

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 16 April, 2018

Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Building

Tenant Engagement Strategy

Purpose of the Report

1. To approve the Tenant Engagement Strategy for public housing attached at [Appendix A](#) to the report.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approves the final Tenant Engagement Strategy.
2. That the final Tenant Engagement Strategy is referred to the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee to monitor the implementation of the agreed actions.

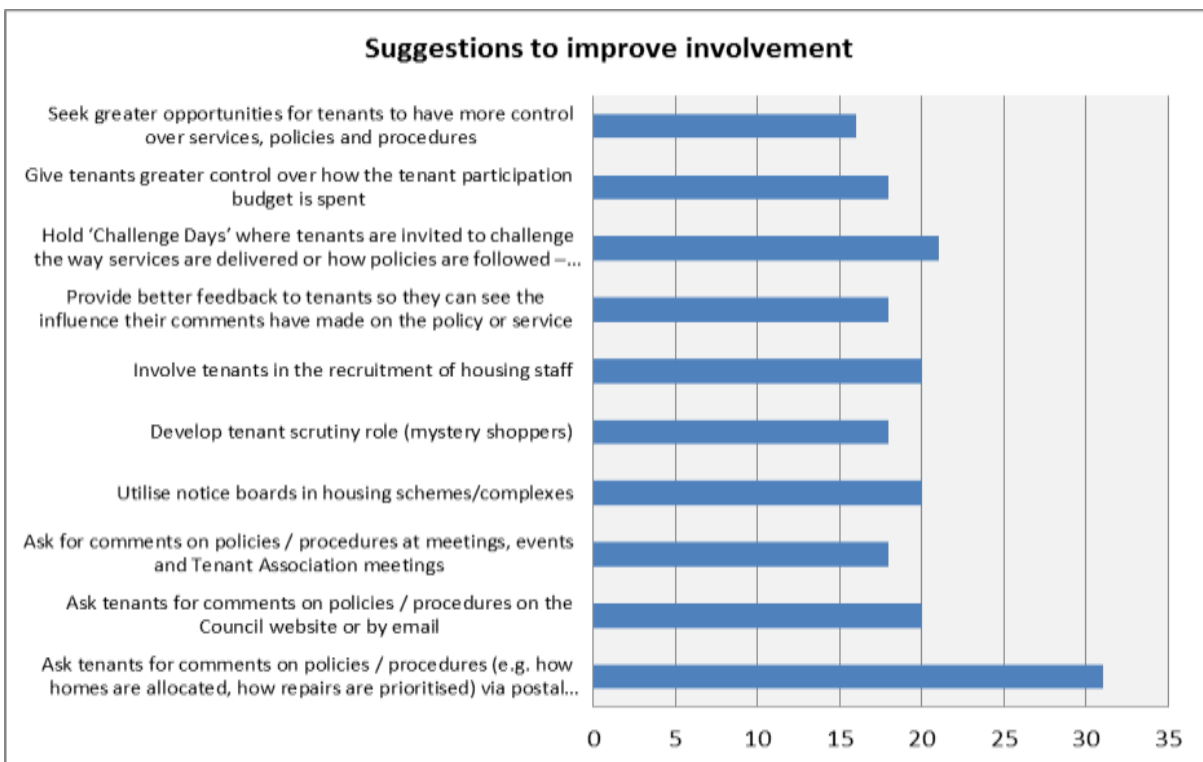
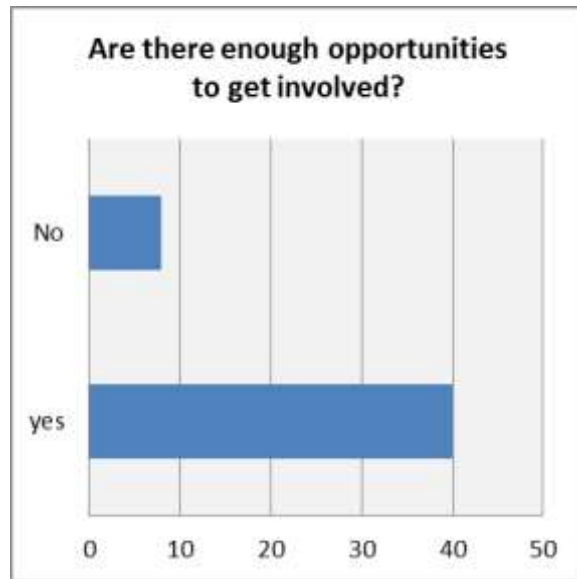
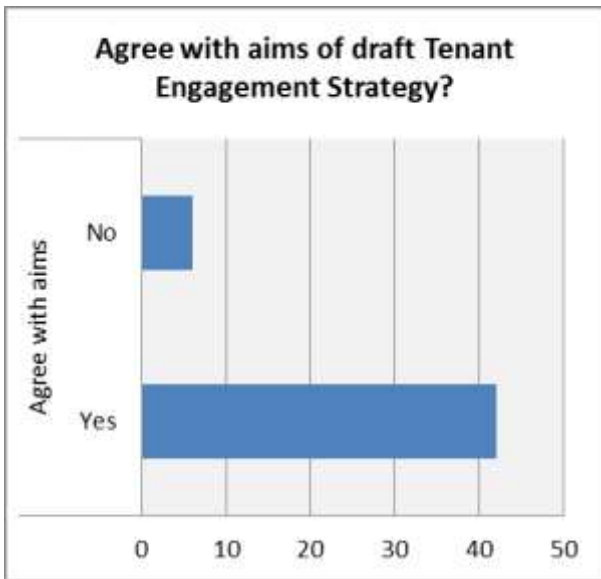
Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To agree the final Strategy document.
2. To ensure the agreed actions are completed within the required timescales.

