

Item No. 8.	Classification: Open	Date: 4 February 2020	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Southwark Resident Participation Framework	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Kieron Williams, Housing Management and Modernisation	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR KIERON WILLIAMS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND MODERNISATION

This report sets out wide ranging actions to strengthen the way the council works with the people who live in our council homes. These changes will open up our approach to resident participation so everyone who lives in a council home can get involved. They will also shift the resources we put 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.

These changes are part of our commitment to make all of our homes and estates great places to live. Achieving that aim is a joint endeavour between the council and the people who live in our homes. Only by working together can we ensure our housing services work for our residents, our homes are in good condition, our estates are safe, clean and cared for, and our local communities are supported to prosper and thrive. That's why we want every resident to feel they can get involved.

Tenants and residents associations (TRAs) will continue to be at the heart of our approach. Southwark has a long and proud history of residents working together through TRAs to improve the homes and lives of the people on their estate. We will work with our TRAs to substantially improve the support they receive, making it easier for them to get funding and providing them with better training, information and officer support, as well as more support to set up new TRAs where one does not exist. Where it is right for residents we will also continue to support them to manage their own estate through a Tenant Management Organisation.

We will also open up our resident participation structures. Everyone who lives in a council home will now be able to get involved in their Local Housing Forum and a much wider range of people will be able to participate in our resident working groups that look in-depth at key housing issues. We will launch a new online residents panel so that hundreds more of our residents can actively help to shape our housing services as well as retaining Southwark wide elected tenant and homeowner forums. We will give residents the right to put issues on the work plan of the council's housing scrutiny commission, with residents represented on the commission too. And we will launch a £900,000 Resident Participation Fund with half the money going direct to grassroots activity and the rest funding independent support and advice services, free training and wider support for our residents.

In making these changes our aim is to grow the number and diversity of our residents who are actively involved in shaping the council's housing services and improving their estates and community and to enable them to be more effective at both. We want to be sure these changes achieve that aim so we will undertake a full evaluation after the first year to make sure we have got it right and to identify improvements we can make.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That cabinet notes:

1. The feedback from the Resident Involvement Review consultation which ran between July to October 2019 and had over 1,120 responses and can be found in Appendix 1.

That cabinet agrees:

2. The actions to reaffirm and further strengthen the council's support for Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs), including to work with TRAs to agree a joint plan to update and enhance the support available to them, as set out in paragraph 40.
3. To establish a new Residents Participation Fund (RPF) with an annual budget of £900,000 that directs more resources to grassroots resident involvement activities that benefit people living in council homes, as set out in paragraph 87, 88 and 89.
4. The updated Resident Participation Framework, including Local Housing Forums, a new digital Residents Panel, Southwark wide Tenants and Homeowners Forums, and a programme of Resident Working Groups to look in depth at issues of most interest to residents, as set out in paragraphs 50 and 58.
5. The actions to give council tenants and homeowners a central role on the council's housing scrutiny commission as a further way to hold the council's housing services to account, as set out in paragraphs 64 and 65.
6. The actions to reaffirm and further strengthen the council's support for tenant management, as set out in paragraph 76.
7. To extend the existing grants for independent tenant and homeowner support and advice services provided by Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations and the Citizens Advice Bureau for a further six months to the 31 September 2020 to allow time for the procurement of contracts for these services.
8. The implementation timeline for the above changes, as set out in Appendix 2.
9. That a review of the new Resident Participation Framework be undertaken after the first year in order to assess its effectiveness and whether any adjustments are needed, with a report back to cabinet by September 2021.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

10. Southwark Council is the largest local authority landlord in London with over 53,000 council rented, leasehold and freehold homes across the borough. The council's relationship with our tenants and homeowners is especially important to the council. It is also governed by statute, requiring the council to consult our tenants and homeowners on matters of housing management. Continuing to improve the way the council's do this is a key commitment in the council's 2018-22 Council Plan which sets out the council's pledge to work with tenants, residents and homeowner to find new ways to engage so that more people can have their say.
11. In taking forward this commitment the council is building on a long tradition of resident participation in Southwark. Our borough has a long established tenants' movement, with the majority of council homes covered by a Tenants and Residents Association

(TRA) as well as over 4,600 homes that are directly managed by tenants and residents through Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs). The council also has a long standing tenant and homeowner consultation structure, including Area Housing Forum and Tenants and Homeowners Councils. Southwark also has a long standing independent tenants' federation, Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations (SGTO), who the council funds to support tenants and residents groups within the borough, including through the provision of training, information and advice. The proposals set out in this report seek to update and strengthen these arrangements.

