

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Housing and Health Committee****12 March 2014****Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-2017****Report by Executive Director (Housing and Community Care)****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the review of tenant participation structures and activities and to present the Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-17.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 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. The strategy must demonstrate how, as a landlord, the Council intends to communicate with, and listen to, tenants and residents.
- 1.2 The introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 requires Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) to report to the Scottish Regulator annually on the achievement of the Charter Outcomes.
- 1.3 The involvement of tenants and others are central to the achievement of all the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes. However, the Tenant Participation Strategy focuses on the achievement of Charter Outcome 3 Participation Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with. The outcome describes what landlords should achieve by meeting their statutory duties on tenant participation, covering how social landlords gather and take into account the views and priorities of their tenants; how they shape their services to reflect these views and how they help tenants and other customers to become more capable of involvement.
- 1.4 The Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2010-13 was approved by Housing and Health Committee on 3 February 2010 (Report 10/60). The Tenant Participation Strategy Monitoring and Implementation Group have been monitoring the implementation and impact of this Strategy and undertaken a range of review activities to develop a Tenant Participation Strategy for 2014-2017.

- 1.5 To review the progress of the former tenant participation strategy the Customer and Community Engagement Team undertook an external accreditation process through the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to examine the ways in which the tenant participation activities of the last three years, 2010-2013, measured against a series of standards and competencies.
- 1.6 The supporting evidence was reviewed by TPAS, who also interviewed a range of the Council's tenants, frontline staff and senior managers. TPAS prepared a feedback report (Appendix 1) with recommendations which was validated by an independent scrutiny panel (consisting of) of a tenant representative, a representative of another landlord and an independent expert from other areas of Scotland.
- 1.7 The independent scrutiny panel awarded the following levels to Perth and Kinross Council:

	The Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) Standard	Level Awarded
1.	The landlord has a tenant participation strategy	Very Good
2.	Tenants are involved in decision making processes	Good
3.	The landlord provides good information to tenants	Very Good
4.	There are sufficient resources and support to enable effective tenant participation	Very Good
5.	Staff have good awareness of tenant participation	Very Good
6.	There are effective tenant involvement structures	Very Good
7.	The landlord and tenants measure performance	Good/Very Good
8.	The landlord is committed to promoting equal opportunities	Very Good
9.	The landlord works in partnership with tenants	Very Good
10.	The landlord has realistic timescales for tenant participation	Good

- 1.8 TPAS concluded 'Perth and Kinross Council has developed an inclusive and representative approach to involving their tenants. It has developed a range of participation options that allow tenants to choose the type and level of involvement they are comfortable with. This ensures that tenants are effectively involved at different levels and can influence the decision making process at strategic as well as local level.'
- 1.9 Recommendations from this process, along with outcomes from the engagement with Registered Tenant Organisations, Thematic Forums, interested persons, partners and staff, have enabled the development of the Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-17 (Appendix2) .

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The vision for tenant participation developed in partnership with our tenants and other people who use our services 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’*.
- 2.2 The successes achieved over the lifetime of the last Tenant Participation Strategy has seen a shift in the approach in how we engage with our tenant and other people who use or services and we will continue to build on the positive relationships with Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) and our thematic forums to achieve this vision.
- 2.3 Some examples of outcomes of achieved by work undertaken with Registered Tenant Organisations and Thematic Forums during the lifetime of the previous Tenant Participation Strategy are:
- Tulloch Tenants’ and Residents’ Association actively engaged their community in the improvement of a disused bowling green in their neighbourhood. As a direct result of their involvement a new community organisation was formed, The North Perth Allotment Association, who have successfully gained £87,000 of funding to develop the site. The group has also secured a 15 year lease on the land and work is well underway, with all the plots being allocated, and with some planting taking place for this season.
 - Letham Tenants’ and Residents’ Association strongly support the community in Letham. They hold regular meetings where range of issues which affect the area are discussed and they have actively been involved in a range of activities to improve the local environment in Letham including litter picks and supporting the work of the Letham Climate Challenge Group in both the development of derelict land and running the local Swap Shop.
 - Blairgowrie and Rattray Tenants and Residents Association have taken the lead in their community to improve a local park, and were instrumental in the development of the award winning Loon Braes Parknership. The group have attracted over £32,000 worth of funding which has resulted in improvement works to the paths and the pond, holding Community Fun Days, supported the purchase of tools being used by volunteers and engaged the local community in litter picks and balsam bashing. They have actively been involved in the development of a Local Letting Plan for the new Old Mill Road Development and hold regular meetings with staff and the community to work on local issues that affect tenants.
 - The Homeless Voice Association has grown out of thematic engagement with people who have or are experiencing homelessness. They became a constituted group in March 2013 and work closely with staff from Homeless Services. They hold regular meetings, have developed an action plan and host the weekly Homeless Voice Drop- In session. They also make regular visits to other organisations such as Churches Action for The Homeless (CATH), Salvation Army and Anchor House to engage with people about their activities.

