

The Charter of Principles - resident consultation and engagement programme

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cabinet on 22 July considered an update on the delivery of the commitment to deliver 11,000 new homes for social rent. The cabinet instructed the director of Housing to do the following:
- Put in place the necessary capacity to oversee further programme delivery;
 - Undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the overall performance of current Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets and report back the outcome of this analysis to cabinet in December 2014;
 - Bring a further report to cabinet in December 2014, setting out the proposed pipeline for the delivery of 1500 new council homes by 2018;
 - Establish a wholly owned and controlled council 'vehicle' to secure future funding capacity for the programme.
 - Initiate a consultation with residents on the draft "charter of principles" through the summer, reporting back to cabinet in October 2014. (Now amended to November cabinet meeting to extend the consultation period)
- 1.2 The charter of principles will establish a framework for the way in which the council and its partners will work with residents to bring about the delivery 11,000 new Council homes for social rent and the investment in and renewal of our existing homes. The principles are underpinned by Council values and fairer future principles.
- 1.3 The charter outlines the Council's commitments to residents across a number of key areas. These are:
- How the Council will work with residents on developing the principles for housing investment and renewal on estates.
 - How the Council will work with residents on development of new homes on their estate.
 - How the Council will involve residents in ensuring that the new homes are of high quality.
 - How the Council will give residents a say on how the new homes are managed
 - What we will do if residents are affected by redevelopment.
- 1.4 Consultation on the charter of principles will be the first stage in a programme of involvement and consultation about how the council will deliver its new homes and investment strategy for the next 30 years.
- 1.5 The second stage will take place in spring 2015 and will seek resident views about the principles of regeneration for the borough and will be coordinated with consultation on the Housing Strategy, Local Plan and Old Kent Road Area Action Plan.

- 1.6 The third and fourth stages will take place on area and estate basis and will look at the detail of investment in particular places and the appetite locally for greater resident involvement in the management of new homes. This will be ongoing and dependent on plans for development.
- 1.7 In addition residents will be asked to identify sites for new homes.
- 1.8 Work on the Housing Commission and the next steps identified above mark a new way of working with Southwark residents to shape the future of housing borough wide.

2.0 The Aims and Objectives of Community Engagement

- 2.1 Local people have told us what they want to see in how we engage with them in the future. We have listened to what they have to say and have tried to capture this in our vision ‘a new relationship with the community’.
- 2.2 Underpinning our proposed community consultation programme are five key consultation promises:
 - Universal
 - Impartial
 - Comprehensive
 - Timely
 - Cost effective
- 2.3 How we will meet these commitments in our consultation on the Charter of principles is set out below.

Table 1 Consultation about charter of principles	
1. Universal	<p>All stakeholders should have the opportunity to participate in the consultation process and to have their views taken into account.</p> <p>The stakeholders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residents in Southwark • In particular those residents who are living in homes owned by the council where most of the investment programme will take place. <p>The consultation will provide all residents the platform to express their views about how the Council will consult on the development of new homes, renewal of estates and investment in homes.</p>
2. Impartial	<p>The charter of principles has already been drafted and considered by cabinet. The proposed consultation seeks residents’ views across each of the areas the council is making a commitment as well as asking an open question to ensure that the final charter reflects residents concerns. The consultation will seek to receive feed back on the proposed charter, including agreement/disagreement with the principles and or suggestions for change to these.</p> <p>Broadly the questions we will ask are as follows:</p>

