

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 12 September 2017	Meeting Name: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing
Report title:		Charter of Principles Review	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All Wards	
From:		Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing:

1. Note the importance of the consultation process in supporting the development of the direct delivery programme, and the successes of the Charter of Principles in supporting residents engage with decisions about new council homes at both a borough wide and local level while achieving the milestones that drive the delivery of the new homes programme.
2. Note the success of the council's engagement on building new council homes with a high level of engagement from tenants and homeowners across the borough on community conversations about where we should build new homes and design standards for these homes in 2015. This has ensured that council tenants and homeowners were at the heart of the council's decision making on housing investment and renewal on its estates, meeting our commitment in pledge 1 of the Charter of Principles.
3. Notes that the feedback on implementing the Charter of Principles indicates that there is a need for modification in the way the council has delivered estate by estate engagement (pledge 2).
4. Approves the suggested changes to the way the council delivers community engagement on the direct delivery of new council homes (pledge 2) and the following principles that underpin the suggested changes to our processes:
 - Tenant and Residents Associations will be at the heart of the council's decision making
 - The council recognizes that one size does not fit all and on some occasions the council may wish to modify the way in which it works
5. Approves the following modifications to the council's engagement process :
 - Council Officers will prepare engagement plans based on gathering local intelligence much earlier in the process where delivery is based on the council's estates.
 - The way the council engages will be based on the existing framework developed for the recent tranche of sites but will allow a flexible approach where appropriate based on local information.
 - The way we engage will also encourage new people to get involved
 - Where there is an active TRA, council officers will work with the local TRA to

develop the local engagement strategy. This way the council will ensure that the TRA is at the heart of the process and the engagement plans reflect local circumstances whilst acknowledging the need to deliver much needed new affordable housing to meet growing need.

- When we are recruiting to site project groups we will endeavor to involve residents who may move into the new homes when they are completed.

6. Approves the following improvements to the council's communications:

- Council officers will post the outcomes of consultation on the consultation hub, write to the local TRA and members of the project group where formed, making clearer how proposals have evolved to reflect residents' views, building on best practice to date.
- We will develop a digital platform to enable residents to keep informed about how proposals are developing and about the project groups allowing the opportunity for further feed back.
- Ensure residents who have asked to be kept informed about the progress of the proposals including submission to planning are kept updated.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

7. In November 2014 the cabinet agreed the Charter of Principles. These set out the framework for consulting with residents of Southwark on the ongoing delivery of 11,000 new council homes, following consultation on a draft of these principles.

8. The principles built on the outcomes of the Housing Commission, the council's approach to community engagement and the way council officers have been working with residents in the ongoing major works programme 'putting residents first' and on projects such as the refurbishment of Lakanal House.

9. Over 2000 people responded to the consultation on the Charter of Principles in 2014 and they were overwhelmingly people who lived in council homes, and this gave the council a high level of confidence that the results reflected the views of the wider population of residents in council homes.

10. The consultation took place with both the formal consultation structures of Tenant and Homeowners Council, Area Housing Forums, Tenants & Residents Associations and more broadly with those not engaged in these formal structures. Officers have continued to consult through the formal tenant and homeowner structures and in other ways to ensure that those who are not engaged in the formal structures are able and encouraged to get involved.

11. The Charter of Principles (see Appendix 1) made six key pledges:

- How we will work with you on developing the principles for housing investment and renewal of our estates
- How we will work with you on the development of the new homes on your estate
- How we will involve you in ensuring that the new homes are delivered to a high standard
- Giving you a real say in how the new homes are managed
- We will demand high standards for the quality and affordability of new homes

- Your housing options if you are affected by redevelopment of your estate
12. All six pledges received support that varied from 87% to 92%. However, about 8% of those who agreed with a pledge and 56% of those who disagreed provided comments generating 1,900 individual comments from about 200 respondents.
 13. 18% of the commentary concerned lack of confidence we would keep our promises on the pledges or delivery of the new homes and 8% about who we should include and how.
 14. To address the concerns officers proposed the following actions:

