



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	20 September 2016
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	'Get involved' – Tenant involvement strategy
Contact:	<p>Portfolio Holder: Councillor Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing</p> <p>Responsible Officers: Elliott Brooks – Assistant Director (Housing) Andy Vincent - Group Manager (Tenants and Leaseholders)</p> <p>Author: Emily-Rae Maxwell – Policy and Participation Team Leader</p>
Purpose of report:	The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet with an overview of the new tenant involvement strategy for 2016 – 2020. This includes a new structure for delivering tenant involvement.
Recommendations	1. That the revised tenant involvement strategy as set out in the report and Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Quality tenant involvement contributes to all of the council's corporate objectives (see appendix 1 - 'Get involved' vision).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clean, safe and enjoyable environment • Building strong and vibrant communities • Ensuring economic growth and prosperity • Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need • Delivering an efficient and modern council
Implications:	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial implications. The 'Get Involved'</p>

<p>'Value For Money Implications'</p>	<p>strategy will be delivered using the Policy and Participation team budget.</p> <p>All involvement activities delivered will be assessed to ensure they are for the benefit of our tenants and leaseholder population and those accessing the housing service where appropriate.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>It is important that we deliver value for money for our tenants. Robust tenant involvement that uses an outcome focused approach to engagement and scrutiny means we can capture where improvements have been made as a result of tenant involvement and any associated costs or savings. Shaping our annual service plans using our tenants' priorities helps us to allocate our resources and deliver what is important within the resources that are available. We will work with our tenants to identify more efficient ways of working, such as moving to digital channels enabling us to maximise the resources available. Sharing resources and skills with partner organisations and exploring opportunities for additional funding will also help us to deliver more for less.</p>
<p>Risk Implications</p>	<p>Failure to engage with tenants effectively can risk a breakdown in relationship between the council and tenant population.</p> <p>The housing operational risk register is presented to the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>
<p>Community Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Community Impact Assessment carried out – see appendix 2</p>
<p>Health And Safety Implications</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>No comments to add to the report</p> <p>S.151 Officer</p> <p>There are no direct additional costs associated with this decision. The existing budget for the Policy and Participation team covers the costs of this exercise.</p>
<p>Consultees:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant and Leaseholder Committee • Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel • Tenant Sub-Committee • Tenant Inspectors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider tenant and leaseholder population • Housing service officers • Cllr Margaret Griffiths • Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration • Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Background papers:	<p>Appendix 1 – ‘<i>Get Involved</i>’ strategy</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Community Impact Assessment</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Overview and Scrutiny report – Get involved</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Tenant and Leaseholder Feedback</p>
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>TIRG – Tenant and Leaseholder Review Group</p> <p>TLC – Tenant and Leaseholder Committee</p> <p>P&P – Policy and Participation</p> <p>HCOSC – Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>TLSP – Tenants and Leaseholders Scrutiny Panel</p>

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Tenant involvement strategy expired in 2015. This presented an opportunity to work with tenants to refresh the direction and structure for delivering a modern and flexible tenant involvement.
- 1.2 This report outlines the approach taken by the Policy and Participation (P&P) team to develop the ‘*Get involved*’ 2016 – 2020 strategy and how the changes in structure will increase opportunities for tenants to shape the housing service.
- 1.3 The first meeting of the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TLC) took place in January 2011 and the meetings have run monthly since this time.
- 1.4 Tenants’ roles in shaping service delivery, continued to grow and in 2012 it became a requirement for every landlord to create a formal scrutiny panel(s). This allows people to highlight opportunities to improve, challenge and scrutinise delivery of housing services and act as representatives for the wider population.

2.0 Developing the strategy

- 2.1 To develop this strategy the P&P team included the views of over 1200 tenants and leaseholders, staff and external stakeholders.

2.2 A range of methods were used to explore topics such as; digital engagement and formal committee structures, young people, rural areas and engaging with leaseholders.

2.3 This included establishing a Tenant Involvement Review Group (TIRG) from currently involved tenants.

3.0 A new strategy and structure

3.1 The vision for the '*Get involved*' strategy is for our tenants and leaseholders to:

- to feel listened to
- feel empowered to influence decisions
- have opportunities to challenge the housing service.

3.2 Using the information gained through consultation, the P&P team developed four outcome based commitments and a new structure for delivering tenant involvement.

