

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Housing and Communities Committee

21 August 2019

Annual Update on Perth and Kinross Tenant and Resident Participation Strategy 2018-2021

Report by Executive Director (Housing and Environment) (Report No. 19/225)

This report asks Committee to note progress in implementing the Tenant and Resident Participation Strategy for Perth and Kinross, previously approved at Housing and Communities Committee on 24 January 2018.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Housing and Environment recognises the pivotal and essential role that tenants and residents must play in helping to shape the services we deliver. Working in partnership with tenants, residents and communities, we aim to design and deliver services through their eyes.
- 1.2 When working well, tenant and resident participation delivers clear benefits for tenants, staff and landlords. These benefits and improvements evolve over time, underpinned by a strong structure and a commitment and culture that embraces participation.
- 1.3 Our [Tenant and Resident Participation \(TRP\) Strategy 2018-2021](#) is the building block for many of our successes both locally and nationally. Most importantly the commitment and culture towards true tenant and resident participation is key to success.
- 1.4 Section 53 (1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a duty on local authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), to prepare a tenant participation strategy, which includes an assessment of resources required, and a statement of the resources to be made available. In addition the strategy should demonstrate how, as a landlord, the Council intends to communicate with, and listen to, tenants and residents.
- 1.5 Perth & Kinross Council's TRP Strategy 2018-21 was approved at Housing and Communities Committee on 24 January 2018 (Report No. 18/18 refers). For the first time the Strategy was developed and written by tenants, following recommendations from the Service User Review and Evaluation (SURE) Team's scrutiny of tenant participation activities.
- 1.6 Supported by an Independent Tenant Advisor, the SURE Team carried out a range of engagement activities, with the wider tenant body, to create the Strategy. Over 700 tenants participated in the consultation, together with housing staff and members of the Stronger Communities Team.

- 1.7 In order to shape the communities where people live, the SURE Team recommended that the Strategy included opportunities for other service users of the Council to be involved in participation, and for the addition of the word 'resident' within the overall Strategy. The review gave a clearer definition of tenant and resident participation: "The processes and structure by which all Perth and Kinross Council tenants and service users have the opportunity to influence policy setting and the nature of service delivery for council housing, and, be involved in estate, neighbourhood and community issues".
- 1.8 The SURE Team review set out the following TRP Standards:
- the landlord has an active and relevant tenant participation strategy
 - tenants are involved in decision making processes
 - the landlord provides good information to tenants
 - sufficient resources and support to enable effective tenant participation
 - staff have good awareness of tenant participation
 - effective tenant involvement structures, including the introduction of a Menu of Opportunities, that allow tenants to feel comfortable with their level of involvement.
 - the landlord is committed to promoting equal opportunities
 - the landlord works in partnership with tenants
 - the landlord has realistic timescales for tenant participation
 - ensure that tenants are effectively involved at different levels, and can influence the decision making process at strategic as well as local level.
- 1.9 Our vision within the Tenant and Resident Participation Strategy is:

"Supporting people to get involved in matters that are important to them and their neighbourhoods, building relationships with staff, and building bridges in communities"

2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 Since approval of the Strategy in January 2018, the TRP team have overseen the TRP Strategy Implementation Plan. The plan was revised following the SURE team review, to reflect their recommendations and to add specific themes.
- 2.2 The first annual progress report for 2018/19 is attached in Appendix 1. The TRP Strategy has the following four key outcomes:
- Deliver a Menu of Opportunities, reflecting local and personal circumstances, enabling all people to be involved effectively, and at a level they feel comfortable with.**
- 2.3 Our aim is to create an environment of participation that supports involvement from a wide range of tenants and residents. Encouraging tenants and residents to be involved, and influence decision making can be challenging due to the complexity of the services we deliver, time commitments and confidence.

2.4 In 2016 our tenant satisfaction results for “*opportunities for tenants to participate*” sat at 74.4%. Our latest tenant feedback places us as the top performing Local Authority in Scotland, with 99% satisfaction, against a Scottish Average of 83.8%.

2.5 During 2018/19, achievements included:

- delivery of 63 Estate Based Initiatives (EBI) projects
- establishing 3 short-life focus groups
- introduction of the TRP Monitoring Group recognising the recommendations from the SURE Team

Undertake an agreed programme of strategic consultation and scrutiny activities with people who use our services.

2.6 Our aim is to ensure that we provide opportunities and support for tenants and other customers, to scrutinise our services at a strategic level.

2.7 Our approach to tenant led scrutiny, particularly through the work undertaken by the SURE Team, is regarded as sector leading. This was endorsed in feedback from Education Scotland following the recent inspection of Community Learning and Development, as demonstrated by the following extract:

*“I have graded this Very Good, because there is a strong sense of Place, with representative’s knowledge of their communities being excellent and therefore they are able to represent their localities very well, in an inclusive way. The **SURE Team** demonstrated productive relationships with services and council staff, which in turn influenced and made real changes for policy and best practice. I am really impressed with the TRP Strategy”*

2.8 During 2018/19 achievements included:

- involving service users in the procurement and appointment of our new floating housing support contract
- SURE Team’s sixth scrutiny report and recommendations focussing on Tenement Management Scheme (TMS)
- the introduction of our Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Monitoring Group to scrutinise the use of monies from the HRA
- increasing the number of tenants participating in our rent setting priorities survey by 298%

Ensure all tenants, staff and all other people who use our services, will be given access to adequate levels of training and support, that will enable them to participate more effectively.

