

Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

Thursday 11 May 2023
7.00 pm
160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH

Supplemental Two Agenda

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Contact

Julie Timbrell on 020 7525 0514 or email: julie.timbrell@southwar.gov.uk

Date: 10 May 2023



Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

Interim MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 20 February 2023 at 7.00 pm at 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Margy Newens (Chair)
Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor Emily Hickson
Councillor Sarah King
Councillor Reginald Popoola
Councillor David Watson
Shalaka Laxman

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Darren Merrill, Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness
Councillor James McAsh, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development
Councillor Natasha Ennin, Deputy Cabinet Member for Diversity

OFFICER SUPPORT: Chris Page, Climate Change and Sustainability Director
Rebecca Towers, Programme Director
Nat Stevens, Resident Involvement Manager
John McCormack, Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team Leader
Tom Vosper, Strategic Project Manager
David Hodgson, Director of Asset Management
Juliet Seymour, Planning Policy Manager
Julie Timbrell, scrutiny Project Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Ketzia Harper and Lydia Marsden.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were none.

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were none.

4. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023 were deferred to the following meeting.

5. **WE WALWORTH**

Rebecca Towers, Programme Director, will presented, with Richard Galpin, Pembroke House.

6. **CLIMATE EMERGENCY CITIZENS JURY**

Chris Page, Climate Change and Sustainability Director, presented on the Citizens Jury, with a focus on the community engagement process.

7. **RESIDENT PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK**

The chair opened the meeting by explaining this item is a mini review on the Resident Participation Framework. The February 2020 Cabinet report on the Southwark Resident Participation Framework is enclosed as background as this was when the arrangements last changed.

John McCormack, Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team Leader, provided a presentation virtually, enclosed with the papers, addressing three main areas:

- Update on implementation of the Resident Participation Framework,
- Impact of the Regulatory Code on participation and the framework,
- What good practice in resident participation looks like.

Nat Stevens, Resident Involvement Manager joined in person. He said the service has some award winning work engaging the community.

The chair then invited the following housing stakeholders to present and contribute:

- Cris Claridge, Tenants Forum, accompanied by Althea Smith, joint Chair of Tenants Forum, Chris Meregini, SGTO Chair and Dario Blake, SGTO Vice

Chair.

- Ina Negoita, Homeowners Forum

The chair explained that Bassey Bassey, Southwark TMO scrutiny representative sent his apologies as he was unable to attend this evening, but he had met with her and the scrutiny Project Manager prior to the meeting.

Ina Negoita, Homeowners Forum scrutiny representative, said that the background to the Cabinet decision and report in February 2020 to change Resident Participation Framework was the Kaizen report, which found that relationships were broken between officers and tenants. Following this there were 14 meetings to co-design a new participation structure. Some resident stakeholder groups did not attend because they did not have faith in the process, however the homeowners/ leaseholders representatives did attend, but with perception that the outcome was predetermined. Towards the end of this process a paper was presented with options agreed through the co-design process, but these were significantly changed by cabinet lead member.

The chair urged a focus on how to change the current participation framework going forward. In response the Homeowners Forum representative said that in her opinion the local area forums are not working, because either officers do not attend or provide long papers, with limited input into the agenda by residents.

Cris Claridge, Tenants Forum scrutiny representative: said that the previous tenant participation structure, in her view, needed to be adapted to encourage more engagement. However the combination of the changes made by Cabinet in early 2020 and the pandemic has left engagement decimated She said that SGTO did recognise that people wanted digital engagement and that it was right to consider how to enable engagement from those places without a TRA, as they were not included in the previous structure . However she said that SGTO and housing resident representatives wanted help with solving these issues, which was not forthcoming. Her preference would be to look at the old framework and enable us get it working once again, with more support to enable greater participation.

Tenants Forum representative added that she did not welcome the proposal for financial reimbursement from central government as this feels like a devaluation of the voluntary dedication to the work of Tennant engagement, which in some cases is a lifetime's work.