- **Us and the Housing** – work with tenants in Perth and Kinross who have a learning disability, The Us and Housing Group have delivered a tenant conference, created a DVD to raise awareness about disability harassment in communities and have recently become a constituted group.
- 2.4 In addition to these examples over the last three years, we have increased the number of opportunities for RTO members and people from our Interested Persons register to help shape and influence how we deliver services. They have been involved in developing our Scrutiny Framework, reviewing how we engage tenants in the annual rent setting process, raising awareness of issues concerning community safety, attendance at Tenant Participations Forums and local and national seminars.
- 2.5 To achieve all of the aspirations highlighted by tenants, staff, and all other people who use our services, the aims and strategic outcomes of this strategy are to:
- Develop a range of opportunities for people to get involved which reflect local circumstances and allow people to participate effectively.
 - Build and develop an agreed programme of scrutiny activities with people who use our services.
 - 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.
 - Continuously develop ways of improving communication and information sharing to meet the needs of all.
 - Regularly monitor and review this strategy to make sure it continues to be effective.
- 2.6 These aims and strategic outcomes will be supported by the current participation activity and structures which have evolved as a result of the work of the last Tenant Participation Strategy 2010-2013, as well as agreed new focus areas for development which include:
- Targeted engagement with young people.
 - Developing thematic forums for older tenants and gypsy travellers.
 - Developing a tenant ePanel.
 - Agreeing an annual programme of scrutiny with tenants and other people who use our services.
 - Deliver Resident Academies based on agreed learning needs.
 - Support the development and build the capacity of aspiring RTOs and thematic groups.
 - Develop tenant approved process for design of new information materials.
 - Test other uses of the texting service and explore the use of social media in Tenant Participation.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 This reports notes the process of review of the tenant participation strategy 2010-2013 and the outcome of external scrutiny of current tenant participation structures and activities. It presents the agreed vision, aims and strategic outcomes for the Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-17 and identifies the new focus areas for development through the three years of the strategy.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee approves the Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-17 as outlined in Appendix 2 and that it continues to receive annual progress reports on its implementation.

Author

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
John Walker	Executive Director Housing and Community Care	12 March 2014

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only, a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting Suzie Burt



Council Text Phone Number 01738 442573

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 and supported has been consulted on the proposals in this report. The costs of the activities outlined in this report will be contained within the Tenant Participation budget of £101,000 2014/15. This will be reviewed in subsequent years.

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.

This section should reflect that 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 range of clients.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

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

- 3.3 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted and there are no direct legal implications in this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Executive Director, Heads of Service and senior managers from Housing and Community Care and senior managers from Education and Children's Services and The Environment Service have been consulted on this contents 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 registered. 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.

As part of the consultation process the draft strategy was sent to other social registered landlords in the area for comments.

The Tenant Committee Report Panel noted and supported the contents of this paper. They considered the report and the strategy well written and easy to understand and were happy to see the work of tenants and staff celebrated in the report, and how they will work together in the future.

5. Communication

- 5.1 On Committee approval of this report, a short summary version of the Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-17, which will also include information on the range of involvement opportunities available to people, will be produced and distributed to every Council tenant house hold in Perth and Kinross, at homeless accommodation sites, area housing and advices offices and be made available on-line.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 in this report is executive summary of the TPAS Accreditation Feedback Report

Appendix 2 in this report is the Perth and Kinross Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-17.

Perth and Kinross Council



TPAS Accreditation Feedback Report Executive Summary

Date of Report: 9 December, 2013

Tenant Participation Advisory Service, TPAS
74 –78 Saltmarket
Glasgow G1 5LG
Telephone: 0141 552 3633
Fax: 0141 552 0073
Email: colin.cassie@tpasscotland.org.uk



Executive Summary

TPAS Accreditation Feedback Report
Perth and Kinross Council

Introduction

Perth and Kinross Council has been successful in its submission for TPAS accreditation. This executive summary outlines the findings of the TPAS accreditation feedback report. It provides an overview of tenant participation at Perth and Kinross Council, in relation to the 10 TPAS accreditation standards. Although the summary can be read as a stand-alone overview, full assessment of how Perth and Kinross Council demonstrated the individual standards and competencies required to achieve TPAS accreditation are outlined in the relevant sections of the full report.

Tenant Participation Strategy

Perth and Kinross Council has a robust and effective Tenant Participation Strategy. The strategy document reflects recognised good practice and fulfils statutory requirements. The necessary work has also been completed to ensure the reviewed strategy will facilitate preparation for tenant involvement in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. There is clear evidence that the strategy is working effectively in practice. However, there are opportunities to improve the strategy document by making it more engaging and accessible for tenants in terms of visual appearance and content. In addition, the Council has recently developed a range of new structures meaning the strategy document must be updated. This will be addressed in the forthcoming review.

Information

Good quality information is provided to tenants. Information is accessible, relevant and provided in plain English. It is provided through a range of different methods. The Council makes good use of traditional methods such as newsletters and less traditional methods such as texting and social networking. Excellent provision of information and reporting of scrutiny activities is provided on the website. The approach is inclusive and innovative. However, there are opportunities to improve the way the Council involves tenants in producing information. A more systematic approach to providing feedback following consultation is also desirable.

Tenant Participation Structures

There are effective tenant participation structures in place. The structures that have been developed allow tenants to get involved at a level they are comfortable with. They also allow the Council to engage in a more representative and inclusive way. However, understanding how the wide range of structures fit together, as well as their role and remit, may be difficult for all tenants to understand. Careful consideration should be given to how structures are publicised and explained in the reviewed tenant participation strategy document.

