

# Executive Committee

No specific Ward

9 December 2009

## TENANT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2009 - 2012

(Report of the Head of Housing and Community Services)

### 1. Summary of Proposals

The Committee is asked to consider the introduction of the first Redditch Borough Council Tenant Involvement Strategy 2009 – 2012.

This Strategy reflects Redditch Borough Council's commitment to developing effective consultation and involvement methods. By working in partnership with our tenants we aim to deliver quality services that are value for money and reflect the needs of our tenants.

### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

1) **The Tenant Involvement Strategy and Action plan are implemented.**

### 3. Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Sustainability Implications

#### Financial

3.1 Within existing budgets.

#### Legal

3.2 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything (whether or not involving expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental, to the discharge of any of its functions.

#### Policy

3.3 In line with the existing Redditch Borough Council compact of 2006 (to be reviewed as part of the action plan).

3.4 The Corporate Plan was adopted by Council on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009. This strategy will contribute to the Well Managed Organisation key

objective WM9 to develop and introduce a Communications and Engagement Strategy.

### Risk

- 3.5 The exclusion of social tenants to have a say in how council services are delivered would not meet public policy, corporate or service objectives.
- 3.6 The outcome of the tenant's survey has highlighted dissatisfaction with tenant involvement and the risk is not addressing what has been identified.
- 3.7 Poor outcomes from future inspections carried out by the Tenant Services Authority that will focus specifically on tenant involvement.

### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.8 Engagement with our tenants is central to sustainable development. Redditch Borough Council Housing Services has an important part to play in enabling involvement in decision-making, and ensuring that involvement becomes embedded in services.

### Report

#### 4. Background

- 4.1 Tenant Participation has been themed throughout housing services since the mid 1990's in the formation of tenant groups and the Borough Tenants Panel the umbrella group over all local groups.
- 4.2 In 2008 the Head of Housing and Community Services reviewed housing services looking at areas for improvement. It was recognised that the implementation of the Housing and Regeneration Bill emphasised that Tenant participation needed to become more embedded in the day to day tenancy management services. Taking this into consideration the Management structure was revised and teams were developed to focus on improving housing services by involving tenants.
- 4.3 A Tenant Involvement Strategy focus group was set up in September 2009 made up of tenants and Redditch Borough Council Officers to develop a strategy and action plan in partnership.
- 4.4 Redditch Borough Council Housing Services has made a commitment to involving tenants in the decision making process. Good quality tenant involvement is integral to delivering improvements in housing management and services for tenants.

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The Strategy aims to help Council tenants to play an active role and influence decisions about the management of their homes.

### 5. **Key Issues**

- 5.1 Tenant involvement is considered to be a central element of good service delivery in housing.
- 5.2 A shift in public policy:
- a) Strong and Prosperous Communities.
  - b) Cave review.
  - c) Housing and Regeneration bill.
  - d) Duty to involve.
- 5.3 Results from the tenants status survey produced in 2009 show satisfaction levels for keeping tenants informed and taking account of tenant's views has fallen since 2006.
- 5.4 There are strong links between tenant involvement and the performance of local authorities:
- a) NI 3 – level of civic participation in the local area.
  - b) NI 4 – percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their local area.
- 5.5 In partnership with tenants a tenant involvement strategy and Action plan to increase involvement methods and opportunities has been produced (Appendix 1).

### 6. **Other Implications**

- |                  |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|
| Asset Management | - | None identified.  |
| Community Safety | - | Improved tenant involvement will assist the Council and its partners to develop actions to meet the requirements of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended. |
| Human Resources  | - | None identified.  |
| Social Exclusion | - | Strengthening the way in which the Council involves tenants will have a positive impact on social exclusion.  |

### 7. Lessons Learnt

- 7.1 Through consultation tenant involvement has been identified as key in establishing service user needs and will enable Officers to meet Corporate and Housing Service priorities.

### 8. Background Papers

Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities; Statutory Guidance, Communities and Local Government 2008.

### 9. Consultation

- 9.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers.

- 9.2 Other Consultees were:

- a) Tenant Involvement Strategy Forum.
- b) Elected Members - Housing Advisory Panel.
- c) Borough Tenant Panel Members.
- d) The Redditch Community Forum.

### 10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Jayne Bough (Housing Services Manager), who can be contacted on extension 3131 (e-mail: [jayne.bough@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.bough@redditchbc.gov.uk)) for more information.

### 11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Tenant Involvement Strategy and Tenant Involvement Action Plan.