The need to update the council's approach to resident participation

12. The council's current approach to resident participation has been in place for many years. In that time there have 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. This had not happened in Southwark for a number of years so it is right that the council reviews and updates them. This is even more the case as in recent years residents involved in the current structures have raised concerns with the council that the current approach is not working as well as it needs to. In particular this review has sought to identify how the council can address a number of key issues:
 - a) **Involving more people:** Whilst a substantial number of people are involved in the current structures, including many who have years of experience of working to improve council homes and estates, the total number of people actively involved remains small in comparison to the over 100,000 people who live in a Southwark council home. Some groups of people are particularly underrepresented including young people and families with children. A further important concern is that the current resident consultation structure excludes some residents from direct representation as those living in the near 40% of council homes which are not covered by a TRA, are not able to elect representatives to Area Housing Forums and therefore in turn are not represented at Tenants Councils.
 - b) **Providing more ways to get involved:** Increasingly people want to get involved in all aspects of life in a range of different ways. The council's existing representative structures work well for some but not all of our residents. It is therefore important that we look at how we can compliment this type of engagement with more open opportunities to get involved so that everyone who wants to has a chance to have a say. That includes using online and digital channels that appeal to many residents, including many younger people and those not able to attend regular meetings.
 - c) **Increasing support for the grass roots:** Most residents who are involved in improving our council housing services and life on our estates do so through local activity with fellow residents on their estate or street, including through their Tenants and Resident Association. This review has therefore looked at how we can free up more funding and officer time to support this grassroots activity.
 - d) **Reflecting changes to council services:** The way the council's housing services are delivered has also changed substantially since the current resident involvement structures were put in place. At that time the council had local housing offices that operated with a significant degree of autonomy. This is no longer the case, with housing services now working to borough wide standards and with the current twelve Area Housing Forums no longer mapping on to the way the council manages its homes. This review has therefore also looked at how the

structures can be best aligned with the way the council now works so residents have direct access to senior managers and quality information on how services are performing.

Wider context to the review

13. In April 2019 the council agreed a new approach to all aspect of community engagement, setting out our intention to strengthen the way we work with and engage the public across all of our work. This review is therefore also an important opportunity to ensure the objectives and principles set out in that approach are equally applied to resident participation. The council's three community engagement objectives are:
 - Create and nurture relationships with people and community organisations and build better connectivity between the council, and voluntary and community organisations and people in Southwark and each other.
 - Understand people's experiences of services they use and the homes and neighbourhoods they live in, work in, run a business in, visit and move through and to better employ this local intelligence and local expertise to improve people's wellbeing, the quality of our places and the quality of our services.
 - Enable good governance and fair and informed decision making, through building confident, skilled, active and influential communities and a culture of getting involved.
14. In reviewing the resident involvement structure, the council has also been guided by the need to comply with Social Housing Regulator's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard, including the requirement to 'consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service'.
15. The council also seeks to be a model of best practice ensuring that the resident participation proposals outlined in this report meet TPAS's National Tenant Engagement Standards. The proposals have in addition been informed by the Local Government Association's report on Engaging and Empowering Tenants in Council Owned Housing (2019) which sets out how good engagement reaches everyone, not just those already involved, and that a variety of methods used are good to promote accessibility.
16. This review of resident involvement and the final proposals set out in this report seek to respond to all of the above issues and others to ensure Southwark has an approach that works for everyone who lives in one of our council homes.

Consultation process

17. The review was initiated in 2016 following a report from the housing and community safety scrutiny committee on resident involvement. That report found that while there were many positive elements, there was also considerable dissatisfaction on all sides with aspects of the current arrangements and a strong desire for change.
18. In February 2017, the housing and community safety scrutiny committee commissioned Kaizen Partnership and Social Engine to conduct an independent, in-depth study of how the council engages with tenants and homeowners as a housing provider and identify areas for improvement.