Decision Making

The Council involves tenants effectively in decision making processes and there are examples of where tenant involvement has improved services. However, feedback following consultation and tenant involvement does not always explain how tenants' views have been incorporated, creating a perceived lack of influence. There may be some confusion over the role, remit and limits of certain structures and the Council should manage tenant expectations in this respect.

Working in Partnership with Tenants

At Perth and Kinross Council, staff and tenants work in partnership to ensure tenant participation is effective and meaningful. This is most evident in joint working to develop scrutiny structures and scrutinise service delivery.

Tenant Scrutiny

The Council has developed a comprehensive approach to involving tenants in the scrutiny of performance. Structures in place and those being developed will allow tenants to set standards, measure and report performance. The preparation for involving tenants in measuring and reporting Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes is robust and will involve tenants inclusively and representatively.

Resources

Perth and Kinross Council provides a good level of resources for tenant participation. An assessment of the resources required to involve tenants effectively has taken place and is outlined in the strategy. Tenants were involved in this process.

Staff Support

There appears to be a good level of staff support for tenant participation. Housing staff that TPAS met with are aware of statutory tenant participation duties. They are also broadly aware of the Council's principle engagement structures, techniques and objectives. Specialist community engagement staff ensures the strategy is planned, monitored and implemented effectively. Bedding-in newly developed structures and further developing the culture of tenant scrutiny will require significant staff time.

Timescales

The Council plans its strategic tenant participation activities and is mindful of timescales. This is crucial to effective tenant participation. However, there is opportunity to improve planning of annual activities and to provide consultation information and feedback to tenants more quickly.

Equal Opportunities

Regular equalities monitoring has provided accurate insight, helping to develop appropriate engagement activities. The Council has developed specific structures to engage with traditionally underrepresented groups and now engages more inclusively and representatively. However, the Council could engage more effectively with younger tenants and should consider how this would best be achieved.

Conclusions

Perth and Kinross Council demonstrates excellent strategic planning and delivery of tenant participation activities. It successfully achieves all the standards and competencies required for TPAS accreditation. The Council's success is built on a partnership approach with tenants and residents. The techniques and structures, developed with full tenant involvement, allow the Council to engage inclusively and representatively. Although there are key areas where the Council can improve the way it involves tenants, there is awareness and recognition of these and a willingness to work with tenants and residents to address them.



Perth and Kinross Council

A Strategy for Tenant Participation 2014-17

Getting Involved

Draft V9 17/02/2014

Foreword

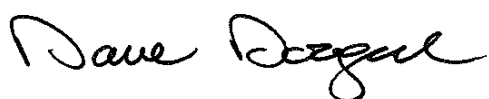
Convener of Housing and Health Committee

Providing affordable housing to rent is one of the ways in which we can help meet the basic needs of the residents of Perth and Kinross, but being a responsible social landlord is about so much more than simply providing people with a warm and dry place to live. This Tenant Participation Strategy sets out how staff will work together with tenants to help make all of the services the Council provides as a landlord effective and beneficial for the people who use them.

Reading through this strategy I realise the extent to which tenant participation has changed over the past few years. Perth and Kinross Council has not been content to rely upon the combination of public meetings, letters and magazines to encourage participation. Instead tenants can now get involved by text message and email, by being part of themed groups which bring together people with shared interests and experience, rather than simply those of a shared geography, and by taking part in learning to help inspect and scrutinise the services their landlord provides.

The breadth of opportunities on offer is really heartening, as is the commitment of tenants who use their spare time to attend meetings, give feedback and participate in the activities of the Council to make services better for everyone who lives in their area.

I look forward to hearing how the outcomes highlighted in this Strategy are achieved and to find out about the other innovations which will no doubt emerge as tenants and staff continue to work together and share their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the whole community.



Councillor Dave Doogan



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Appendix 1 – The Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

Appendices (available on request)

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- Appendix 3 – Area office structure
- Appendix 4 – Housing and Community Care contacts
- Appendix 5 – List of tenants and residents groups
- Appendix 6 – Information on customer complaints procedure
- Appendix 7 – List of additional sources of assistance

Section 1

1.1 Introduction

The Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2010 give tenants legal rights in relation to tenant participation and places a duty on Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to consult with tenants and service users on a range of housing issues. This Tenant Participation Strategy has been produced by Perth and Kinross Council in co-operation with tenants, tenants' groups, and other key stakeholders. It reflects Perth and Kinross Council's commitment to developing effective tenant, customer and community engagement. By doing so, it also takes into account the introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and the achievement of its outcomes to ensure that tenants and other customers of housing services are at the heart of what we do. This builds on the principles and standards that inform and support best practice in tenant participation and we will continue to work towards them.

The purpose of this Tenant Participation Strategy is to set out how the Council will work with tenants and other customers to achieve this outcome.

1.2 How Can You Have Your Say on the Tenant Participation Strategy

You can write with your comments to:

Suzie Burt
Team Leader Customer and Community Engagement Team
Housing and Community Care
Perth and Kinross Council
Pullar House
35 Kinnoull Street
Perth
PH2 0PA

By email to: TenantParticipation@pkc.gov.uk
Or by telephone on 01738 476771

1.3 Is the strategy available in other formats?

The strategy is available in Braille, MOON, large print, on audio CD and in some community languages, upon request. Please use the contact details above for further information or copies.

