

Item No.	Classification: OPEN	Date: 13 th September 2004	Meeting Name: Tenant Council
Report title:		Tenant's Halls Review Draft Terms of Reference	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All Wards	
From:		The Strategic Director of Housing	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Tenant Council receives the report and makes any comments it deems appropriate on the Tenant's Halls Review Draft Terms of Reference.
2. That Tenant Council endorse the Project Board's decision to send the draft Terms of Reference for the review to all Secretaries of T&RAs for comment.
3. That Tenant Council refers this report for information to Neighbourhood Forums.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. On 7th July 2003 Tenant Council agreed to elect six tenants representatives to a Tenant's Halls Working Party. At this meeting the Strategic Director of Housing informed Tenant Council that the Tenant's Halls Review would not start until sufficient resources within the Housing Department had been identified.
5. At the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on 9th February 2004, it was determined that the review would not commence for another six months due to the number of outstanding reviews that would impact on Tenant's Halls. Members requested that officers provide information on tenant's halls and their facilities.
6. On the 22nd March 2004, the Strategic Director of Housing informed Tenant Council that the Corporate Best Value Team would project manage the Tenant's Halls Review.
7. On the 11th May 2004 the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee received a report entitled "Review of Tenants Halls" containing the information sought at the 9th February 2004 Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee meeting and resolved:
 - a) That the draft Terms of Reference be noted;
 - b) That the officers convene a meeting of the Project Board, including elected tenants representatives, before the end of May 2004;
 - c) That the Project Board would be responsible for deciding whether the draft Terms of Reference should go to Neighbourhood Forums for comment.
8. The first meeting of the Best Value Review of Tenant's Halls Project Board took place on 27th May 2004. At this meeting the draft Terms of Reference was discussed and it was decided that the draft should be sent to the Secretary of each T&RA in the borough for comment.

9. Appendix A of this report contains the Tenant's Halls Review Draft Terms of Reference.

Report Author: Harry Marshall, Divisional Housing Manager

Lead Officer: Chris Brown, Head of Housing Management

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Minutes of the Tenant's Halls Review Project Board Meetings.	East House, Town Hall Complex	Mike Carroll 0207 525 0784

Draft

Best Value Review of Tenant's Halls
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TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Purpose

To undertake a Best Value Review of the Management and Usage of Tenants Halls.

Background

Southwark Council has approximately one hundred Tenants meeting rooms. The overall budget is x. They are managed and used by Tenants and Residents Associations and a range of community organisations for specific activities such as weddings and nurseries. Ten of these premises have bar licenses and a number are limited in size for use as meeting rooms and serve no other recreational use.

Buildings are principally owned by the Housing department and have an asset value of £XXXX. They are made available to tenants and residents through a mixture of leases and licenses for peppercorn rents. While there are a variety of licences, there is no standard form of licence between tenants and the council. In some instances the licences and lease agreements have been lost so the legal relationship between the Council and users is unknown. From available information there is considerable variation in the use of these facilities with some facilities in great demand whilst others are under used. Many of the T&RA's do not have access to their own hall but share with others due to the historical development of individual estates and evolution of different T&RA's.

The funding for these facilities comes from the Housing Revenue Account. This means in theory that the 46,000 tenants and 10,000 leaseholders and their families collectively own the halls.

Objectives

a) The overall aim is to produce options for the provision of tenant and leaseholder meeting room facilities for the future. The review will seek to clarify the key question of why we have tenants halls. This will be based on an assessment of:

- The needs of Tenants, Leaseholders and residents as a whole.
- The effectiveness of current management arrangements.
- The effectiveness of 'Tenants Compacts' in securing broader access by the community to facilities, particularly traditionally under represented groups.
- The most effective use of the resources available and the contribution made to achieving the council's wider strategic objectives relating to youth, reducing crime and improving health and education.
- How many of the buildings are DDA compliant to meet the October 2004 legislative requirements.
- We will consider the current levels and types of halls and the access to the community by seeking the views of users and non-users.
- We will consider the current cost effectiveness of the available assets.
- The standards of the facilities and future liabilities.

- (b) We will examine the degree of under usage, lack of provision and over provision of facilities. We will examine the principles and rationale behind the current rent setting and leasing arrangements, particularly:
- the service and management information behind decisions;
 - the rationale behind the varying levels of rent setting across the facilities
 - the health and safety implications of managing tenants facilities.
- (c) We will identify and evaluate new governance arrangement drawing on best practice from other authorities e.g. management/committee arrangements and relations with housing management

2 Scope

- 2.1 The emphasis of this review will be placed on Challenge, Consultation and Comparison.
- 2.2 The review will cover the future management arrangements for the one hundred tenant halls:
- 2.3 It will **not** cover in detail how Tenant and Resident Associations are funded and how Tenant and Resident Participation is managed by the Council as this was covered by the 2003 Best Value Review of Housing Management. It will however cover the income streams generated as a direct consequence of Tenant hall letting and activity and the proper use of that income and it will consider wider community use where funding streams (e.g. General Fund) or grant income are identified to supplement HRA funding for such wider purpose.

3 Methodology

The review will be undertaken drawing on the statutory requirements of Best Value, and the Best Value methodology used by the Council. It will:

- Challenge why, how and by whom the facilities are provided and what needs they do and could meet. ***Scrutiny and Tenant Association Representatives will provide this challenge function.***
- Consult existing service users, potential users, housing staff and other stakeholders such as SGTO.
- Compare the costs, contractual relationships, legal usage of our halls, policies and management practices by T & RA's with other authorities particularly focusing on those authorities with good community strategies.

4 The Management Arrangements for the Review

The Project Board

Project Sponsor	-	Keith Broxup
Project Manager (s)	-	Mike Avis & Mike Carroll
Project Board	-	Chris Brown Harry Marshall Mike Carroll Mike Avis Pat Topley Colin Harrison Kim Jones Nancy Horwood Ina Norton Mohammed Sillah