2.9 Our aim is to underpin our menu of opportunities for participation with a range of training and learning opportunities, for everyone involved in community engagement and TRP.

2.10 During 2018/19 our achievements included:

- 4 community representatives and 4 staff from TRP working towards an HNC in Working with Communities
- supporting 48 participants to become more digitally included through our Digital Inclusion Programme
- delivery of 2 bespoke Activate courses in effective participation in Perth and Crieff involving 22 participants
- enhancing our approach to partnership working with colleagues in Community Learning and Development

Continuously develop ways of improving communication and information sharing to meet the needs of all.

2.11 Participation can often be driven by the way we communicate. Our aim is to recognise that not one size fits all and offer a range of communication channels from face to face, telephone, e-mail and social media.

2.12 In 2016 our tenant satisfaction results for “keeping tenants informed about services and decision making” were 82.5%. Our latest tenant feedback is 96.8% against a Scottish average of 90.6%. This performance sees us a sector leading Local Authority in Scotland.

2.13 During 2018/19 our achievements included:

- increasing our social media platform by 26.2% on Facebook and by 16.9% on Twitter
- introducing a free texting service with 3,560 tenants receiving regular information about our services
- increasing our e-mail contact list by 258% to 853 tenants

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The TRP Strategy has enabled ongoing engagement with Registered Tenant Organisations, development of thematic Forums, an increase in the interested persons list membership, and further involvement in TRP from partners, agencies, communities and staff.

3.2 The SURE Team have noted:

“The year 1 Progress Report is comprehensive and shows the considerable progress made at the end of year 1. A wide ranging Menu of Opportunities is being delivered which allows tenants to have their say at three levels of: light touch, take an interest and get involved. This is enhanced by the use of on-line and social media technologies and digital skills training which are all helping to widen tenant and resident engagement.

The TRP Monitoring Group has been successfully set up and has focussed on extending involvement in the remoter rural areas. The short life Working Groups, and the Focus and Thematic Groups offer more joint working opportunities to combine staff and service user experience to solve problems.

This ensures that the Housing Service is responsive to tenants' needs and changing circumstances in addition to the continuing support for more in depth tenant-led service scrutiny.

In this way the TRP Service continues to be pioneering, forward looking and supportive of new ways to engage with local communities in the areas where the Housing Service operates."

- 3.3 The Strategy is being delivered through activities such as the Rent Restructure, satisfaction surveys, Estate Based Initiatives, the Tenant and Resident Participation and Housing Revenue Account monitoring groups; short-life consultations, locality-based working, the digital inclusion project, networking tenant events, forums and conferences. In addition, there are a range of communication methods, with participation through e-panels, website information, Facebook and Twitter. Training and support is ongoing, with tenants attending Tenant Participation Advisory Service and Tenant Information Service conferences and training sessions, Housing Regulator events, the in-house Activate and HNC courses, as well as training sessions held by the TRP team.
- 3.4 Significant progress has been achieved throughout 2018/19 in delivering the overarching aims of the Tenant and Resident Participation Strategy. Working collaboratively with tenants and residents, and in partnership with other key stakeholders, has been fundamental to our success. This will be further enhanced through the development of the emerging Perth and Kinross Offer.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) notes the progress made during 2018/19 towards achieving the outcomes set out within the TRP Strategy (Appendix 1)
 - (ii) request the Executive Director (Housing & Environment) to bring forward a further report in 12 months time.

Authors

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	YES
Corporate Plan	YES
Resource Implications	
Financial	YES
Workforce	N/A
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	N/A
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	YES
Strategic Environmental Assessment	YES
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	N/A
Legal and Governance	YES
Risk	N/A
Consultation	
Internal	YES
External	YES
Communication	
Communications Plan	YES

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The contents of this report supports all the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement, namely:

- i) Giving every child the best start in life
- ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The contents of this report support all the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities namely:

- i) Giving every child the best start in life
- ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 Head of Finance has been consulted on this report. The costs of the activities outlined were contained within the Tenant Participation budget of £100,655 for 2018/19.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Services that are the focus of this report provide positive outcomes through care, support and assistance to a range of clients.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.4 No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Legal and Governance

- 3.5 Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted and there are no direct legal implications in this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Heads of Service and senior managers from Housing and Environment and senior managers from Education and Children's Services have been consulted on the content of this report.

External

- 4.2 The development of the proposals and the preparation of the contents of this report has involved a range of people including members of Registered Tenant Organisations, thematic forums and those on the tenant participation interested persons list. They were actively involved in the TPAS Accreditation Process, Tenant Participation Forums and workshops to help review and shape the strategy especially in relation to creating the vision and priorities for the future development.
- 4.3 As part of the consultation process, the draft strategy was sent to other social registered landlords in the area for comments.
- 4.4 The Tenant Committee Report Panel noted and supported the contents of this paper. They stated *“This is an excellent report with many positive outcomes. Really pleased with the number of tenants participating in the rent priorities survey which has increased by 298%. This is a huge increase as a result of the variety of ways to respond which is great to see”*.

5. Communication

- 5.1 If the following committee approves the report, the Tenant and Resident Participation Annual Progress Report will be produced, distributed and be made available on-line.

3. APPENDICES

- 3.1 Appendix 1 in this report is the Tenant and Resident Participation Strategy Annual Progress Report