1.4 Strategy Appendices

The appendices of this strategy include guidance notes on registration of tenant groups, the area housing office structure and contacts for Housing and Community Care, a list of tenants and residents groups in Perth and Kinross, information on customer complaints procedures and a list of additional sources of assistance and the Tenant Satisfaction Survey. Appendices are available upon request from the contact details above.

1.5 Legislative and National Policy Context

- **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001**

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. The strategy must demonstrate how, as a landlord, the Council intends to communicate and listen to tenants and residents, the proposals to be consulted upon and the ways the council will do this.

- **Housing (Scotland) Act 2010**

The introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter through the Housing (Scotland) Act requires Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) to report to the Scottish Regulator annually on the achievement of the Charter Outcomes. The Tenant Participation Strategy will support this across a number of outcomes, especially Equalities, Communication and Participation.

- **The Scottish Social Housing Charter**

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter came into effect on 1 April 2012. The Charter sets standards and outcomes that tenants and other customers who use their services can expect from social landlords. There are 16 Social Housing Charter Outcomes (See Appendix1) and a range of indicators which social landlords are required to report back on to the Scottish Housing Regulator. This will help tenants and others to understand their landlord's performance, enabling them to hold their landlord to account.

The involvement of tenants and others are central to the achievement of all the Charter Outcomes but this strategy focuses on the achievement of Charter Outcome 3 Participation: social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with. The outcome describes what landlords should achieve by meeting their statutory duties on tenant participation. It covers how social landlords gather and take into account the views and priorities of their tenants, how they shape their services to reflect these views and how they help tenants and other customers to become more capable of involvement.

1.6 Local Policy Context and Links to other Strategies and Plans

This Statement complements, and is consistent with, other Perth and Kinross Council Plans and Strategies including:

- Perth and Kinross Council Community Plan /SOA 2013-2023
- Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2013-2018
- Perth and Kinross Local Housing Strategy
- Perth and Kinross Homelessness Strategy
- Perth and Kinross Neighbourhood Strategy
- Housing and Community Care's Business Management and Improvement Plans
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) Delivery Plan

The Perth and Kinross Community Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan have overlapping key themes. These are:

- A safe, secure and welcoming environment.
- Healthy, caring communities.
- A prosperous, sustainable and inclusive economy.
- Educated, responsible and informed citizens.
- Confident, active and inclusive communities.

This Tenant Participation Strategy, therefore, plays an important and integral role in the Council's priorities. The objectives and actions identified in this Strategy support from the Council's priorities, particularly around improving housing, social inclusion, community regeneration, improving health and wellbeing, community safety and stimulating the economy.

1.7 Our Principles of Participation

Our principles reflect those of the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Participation, 'Partners in Participation'. These include:

- Create a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, elected members and housing officers at all levels, working together towards improving housing conditions and housing services.
- Ensure tenant participation is a continuous process.
- Enable a joint process of agenda setting and information sharing.
- Enable processes of decision making that are open, clear and accountable.
- Recognise that tenant representatives should be given enough time to consider the issues properly and work out a common view in advance of meeting Council representatives.
- Recognise the independence of tenants' organisations.
- Good working relationships evolve gradually and are flexible to adapt to local circumstances.

- Recognise that tenants' organisations require adequate resources for organisation, training and support.
- Tailor tenant participation in remote areas to suit the particular needs of tenants in these communities.
- Provide all tenants with an equal opportunity to contribute, removing barriers to effective participation

1.8 Equalities

There is a range of legislation and policy developments which require public bodies to deliver their services in a way which promotes equality and is not discriminatory. The planning and delivery of good quality housing; appropriate information; advice; and care and support services in Perth and Kinross embrace the principle of equal opportunities.

Perth and Kinross Council's Housing and Community Care Services has a dedicated equalities action plan which sets out a detailed list of actions which for each of seven equality strands aims to:

- Tackle discrimination and harassment directed against minority groups.
- Promote equality of opportunities for minority groups.
- Promote positive attitudes towards minority groups.
- Encourage participation in public life by minority groups.
- Endeavour to meet the needs of our service users who may be a member of a minority group.

The Tenant Participation Strategy, as part of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), will undergo an equality impact assessment to review the effects of the Strategy. The LHS plays a significant role in promoting the equalities agenda and demonstrates that significant investment is being undertaken in housing for people with particular needs (e.g. older people), as well as addressing the needs of a range of individuals with community care needs whether they are part of planned discharge or remodelling programmes or currently live in unsuitable housing in the community.

Perth and Kinross Council Housing and Community Care Service's Equalities Action Plan aims to ensure that all services, including this Strategy and related actions, take positive steps towards the equalities agenda. This means that the Council will strive to encourage equal opportunities and diversity, responding to the different needs and service requirements of people regardless of gender, race, colour, disability, age, nationality, marital status, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender re-assignment.

In order to help remove barriers from tenants participating, we can provide help in the following ways:

- Travel expenses and transport provision
- Carers' allowance to help towards paying someone else to provide care while they attend a tenant participation activity
- Information in alternative formats or languages
- Accessible venues for events
- A hearing loop system at meetings and events for people who use hearing aids
- A variety of meeting times

1.9 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a legal requirement on local authorities to assess public policies, plans and strategies, showing their potential impact on the environment. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) ensures that environmental issues are considered by decision makers alongside social and economic issues.