Theme	Action	Response
Lack of confidence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a system of annual review of the implementation of the Charter of Principles. 2. Work with the Futures Steering Board (FSB) to develop the engagement plan for future stages of consultation. 3. Develop a communication strategy that seeks to address frequently asked questions, clarifies what we mean when using words such as <i>affordability</i> and <i>regeneration</i>, and promotes the homes as we complete. 4. Provide training for residents so they are able to fully engage in future discussions. 5. Reaffirm the council's commitment to consultation and engagement with residents throughout all the stages of the design and delivery programme. 6. Promote that the council wants to work with residents on a co-productive basis on individual schemes. 7. Be transparent and open about the factors the council is considering at the earliest opportunity to promote trust and share the complexity of the decision making ahead. 	<p>Review in progress</p> <p>Worked with FSB on engagement on where to build and design</p> <p>FAQ were posted on the website</p> <p>Training is included in the first session of the project groups using an independent residents' friend</p> <p>Two engagement officers are working with the Direct delivery team.</p> <p>Development of project groups to work with Council during design process.</p> <p>Letters and communications make clear the objectives of each scheme.</p>

Theme	Action	Response
Involving everybody	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that we work closely with our existing formal tenant structures along with the wider community. 2. Work in ways that encourages those who are not involved to participate. 3. Build on the work of the Community Engagement team to develop relationships with groups who do not normally participate such as young people and residents in sheltered housing. 4. Use a range of engagement tools that encourages a diversity of people to respond, such as hard to reach communities, young people and disabled people. 5. Build on the enthusiasm demonstrated in the volume of responses and eagerness to be involved, to ensure that these residents are integrated into future discussions. 6. Develop a phased communication plan to provide residents with interesting issues to engage in over the next consultation period. 	<p>Established a framework for involving TRA members</p> <p>Use drop ins to reach a wide audience and open up project group membership Work on identifying sites and design phase included outreach to seldom heard groups</p> <p>Used a range of digital and outreach tools e.g..Talkoke, Mapping, consultation hub #Chatback event</p> <p>Phase two of consultations targeted those who had left details from phase one</p> <p>Developed for phase two</p>

Implementation of the Charter of Principles Pledge 1 – principles for Housing Investment (stage two of the council’s consultation on new homes)

15. In February 2015 the council asked residents for their ideas about where we could build new council homes using an online map and talking to our Tenants and Residents Associations.
16. The interactive map was visited 1,187 times by 753 unique users and generated more than 160 comments. Discussions with TRA’s and the information gathered through the maps provided a wealth of information for the Direct Delivery team to use to support the development of a programme for investment in new homes across the borough. Some of the sites that were suggested by residents and which have been included in the programme are Haddonfield Estate and Daniels Road.
17. Daniels Road development has planning permission for 19 new homes; Haddonfield Estate development has submitted planning proposal for 14 new homes; we have begun discussions with residents on proposals for new homes

on the Canada Estate.

18. In the summer of 2015 the council consulted residents on establishing the design standards for council new build homes, and drew on previous consultations and commentary such as Aylsbury design values discussions, Charter of Principles consultation and #chatback event to ensure the broadest engagement possible informed the design standards we adopted. The views of 1,748 people influenced the outcome. In November 2015 the council adopted a suite of documents that identified our design values and standards as well as the technical specifications that represented the minimum we would expect developers to deliver in providing new council homes.
19. Council officers have refreshed terms of reference of the FSB in February 2014, July 2015 and June 2016 to ensure that tenants and homeowners from Tenants and Homeowner Council continue to be able to hold us to account on our promises to build new council homes and the ways we involve our residents.