19. The research identified a number of fundamental challenges including the limited coverage of TRAs, how to engage with residents across the borough's diverse population, the lack of diversity among members of Area Housing Forums, Tenants and Homeowner councils, low awareness of residents of the resources available, a preference for funding to be directed towards estate-based/local community projects and that Tenants Council and Homeowners Council meetings were not effectively contributing to strategic decision making about housing services.
20. The Kaizen/Social Engine report demonstrated that there was an urgent need for a comprehensive review of the housing engagement structures to ensure that council tenants and homeowners can access the structure, to empower TRAs, to allow for efficient and accountable use of residents funds and assets (Tenants Fund, Homeowners Fund, TRA halls) and to ensure that there is effective resident scrutiny of housing management services.
21. In June 2018 the Kaizen/Social Engine review was presented to Cabinet which agreed to set up an independently chaired co-design panel of residents (Panel) to review the housing engagement and involvement structures and make recommendations on changes where these were needed.
22. The Panel was set up in September 2018. It was independently chaired with a majority of residents, drawn from a different housing tenures, geography and demographics. The Panel received evidence in the form of written submissions from existing bodies, residents involved in current structures officers of the council, as well as papers prepared by the independent chair. The Panel also spoke with resident representatives and council managers. Its findings were published in January 2019 and were subject to a four week public consultation.
23. The full co-design Panel report, salient points from that consultation and recommendations for the new resident involvement framework were presented to Cabinet in June 2019. Cabinet then agreed a final round of consultation on the proposals.
24. That most recent round of consultation ran between 10 July and 10 October 2019. The purpose of this final round of consultation was to hear the views of a full range of people who live in council's homes, as well as wider interested people and organisations, on the council's proposed changes to resident participation. It produced a large response, with a total of 1,120 submissions including: over 170 people spoken to face to face, 669 responses to the questionnaire (over 132 of those submitted on paper and the rest online), 20 written responses received from various bodies and 260 postcards from a campaign by the Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations (SGTO).
25. Of the survey responses received 54% were council tenants, 21% council homeowners living in the property, 3% non-resident council homeowners, 3% private renters living in a council block, 3% temporary accommodation tenants living in a council property, 11% said they were none of these and 4% did not say.
26. The proposals were also considered through the council's current formal resident consultation structures i.e. Area Housing Forums, Tenant Council, Homeowner Council and Southwark TMO Committee.
27. The consultation was promoted in many ways, including publicity distributed in libraries, housing estates, via Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs), on Social

Media, face to face at TRA summer events, etc. Officers worked with partners to reach the seldom-heard such as Southwark Disablement Association, Sheltered Housing Units, Citizens Advice Bureau, Young Advisors, etc.

28. The survey responses include a wide spread of people, with a good cross section of tenants and homeowners, women and men, ethnicities, people with and without disabilities and people of different sexual orientations. Whilst the majority of people who responded were aged 25-65 a significant number of older people also responded and targeted consultation was also undertaken with young people under 25. Taking the size of the response together with the representativeness of those responding this gives a very high degree of confidence that the results reflect what most people would be likely to say.
29. Full details on the methodology for this final round of consultation can be found in Appendix 1. This report presents the feedback from this final consultation and the final proposals for resident participation which have been developed to take into account all the feedback the council has received over the last three years.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Consultation Findings

30. A wide range of responses were received on the detailed recommendations as summarised in Appendix 1. Overall there were a number of common themes across these responses, notably:
 - i. Residents want structures that both enable them to shape housing services and help them to take action to build inclusive, strong local communities on their own estates.
 - ii. More people want to get involved both in shaping housing services and improving their estates and local community than are at present, with 65% of respondents to the questionnaire saying they would like to be more involved.
 - iii. Residents want a range of ways to participate that suit their different needs. For example, a majority of respondents would like to see more opportunities for digital and online participation, while at the same time many residents highlighted the need to also retain traditional face to face methods, including the importance of elected tenant and resident representation.
 - iv. There is very strong backing for continuing to improve support for Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) with many positive comments on the work TRAs do for their communities, while at the same time highlighting the need for TRAs to be inclusive and accountable in how they operate and spend funds. Whilst smaller in number, there was also a significant number of responses highlight the value and importance of Tenant Management Organisations.
 - v. There was also strong support for providing more opportunities for residents who live in homes not covered by a TRA to get involved and to be able to access resident participation grant funding for their estate or area.
 - vi. Many of the responses also highlighted the importance of resident lead participation structures, through which tenants and homeowners can raise issues of concern to them, lead the scrutiny of housing services and shape decisions on the best ways to use resident participation funding.

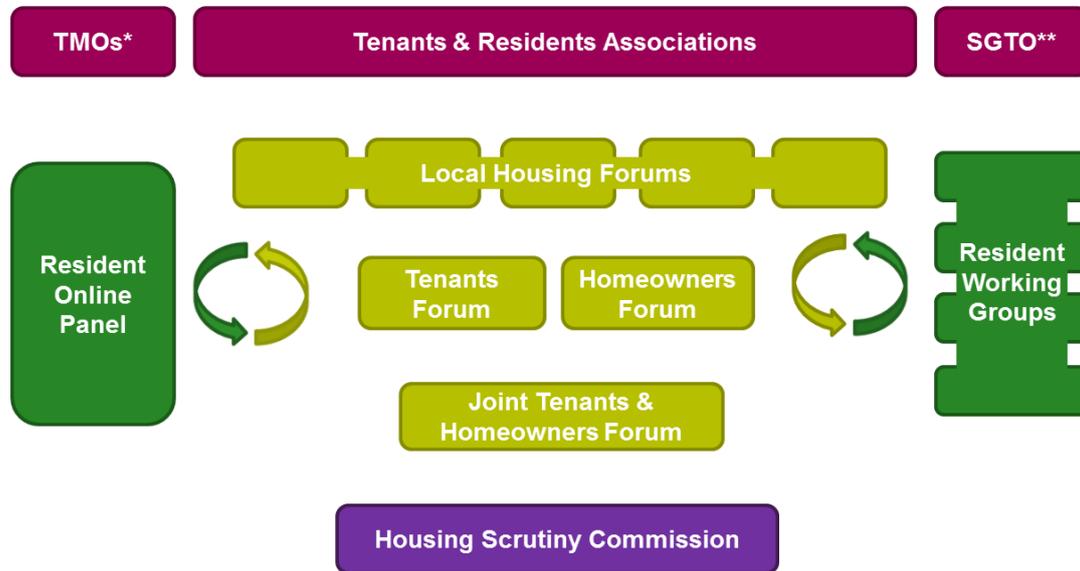
- vii. A further common theme is the importance of having forums that have sufficient time and space to consider the many different details of housing and estate management. In particular a large number of respondents felt that the proposal to make Ward Forums the place to discuss housing issues at a local level will not work in practice as the wider focus of Ward Forums on all aspects of life in each area would not give sufficient time to address the detail of housing management.
 - viii. Many of the responses also emphasised the vital importance of high quality support to ensure resident participation is meaningful and effective and asked for clarity from the council on how that support will be provided.
31. Further information from the consultation in relation to each of the proposals is presented further down this report. A full summary of responses can also be found in Appendix 1.