She went on to identify that that the resident participation structures are no longer representative, whereas previously there was a delegate structure with TRA representatives attending forum meetings on behalf of their local area. She spoke of the difficulty in holding large meetings that are open to all.

Althea Smith, joint Chair of Tenants Forum made the following points:

- There is a concern about consultants, and those no longer living in social housing, making decisions on behalf of those living in social housing.

- Southwark has a strong tenant's movement which is training nationwide.
- The previous structure had a representative and delegate structure. This meant there was a process in place to review rent proposals with the council through negotiation, utilising advice where needed.
- Tenants pay towards the existing tenants' structure, with a precept on rent.
- SGTO and residents previously, and currently, want to revise the participation structure with the council together, not via consultants, but very much with tenants, for example through a day's conference.
- The Tenant Forum co-chair emphasised that they would like to go back to old system and then see what needs to be amended and modernised.

The chair thanked the representatives, remarking that while the history is important to understand she encouraged looking forward, remaining focused constructive solutions and not throwing the baby out of the bathwater.

She also noted that in order to plan this session and mini review in collaboration with the housing stakeholder scrutiny representatives there had been attempts to organise a meeting in advance, and part of this was to understand the history and key issues. The SGTO representatives acknowledged this and said that that while they had been unable to do this previously they would like to find a time to meet. Both the Homeowners Forum and Tenant Forum representative said that in their view the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission (where they are co-optees) would have been more appropriate to conduct the review given the importance of participation to the delivery of housing services. The representatives highlighted that recently the housing participation team had moved out of Community Engagement unit and joined the Housing department. A member asked about rationale for this Commission conducting the review. Head of Scrutiny explained that previously the cabinet member for Community Engagement had led on the Framework, and the chair explained that this year Community Engagement function had moved to the Environment Commission, whereas previously it had been with Housing. There had been an internal discussion amongst scrutiny chairs about the best place to conduct the review. Largely to balance workloads the Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission had picked up the work rather than the Housing and Community Engagement Commission [the latter part of this discussion happened under the work programme items but is recorded here for clarity].

The chair then welcomed invited Cllr Natasha Ennin, Deputy Cabinet Member for Diversity, to contribute, with a focus on her work on broadening diversity. She was joined by the following TRA representatives:

- Melvin M Kanu (Alberta TRA)
- Harry Matthews (Thurlow Lodge TRA)

- Kudirat Olamide Balogun (Brandon 1 TRA)
- Sheila Benjamin (Brandon 3)

Cllr Natasha Ennin, Deputy Cabinet Member for Diversity said that she had been engaging with the wider community of residents , including some of those who were not aware of if the previous structure . She explained that the TRAs here today are present to enable the Commission to hear from diverse groups. She added that some TRAs and engagement structures have not got demographic data so the council do not always know the diversity of resident participation.

The TRA representatives then made the following points:

- Brandon TRA work to ensure younger and older people are engaged. This is done in the local estates on the ground. The TRA are also providing avenues to meet staff, including John and Nat who contributed earlier.
- Alberta have a WhatsApp group where the TRA try and ensure that more people are engaged.
- Brandon work with community groups to put on activities and activities to engage residents. There are language barriers. There had a recent meeting on heating but with a no show from officers, which is not acceptable. The TRA would like to see the council officers come out and welcomed Nat's work here.

Councillor Darren Merrill, Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness commented that while there has been some great work in the past and some really good practice currently, he is not going to pretend it is perfect, adding the Framework has had difficulties and welcomed the Deputy Cabinet member's outreach work on this.

The Deputy Member for Diversity said that her work with TRA and residents was with a focus on getting a broader demographic of people involved. Through the course of this she had discovered that there were problems with the old system, particularly involving younger people and more diverse ethnicity. Her engagement work has been looking at how to develop a co-design framework.