After consideration of the analysis provided to the SEA Gateway, the Council has received confirmation from the SEA authorities that the Local Housing Strategy, of which the Tenant Participation Strategy is part of, is not likely to have significant environmental effects. Therefore the Council has made a 'screening determination' and submitted this to the Scottish Government. This has been publicised including a notice being placed on the Council website.

Section 2

2.1 Our Vision and aims

The vision for tenant participation developed in partnership with our tenants and other people who use our services 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.’

To achieve all of the aspirations highlighted by tenants, staff, and all other people who use our services, the aims and strategic outcomes of this strategy are to:

1. Develop a range of opportunities for people to get involved, which reflect local circumstances and allow people to participate effectively.
2. Build and develop an agreed programme of scrutiny activities with people who use our services.
3. 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.
4. Continuously develop ways of improving communication and information sharing to meet the needs of all.
5. Regularly monitor and review this strategy to ensure it continues to be effective.

These aims and strategic outcomes will be supported by the current participation activity and structures which have evolved as a result of the work of the last Tenant Participation Strategy.

2.2 How we developed this strategy

To review the progress of the former tenant participation strategy the Customer and Community Engagement Team undertook an external accreditation process through the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to examine how our tenant participation activities over the last three years, 2010-2013, measured against a series of standards and competencies.

A key component of the accreditation process was the completion of a self-assessment framework that demonstrates how we meet the standards and competencies. The self-assessment and supporting evidence has been reviewed by TPAS, who also interviewed a range of our tenants, frontline staff and senior managers. TPAS then prepared a feedback report with recommendations which was then validated by an independent scrutiny panel made up of a tenant representative, a representative of another landlord and an independent expert. This panel had the final decision of the awarding of levels and the TPAS accreditation, which Perth and Kinross Council has achieved.

2.3 TPAS Assessment Scores for Perth and Kinross Council

The award levels applied for each of the standards are as follows:

Level 6: Excellent - Outstanding, sector leading

Level 5: Very good - *Major strengths*

Level 4: Good - *Important strengths with areas for improvement*

Level 3: Above average- *Strengths outweigh weaknesses*

Level 2: Average- *Important weaknesses*

Level 1: Unsatisfactory - Major weaknesses

The TPAS Standard		Level Awarded	
1	The landlord has a tenant participation strategy	5	Very Good
2	Tenants are involved in decision making processes	4	Good
3	The landlord provides good information to tenants	5	Very Good
4	There are sufficient resources and support to enable effective tenant participation	5	Very Good
5	Staff have good awareness of tenant participation	5	Very Good
6	There are effective tenant involvement structures	5	Very Good
7	The landlord and tenants measure performance	4 / 5	Good / Very Good
8	The landlord is committed to promoting equal opportunities	5	Very Good
9	The landlord works in partnership with tenants	5	Very Good
10	The landlord has realistic timescales for tenant participation	4	Good

2.4 TPAS Accreditation Conclusions

TPAS reported the following conclusions in the Accreditation Report:

‘Perth and Kinross Council has developed an inclusive and representative approach to involving their tenants. It has developed a range of participation options that allow tenants to choose the type and level of involvement they are comfortable with. This ensures that tenants are effectively involved at different levels and can influence the decision making process at strategic as well as local level.’

‘A key strength of Perth and Kinross Council is their commitment to working in partnership with tenants, ensuring effective service delivery and tenant scrutiny. This is apparent in development of the Resident Academy, Quality Panel, TP Forum and Service User Review and Evaluation Team (SURE).’

‘The Council has given careful thought regarding how best to address the decline of involvement in traditional tenant group structures that have taken place throughout the country. In partnership with its tenants, it has developed a range of accessible options for inclusive community engagement.’

2.5 High Level TPAS Recommendations

To further improve tenant participation in the future, TPAS and the Independent Scrutiny Panel put forward a range of practical recommendations which will be taken forward and implemented in the Action Plan which supports this strategy. A full version of the TPAS Accreditation Report is available on request (Appendix 2).

2.6 Staff Involvement

A range of front-line staff were consulted in a focus-group format facilitated by TPAS and we have listened to feedback from staff working in staff tenant working groups. They told us that they have had positive experiences of working with tenants in local matters and in the development of the scrutiny framework, but that work still needs to be done to widen tenant participation activities to make sure opportunities are available for lots of different kinds of people. They have suggested priorities for this strategy should include:

- Further investment in learning opportunities for people
- Explore the use of social media and the continued use of texting
- Increase opportunities for people to be involved about decisions that affect their neighbourhoods
- Continue to develop and implement our scrutiny activities

2.7 Tenant Involvement

As well as undertaking the TPAS Accreditation, tenants and other people who use our services have been involved in supporting the development of this strategy. Through the Tenant Participation Forum, a special tenant workshop, and focus groups with TPAS, they have discussed the priorities we need to work towards together and their vision for tenant participation. Priorities for tenant participation focused very much on:

- The need to offer a range of different opportunities so people can get involved in a variety of ways, especially younger people.
- To continue to develop and implement our scrutiny activities.
- To implement the proposals of the Tenant Engagement in Annual Rent setting Review Group.
- To communicate with tenants in lots of different ways.
- Let people know how their involvement has made a difference and is of value.
- To support the development of people who get involved through learning.
- Help people improve their local neighbourhoods and communities.
- To continue to provide support and resources for tenant participation.
- Building relationships with senior managers and elected members.