Final Proposals

32. The following paragraphs set out the proposals consulted on, a summary of the consultation feedback and the final recommendations for cabinet to approval with a rationale. These final recommendations take into account all feedback received across all stages of the consultation over the last two years.
33. The proposals seek to strengthen resident participation in ways that:
- Respond to feedback received through the consultation
 - Enable people who live in council homes to achieve improvements in our housing services, homes, estates and the lives of our residents
 - Increase the number and diversity of residents actively involved
 - Continue to fulfil the council's statutory duties to consult our tenants and residents
34. They are designed 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).

35. The main elements of the revised resident participation framework are set out in the diagram below and described in more detail in the following sections.



* Tenant Management Organisations

** Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations

Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs)

Proposals consulted on

36. The recommendation in relation to TRAs was that they remain fundamental to the structure providing both scrutiny and community development functions for tenants and homeowners. In addition the council proposed that it would seek to establish and re-establish TRAs in those areas where none currently exist and will:

- Identify non-TRA areas and work proactively with tenants and residents in those areas to support them in establishing TRAs where they wish to do so
- Review the existing TRA model constitution, with a view to simplifying it, ensuring it is in plain English (with less bureaucratic jargon)
- Review the existing training offer for residents to ensure that it is fit for purpose, offers value for money, and widens the pool of digitally-included residents.
- Provide specialist support for TRAs in respect of financial management and governance to increase transparency and accountability
- Increase the proportion of resident participation funding available to TRAs through additional small grants for projects
- Arrange free full fibre broadband connections to TRA halls
- Explore how libraries across the borough can be used as resource centres for TRAs for accessing IT facilities, holding meetings where TRA facilities don't exist, training, etc.

Consultation Findings

37. The most recent consultation showed that a large majority of respondents were positive and supportive although there was also emphasis on ensuring TRAs should be inclusive and accountable in respect of how funding allocated is spent. From the survey responses:
- 75% (505) strongly agreed that the council should continue to support TRAs 78% (521) that the council should support residents in setting up TRAs where there are none.
 - 84% (564) strongly agreed that the council should help TRAs to be as inclusive and representative of their local community as possible.
 - 65% (435) strongly agreed that, where there are no TRAs, funding should be allocated to local community organisations for the benefit of tenants and leaseholders
 - Almost 65% (433) strongly agree that the council should revise its residents' training offer.
 - A number of respondents commented that the council should do more to ensure TRAs are accountable for how they use money and community assets.
38. The co-design panel also recommended that the council continues to support the work of TRAs and their development as community organisations by holding annual resident involvement events where there is no TRA to raise awareness of opportunities for further involvement – local level, strategic levels, pool of active residents, etc. These events would provide grassroots resident groups (whether TRAs or not) with opportunities to apply to the proposed Communities Fund and offer relevant training and support services to resident groups.
39. Two in three of the respondents to the Kaizen review said that they knew about their TRA. The respondents were clear in their views on what the role of their TRA should be with two thirds saying they thought it should be to improve their local area and half saying the TRA should be representing tenant views about services to the Council. The report also recommended that the council should review the approach and provision of training and support for tenants and TRAs.

