

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA
ITEM NO

HOUSING COMMITTEE

11 DECEMBER 2018

10

Report Title	TENANT INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY
Purpose of Report	Feedback to Housing Committee to provide an update on Tenant Involvement activities The Tenant and Involvement Strategy for 2019 - 2021
Decisions	Committee resolves To approve the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Strategy (Appendix A).
Consultation and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair & Vice Chair of Housing Committee • Neighbourhood Ambassadors • Tenant Representatives on Housing Committee
Financial Implications and Risk Assessment	<p>Any expenditure associated with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Strategy will be funded from the existing Resident Involvement budget, and so there are no further financial implications. Lucy Clothier, Principal Accountant Tel: 01453 754343 Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk</p> <p>Risk Assessment The Regulator for Social Housing administers compliance with the tenant and involvement and empowerment standard which requires providers to ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in decisions relating to housing related services including policies. This process is fully compliant with that approach</p>
Legal Implications	<p>There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Specific legal advice can be provided regarding any actions or activities that might result from operation of this Strategy when they are conceived and prior to implementation. Nicola Swan Interim Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email: nicola.swan@stroud.gov.uk</p>
Report Author	Michelle Elliott, Principal Neighbourhood Management Officer Tel: 01453 754113 Email: michelle.elliott@stroud.gov.uk
Performance Management Follow Up	Updated performance to Housing Committee in April 2019
Background Papers / Appendices	Appendix A - The Tenant Empowerment & Involvement Strategy Appendix B - Action Plan

1. Background

- 1.1 Tenant Involvement is a key regulatory compliance requirement as part of co-regulation, supporting tenants and improving the services we provide, Tenant Services recognise the benefits of tenant involvement in enhancing the communities in which they live and providing social value to individuals, improving wellbeing, increasing confidence and environmental sustainability and involving tenants in issues which matter and are transparent.
- 1.2 Following the paper to Committee in September 2018, outlining the changing future of tenant involvement, the Tenant Empowerment and Involvement Strategy has been developed. This will plan and action how we move forward and encourage a greater number and broader range of tenants to engage with Tenant Services.

2. Introduction

The Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Strategy demonstrates the commitment that Tenant Services has in involving tenants in the services it provides.

2.1 The Housing Regulator

- The Regulator requires the Landlord to ‘ provide choice, information and communications that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards’
- Ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in, including involvement in housing related strategies and service standards.
- Tenants should be involved in the scrutiny of their Landlords performance and recommendations to the landlord of how performance can be improved.
- Agree local offers for service delivery

Highlights of the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Strategy include:

- Tenants are given a voice to help improve the services they receive
- Tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to be involved at a time to suit them
- Expanding our social media involvement
- Information & best practice ideas to be shared between Officers, Tenants & Councillors
- Increased community involvement
- Improved efficiency
- Better value for money
- Looking at barriers to involvement
- Discuss local offers

We aim to listen to tenant’s views on local offers and support tenants to improve their neighbourhoods. We aim to put tenants at the heart of all we do and support and empower tenants to check how we perform, challenge us to improve and hold us to account.

2.2 Action Plan for Communication & delivery of Tenant Involvement

1. Action plan in place to deliver tenant involvement through the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Strategy
2. Task & Finish and working groups involving councillors, tenants and officers in place earlier this year defined the action plan and agreed on practices moving forward.
3. The development of Tenant Inspectors to scrutinise the service as part of an agreed work programme with defined outcomes and recommendations This group have undergone a training session on void properties and later this month will be receiving training on our Repairs standard. They will be going live early in 2019.
4. Development of Neighbourhood Ambassadors. We currently have four Neighbourhood Ambassadors in place, who have given their input into the action plan for 2019.
5. Tenants have been involved in changes to our new Tenant handbook, which is due to go online early in 2019.
6. Procurement for the Independent Tenant Assessor has been conducted with involvement from tenants and an assessment day is being planned where by tenants will be involved in scoring and choosing the two new tenant representatives.
7. Star Survey planned for early 2019

2.3 Activities planned for 2019

- Continue to promote the role of Neighbourhood Ambassador
- Continue to promote the role of tenants Voids & Repairs Inspectors
- Arrange training programme
- Review Service Standards with tenant groups
- Evaluate results of STAR survey
- Increase involvement through digital approach
- Formal recruitment of two tenant representatives to sit on Housing Committee
- Promote & advertise for tenants to scrutinise our services
- Consider local offers in neighbourhoods

3. Summary

It has been widely recognised that tenant engagement is key to the delivery of our housing service, by working through our Tenant Involvement Action plan and sharing our tenant Involvement and empowerment plan we hope to engage with more tenants over a broader age range.

If the recommendations are accepted, we will report back to Housing Committee in April 2019 on the implementation of the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Strategy.