Section 3

3.1 Current structures and activities

Outcomes achieved by the last tenant participation strategy include: We continued to support our local tenant and resident groups across Perth and Kinross, helping them to work with Neighbourhood Services and with other community based services such as the Safer Communities Team, the Police and Fire and Rescue Services. They are playing an active role in supporting the implementation of the Neighbourhood Services Strategy, working on range of projects important to their neighbourhood and local people.

3.2 Registered Tenant Organisations

We reviewed the support for our Registered Tenant Organisations and the introduction of a new tenant participation grant process. All our registered and non-registered tenant organisations can apply equally for grants up to £1,000 per year to achieve the aims of their constitutions. Currently the following registered and non-registered tenant organisations are active across Perth and Kinross.

- ❖ Alyth Area Tenants' and Residents' Association
- ❖ Blairgowrie and Rattray Tenants' and Residents' Association
- ❖ Letham Residents' Association*
- ❖ Perth and Kinross Tenants' and Residents' Federation*
- ❖ Stanley Tenants' and Residents' Association*
- ❖ Tulloch Tenants' and Residents' Association*
- ❖ Perth Homeless Voice Association
- ❖ Us and the Housing

** indicates those on the Council list of Registered Tenant Organisations at time of publication*

3.3 Thematic Groups

We have seen the progression of two of our thematic forums, homelessness and learning disability, flourish. Both of these groups have now become formalised constituted organisations and are now actively involved in working our services, contributing to improvements and influencing how services are delivered.

- ❖ **The Homeless Voice Group** – works with people who are currently homeless or living in temporary accommodation to engage with services and contribute to decision making processes. As a result, the Perth Homeless Voice Association, a constituted and soon-to-be Registered Tenants' Organisation, have developed and taken a leading role in representing people who have or are experiencing homelessness.

- ❖ **Us and the Housing** – works with tenants in Perth and Kinross who have a learning disability. The Us and Housing group have delivered a tenant conference, created a DVD to raise awareness about disability harassment in communities and have recently become a constituted group.
- ❖ **Older People's Forum** - reflecting the increasing number of tenants who are growing older in Perth and Kinross, this thematic forum is currently being developed based on best practiced identified in Scotland and are in the process of agreeing priorities and a format for engaging with older tenants.

3.4 Learning Opportunities

The development of Resident Academies has increased learning opportunities for people who want to get involved.

Accredited Learning – working with Just Housing, we have delivered the first accredited learning to tenants in Scotland on Resident Inspection, Community Research and Resident Scrutiny.

- ❖ Understanding Housing – we agree with tenants and staff a programme of informal learning about Housing Services which included sessions on Allocations, Homeless Services, Neighbourhood Services, Repairs and Improvements and Finance.
- ❖ TPAS also delivered a programme of learning based on consultation with Perth and Kinross Tenants' and Residents' Federation on Committee Skills, Tenant Participation, Creating Newsletters, Complaint Handling, Performance Management and Negotiation skills.
- ❖ Tenancy Academy – we developed and piloted a learning programme for new tenants to support tenancy sustainment. This has been evaluated and a new learning resource is currently being developed and will be delivered in 2014.

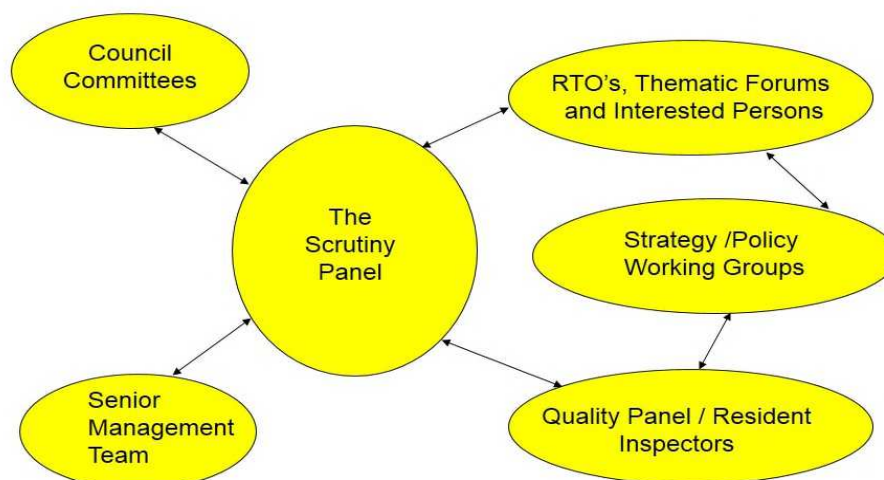
3.5 Working Groups

We have worked with tenants and other people who use our services to improve our services through a range of working groups and the development of mechanisms to enable involvement, they include:

- ❖ The Quality Panel – graduates from our Residents' Academies have developed this body to work with housing staff to provide a tenant perspective of services through inspections and quality checks of agreed areas.
- ❖ The Tenant Participation Strategy Monitoring Group – meeting on a quarterly basis, this group monitors the implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy Action Plan and advises on improvements.