Final Proposals

40. The council will continue to support TRAs as the foundation of resident participation. Our ambition is to have a TRA covering every council home. We will develop a joint plan to improve support for TRAs, developed with TRAs, setting out what the council and SGTO will do to:
- i. Identify non-TRA areas and work proactively with tenants and residents in those areas to support them in establishing new or joining neighbouring TRAs where there is a will to do so
 - ii. Clarify & strengthen officer support to individual TRAs
 - iii. Streamline the process for accessing TRA core funding to make it easier for eligible TRAs to access their grant and to review the conditions of grant to ensure they are proportionate
 - iv. Increase funding for small grants for local projects that bring the community together and improve the wellbeing of people living in council homes
 - v. Improve training, by undertaking a review of the existing training offer for council tenants and residents to ensure that it is fit for purpose, offers value for money, and widens the pool of digitally-included residents, including working with the Southwark Adult Learning Service and other local learning providers to ensure a coordinated training offer that maximises the benefits for tenants and residents.

- vi. Improve information for residents and TRAs on the maintenance and management of their estates from the council, including on forthcoming major works, on individual blocks and on the performance of repairs and maintenance services.
 - vii. Provide specialist support for TRAs in respect of financial management and governance to ensure transparency and accountability
 - viii. Strengthen the role for TRAs (and wider residents) in shaping major works, by reviewing how they are involved to identify how they can have a stronger say
 - ix. Improve support for TRA Halls, by reviewing how the council can best support TRAs to get the most out of their halls for the benefit of their communities
 - x. Review the existing TRA model constitution, with a view to simplifying it and ensuring it is written in easy to understand language and to include anonymous Equality & Diversity monitoring of TRA committee members across the whole borough
 - xi. Improve guidance on safeguarding
 - xii. Arrange free full fibre broadband connections to TRA halls and explore what other support can be provided through TRAs to best enable residents to be digitally included
 - xiii. Explore how libraries across the borough can be used as resource centres for TRAs for accessing IT facilities, holding meetings where TRA facilities don't exist, training, etc.
41. In many areas of the borough TRAs are already working together and with other local community groups to improve their local area and community. The council will work with TRAs to help them continue this work supporting residents led local collaborations and forums including between council and housing association TRAs. The council will work to support in ways that are helpful and benefit the local community.

Rationale

42. Increasing the number and greater resources is not only a matter of fairness and opportunity, but also shows the council's commitment to 'providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved'.
43. Gathering anonymised equalities and diversity data will allow the council to carry out analysis and identify any particular groups who are not represented so that targeted outreach activity can be delivered to encourage them to get involved. This will compliment other activities to enable the council to better know its residents and the review of training is another example of recognised good practice (LGA).
44. It is important that TRAs are transparent in how funds are allocated and spent as they are public funds and many residents in the consultation expressed a desire for this information to be more widely monitored and easily accessible.
45. The above proposals are likely to result in more estates covered by a TRA which will lead to more empowered local communities. Residents will be able to learn from each other and share best practice, leading to more TRAs thriving and maximising their available resources for the benefit of the local community with more local projects being delivered by the local community for the local community

Local Housing Forums

Proposals consulted on

46. That the 12 Area Housing Forums (AHFs) be abolished and their function of providing a place to discuss area housing issues be incorporated into the newly established Ward Forums, designed to bring residents and local councillors together to discuss local issues.

Consultation Findings

47. This was the least popular proposal in the most recent consultation. Both individuals and organisations expressed concerns about the proposal's viability and that it would dilute the importance of housing issues. Feedback also indicated that residents feel the council should be more inclusive and engage with residents regardless of whether they have TRAs or not and to also make it easier for those who can't attend meetings to have a say. The general feedback from AHF, Tenants Council (TC) and Homeowners Council (HOC) has been that ward forums are not the right place to discuss housing issues.
48. The co-design panel recommended that the current Area Housing Forums (AHF) be replaced by new Housing Forums, open to all council tenants and homeowners in their respective area. These Forums should have a clearly defined role and a standard agenda developed with residents, including housing service performance and would provide a mechanism to highlight and escalate systemic concerns.
49. During the Kaizen/Social Engine review 57% of respondents said they knew nothing about Area Housing Forums. It was also highlighted that Area Housing Forums do not match with the housing management areas and that this adds confusion to who is responsible for what and that some form of re-assessment of structure to clarify the purpose and remit of each element would be beneficial.

Final Proposal

50. Taking into account the above, the final proposal is, not to incorporate the functions of AHFs into Ward Forums, instead the council will continue to have local forums focused solely on council housing issues, replacing the current AHFs with five Local Housing Forums (LHF). Appendix 3 shows a map of these areas. LHF will:
 - i. Provide a local forum where tenants and residents can:
 - Promote positive & effective resident participation
 - Shape and improve the council's housing services
 - Be consulted on key council policy changes that particularly impact on people living in council owned homes in their area
 - Receive updates on the performance and delivery of housing services
 - Access residents participation support and training
 - Showcase work they are doing in their area
 - Network with other active tenants and residents and local councillors
 - Elect representatives to the Southwark Tenants and Residents Forums (see below), and receive regular updates from them.
 - ii. Be inclusive and open to all residents living in council owned, leased or freehold homes in their area, including council owned temporary accommodation.
 - iii. Be chaired by an elected council tenant or resident leaseholder who lives in the area