The chair then invited further comments and questions:

The SGTO representative said that they are doing their best to diversity and indicated the ethnic diversity of people in attendance from SGTO. The SGTO vice chair spoke about community engagement work including a meeting with young people formally involved with criminal justice - who now want to give back. They cook and provide this to the community. Many are from the Romanian community. SGTO also support and advocate for them with the police.

SGTO representative said as well as community engagement another very important function is advocating to improve cleaning , repairs , but that is going by

the by wayside. In SGTO said there is a failing repairs service and commented that the opportunity to improve this function, and work with the council to address this, is not there any longer.

The Homeowners Representative said that the council is good at producing papers, but then papers are not followed, including the terms of references. She would like to see this addressed. She also said that previous participation structure enabled representatives to influence council papers, but this is no longer possible and she would also like this addressed.

SGTO said they would like a better understanding of officer roles and who to raise problems with on matters such as repairs.

The Deputy Cabinet said her role is to enable participation and scrutiny by residents from a diverse background.

SGTO said that they spend a lot of time consulting with residents but see no outcome and impact, and they would like to see improvements in this area.

The TRA representatives said that they would like to see the council make it easier to apply and manage a grant. Although the grant was awarded the money did not arrive until too late. The grant evaluation took 40 hours, which is a barrier, along with the lack of Plain English explanation. There are too many barriers.

Members noted the contrast and gap between earlier presentations of community engagement going well and the more strained relationships and concerning situation here.

The housing representatives said to undertake a review such as this more time is needed and suggested a day was set aside. Members also indicated more time might well be needed.

The Resident Involvement Manager said all officers are required to meet a 100 residents. The team are also co creating with event with TRA, with each officer holding four events as a way to we get better relationships and better understanding.

Officers noted that the Regulator is looking for co-creation as part of the Tenant Empowerment and Involvement Standards, and the introduction of regulation for councils. There is a window of opportunity here to revisit the Framework.

Nat Stevens, Resident Involvement Manager, reported that the Housing Quality Network has been invited to look at where we are now and where the participation framework needs to go.

8. REVIEW: FINANCING AND RESOURCING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN - OFFICER BRIEFING

The following officers presented and took questions:

- Chris Page, Climate Change and Sustainability Director (in person)
- Tom Vosper, Strategic Project Manager (virtually)
- David Hodgson, Director of Asset Management (virtually)
- Juliet Seymour, Planning Policy Manager (virtually)

9. INTERVIEW: CABINET MEMBER CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The commission interviewed Councillor James McAsh, who is providing maternity cover for Cllr Helen Dennis, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Catherine Rose

Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks, Streets & Clean Air

Cllr Rose will increase the quality of the borough's parks and green spaces. She will ensure that the borough's streets are safe to travel, and increase the number of people who use them on foot or by bike, making cycling genuinely accessible to all. Cllr Rose is responsible for transport policy, streets and highway infrastructure, traffic management and parking enforcement. She will promote sustainability and cleaning up our air, particularly around schools. Cllr Rose will keep Southwark clean, leading on waste management, increasing recycling and reducing waste to landfill. She is responsible for supporting sports, our leisure services and cultural institutions across Southwark, ensuring the borough continues to be a vibrant and exciting place to live and work.

Cllr Rose will be responsible for delivering our commitment to:

- deliver more high quality green spaces and parks
- a new right to community gardens or food-growing plots on estates
- plant 20,000 trees and create more tree canopy cover
- improve air quality and road safety at every Southwark school
- design safer, greener and healthier streets and routes for walking and cycling
- work with TfL to reduce traffic on main roads and make bus journeys quicker and more reliable
- ensuring older and younger people, women and our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities all have a full say, so we design streets and transport that works for everyone
- deliver on our Equal Pavements Pledge
- make Southwark a Cycle Friendly Borough.
- offer free cycle lessons for all Southwark residents
- double the number of cycle hangars
- more segregated cycle lanes and extending cycle hire
- create new ways for residents on low incomes to access an affordable bike
- encourage people to switch to less polluting cars
- pilot incentives to residents to give up their cars altogether
- deliver 1000 more electric vehicle charging points in Southwark
- help businesses switch to zero pollution delivery vehicles