- ❖ The Tenant Participation Forum – this meeting takes place every 2 months and is open to all tenant and resident association representatives and registered interested persons. It is the mechanism for people and housing staff to discuss emerging issues, engage in wider consultation on the activities of staff working groups, share information and agree together what action we will undertake.
- ❖ The Safer Communities Working Group – involves people and staff supporting the implementation of the Neighbourhood Strategy. Together ideas for action have been identified, including a Bogus Caller Initiative for tenants, raising awareness of Gypsy Traveller communities and exploring best practice in tackling dog fouling.
- ❖ Tenant Committee Report Panel – invites 2 representative from each of our tenant and resident groups and people who have been involved in working groups that are presenting housing reports to the Council's Housing and Health Committee, to read and be consulted over the contents with report authors, Housing Service Managers and the Head of Housing. Comments from this panel are included into the reports prior to them being sent out to Councillors and 2 representatives from this group are invited to sit at Housing and Health Committee during the approval process.
- ❖ Strategic Tenant Engagement in Annual Rent Setting Review Group – this group has been set up as result of listening to concerns from our tenants about levels of engagement in the annual rent setting process. A proposal has been developed to change how we engage with tenants and actions will be included in the new Tenant Participation Strategy Action Plan.
- ❖ The Scrutiny Approach Steering Group and Implementation Group – this critical working group is responsible for the development and implementation of the Council's scrutiny approach. Facilitated by the Tenants Information Service, this joint working group has identified and helped to create our Scrutiny Framework, which has enabled us to demonstrate how all our tenant participation activities 'join up' to work together.
- ❖ The group are developing an independent scrutiny panel, the SURE (Service User Review and Evaluation) Team who will have the responsibility of working with our services through a programme of scrutiny which will be identified and agreed by tenants and people who use our services, monitor the performance of Housing Services and the effectiveness of policies and strategies and validate the Council's Annual Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter before submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Our Scrutiny Framework **How we will scrutinise our services**



3.6 Information and Communication

We have continued to distribute a range of publications, including Tenant Participation Updates and the 'On the House' magazine, however we have also:

- Introduced a free texting services and now have 3,640 tenant mobile numbers who receive regular information. They can reply to us through this system free of charge and we are currently exploring new ways of using this to support proactive information-sharing in our neighbourhoods.
- We now have over 200 tenants who want to receive their information through emails compared with 15 in 2010.
- To reflect the changes in ways people want to receive communication from us, we have started to develop a Tenant e-Panel using emails and texting and will continue this initiative.

Section 4

4.1 Resources and support for tenant participation

Perth and Kinross Council recognises the need to adequately fund tenant participation and is committed to doing so.

The budget for 2014/15 is £102,000, which equates to around £13.83 per tenant household. It will be used to offer and deliver:

- Opportunities and funding to attend joint development events and local and national conferences.
- Access to training events and information including joint training with housing staff.
- Support from council staff, including attendance at meetings, where appropriate.
- Guidance and support to all groups to enable them to become RTOs.
- Information and consultation 'road shows' events.
- Information on Perth and Kinross Council (www.pkc.gov.uk) website.
- Specific consultation events with local groups about local issues.
- Local public meetings.
- Twice yearly 'On the House' newsletter and regular Tenant Participation Updates.
- Free text service for tenants.

4.2 Staffing

Staff support for tenant participation is based in the Housing and Community Care's Customer and Community Engagement Team and includes a Tenant and Community Engagement Worker, a Tenant and Community Engagement Assistant (Homeless) and an Engagement and Communication Assistant. They work and liaise with a range of staff from across Housing Services to make sure tenants and other people who use our services are actively involved in service developments and their local neighbourhood.

Section 5

5.1 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Effective monitoring and evaluation is essential if we are to assess the success of this strategy to make sure we achieve the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes. The Tenant Participation Strategy Monitoring Group is responsible for overseeing the ongoing implementation and monitoring of the strategy. The group considers the strategy's progress and ensures effective reporting.

5.2 Action Plan

The action planning framework of this strategy provides the basis against the progress which will be measured. The strategy will be subject to on-going monitoring and evaluation to:

- Determine whether the priorities and actions set out in the strategy are being effectively progressed.
- Determine whether the actions are achieving the outcomes anticipated.
- Consider factors that are a barrier to achieving anticipated outcomes.
- Identify if there is any need to review actions, indicators and targets.

5.3 Strategy Review

Each year, a review of the progress on the implementation of the strategy will be reported to;

- Housing and Health Committee
- Housing and Community Care Senior Management Team
- The Tenants' Committee Report Panel
- The Service User Review and Evaluation Team
- The Tenant Participation Forum

We will also celebrate and publish annual tenant participation achievements through:

- 'On the House' magazine
- Digital screens in local area housing offices
- The Council's Website
- The 'Celebration of Achievement' event

Section 6

High Level Action Plan

(Please see Appendix 1 for description of the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes).

Strategic Outcome 1: Develop a range of opportunities for people to get involved, which reflect local circumstances and allow people to participate effectively.