	<p>1. Have we missed out any areas that the Charter of principles should cover?</p> <p>2. The first set of commitments are to involve you in developing the overarching principles for housing investment working on an area by area basis, do you agree with these?</p> <p>3. The second set of commitments describes how we will work with you on the development of new homes on your estate. Do you agree with these?</p> <p>4. The third set of commitments describes how we will work with you in making sure new homes are delivered to a high standard. Do you agree with these?</p> <p>5. The fourth set of commitments the charter makes is to give you a say in how the new homes are managed. Do you agree with these?</p> <p>6. The fifth set of commitments are to involve you in ensuring the affordability of new homes, good design, the homes meet the needs of all, and bring improvements to your neighbourhood . Do you agree with these?</p> <p>8. The final set of commitments is to involve you in your housing options if you are affected by the redevelopment. Do you agree with these?</p> <p>9 Are there any other comments you would like to make?</p>
3. Comprehensive	<p>The proposed charter draws on commitments the council has already made and the experience the council has learnt through a range of activity in departments such as major works, community engagement, regeneration and planning. A summary of the proposed consultation programme is presented in section 4 of this report.</p>
4. Timely	<p>Following the Housing Commission consultation in 2013 the Council has been putting in place the mechanisms and developing the strategy to deliver the commitment made to deliver 11,000 homes.</p> <p>The council anticipates identifying potential sites by January 2014. There is need to be prepared to work with residents on the specifics in areas identified very shortly so the council is able to deliver its commitment to deliver 1,500 homes by 2018.</p> <p>The council is developing its Housing Strategy, Southwark Plan and Asset Management Strategy. It needs to be in a position to talk to residents about these issues together.</p> <p>The charter of principles will provide the framework for these conversations and needs to be agreed by cabinet by November 2014 so we are able to launch a borough wide conversation about principles of regeneration and delivery of new homes.</p> <p>The consultation will need to close by 13 October to report to Cabinet by the dates agreed.</p>
5. Cost	<p>The consultation will use web based tools to deliver universal</p>

effective	<p>consultation in the most cost effective way. Information will be sent to homeowners and tenants directly to ensure that it is comprehensive.</p> <p>Discussions will be held with tenant bodies, community councils and at other events during the time frame of the consultation.</p>
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3.0 Engagement Principles

3.1 The consultation process will follow the Code of Practice on Consultation issued by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. The BIS guidance outlines its consultation principles:

3.2 **Criterion 1: When to consult**
Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

The decision on the charter of principles will be taken at the November Cabinet. There will be opportunity for the opinions expressed by residents to have an impact on the final draft of the charter.

3.3 **Criterion 2: Duration of consultation exercises (BIS recommends 12 weeks)**

This consultation will last 8 weeks. The charter builds on the work that has been done over the last two years agreeing the principles for consultation, the Housing commission and experience gained in our work across the borough.

3.4 **Criterion 3: Clarity of scope and impact**
Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected benefit and costs of the proposals.

The draft charter will be circulated with the questionnaire so those who respond are clear about the proposal. The closing date and cabinet decision will also be clear on the documentation.

3.5 **Criterion 4: Accessibility of consultation exercises**
Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at those people the exercise is intended to reach.

This consultation will be both web and paper based ensuring that there is maximum opportunity for people to respond.

3.6 **Criterion 5: The burden of consultation**
Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

The web based form for consultation should ensure that participants are not over burdened.

3.7 **Criterion 6: Responsiveness of consultation exercises**

Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

The findings from the engagement programme will be reported to Cabinet in November 2014. A report will be published.

4.0 Consultation Methodology

Who will we consult

- 4.1 All residents living in the borough will have an opportunity to contribute to the conversation about the charter of principles. However the focus of this consultation will be those residents who live in homes that are owned or leased by the council.
- 4.2 **Housing based formal meetings:** There will be consultations with people who attend TRA meetings and other representative housing based meetings, such as Area Housing Forums, the Tenants Council, the Homeowners Council, and Futures Steering Board.
- 4.3 **Community Councils:** During September consultation will take place at each of the five Community Councils.
- 4.4 **Community Forums:** We will highlight the consultation and how to participate in the consultation in the e - news letter that is sent to all our networks.

How we plan to engage with residents

- 4.5 The main tool for communicating with residents will be through a mail shot in September rent statements and with our leaseholders either with a statement or through a separate mailing.
- 4.6 We will use posters and leaflets in libraries and our resource centres to advertise online consultation.
- 4.7 We will contact TRAs through the chairs and secretaries.
- 4.8 We will consult with FSB, Tenant Council, Homeowners Council and Area Housing Forums in September.
- 4.9 SGTO will support the consultation by inviting members to participate and we will approach LAS2000 to offer the same support.
- 4.10 The council has a twitter account and a facebook page these will be used to raise awareness of the consultation, create interest and have conversations. The council will use discussion groups and on-line forums, such as the SE1 Forum and the SE5 Forum to gather community views. This has proved to be an effective way of gathering views.