- work with the Mayor of London to upgrade Southwark's train and tube stations
- campaign with the Mayor of London to protect and improve public transport
- ensure Southwark has one of the highest recycling rates in inner London, including extending food waste recycling to estates
- upgrade street and estate lighting across the borough, installing clearer, safer, greener LEDs
- keep your streets and estates clean
- expand our library service, increasing the range of services you can access through them
- open a new library on the Aylesbury and an expanded library on the Kingswood Estate
- establish a new in-house Active Southwark Service designed to help you stay healthy and fit
- celebrate Southwark's rich diversity, funding local community groups to deliver events and festivals that showcase the diverse histories, music, food and art of our communities

Cllr Rose will have wider responsibility for:

- parks, trees and biodiversity
- transport policy and travel strategy
- active travel, walking and cycling
- public transport and accessible travel
- relationship with TfL
- highways and parking
- street cleaning, fly-tipping and graffiti
- estate cleaning and grounds maintenance (working with the Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness)
- pest control
- flooding, flood defences, internal waterways, moorings, marinas and associated infrastructure
- cemeteries and crematorium services
- libraries and heritage
- culture and events
- leisure services
- sports

[Previous](#)

Mini-Review of the Residents' Participation Framework

Overview

Southwark Council is the 4th largest social landlord in the country and the largest in London, with over 53,000 council rented, leasehold and freehold homes across the borough that are home to over 100,000 people. As such Southwark has historically been a trailblazer within the Tenants' movement. However, this role comes with considerable additional complexities, challenges and responsibilities to ensure a properly functioning, inclusive and democratic residents' participation structure that is fit for the 21st Century.

The structure in place prior to the 2020 report had survived largely unchanged for approximately 30 years. In that time there had been considerable changes in both the way housing services are delivered and the way that residents tell the council they want to be involved. Best practice advice from the Local Government Association and others recommends that councils review their resident participation arrangements regularly to ensure they work well.

In its surviving form, the Resident Participation Framework was failing to attract new residents to get involved. Some groups of people were particularly underrepresented including young people and families with children. Furthermore, 40% of tenants and leaseholders were excluded from the resident consultation structure altogether, as they lived in council homes which were not covered by a TRA at all. As such they were unable able to elect representatives to Area Housing Forums and, therefore, were not represented at Tenants Councils or elsewhere.

In 2020 a new structure was finalised for introduction with the aim of opening up the Council's approach to resident participation to give everyone living in a council home the opportunity to get involved. However, it appears that not all of the recommended changes were successfully introduced to date, and those that were have of themselves failed to attract significant wider resident involvement. Accordingly there is a fairly universal acknowledgement that the framework needs to be revisited and improved in order for it to achieve its aims.

The 2020 Cabinet Report undertook to carry out a full evaluation after the first year to assess the way the new structure was working and identify further improvements that could be made. Such an evaluation has not been carried out to date and the aim of this review is to provide some pointers and recommendations to move this process forward.

Examples of successful Community Engagement within the Council

Conscious of some significant complexities associated with building a successful and sustainable Resident Participation Framework, the Commission decided to investigate how the Council approaches community engagement in other areas, with a view to exploring how good practice could be replicated across the board.

There is good evidence of successful community engagement methodology and outcome within the council in some areas and the Commission focussed on 2 examples:

1. The [Citizens's Jury](#) established as a deliberative forum comprised of randomly selected residents to focus on a particular policy issue (Climate Change) and respond to a specific question: 'What needs to change in Southwark to tackle the emergency of climate change fairly and effectively for people and nature?'

The Commission heard from the Director of Climate Change and Sustainability about the process deployed to gain an understanding of residents' objectives and priorities in relation to the question posed.

Members of Jury were selected using stratified sampling so that the final profile of the jury reflected local diversity in terms of: age, disability, ethnicity, gender, geography, relative deprivation of an area and attitude to climate change.