Background

2. On 9th October 2017, Cabinet endorsed a draft Tenant Engagement Strategy subject to further consideration by the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee as well as a consultation exercise with Council tenants.
3. These actions have now been completed. The draft Strategy was considered by Scrutiny on 11th October 2017 and the public consultation exercise closed on the 22 February 2018
 - Resident consultation and priorities
4. A variety of techniques have been used to consult tenants and inform the priorities included in the Strategy. These include the large scale tenants' satisfaction survey (STAR survey) which asked specific questions about whether tenants feel their views are listened to and acted on. Over 1,300 tenants completed the survey and it is possible to break the results down into different demographic groups and different geographical areas - enabling us to get a detailed insight into the views of tenants across the Vale.

5. A specific tenant engagement questionnaire was completed by tenants attending the Festivale event held in August. Nearly 50 surveys were completed and useful feedback was received about the aims of the strategy, barriers to tenants getting involved and suggestions for activities and initiatives that would encourage more tenants to take part. A breakdown of the results is included in the Strategy.
6. A public consultation exercise with Council tenants in the Vale was carried out via the external web site and promoted via Social Media. The consultation web page received a number of 'hits' and a smaller number of surveys were completed. In addition, several Residents' Boards were consulted on the contents of the draft Strategy. There was widespread support for the key aims, with almost all tenants agreeing the key aims proposed and supporting many of the key areas for action.



- Monitoring and evaluation
7. Progress with implementing the Strategy will be measured via the completion of individual actions contained within the Operational Delivery Plan towards the back of the document. There will also six monthly monitoring reports to the Homes and Safe Communities Committee regarding the range of projects and initiatives taking place.

Relevant Issues and Options

8. The following comments were made at Scrutiny Committee:
9. A Member asked how the Council would be tackling the distinct high level of apathy amongst young people evidenced amongst the young people in her own local area.
10. The Head of Housing and Building Services advised that the Council currently operated a Community Investment Strategy which had been brought to the Committee previously; which included various training activities which had been provided for young people. For example, driving lessons which would in turn help to build the young person's employability and skill set. The officer also advised that the particular housing area that the Member referred to was under the control of the Newydd Housing Association and suggested that it may be of benefit to the Committee if the Association were invited to present on their current work. The Committee agreed that this would be a useful presentation to receive and requested that the recommendation be made.
11. A Member highlighted the fact that young people have a very different set of needs and interests and the Council therefore needed to be aware of these to have effective engagement with them. With this in mind, the Member asked officers whether they had been in contact with the Youth Forum and how the Council intended to start engaging with young people generally.
12. The Head of Housing and Building Services advised that Digital Inclusion courses had already been offered to young people and that the Housing and Building Services Department were getting involved with community investment events as part of the Community Investment Strategy. However, there needed to be further emphasis put on the use of social media to build an extra communications platform to engage with young people.
13. A Tenant Working Group representative provided the Committee with an example of engagement work currently undertaken with young people in her local area. A leaflet was distributed to homes by the Tenant Group which requested young people to feedback on the information that they wished to know and/or activities they wished to get involved in within their local area. From this, a "ground force" project was created and an information only Facebook page was set up for local area residents to subscribe to. The representative then updated the Committee on the fact that the young people involved wished to continue the project independently and had thoroughly enjoyed the experience.
14. Officers and Members congratulated the Tenant Working Group representative on her work and the success of the "ground force" project and also their hopes that other resident groups would take the success as a positive example for future engagement work.
15. Having considered the draft Strategy and all the outcomes and objectives contained therein the Committee summarised their comments for consideration.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

16. Significant financial support has been set aside to deliver the objectives in the Strategy. This includes provision of a £36,000 to support the activities of residents Boards and other tenant groups which represent the interests of Council tenants. A Revenue budget has also been made available to fund two Community Investment and Involvement Officer Posts to take the lead in community engagement and capacity building. Lastly, participatory budgets of £60,000 per annum have been set aside to fund smaller scale estate and environmental improvements identified by local residents and groups.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

17. Increasing tenant engagement will lead to better quality services, happier tenants and more sustainable estates where people want to live.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

18. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

19. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the report, however effective tenant engagement has been shown to help reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour on specific estates.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

20. Tenant Engagement will take into account the needs of tenants from a variety of backgrounds as well as people with protected characteristics.

Corporate/Service Objectives

21. This Strategy is consistent with the overarching vision within the new Corporate Plan, namely 'Strong Communities with a Bright Future' as well as several of the Well Being Outcomes, including 'An inclusive and Safe Vale', 'An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Vale', 'An Active and Healthy Vale'.
22. It is also consistent with many of the core objectives (which support the Well Being outcomes), including: reducing poverty and social exclusion; decent homes and safe communities; promoting regeneration; sustainable development and protecting the environment; and active and healthy lifestyles.

Policy Framework and Budget

23. This report is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

24. This report will affect all council tenants and therefore no individual ward member consultation has been undertaken.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

25. Homes and Safe Communities.

Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer

Nick Jones - Housing & Strategic Projects Team Leader.

Officers Consulted

Committee Reports
Operational Manager Finance

Responsible Officer:

Miles Punter - Director of Environment and Housing Services