- with chairs having a tenure of no longer than three consecutive years.
- iv. Each be supported by a named lead Councillor, a named Area Manager and a named resident involvement officer, with other relevant council officers and contractors also attending as needed to:
 - Discuss potential changes to council policies, strategies and services and listen to residents views to help shape them
 - Update on the performance and delivery of the council's housing services
 - Address topics requested collectively by residents, listen to their feedback and jointly problem solve service delivery issues
 - v. Use a residents' poll at the start of the year to help inform the topics that they will have on their agendas.
 - vi. Each have a dedicated webpage to provide accessible information to residents about how they can get involved and enable those unable to attend meetings to find out what is happening in their area.
51. In addition, it is also vitally important to recognise that council homes make up over a quarter of Southwark. It is therefore right that issues related to council homes are also considered at Ward Forums alongside other import issue for the local community, so in addition to the above Ward Forums will also want to dedicate some of their meetings to council housing issues that are of particular concern within their wards. Where there are issues that Local Housing Forums feel could helpfully be discussed at a Ward Forum or Multi-Ward Forum meeting, they will be encouraged and supported to make that suggestion to the chair(s) of the relevant Ward Forums.

Rationale

52. The final proposal addresses the concerns expressed during the consultation about the ward forums as places to discuss housing while at the same time introducing a more open an inclusive mechanism to discuss local housing issues, whereby any resident regardless of whether they have or not a TRA or whether they are not part the TRA committee can participate and also put themselves forward to be elected for the borough wide strategic body. They will also provide opportunities for residents without a TRA to be included in the resident participation structure and obtain the information and support to set up their own TRA. This will allow for a wider diversity of views and opinions to be fed back to the council. The council commits to delivering well prepared, timely and bespoke approaches to resident participation topics across all the new structures, which in turn will lead to residents having an opportunity to have meaningful input into service design and improvement. The LHF's will at the same time provide a platform for experienced local community activists to bring their local knowledge to bear on discussions and debates around a host of housing and housing related topics.

Southwark Wide Tenant and Homeowner Forums and Resident Working Groups

Proposals consulted on

53. It was proposed that tenant and homeowners work together in one Tenants and Homeowners Forum (THF) with a total of 47 members representing each of the 23 wards. It was also proposed that the My Southwark Home Owners Board be retained.

Consultation Findings

54. The most recent consultation showed that

- 71% (474) strongly agree that tenants and leaseholders should jointly hold the council to account
 - 76% (513) strongly agree that such a body should be as representative as possible of those who live in council homes.
55. A number of respondents commented that tenants and leaseholders should be able to have separate meetings to address tenure specific issues. The general feedback from AHF, TC and HOC has been that tenants and leaseholders have distinct interests and discussing these in a joint tenure body would not work.
56. The co-design panel recommended that the council sets out reasonable expectations for any strategic group for tenants or homeowners such as accountability, clear membership, representation, code of conduct, robust governance, avoidance of duplication and consideration of tenure specific issues.
57. The Kaizen/Social Engine review recommended merging the Homeowners Council and Tenants Council. It based this recommendation on the finding that over half of respondents (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. The review concluded that having a separate Tenants Council and a Homeowners Council creates inefficiency and duplication as well as reinforcing a division between leaseholders and tenants that is unnecessary and unhelpful for scrutinising a single housing management service.

Final Proposal

58. The final proposal is to replace Tenants Council, Homeowners Council and the My Southwark Homeowners Board with a new Tenants Forum and a Homeowners Forum as well as a joint Tenants & Homeowners Forum.
- i. The common purpose of these forums will be to provide a place where tenant and homeowner representatives will:
 - Help to shape and improve the council's housing services and ensure residents can raise any concerns they have about the management of the council's housing services and homes
 - Be consulted by the council on key council policy changes that particularly impact on people living in council owned homes, including the setting of rents and service charges
 - Advise and support the council in developing an effective approach to resident participation
 - Receive feedback from other parts of the resident participation structure
 - Receive updates on the performance and delivery of housing services
 - ii. The Tenants Forum will:
 - Focus on issues relevant to tenants (e.g. tenancies, rents, tenants' service charges and repairs within the home, etc.)
 - Be made up of 24 elected tenant representatives
 - Tenure for each of these roles will be no longer than three consecutive years.
 - iii. The Homeowners Forum will:
 - Focus on issues relevant to homeowners (e.g. leases, homeowners' service charges, the home ownership service and the homeowners improvement plan, etc.)