The early sessions gave the jury a general overview of the issues and the topic of climate change. The sessions were facilitated to allow jurors to agree guidelines for working together. After initial sessions, they then prioritised the themes they wanted to focus on, and had sessions with experts in these themes.

After this the jury spent time considering what they had learned, and developing a set of recommendations which they voted on to rank in preference.

2. The [We Walworth](#) project established with a goal of mass engagement within a particular geographical area of the borough with the purpose of identifying local priorities and developing new visions for identifying and addressing neighbourhood challenges.

The Commission heard from the Programme Director and a representative of the local partner Pembroke House. Using neighbourhood welcome events with shared food to train local people in engagement (e.g. street and phone canvassing) with the wider community. Through this process, other members of the community became engaged to participate, thus building capacity for further outreach. The project was aimed to engage with 80% of residents in the neighbourhood.

The methods deployed enabled the building of equitable cross-sector teams able to work successfully together. New neighbourhood capacity was created through new skills, connections, relationships and partnerships.

The intention has been that, with time, local people and organisations gain a greater sense of agency and ability to affect change in their local area, having gained new skills to better connect with and therefore serve their communities.

Equally, learning from the project is embedded within organisational structures and shared by participating staff within their teams.

Whilst noting the successes of the We Walworth project, it is important to emphasise that it has been extremely well funded by central government and that certain caveats may apply accordingly.

Learning from successful community engagement experiences

Whilst anecdotally, the We Walworth project was felt to be inclusive and representative of its diverse neighbourhood, there was no evidence that this had been specifically monitored. Nevertheless, the Commission heard that it had been successful in achieving its aim of mass engagement. Meanwhile, a Citizens' Jury, by definition, is not designed for mass participation and so ensuring that it was constituted in such a way as to be truly representative of our diverse borough had been paramount from the outset. Drawing from this experience it is logical to conclude that, whilst mechanisms to embed diversity are crucial to the success, relevance and optimisation of any engagement structure, mass participation helps to facilitate this; conversely, where only a small pool of residents are involved much greater attention needs to be given to ensuring that the pool is truly representative.

The We Walworth project in particular was intended as a replicable model that can be refined for use in local decision making on any issue and in any area.

The Citizens' Jury was developed to give additional breadth of understanding and purpose around a key Council policy area, whilst the We Walworth project focused on developing mass engagement in order to identify and address residents' priorities. A successful resident participation structure needs to do both of these things.

Factors from both projects, which may be considered to have contributed to their success, include the following:

- Adequate resourcing including sufficient officer support from within the Council, combined, where necessary, with external support
- Training within the structure to build capacity and maximise grass roots participation
- Ensuring diversity of participants
- Some kind of reimbursement/remuneration of participants

The Commission heard from the Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team Leader, about the impact of the new Regulatory Code on participation and the framework. The Regulator is encouraging co-creation as part of the Tenant Empowerment and Involvement Standards which incorporates practices such as resident involvement in landlord communications to residents, as well as recognition and reimbursement for time taken by residents (as per Citizens' Jury and We Walworth example cited earlier).

Updated practices for resident involvement should include in depth research, training for residents to become active citizens, and creative, educational and enjoyable activities, much of which is also part and parcel of the We Walworth project.

The Commission heard from the Resident Involvement Manager who noted that the service has been responsible for some award winning work engaging the community. It was reported that the Housing Quality Network has been invited to look at where we are now and where the participation framework needs to go.

Background to the 2020 changes in the Resident Participation Framework

The Kaizen/Social Engine report commissioned to explore how to update and reinvigorate the resident participation framework found the following:

- 65% of respondents to the questionnaire saying they would like to be more involved
- 56.7% said they knew nothing about the Tenants Council. Young people in particular felt that the formal engagement structures were not accessible to them.
- 64% of respondents said they knew nothing about the Tenants and Homeowners Funds. Respondents expressed a clear preference for spending to be allocated for activities which directly and demonstrably benefit communities, which was not achieved by the wa
- 57% of respondents said they knew nothing about Area Housing Forums.