Implementation of Charter of Principles Pledge 2 Estate-by-estate/ site specific engagement (stage three of the council's consultation on new homes)

20. The review below is based on the work with the Direct Delivery team and a similar evaluation will be undertaken on Southwark Regeneration in Partnership Programme.
21. The council's work on delivering its commitments in the Charter of Principles to specific sites began in December 2015.
22. The way in which the council has worked to deliver community engagement on these new sites has reflected the commitments made in pledge two in the charter of principles. Notably the following points:
 - We will work with you on the design of each scheme and keep you informed every step of the way as the programme progresses.
 - Consultation and engagement will continue throughout the design and delivery of the programme rather than be a one-off exercise at the beginning without further opportunities to give us feedback.
 - We will keep you informed as to how your views have been taken into account.
 - Each scheme will have a named lead officer so that residents know who to contact.
 - Consultation will be led by local project groups of residents and local Councillors in each area.
 - We will hold one to one meetings for any resident that wants one.
 - We will only proceed with submitting a planning application for proposals for this programme where there has been thorough dialogue and consultation with residents.
23. To ensure that the council implemented a consistent standard of engagement across Southwark, that reflected the above commitments, the Direct Delivery and Engagement Teams agreed an approach for engagement on potential sites for delivery of 11,000 new homes. The current process is outlined below:

- Identification of site and discussion with Cabinet member about inclusion in programme
 - Discussion with ward councilors
 - Discussion with local TRA where one exists
 - Independent Decision Maker report for site inclusion in the programme
 - Appointment of architects and employers agents
 - Preparation of engagement plan
 - First drop in to discuss scheme
 - Formation of project group
 - Three or Four project group meetings – the first session includes training with an independent advisor
 - Second drop in
 - Submission of planning application (who will conduct their own consultation on the application which is subject to statutory requirements for consultation)
24. Council officers developed standard terms of reference and a clear system for deciding who should be invited to join project groups based on the site and who would be impacted by any scheme (at Appendix 2).
 25. This was done in order to ensure consistency in approach across the borough, that everyone impacted by the scheme had an opportunity to be involved, and ensure that the TRA in particular had significant input into the scheme proposed on their estate.
 26. Those that are invited to open drop ins are anyone who lives in the vicinity of the potential site, taking into account natural boundaries such as railway lines and major roads, and ensuring that rows of houses or parts of estates, where development is proposed, are not excluded.
 27. The consultation area is used as a starting point for identifying the local lettings area. The Local Letting Plan for each development is subject to approval by the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing.
 28. The aim of this approach has been to work both closely with our TRAs on developments on the estates they represent along with the wider community, and work in ways that encourages those who are not involved to participate.
 29. The project group membership is drawn from a mixture of TRA representatives and people who express an interest at the first drop in sessions. The purpose of the group has been to enable the council and its partners to work closely with individuals in a collaborative way to develop plans where views of local residents and needs of council are discussed in an open and transparent way.
 30. It is the council's view that through collaborative working it is able to design proposals that can be supported locally and bring benefit to the community within which they are located whilst delivering new council homes for local tenants and others in desperate need of a home they can afford to rent.
 31. Overall the teams have worked together on ten sites in this recent tranche of sites. In some areas there was little take up of the offer to form project groups and the way we involved residents in the design process adapted to ensure that residents continued to be engaged. Residents groups for one site have expressed concern about involving residents that are not living on the estate

affected and on another residents in private homes near a proposed development complained that they were not involved.

32. The table below indicates the site and engagement approach used during the design process.

Site	Engagement approach	Stage the project has reached
Canada Estate	Established a project group the TRA will now play a central role in steering the engagement in this project.	2 project meetings held
Commercial Way	Established a project group following the framework	Planning permission granted
Daniels Road	Established a project group following the framework	Planning permission granted
Goschen Estate	Established a project group following the framework	planning application submitted
Haddonfield Estate	Established a project group following the framework	planning application submitted
Kinglake	Met with TRA at key points during the design phase as there was no interest in project group	Planning permission granted
Meeting House Lane	Engaged with residents through an increased number of drop ins as residents did not wish to be involved in a project group	Planning permission granted
Nunhead Lane (not based on an estate)	No interest in project group met with neighbours of the site informally and held 2 drop ins	Planning permission granted
Pelier Street	Engaged with residents through an increased number of drop ins as residents did not wish to be involved in a project group	Planning Permission granted
Tender Road	Established a project group following the framework	Planning Permission granted

33. As the table indicates although the starting point for each engagement process

has been the framework, the council has also adapted the ways it works to ensure that it has engaged local people in the process of developing our designs.