- Be made up of 12 elected resident homeowners, plus up to 6 appointed resident homeowners who will bring experience that fills gaps in the knowledge of the elected forum members (for example this could be the experience of freeholders or people living in street front properties)
 - Have a homeowner chair and vice chair, the tenure for each of these roles will be no longer than three consecutive years.
- i. The Joint Tenants and Homeowners Forum (THF) will:
- Focus on the issues relevant to tenants and homeowners, including the overall performance of housing services, fire safety and the commissioning & monitoring of independent tenant and resident support and advice services
 - Be made up of the chair and vice chairs of the Tenants Forum & Homeowners Forum plus a number of other representatives elected from the Tenants Forum and Homeowners Forums
- ii. All three forums will:
- Have a forward plan set at the beginning of the council year, fine tuned via joint agenda planning meetings with the chairs and Cabinet Member
 - Be attended by the Cabinet Member (or their deputy) and a housing director
 - Be supported by a named resident involvement officer
 - Have no more than one tenant and one homeowner representative from each estate
- iii. The Tenants & Homeowners Forums will establish a small number of time limited Resident Working Groups to look in depth at key issues and make recommendations to the forums and the council on specific improvements that can be implemented. These working groups will each include representation from the Tenants and or Homeowners Forums as well as a majority of members recruited via Local Housing Forums and the Housing Online Panel who have experience of and interest in each topic, with the explicit aim of broadening the number and diversity of tenants and residents involved. These groups will normally undertake their work and report back recommendations in no more than six months. These working groups will be attended by lead officers and where appropriate councillors and will be facilitated by a resident involvement officer. All existing sub groups established by the current Tenants Council and Homeowners Council will conclude their work by the time of the first meeting of the new Joint Tenants and Homeowners Forum so that working groups going forward can be agreed by the new forums.

Rationale

59. These changes seek to widen participation in collective representation, strengthen the lines of electoral accountability, and enhance tenant and residents' collective influence in council decision-making. They ensure representativeness so that all key residents' interests and views are articulated at a strategic level while also ensuring the right level of seniority at the meetings so that agreed decisions can be acted upon promptly at the highest level.
60. Many respondents, including Tenants Council and Homeowners Council, highlighted the importance of collective participation structures that ensure the democratic accountability of tenant and resident representatives to a defined constituency and the possibility of their recall and replacement. This is also in keeping with notational policy developments. The principle of collective participation was embraced by government in

the Social Housing Green Paper (MHCLG, 2018), the National Housing Federation's new Tenants Together programme also recognises the importance of collective engagement and moves to establish a national representative organisation for tenants and residents have been announced.

61. Council tenants and homeowners live in close proximity to each other. On many of our existing estates council tenants, leaseholders, and private renters all live in the same block. As a result, there is a need for council services and communities to work together to ensure our services meet the needs of all our residents and that we all take pride and responsibility in homes and the local area. However a significant number of tenants and homeowners also felt that they faced some specific issues which they felt warranted tenant and homeowner specific bodies.

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Proposals consulted on

62. The council's Housing Scrutiny Commission has a formal legal role in scrutinising the delivery of the council's housing services. The committee is primarily made up of councillors from all parties but can also co-opt other members. It was proposed that the Chair, Deputy-Chair and one other member of the Tenants and Homeowners Forum would be co-opted to the Housing Scrutiny Commission, a sub-committee of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that they would have a right to fully participate in the meetings and deliberations of that Commission. Also that the Tenants and Residents Forum would have the right to select one subject per year for consideration by the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

Consultation Findings

63. Southwark TMO Committee asked that a third place on the housing scrutiny commission is allocated to a TMO representative.

Final Proposal

64. Tenants Forum, Homeowners Forum and STMOC will each be able to nominate one of their members to be co-opted onto the commission each year
65. The Joint Tenants and Homeowners Forum will also be able to identify a topic/issue to be looked at in depth by the commission as part of the commission's work plan each year (as well as being able to recommend other topics the commission may wish to include in its work plan)

Rationale

66. These proposals aim to strengthen the link between this commission and residents, so residents are better able to scrutinise housing services. The inclusion of a TMO representative ensures that TMO's views and ideas are also fed into the housing scrutiny process.

Tenants and homeowners online panel

Proposals consulted on

67. It was proposed that, alongside all of the structures, the council should endeavour to recruit up to 1,000 tenants and homeowners to a panel of active residents who can be

invited to give their views or take part in service improvement initiatives, such as Task & Finish groups. The membership of the panel would be a cross section of our communities, reflecting the geographical, age, gender and ethnicity mix of those who live in council homes.