Action Ref No	Milestone/Target	Timescale	Charter Outcomes
1.1	Develop Neighbourhood engagement and activities to support consultation and local involvement	Planned annually from April 2014	1,2,3,5,16
1.2	Thematic forums for younger tenants, older tenants and gypsy/traveller community	March 2016	1,2,3,6,12
1.3	Develop Tenant e-Panel	March 2015	1,2,3
1.4	Develop joint working with other council services and Registered Social Landlords to support neighbourhood engagement	When appropriate and agreed	1,2,3,6,13, 14, 15
1.5	Produce and promote a range of involvement activities	March 2015	

Strategic Outcome 2: Build and develop an agreed programme of scrutiny activities with people who use our services.

Action Ref No	Milestone/Target	Timescale	Charter Outcomes
2.1	Implement the Scrutiny Implementation Action Plan	Completed by September 2014	All Charter Outcomes
2.2	Agree an annual programme of scrutiny with tenants and other people who use our services	March 2015	All Charter Outcomes
2.3	Review the role of the Quality Panel	August 2014	1,2, 3
2.4	Host regular Tenant Participation Forums	Up to 5 per year	All Charter Outcomes
2.5	Implement the Strategic Tenant Engagement in Annual Rent Setting Action Plan	From April 2014	1,2,3,13 14, 15
2.6	Support the administration of existing and new working groups and tenant panels.	From April 2014	1,2, 3

Strategic Outcome 3: Ensure all tenants; other people who use our services and staff will be given access to adequate levels of training and support that will enable them to participate more effectively.

Action Ref No	Milestone/Target	Timescale	Charter Outcomes
3.1	Deliver Resident Academies based on agreed learning needs	Annually from April 2014	1,2, 3
3.2	Deliver staff training to support agreed learning needs of staff and partners	Annually from April 2014	1,2, 3
3.3	Fund local RTOs and Thematic Groups	Annually from April 2014	1,2,3, 6
3.4	Support attendance at national conferences, seminars and consultation events	Annually from April 2014	All Charter Outcomes
3.5	Support the development and build the capacity of aspiring RTOs and thematic groups	When required	1,2,3, 6

Strategic Outcome 4: Continuously develop ways of improving communication and information sharing to meet the needs of all.

Action Ref No	Milestone/Target	Timescale	Charter Outcomes
4.1	Provide relevant and accessible information on services and standards through the Tenant Participation Communication Plan	Agreed by June 2014	1,2,3
4.2	Test other uses of the texting service	From April 2014	All Charter Outcomes
4.3	Develop a tenant approved process for design of new information materials	March 2015	1,2,3
4.4	Explore the use of social media in Tenant Participation	Ongoing from April 2014	All Charter Outcomes

Strategic Outcome 5: Regularly monitor and review this strategy to ensure it continues to be effective.

Action Ref No	Milestone/Target	Timescale	Charter Outcomes
5.1	Review the role of the Joint Tenant Participation Strategy Monitoring and implement any agreed changes	May 2014	1,2,3
5.2	Present an Annual Review and Progress Report Housing and Health Committee	March 2015 March 2016 March 2017	1,2,3
5.3	Maintain a register of tenants groups.	Monitored quarterly from April 2014	1,2,3
5.4	Maintain a register of interested persons	Monitored quarterly from April 2014	1,2,3

The Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes:

Charter Outcome 1:	Equalities
<p>Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services. This outcome describes what social landlords, by complying with equalities legislation, should achieve for all tenants and other customers regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. It includes landlords' responsibility for finding ways of understanding the needs of different customers and delivering services that recognise and meet these needs.</p>	
Charter Outcome 2:	Communication
<p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides. This outcome covers all aspects of landlords' communication with tenants and other customers. It is not just about how clearly and effectively a landlord gives information to those who want it. It also covers making it easy for tenants and other customers to make complaints and provide feedback on services, using that information to improve services and performance, and letting people know what they have done in response to complaints and feedback. It does not require landlords to provide legally protected, personal or commercial information.</p>	
Charter Outcome 3:	Participation
<p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.</p>	
Charter Outcome 4:	Housing Quality and Maintenance, Scottish Housing Quality Standard
<p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.</p>	
Charter Outcome 5:	Housing Quality and Maintenance, Repairs maintenance and improvements
<p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.</p>	

Charter Outcome 6:	Neighbourhood and Community, Estate Management and Anti -Social Behaviour
Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that: tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.	
Charter Outcomes 7, 8, 9:	Access to housing and support, housing options
<p>Social landlords work together to ensure that: people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.</p> <p>Social landlords work together to ensure that tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.</p> <p>Social landlords ensure that: people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.</p>	
Charter Outcome 10:	Access to social housing
Social landlords ensure that: people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.	
Charter Outcome 11:	Tenancy Sustainment
Social landlords ensure that: tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.	
Charter Outcome 12:	Homeless People
Local councils perform their duties on homelessness so that: homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.	
Charter Outcome 13:	Value from rents and service charges, Value For Money
Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that: tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.	

Charter Outcomes 14, 15: Rents and service charges
<p>Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that: a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and other customers can afford them</p> <p>Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that: tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including any details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.</p>
Charter Outcome 16: Other customers
<p>Local councils and social landlords with responsibility for managing sites for Gypsies/Travellers should manage the sites so that: sites are well maintained and managed.</p>