

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 20 September 2022

Report Title

Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Tenant Engagement Framework has been refreshed in line with the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper following consultation with our tenants and key stakeholders.

The Framework recognises the key issues affecting tenant engagement in Rotherham, demonstrates alignment with other key strategies and plans, and sets out how the council will engage tenants in housing services.

This report provides a summary of the achievements from the Tenant Engagement Framework 2019-22 and an overview of the draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25.

Recommendations

1. That IPSC provides feedback on the Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25.
2. That a progress report for the Tenant Engagement Framework is presented to IPSC after 12 months.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25
Appendix 2 Initial Equality Screening (Part A)
Appendix 3 Equality Analysis Form (Part B)
Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Tenant Engagement Framework 2019-22
[tenant-engagement-framework \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](https://rotherham.gov.uk/tenant-engagement-framework)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
None.

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

1. Background

- 1.1 The Tenant Engagement Framework 2019-22 expanded opportunities for tenants to make a positive difference to our services through a flexible menu of options for involvement. This included the implementation of Ward Housing Hubs and new digital methods which were accelerated through the pandemic.
- 1.2 The framework sets out how tenants can get involved in housing services at a level and in a way which suits them. This includes informal, low-level engagement or high-level involvement through attendance at the Housing Involvement Panel and Tenants Scrutiny Panel meetings.
- 1.3 The Council has a contract in place with Rother Fed (local tenant federation) who are successfully recruiting and empowering tenants and Tenants and Residents Associations (TARA's) through the provision of tools, resources, and support to enable them to make a difference to housing services and their neighbourhoods.
- 1.4 There has been a number of changes locally and nationally since the last framework was published. This includes the COVID-19 pandemic, Social Housing Bill, Social Housing White Paper and TPAS Engagement Standards.
- 1.5 Tenant Engagement has evolved over the last 3 years not depending solely on traditional face to face engagement. Digital opportunities including the implementation of Ward Housing Hubs and meetings via Microsoft Teams were implemented during the pandemic to enable tenants to continue to engage with the housing service and to give more flexibility in how they want to put their views forward.
- 1.6 The Tenant Engagement Governance Structure and menu of options (learning from the pandemic) has been reviewed with our tenants to ensure it is robust, future proofed and fit for purpose to meet our local/national challenges and opportunities in the future.
- 1.7 The Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25 has been developed to meet the local and national key challenges and learning from the pandemic.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The key achievements from the Tenant Engagement Framework (2019-22) are detailed below:
 - In 2022, the Council was 'Exemplar Accredited' by Tpas, the national tenant engagement organisation. Tpas promote, support and champion tenant involvement and empowerment in social housing across England. Exemplar status is awarded to organisations who have received the Tpas PRO accreditation three times and have consistently demonstrated their exemplar approach to tenant

engagement through a rigorous assessment process. Rotherham Council is the third Housing Provider in the country to achieve exemplar status.

- 25 Ward Housing Hubs were implemented across the borough in April 2021 enabling a diverse range of tenants to become involved and add value to Neighbourhood and ward-based working.
- The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is supported and facilitated by Rother Fed on behalf of the Council. They have completed four reviews in the past three years including Anti-Social Behaviour, Aids and Adaptations, Customer Satisfaction for Repairs and Maintenance and Communications. The outcomes from the reviews have helped to improve and develop services to meet customer needs.
- Rother Fed supported and empowered 75 TARA's and community groups during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure they had the right skills and equipment to offer support to vulnerable residents within their communities. The work undertaken by TARA's has helped to support delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods agenda.
- The Council and Rother Fed supported residents to get online and utilise technology during the pandemic so that they could continue to be involved in housing services.

2.2 Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25

2.2.1 Our vision is to put tenants at the heart of everything we do, ensuring that council tenancies and estates are sustainable to create vibrant communities in which people feel happy, safe, and proud.

