**
- 3. Communication & Insight**
- 4. Influence & Scrutiny**
- 5. Community Engagement**
- 6. Value for money**

3.12 The strategy also includes an outcome table which can be used to measure the performance and effectiveness of the Resident Involvement service during the lifespan of the strategy (2017-2020).

3.13 It is planned that updates on the strategy will be brought to committee annually.

4. Implications

(a/b) Financial/staffing Implications

The Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020 is designed to be delivered with existing resources and staffing.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Some areas of resident involvement cross into social, financial and digital inclusion. Where appropriate, these be linked to/delivered in conjunction with wider anti-poverty strategies.

(d) Environmental Implications

N/A

(e) Procurement

N/A

(f) Consultation and communication

A survey of tenants and leaseholder was conducted, asking for their views on key areas related to resident Involvement. Headline results are included above in section 3.9, more detailed results can be found in appendix II.

(g) Community Safety

N/A

5. Background papers

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

HCA Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422709/Tenant I and E Standard 2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422709/Tenant_I_and_E_Standard_2015.pdf)

TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards:

https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_tpas_national_tenant_engagement_standards.pdf

6. Appendices

- I. Resident Involvement Strategy 2017-2020
- II. Resident Involvement Survey Results 2017

7. Inspection of papers

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

Author's Name: James Bull
Author's Phone Number: 01223 - 458323
Author's Email: james.bull@cambridge.gov.uk