3.3 The four commitments are underpinned by the priorities of our tenants and leaseholders. These are:

- Commitment one: All Dacorum tenants and leaseholders have the opportunity to '*Get involved*'
- Commitment two: Dacorum Borough Council works in partnership to ensure the housing service is shaped by the needs of our tenants
- Commitment three: Young people within Dacorum's tenant population have a voice and a positive influence in their local communities
- Commitment four: Dacorum Borough Council's housing service is accountable to our tenants and leaseholders

The structure for delivering these four commitments includes three levels of involvement - see *appendix 1*.

Level One 'Our Tenants': 'Our Tenants' is about creating conversations and building relationships between the council's housing service and the whole tenant population. Using a range of communication channels such as social media and getting out and about in the community we can keep our tenants informed, share the benefits tenant involvement has for them and begin to build a network of people who want to '*Get involved*'.

Level Two 'Service Shapers': 'Service Shapers' then uses a variety of engagement activities to build up a picture of our tenants needs. Within this level of involvement using activities such as 'burst groups' we can introduce topics of interest and capture tenants and leaseholders thought and experiences. The information and insight captured at level two then informs the development of key documents or decisions. Other activities within 'Service Shapers' include 'Youth Tenant Involvement' and 'Tenant Inspectors' where individuals within the tenant population can take part in projects that benefit the wider tenant community.

Level Three 'Official Involvement': 'Official involvement' is the top level of involvement and requires the most commitment from our tenants and leaseholders. It brings together tenant and leaseholder representatives, local professionals, Councillors and the council's housing staff to regulate, scrutinise and challenge the housing service. This level of involvement includes a Tenant and Leaseholder

Committee and Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel. All are required to meet on a quarterly basis and review key areas of the housing service. This top level committee will also be used as a formal part of any consultation process. Information collated at level two and the documents drafted using this information will be presented to committee members digitally for feedback to ensure the decision and or service change is reflective of local need.

The variety of activities and different levels seeks to create a more active and involved tenant community.

4.0 Implementing the new strategy and timescales

- 4.1 The draft strategy was presented to the former TLC in June 2016. Following this, TLC members were encouraged to offer feedback. This feedback was collated with the information collated throughout the consultation process and outstanding decisions were presented to HCOSC in July 2016.
- 4.2 The former TLC was disbanded in July 2016 and attended a celebration event hosted by the Mayor to thank them for their contribution to the housing service.
- 4.3 It was agreed by HCOSC no TLC meetings would take place between July and October 2016. This is to allow the P&P team a mobilisation period for recruiting to the new committee and launch of the *'Get involved' strategy*.
- 4.4 Tenants raised the concern of the housing service not being held to account during this mobilisation period. HSCOC and the Portfolio Holder for Housing agreed there will be minimal impact regarding the service being held to account as this the role of elected members.
- 4.5 The Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel (TLSP) have agreed they would also break from meeting during this time and have requested support from the P&P team to recruit additional members during this period.
- 4.6 The P&P team will work with the TLSP to explore more effective methods for delivering a robust scrutiny process in line with the new Tpas standards.

5.0 The Tenant and Leaseholder Committee

- 5.1 Best practice suggests that top level committees include a mix of independents, tenants and leaseholders.
- 5.2 HCOSC reviewed all potential options for the new TLC and agreed it should include; 5 tenants, 2 leaseholders, 1 non-portfolio holding councillor, 2 independents.
- 5.3 Cllr Imarni expressed an interest in the non-portfolio holding councillor role.
- 5.4 The P&P are in the process of recruiting new committee members. An application form has been designed using best practice guidelines and advertised through a number of streams.
- 5.5 The new TLC will meet quarterly to review performance, make recommendations on strategic decisions and challenge the service to ensure it reflective of tenants needs.

5.6 Between these meetings, key documents requiring formal consultation would be circulated remotely to all TLC members and feedback will be submitted back to the P&P team via email.

5.7 Additionally TLC members will be encouraged to engage with teams in the housing service if they feel this is appropriate.

6.0 Achieving Tenant Participation Advisory Service Accreditation

6.1 In the first year of delivering this strategy, the housing service will achieve the National Tenant Engagement Standards developed by TPAS.

6.2 This strategy and structure has been developed in line with the requirements as set out by the standards.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 That the revised tenant involvement strategy as set out in the report and Appendix1 to the report be approved.