The above findings are fully consistent with other accounts received by the Commission and Commission chair, including that based on the experience of the Deputy Cabinet Member for Diversity, who commented that she had been engaging with the wider community of residents, including some of those who were not aware of if the previous structures in place.

The Deputy Member for Diversity said that her work with TRA and residents had been focussed on getting a broader demographic of people involved. Through the course of this she had discovered that there were problems with the old system, particularly involving younger people and more diverse ethnicity. These findings and other accounts suggest that the old structure was not successfully fulfilling its purpose.

The Commission learnt that some TRAs and engagement structures do not collect demographic data so the Council does not always know the diversity of resident participation. Additionally, there are areas where language barriers present a considerable obstacle to communication and inclusion.

Despite acknowledged shortcomings, the Kaizen/Social Engine report did draw some sensible conclusions, and the intentions behind the changes in the structure that followed were noble, namely to:

- Ensure everyone living in a council home has the opportunity to participate, with more choice of how and when they can get involved
- Direct more resources and support to the grass roots, so tenants and residents have the support they need to improve their local estates and communities
- Use digital engagement as an additional way to get more people involved
- Ensure residents living in council homes not covered by a TRA can participate, as well as working with tenants and residents to increase the coverage of TRAs
- Continue to include elected representation of tenants and homeowners

- Continue to include local housing forums (keeping them separate from the wider Ward Forums)
- Continue to include separate Southwark wide forums for tenants and for homeowners, alongside a joint forum to consider shared issues
- Ensure residents continue to set the agendas of housing forums so they focus on the issues that matter to them, with forums chaired by residents and with annual work plans set by residents
- Ensure decisions on funding for resident participation are based on recommendations from tenants and residents
- Strengthen the link between tenants & residents and the council's Housing Scrutiny Commission
- Continue to provide independent support and advice for council tenants and homeowners, including from Southwark's independent tenants federation, Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations (SGTO).

The intention was to adopt a truly inclusive and democratic approach to resident participation that allowed everyone living in council accommodation to become involved and to shift the resources that the council puts into resident participation back to the grassroots, giving our residents more support and funding to do the things they want to do to improve their local estates and communities.

Within 2 months of the Cabinet Report being published, the country was in full COVID lockdown and the process of rolling out the changes faltered to other urgent priorities within the council.

Due at least in part to the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the degree to which residents are able to access council services and processes digitally, as well as to communicate within resident groups via social media. Increased digital inclusion presents additional opportunities for more residents to participate. Crucially, there needs to be a plurality of engagement options rather than a *one size fits all* approach.

The Commission heard from Brandon TRA about work to ensure younger and older people are engaged through activities. The TRA are also providing avenues to meet staff.

The state of play in 2022-23

During the course of conducting the current review it became apparent that there are tensions, if not an impasse, between the areas of the council dealing with council housing and some of the parties currently and historically involved in the tenants' and homeowners' organisations. In recognition of these tensions, and by way of trying to plot a constructive way forward, prior to the open meeting of the Scrutiny Commission on 20th February, the Commission chair sought meetings with officers and residents in order to gain a better understanding of the background. It was felt that this would be the best way of preparing the ground for a meeting focussed on achieving positive outcomes

The Chair regrets that, in general, it did not prove possible to arrange such advance meetings with residents' representatives. Accordingly, much of the 20th February meeting of the Scrutiny Commission was spent listening to accounts of past difficulties, leaving much less time and opportunity for residents and members to suggest or sound out solutions, or explore together improvements that could be achieved.

The SGTO representatives attending the meeting on 20th February acknowledged the efforts made to meet in advance and said that while they had been unable to do this previously they would like to find a time to meet. Such a meeting subsequently took place.

It is a notable observation through this process that discussion of the past is generally rancorous. It cannot be doubted that all parties have a genuine desire to see a resident participation framework which is fit for purpose and that this can only come about through looking forward rather than backwards.

