

Report for: Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel

Title: Housing Services Resident Engagement Annual Review for 2023/24

Report authorised by: Jahedur Rahman, Director of Housing Services

Lead Officer: Reda Khelladi, Community and Resident Engagement Manager
Neehara Wijeyesekera, Assistant Director for Housing Management

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** For information.

1. Recommendations

That the report be noted.

2. Describe the issue under consideration.

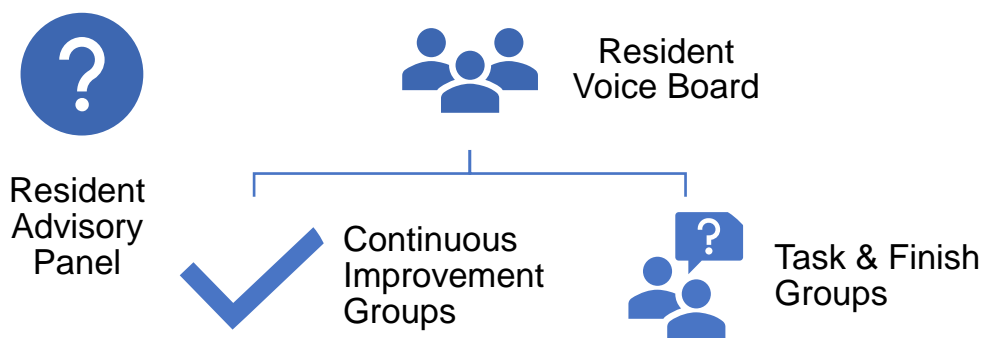
- 2.1 This report sets out a summary of the Resident Engagement Annual Review that covers the financial year 2023-24. The report also provides some background on resident engagement, why it is necessary, and high level outcomes.
- 2.2 A copy of the Resident Engagement Annual Review is provided in Appendix A which will provide the panel with more in depth information and data.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Resident Engagement Strategy was adopted by cabinet in July 2022 with 6 clear deliverables:
- Amplify the voice of residents.
 - Develop a Training Academy for residents.
 - Evolve resident-led scrutiny to hold the leadership and managers to account.
 - Make best use of community spaces, achieved by us investing in the right facilities in the right locations so facilities are accessible to all our communities.
 - Review the role of engagement team to ensure they are recognised, and roles are revised in order to lead and support resident engagement.

- Use customer data to understand their needs and expectations and tailor our services accordingly.
- 3.2 In April 2023, Cabinet approved a Housing Improvement Plan, following the Council bringing the management of the Housing Service back in-house. The plan set out a number of key objectives and actions for improving service for tenants and leaseholders, with the aim to increase satisfaction.
- 3.3 For the Community and Resident Engagement service, this included a series of 17 actions that would support the aims of the Housing Improvement Plan. Objectives relevant to this report included:
- Regular reporting in impact assessment.
 - Amended governance arrangements as part of compliance.
 - Produce a clear and concise customer consultation strategy.
 - Council protocols reviewed to accommodate resident-led scrutiny feedback.
- 3.4 In addition to the Housing Improvement Plan, the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 was introduced, allowing the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to take action against social landlords before people are at risk and holds landlords to account with regular inspections.
- 3.5 The regulator's proactive role is supported by new consumer standards and an inspection regime, of which there are four key areas:
- Safety and Quality
 - Tenancy
 - Neighbourhood and Community
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
- 3.6 Beneath these standards there are more specific requirements, of which some relate to how we engage with residents and the impact of their involvement on services. Under the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard these are:
- Registered providers must take tenant's views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered.
 - Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
 - Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivery landlord services.
- 3.7 These requirements mean that we must give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise our services as a landlord and show how we have taken resident views into account to improve our services, information and communication.

- 3.8 Whilst the actions for Community and Resident Engagement under the Housing Improvement Plan are complete, the Regulator requires the service to continually review progress and change.
- 3.9 In October 2023, the Community and Resident Engagement service in Housing services introduced the newly established governance engagement structure which included a new recruitment process.
- 3.10 This recruitment process achieved a total of 60 recruits. Of these 60, 63% were newly involved in our resident engagement structures, with only 37% having been involved previously.
- 3.11 In terms of the demographic data of our governance involved residents, the below provides a high level summary:
- 75% females and 25% males
 - 73% BAME and 27% white
 - 83% of recruits were tenants and 17% leaseholders
 - 12% had a declared disability
 - 28% were resident association members, with 72% being non-members
 - 38% were 55 to 62 year olds, 25% were 45 to 54 year olds, 20% were 34 to 44 year olds, and 17% were 65 or over.
- 3.12 The governance structure in place consists of a series of Continuous Improvement Groups (CIGs) and Task and Finish Groups, which feed into the Resident Voice Board. In addition there is the Resident Advisory Panel (RAP) who provide scrutiny on specific functions and services. A diagram of this is below:



- 3.13 The CIGs and Task and Finish Groups are service specific. Through them, residents work directly with heads of service on improvements and their implementation. They are chaired by members of the Resident Voice Board and focus on improving customer experience through principles of co-production. Task and Finish groups are usually finite, working on specific initiatives or projects, where CIGs are ongoing and cover services more generally. The current list of groups are:
- Repairs
 - Resident Engagement

- Supported Housing
- Tenancy
- Leasehold
- Estate Parking Management Scheme
- Editorial Communications

4. Summary of Outcomes

- 4.1 Throughout all forms of engagement, there have been a multitude of outcomes which have impacted our services and residents positively.
- 4.2 It is important to note that these outcomes are only possible due to the dedication shown by our residents, where they have contributed 386 working days of their own time to help shape services with us.
- 4.3 This has led to significant increases in satisfaction with engagement and communication, with an 18% improvement in 'Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter' to 66% for 2023/24 from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). In addition, from the annual STAR survey we have seen a 7% increase in 'Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them' to 44% for 2023/24.