Evaluation of four schemes

34. In order to evaluate better the way in which we have worked on these recent tranche of sites we looked at four case studies. The aim was to dig deeper and through this understand more about how people felt about being involved in this way and use these experts by experience to improve the process.
35. The choice of the four schemes to be case studies was based on two from each of the direct delivery teams and two where officer assessment was that they worked well and two where there were challenges.
36. The evaluation asked project group members, architects, employers agents, and project co-ordinators, who lead the schemes, the following:
 - How people felt about the meetings
 - Did residents feel that they were able to influence the final proposals
 - Did residents feel that they knew more by the end of the process
 - What worked well and what could be improved
 - Would they take part again.
37. The Goshen Project Group membership was made up of a mix of council tenants and leaseholders and private homeowners. The majority of residents that participated thought their views were respected and listened to, they were able to influence the final design and were comfortable with the project group approach and would take part again. Keeping residents involved was raised by one respondent as a concern.
38. The Haddonfield Project group was composed of residents of the estate and members of Haddonfield and Tissington TRA. The site for development was suggested by a local resident. The majority of residents thought their views were respected and felt able to speak up. However only one resident thought they had been able to influence the final design and all expressed a concern about feedback and being kept informed. One participant thought they learnt more about how the council works and most thought the engagement approach was reasonable but were concerned about how much they were able to effect the outcome.
39. The Tenda Road project group was made up of people from the Manor Estate, the Rennie Estate TRA was invited to participate but declined. The participants were all comfortable with the meetings and felt that they were able to influence the outcome, one person expressed regret that representatives from the neighbouring estate did not take part and members said would be happy to be involved again.
40. Participation in Kinglake Estate drop ins was poor and although residents nearby expressed an interest in belonging to a project group no one turned up to the two meetings we arranged. As a consequence and to ensure there was resident input into the scheme the Project Co-ordinator regularly attended TRA meetings. The TRA reported that they felt informed and were able to influence the scheme.

41. The architects and employers agents felt that they were able to better understand the areas they were working in and make better plans as a consequence of listening to people in the project groups. They commented that there were often issues in the early part of the process reflecting a lack of confidence of participants that they would be listened to or as a consequence of local issues that were poorly understood.
42. The main suggestions for improvement were as follows:
- Improve communication during the process to ensure that everyone who takes part is notified of follow up sessions
 - More feed back between meetings and information about the planning application and outcome of planning process
 - The process should be flexible to enable response to issues as they arise
 - Ensure that the team has the necessary information about the local area before the project begins.
43. In addition Rotherhithe Area Housing Forum, which had two schemes in this phase of the programme and an additional two in the next phase, has emphasised that this works best when the TRA and people who live on the estate are most involved in the preplanning phase of developing the designs.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