Residents' representatives expressed the view that the Council needs to be an enabler of participation, whilst residents should be the driving force. There have been concerns that meetings have become too officer-led and, rather than being a forum for debate, they have been used to communicate council policy and decisions. A more clearly defined framework that lays out responsibilities of different stakeholders would help to overcome this impasse. Officers have also identified a need to have a corporate vision of the future of the Resident Participation Framework.

There seems to be a general consensus between officers, members and residents giving evidence that it would be helpful to organise a one-day conference of interested parties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1.

The Council should properly explore what can be learnt from the examples of successful engagement and replicated in the Resident Participation Framework. There are processes that are integral to the operation of the Citizens' Jury, the We Walworth project and perhaps other examples of successful community engagement with residents which are transferrable. Many of the practices seen in the We Walworth project in particular are consistent with the new Regulatory Code for social housing and officers should explore and understand how this methodology and lessons learnt can be used in the context of the Resident Participation Framework.

Recommendation 2.

The Council should consider setting up a Citizens' Jury of residents in council housing – i.e. using the selection process employed to select the Citizens' Jury brought together to consider climate change. The use of this model would ensure the selection of a truly representative group of tenants and leaseholders that could consider a variety of matters pertaining to the future development of residents' participation structures, including reimagining and co-designing future development of grass roots

involvement and the wider framework. As with the Citizens' Jury, selected residents would then work with experts to develop a set of recommendations.

Recommendation 3.

Equality and Diversity should be at the heart of the Resident Participation Framework. Budget should be set aside for targeted engagement with diverse communities that have lowest turn outs using diverse providers. The process and the eventual outcome must be underpinned by a firm commitment towards data collection, evidence and impact monitoring.

Recommendation 4

In line with recommendations from central government and existing experience of successful community engagement through the Citizens' Jury and the We Walworth project, the council should adopt a system of incentives such as financial reimbursement/remuneration for residents' time.

Recommendation 5

In accordance with the recommendation in the 2020 Cabinet Report, the Council should carry out a full evaluation of the Resident Participation Framework introduced. This needs to be a properly resourced proactive exercise carried out at a grass roots level in each individual ward/area. Drawing on the We Walworth model, this could involve street/telephone canvassing, drop in sessions, digital fora, workshops.... to bring people to the table. This process must involve all community leaders and groups such as the Southwark Black Parents' Forum, Livesey Exchange, Spring Hub, The Giving Lab, Active Communities Network, Golden Oldies, Elim house, London Seniors, Southwark LGBT Network, Somalia Development Association, Unshackled Duma. This could be facilitated by [Open Communities](#) which currently works with some TRAs.

Recommendation 6

Review and put in place a performance framework for all stakeholders who have a role in delivering the Resident Partnership Framework in order to get clarity on roles and improve coherence and delivery. As part of this process, all organisations/stakeholders within the framework in receipt of or responsible for managing funds should present verifiable accounts. Organisations receiving larger sums should be required to present fully audited accounts. This will ensure that resources are used more efficiently and that functions are neither duplicated nor missed.

Recommendation 7

It is recognised that many tenants do not live on estates and that not all estates have functioning TRAs. Through the course of the above, the Council should consider, at a grass roots level, how best to expand TRAs to estates where there is none, and how best to ensure that residents not living on estates are properly represented.

Recommendation 8

Explore how the growth in digital inclusion can improve engagement and provide further training to residents who remain digitally excluded.

Recommendation 9

Officers should work with residents to ensure that residents are able to influence the process of agenda planning for meetings. Meetings should be minuted and minutes circulated.

Recommendation 10

The following on from this report, the Council should arrange a one day or half day conference of interested parties to discuss and communicate how this process will be taken forward.

Recommendation 11

Residents taking on executive committee/ officer positions in constituent bodies within the Resident Participation Framework should be required to submit a Register of Interests form in which they declare any private interests which may conflict or be perceived to conflict with their public duties.

Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022-23

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