2.2.2 We have developed five key outcomes in consultation with our tenants to enable us to achieve our vision and meet the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper:

- **Outcome One:** Putting our customers at the heart of everything we do
- **Outcome Two:** Delivering a range of options to give all our tenants an opportunity to get involved.
- **Outcome Three:** Supporting our tenants to get involved in their community, providing help to each other, and taking pride in their neighbourhood.
- **Outcome Four:** Enable tenants to scrutinise and challenge our performance by providing open, transparent, and accessible information
- **Outcome Five:** Ensuring the relationship with our tenants is built upon a culture of openness, understanding and mutual respect.

2.2.3 The framework is aligned with key local strategies such as the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and Council Plan contributing to empowering and supporting our tenants and residents to take an active role in their communities directly contributes towards the delivery of 'Every Neighbourhood Thriving' and 'A Cleaner, Greener and Local Environment':

An action plan has been developed within the Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25 setting out how the Council will deliver the 5 outcomes.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 IPSC are asked to provide feedback on the Draft Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Between March 2022 and August 2022, consultation was carried out with tenants, council staff and a wide range of partners and stakeholders. Evidence from the following was used to develop the framework:

- Housing Involvement Panel
- Strategic Housing Forum
- Rother Fed
- Consultation Session with Cabinet Member for Housing and Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion.

- 4.2 The feedback from the consultation exercises was used to develop the five outcomes and associated actions.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Assistant Director of Housing has overall accountability for delivering the Tenant Engagement Framework outcomes over a three-year period until 2025.
- 5.2 Progress will be discussed regularly at Rotherham Housing Involvement Panel and an annual report will be prepared for the Improving Places Select Commission.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications from the draft framework. The Tenant Engagement Framework will be delivered within existing resources and budget.
- 6.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in the report. However, any identified need to procure goods, services or works in relation to delivering against the Framework must be procured in line with the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) as well as ensuring social value commitments are secured.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no substantive legal issues arising from the content of this report other than as may be dealt with in the body of the report.

7.2 The Tenant Engagement Framework will enable the Council to meet the statutory and legal requirements arising from the Social Housing Bill and Social Housing White Paper.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resource implications specific to this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Relevant staff who engage with this group receive safeguarding training along with staff from Rother Fed who follow their own policies and procedures.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Please see attached Equality Analysis.

10.2 We will actively engage under-represented groups and use our customer data to ensure services are accessible and meet the diverse needs of our tenants and neighbourhoods by contributing to the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022-25 through the following:

1. Understanding, listening, and engaging across all communities
2. Delivering fair, inclusive, and accessible services
3. Empowering people to engage and challenge discrimination and to promote good community relations

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Please see attached Carbon Impact Assessment Report.

11.2 Through the Tenant Engagement Framework, we will contribute towards reducing carbon footprint and emissions through a flexible menu of options including hybrid working and accessing services online and being able to self-serve. This will help reduce the need for transport and waste. We will seek to empower tenants to maximise resources such as neighbourhood centres to make multiple use of buildings already in use. We also strive to bring empty properties back into use. Ward Housing Hub funding will continue to fund projects which make environmental improvements which are carbon friendly.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 The Council has a contract in place with Rother Fed (local tenant federation) to support with the delivery of the Tenant Engagement Framework. Performance management reports are submitted to the council on a monthly and annual basis to ensure contractual obligations are being met.

12.2 The Council will seek out best practice and consider how we can continually improve the way that we engage with social housing tenants. This will be achieved through attendance at TPAS, Sheffield City Region (Together with Tenants) and House mark meetings sharing good practice around tenant engagement.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The risk of failing to deliver the outcomes set out in the Draft Tenant Engagement Framework and action plan will be mitigated by ensuring the correct staff resources and processes are in place, and through regular and robust progress monitoring including reports to the Housing Involvement Panel and an annual report to the Improving Places Select Commission.

13.2 The risk of the Tenant Engagement Framework becoming out of date due to policy and context changes at the national and local level, is mitigated by refreshing the framework every three years.

Accountable Officer(s)

Paul Walsh, Acting Assistant Director of Housing
 Lynsey Skidmore, Acting Head of Housing and Estate Services
 Asim Munir, Tenant Involvement Coordinator

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	12/09/22
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion - Councillor Shepherd	12/09/22

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