- 4.11 The consultation will be largely web based with an article on the Cabinet update and the charter of principles web pages with the relevant documents and questionnaire posted.
- 4.12 In addition to feed back from the key forums the target is 150 responses to the charter consultation. This is a consultation about how we will consult and it is probable that unlike the original Housing Commission and the conversations in the next stage, we will be unlikely to generate a large volume of participants.

Key messages

Throughout the campaign and in our printed and social media pieces the following messages should be promoted and used to explain the consultation

4.13 Engagement

- We have learnt the lessons from past engagement and consultation and following the success of the housing commission we want to continue to work closely with our communities.
- We will deliver sound engagement with the community and involvement by residents is the bedrock upon which the investment programme will be progressed.
- Our engagement will be universal, impartial, comprehensive, timely and cost-effective.
- As well as working closely with our TRAs we will use a range of tools to encourage those who do not normally give us their views to have their say.
- This consultation on the charter of principles is the beginning of our conversation with residents about the future of housing in Southwark.

4.14 New Homes

- The council has reaffirmed its commitment to deliver 11,000 council homes for social rent over the next 30 years.
- Residents want to see results now and we have already planned the delivery of an additional 212 homes for social rent (are these all council?).
- By 2018 we will have started to build 1,500 council homes.
- Building of new homes will be self financing this will mean that we will build additional homes for private sale to cross subsidise the council and affordable homes.
- We will need to develop a vehicle that will allow us to borrow additional funds

4.15 Asset Management

- Our investment in existing homes, renewal of our estates and delivery of additional homes will be managed and developed together to ensure value for money.
- Our decisions on investment in existing homes will be based on the benefit the investment brings to the lifespan of our homes and need for future investment, alongside issues such as well being, local community and local services.
- We will adopt different approaches area by area so our solutions meet the needs on each of our estates.
- Our investment programme will do more than meet the demand for more and better homes but will also look at how, through our investment choices, we can bring additional benefit to our communities.

5.0 Resources structure

Table 2.

Role	Function
Futures Steering Board	A board of residents (tenants and homeowners in council property) appointed to take a quality assurance role in the consultation process ensuring that it reaches the stakeholders.
Resident Friend	An independent organisation appointed to provide impartial guidance to the Futures Steering Board and quality assurance of the consultation process documents and outputs.
Community Engagement team	Responsible for implementing all community engagement (including attending Housing forums, and community councils)
Communications	Creating consultation webpage and responsible for managing all social media (including Twitter and Facebook accounts). Responsible for maximising participation through a proactive communications campaign and facilitating the mail outs.
Programme manager	Responsible for the development and management of following aspects of the engagement programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plan and co-ordination of engagement activity • Drafting report to Cabinet and other stakeholders
Project Costs	
Mail out to Homeowners	TBC
Printed materials	TBC

6.0 Consultation Timetable

	Task	Deadline	1 Aug	8 Aug	15 Aug	22 Aug	29 Aug	5 Sept	Sept	Oct	Nov
	1. Governance										
1.1	Cabinet agreed consultation on charter	22 July									
1.2	FSB meets	30 July									
1.3	Agree consultation Plan/ materials	8 August									
1.4	Launch Consultation	15 August									
1.5	Project Board	27 August									
1.6	Consultation Ends	13 Oct									
1.7	Cabinet draft report on outcomes of consultation	27 Oct									
	2. Communication & Raising Awareness										
2.1	Website	15 August									
2.2	Email to TRAS	15 August									
2.3	Article for SGTO and LAS2000 bulletins	22 August									
2.4	Report to Tenants Council and Home Owners Council	22 August									
2.5	Community e news	End Aug									
2.6	Distribution info to libraries and resource centres	End Aug									
2.7	Mail out to Tenants	1 Sept									
2.8	Mail to Homeowners	TBC									
	3. Wider Engagement Programme										
3.1	Community councils	Sept									
3.2	AHF and Councils	Sept									