Resident Voice Board Outcomes

- 4.4 The Resident Voice Board (RVB) is a resident body that directly influences strategy, policy and processes, where co-production is an integral part of development. In total, the RVB has co-produced 15 policies, 3 strategies, and 1 process which is on average more than one a month.
- 4.5 The RVB have also influences the organisational culture to be more customer focused, with all Heads of Service having attended and presented at RVB, with direct feedback provided on their services.
- 4.6 Seven members of RVB achieved their Chartered Institute of Housing Level 1 qualification, in addition to completing seven training courses from Strategic Thinking and Participatory Budgeting to Value for Money and Scrutiny.
- 4.7 In addition to the above, below are some other achievements of the RVB:
- Commented and challenged performance of housing services quarterly.
 - Addressed housing staff at the annual conference and leadership forum.
 - Took part in the selection of three senior staff in the Council.
 - Review the Resident Engagement budget and strategy with six new deliverables.
 - Set up a procurement panel for contractor selection.

- Contributed to the VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) re-commissioning.
- Reviewed the Housing Improvement Plan and Inspection outcomes.
- Selected the independent mentor for the Resident Advisory Panel (RAP).
- Co-produced Social Value ideas for contractors.
- Contributed to the service review carried out by the RAP.
- Developed an action plan for the TSMs.

Resident Advisory Panel Outcomes

- 4.8 The RAP completed the first resident led deep dive review of Estate Cleaning and have scoped and planned their second deep dive review into the repairs customer journey.
- 4.9 As part of their review, the RAP have independently run satisfaction surveys, run focus groups with staff and residents, reviewed documents and shadowed staff, presenting their findings to Placemaking and Housing Board with all 21 recommendations included into the Service Improvement plan.
- 4.10 Four members of RAP have completed their Chartered Institute of Housing Level 1 qualification, with 7 courses also completed from Performance Management and Social Housing Act requirements to Conflict Management and Relationship Building.

Continuous Improvement Group and Task and Finish Outcomes

- 4.11 There have been a number of impacts across the CIG and T&F groups, impacting a range of functions across the whole of Housing Services. The CIG and T&F groups have:
- Co-designed the new repairs handbook
 - Researched best practice in engagement and co-produced the first draft of the engagement strategy.
 - Reviewed and re-wrote the Engagement Code of Conduct in consultation with Resident Associations.
 - Reviewed and updated the Resident Expenses Policy.
 - Analysed and advised on Void Management.
 - Reviewed the repairs raising process for leaseholders.
 - Co-produced the Disrepair policy and Responsive Repair Policy.
 - Designed and facilitated coffee morning in sheltered housing to gather feedback on the service to be included in final recommendations of a service review.
 - Started the co-design of the Tenancy Strategy.
 - Co-designed the new Leasehold Service Charge booklet.
 - Co-designed the Damp and Mould Policy.
 - Reviewed and commented on Repairs Key Performance Indicators monthly.

- Recommended implementation of call back protocol.
- Shaped HomesZone content.
- Co-designed the consultation for the Estate Parking Management Scheme.
- Reviewed and updated the Residents Association Recognition and Funding policy.
- Co-produced the new Supported Housing Welcome Pack.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Some of the challenges initially faced was around trust from residents, accessing seldom heard communities, managing expectations, strengthening relationships, and working with community and voluntary organisations to build capacity for representation. However, since the engagement structure is truly starting to embed in how we operate as a landlord and with residents influencing our approach to address the challenges, we are starting to see the increase in satisfaction as outlined earlier in this report.
- 5.2 The next phase of the engagement journey is to measure the impact of the changes made for residents for 2024/25 in their neighbourhoods through:
- Annual impact of resident engagement evaluation report
 - STAR survey
 - Engaged Resident Survey
 - Targeted communications
- 5.3 We are also launching the new Resident Engagement Strategy for 2025 to 2028 with 6 deliverables that were co-produced with residents. The Strategy is scheduled to go to Cabinet in September for final approval before it is launched to residents. The strategy builds on the previous one as well as strongly linking to the Haringey Deal and the Cabinet approved participation framework.

6. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

Not required.

7. Procurement

Not required.

8. Head of Legal & Governance

Not required.

9. Equality

The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

The Regulator's new Consumer Standards, particularly the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard are likely to have a positive impact on Haringey council tenants as there is a requirement for landlords to 'understand the diverse needs of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs' and 'assess whether all tenants have fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services. Additionally, the standard requires that landlords must ensure that their services are accessible.

10. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Resident Engagement Annual Review 2023-24.

11. Background papers - none