

SUBJECT: TENANT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2021

DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND REGENERATION

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MANAGER**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to implement the new Tenant Involvement Strategy 2018-2021.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The council's previous tenant involvement strategy covered the period 2014 –2017 and finished at the end of December 2017. Therefore a new strategy for 2018-2021 has been developed. The revised strategy is attached at appendix 1.

3. Background

- 3.1 The City of Lincoln Council recognises the importance and value of Involving tenants. The participation of residents is crucial in helping the City of Lincoln Council to deliver outstanding housing services and without their input it would be difficult to provide quality services to tenants.
- 3.2 Involving tenants in services also provides a number of benefits for both the council and residents. These can include services that are better designed, increased levels of tenant satisfaction, improved communities and higher standards of service.
- 3.3 There is also a legal duty to involve residents under the Homes and Communities Agencies' (HCA) Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England. The framework contains the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and this sets out guidelines on how providers should involve tenants. Please see appendix 2 for a copy of the standard.
- 3.4 The Homes and Communities Agency do not actively check these standards are being met, instead they expect councils and tenants to self-monitor through a process known as co-regulation. Co-regulation means that councils should support tenants to scrutinise and challenge them on performance and service delivery. In return tenants should work to provide constructive feedback and work with the council to improve performance.
- 3.5 To ensure the City of Lincoln Council has effective arrangements in place for resident involvement and complies with the regulatory framework a strategy is needed to set out how this will be achieved. The previous

Tenant Involvement Strategy (2014-2017) expired at the end December 2017 and therefore a new strategy has been developed. It is proposed to agree and publish a new Tenant Involvement Strategy to cover the period 2018-2021.

- 3.6 The new strategy has been developed jointly with the Lincoln Tenants' Panel. Residents have also been consulted on a number of occasions, these include:

- Initial consultation at the housing roadshow in July 2016
- Through a survey in the Home! magazine
- At several of the neighbourhood boards
- Further consultation at the housing roadshow in August 2017.

- 3.7 Throughout the process the strategy was developed to meet the aims of the council's Vision 2020 document and will specifically help to deliver the objectives of 'Lets deliver quality housing' and 'Lets reduce inequality.'

4. Vision and Objectives for the Tenant Involvement Strategy 2018-2021

- 4.1 The new vision for tenant involvement is to : *'Build on the council's successful involvement arrangements to further develop and deliver meaningful engagement; so that tenants and leaseholders have a range of opportunities to be involved and their involvement leads to service improvement.'*

- 4.2 To deliver this vision four objectives have been developed. These are:

1. Ensure accountability – to achieve this we will continue to work with residents to deliver co-regulation. This will mean continuing to support tenants to carry out scrutiny of our services, challenge us over performance and hold us to account over service standards. It is also important that we allow tenants to have a voice and can influence decisions made about the service they receive.

2. Strengthen Involvement – to achieve this we will further develop the menu of options for customers to get involved. This is to include, further use of customer feedback to improve services and training for staff on how to effectively involve tenants. We will also continue to provide training and focus on developing involved tenants so they can fully participate.

3. Help to develop thriving communities – to achieve this we will incorporate key community development activities, and focus on supporting and coordinating engagement at a local level.

4. Communicate key messages and increase digital engagement - to achieve this we will continue to publish the Home! magazine and Annual Report to Tenants. Key messages will also be communicated to residents at estate based events and through Facebook. To increase digital

engagement we will look at developing Facebook to carry out surveys and promote the work of Lincoln Tenants' Panel.

- 4.3 To achieve these objectives a three-year action plan has been produced. This sets out the main tasks that will be carried out, a copy can be found in appendix 1.

5. Delivering, Monitoring and Reviewing the Strategy

- 5.1 The resident involvement team will take the lead in its delivery.
- 5.2 Throughout the lifetime of the strategy the resident involvement team will review the strategy to ensure the objectives are being met and activities are providing value.
- 5.3 The Lincoln Tenants' Panel, Housing Scrutiny Committee and housing management will monitor the delivery of the strategy.

6. Strategic Priorities

6.1 'Let's delivery quality housing'

Having meaningful tenant involvement plays a crucial role in the delivery of quality housing. The participation of tenants can lead to services that are better designed, higher levels of satisfaction and improved performance.

'Let's reduce inequality'

Resident involvement contributes to reducing inequality through providing activities to tackle issues such as social isolation, health problems and unemployment. This can be through community projects, activities provided by residents' groups and by participating in tenant involvement groups.

7. Organisational Impacts

7.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

While there are no direct financial implications from this report, delivery of the strategy action plan may result in further additional expenditure should any of the actions, as they are explored, require additional resources. Currently, it is expected that the cost of delivering the action plan can be met from existing resources.

7.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

The HCA's Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England requires the council as a Registered Provider of Social Housing to ensure tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the

management of their homes and the formulation of policies and the making of decisions about how housing landlord services are delivered.

The new Strategy sets out the processes and opportunities for tenant involvement in compliance with the Regulatory Framework. All existing purchases are carried out in accordance with procurement requirements and any new purchases required will also be carried out under these rules.

7.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights

This strategy aims to encourage all tenants to get involved, at any level and in a way that suits their needs, therefore an equality and diversity impact assessment was not carried out on the strategy. However, these will be carried as required when implementing the action plan.

8. Risk Implications

8.1 (i) Key risks associated with the preferred approach

The key risk would be failure to deliver the actions set out in the strategy and this could mean the council not having meaningful tenant participation in place. This might result in a failure to comply with the HCA's regulatory framework, lower levels of tenant satisfaction and poor service design. To mitigate against this threat a risk assessment is in place and a copy can be found at the end of appendix 1.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Executive is asked to approve the new tenant involvement strategy for 2018 – 2021.

Is this a key decision?	No
Do the exempt information categories apply?	No
Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?	No
How many appendices does the report contain?	Two
List of Background Papers:	None

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