44. The evaluation has demonstrated that in terms of two of the council's pledges it should make the following improvements:
- We will work with you on the design of each scheme *and keep you informed every step of the way as the programme progresses.*
 - *We will keep you informed as to how your views have been taken into account*
 - The engagement team will ensure that the council keeps in touch with those that have expressed an interest as the project develops outside of the public events that everyone is invited to. In addition, the council will improve its communications to make clearer how proposals have evolved to reflect residents' views and ensure that these are publically available through the consultation hub and updating the local TRA where there is one.
 - The principles that will underpin the council's engagement approaches will reflect both the engagement approach adopted by the council in 2012 and the commitments made in the cabinet report on Charter of Principles. These are:
 - Ensure that we work closely with our existing formal tenant structures along with the wider community.
 - Work in ways that encourages those who are not involved to participate.
 - Build on the work of the community engagement team to develop relationships with groups who do not normally participate such as young people and residents in sheltered housing.
 - Use a range of engagement tools that encourages a diversity of people to respond, such as hard to reach communities, young people and disabled people.
45. Experience obtained through the council's engagement with residents about these sites has demonstrated that TRAs should be at the heart of our processes, that one size does not fit all and that it is important that our engagement processes are flexible and address local circumstances. In view of this the

council will amend its processes in the following ways:

- Council officers will prepare engagement plans based on gathering local intelligence much earlier in the process.
- The way the council engages will be based on the existing framework developed for the first phase of sites but will allow a flexible approach based on local information where appropriate.
- Where there is an active TRA council officers will work with the local TRA to develop the local engagement strategy. This way the council will ensure that the TRA is at the heart of the process and the engagement plans reflect local circumstances whilst acknowledging the need to deliver much needed new affordable housing to meet growing need.

46. Review of these changes to the implementation of the Charter of Principles should take place 18 months after they are actioned.

Community impact statement

47. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

48. This review of how we implement the commitments we made to place residents at the heart of our decision making has made recommendations on how we can improve our processes to ensure that residents are included in the design process.

49. Our approach to engagement remains one that seeks to widen participation while ensuring that the process is able to adapt to local needs and circumstances.

Resource implications

50. The recommended changes do not impact on resource allocation.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (FIN0979 – JB)

51. The report reflects on the experience gained in the early stages of the direct delivery programme consultation process. The report recommends certain modifications to the engagement process and communications approach as detailed in paragraphs 5 and 6.

52. Paragraph 50 notes that these recommendations do not have a resource impact so the proposed changes will be delivered within the existing budget provisions.

Director of Law and Democracy

53. The report asks the cabinet member to note the progress made in relation to delivering the council's commitment to build new council homes and the work undertaken in engaging communities. It asks the cabinet member to approve an

amendment to the way the Charter of Principles, agreed in 2014, are put into practice and the council's approach to engagement and communication, based on feedback received.

54. The exercise of the council's functions and the consultation it undertakes is capable of being challenged and subjected to oversight of the courts. Any consultation carried out by the council must be undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage, must include sufficient reasons for the proposals to allow interested parties the opportunity to consider the proposal and formulate a response, must allow adequate time for interested parties to consider proposals and formulate their response and the outcome of it must be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken. These are the central requirements for fair and proper consultation and underpin good decision-making, and should be applied at all stages of the consultation process. These matters therefore have a bearing on the council's approach to community engagement and consultation in relation to delivering its commitment to build new council homes.
55. The community impact statement section of the report refers to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The cabinet member is reminded that this is a duty, set out in section 149 Equality Act 2010, on the council, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct; advance of equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and foster good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and those that do not share it. It is of particular relevance in this context that the duty to advance equality of opportunity entails having regard to the need to take steps to meet the different needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic, and encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic participate in public life or any other activity in which they are underrepresented. It is recommended that paying regard to these issues should form part of any ongoing review of the council's Charter of Principles and approaches to engagement and communication.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet November 2014 – report on Charter of Principles	(Copy and paste link into browser) http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=4864&Ver=4	Jessica.leech@southwark.gov.uk
Cabinet report November 2015 – report on 11,000 new council homes - results of consultation on design, neighbourhoods and where to build.	(Copy and paste link into browser) http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=5141&Ver=4	Jessica.leech@southwark.gov.uk

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Charter of Principles
Appendix 2	Terms of Reference for Project Groups and Membership of project groups

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Gerri Scott Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation	
Report Author	Stephen Douglass Director of Communities	
Version	Final	
Dated	11 September 2017	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	11 September 2017	