Consultation Findings

68. The most recent consultation revealed that
- 74% (495) agree that it is important to offer a range of ways for people to get involved
 - 53% (357) said they would be interested in joining an on line engagement pool.
 - A few respondents commented that the balance between online and face to face engagement has to be right
 - 73% (491) selected e-mail as the way respondents would like to be kept up to date about decisions that affect them with choosing this option
 - The second most popular at 52% (349) was meetings
 - 41% (276) preferred questionnaires and surveys)
 - Young people expressed a preference for engaging on line with only 5% saying they would be interested in joining a young people's panel or attending meetings.
69. The co-design panel recommended three initial pilots for developing digital involvement, such as major works, communication, a sounding board through emails which could widen considerably the number of involvement residents.
70. The Kaizen/Social Engine review recommended making more effective use of digital tools. It noted that this needed to be accompanied by a level of sophistication, engagement expertise and leadership in order to make it 'live' and relevant. The review particularly noted that young people were more likely to embrace digital platforms, whilst recognising the barriers that some residents have to using digital technology.

Final Proposal

71. That the council establishes an online panel of tenants and residents to seek wider views on the council's housing services, homes and estates and how they can be approved. The panel will:
- i. Seek the wider views of people living in council homes on our housing services, homes and estates and how they can be improved
 - ii. Engage a representative cross section of the people who live in council homes
 - iii. Be an additional and complementary way to engage with residents - supplementing but not replacing face to face and other forms of engagement
 - iv. Help to inform the work of the council, Tenants and Homeowners Forums and housing scrutiny, with surveys commissioned jointly by these bodies and findings reported back to them
 - v. Use a range of online surveys, email and social media to engage residents
 - vi. Be supported by an officer with expertise in seeking residents' views online

Rationale

72. Southwark Council recognises that not all residents are digitally included and the consultation feedback showed concern that greater use of IT should not exclude

anyone due to lack of access to or experience of using modern technology and tools. The wider proposals retain a robust element of face to face meeting based engagement for those who have a preference for that way of interaction. At the same time, the proposals for digital engagement mean that a wider pool of residents will be able to participate and express their views, adding to the ways in which residents can engage with the council.

73. The residents online panel will also be a source for topic specific task and finish groups which will facilitate a greater residents and landlord collaboration, enabling issues to be probed and understood in depth. This approach will also fosters a culture of partnership and joint learning focusing on solutions to problems and service improvement, allowing adequate time for complex issues to be considered in depth leading to more innovative ideas, responses and interventions.

Tenant Management

Proposals consulted on

74. The recommendation in relation to tenant management was that the Southwark Tenant Management Organisations Committee (STMOC) should remain in its current form and continue to carry out its role identifying opportunities to improve the partnership working between the council and TMOs and identify improvements to services in areas under TMO management for the benefit of residents.

Consultation Findings

75. Whilst this recommendation received only a small number of comments those received were all supportive. However a number of respondents made the wider point that tenant management is a key building block of resident participation and should be consistently recognised as such. A request was also made for TMOs to have a place on housing scrutiny alongside tenant and homeowner representatives to provide a tenant management perspective.

Final Proposal

76. Southwark has a long and proud history of supporting tenant management, the council is committed to continuing this and to making tenant management one of the key building blocks of our approach to residents participation (whilst also recognising the distinct and spate roles of TRAs and TMOs). as part of this commitment:
 - i. Southwark Tenant Management Organisations Committee (STMOC) will remain in its current form as part of the council's formal residents participation structure
 - ii. STMOC will be able to nominate one of its members to be a co-opted member of the council's Housing Scrutiny Commission, with the right to fully participate in the meetings and deliberations of that Commission.
 - iii. STMOC will be able to nominate one of its members to be a co-opted (non voting) attendee of Tenants Forum and one to Homeowners Forum, with both also being co-opted (non voting) attendees of the joint Tenants and Homeowners Forum.
 - iv. The council will work with TMOs in assisting them to review their training needs (in coordination with the TRA offer)
 - v. The council will continue to support TMOs in extending or establish new TMOs to cover areas without one where residents would like to do so and it is right for them

Rationale

77. A significant proportion of Southwark homes are covered by a TMO. The nature of tenant management is that it brings its own unique issues and therefore it is important the experience and perspective of TMOs is represented across the council's resident participation structures.

Housing Conferences

Proposals consulted on

78. It was proposed that the council will support Tenants and Homeowners to arrange an annual conference.

Consultation Findings

79. A homeowners and a tenants conference were held during the consultation period. Both were well attended and there was strong support for continuing them. Homeowners council and attendees at the homeowners conference also expressed the value of a stand alone homeowners conference including for non-resident homeowners for who this may be their only point of face to face engagement with the council.

Final Proposal

80. The council will work with the Tenants Homeowners Forums and SGTO to organise and deliver an annual Tenants and Resident Conference open to everyone who lives in a council home and will also work with the Homeowners Forum to organise an annual event for all council leaseholders and freeholders focussed on homeowner specific issues.

Rationale

81. Both Tenants Council and Homeowners Council have arranged successful large events in recent years. The council want to continue to support this format of engagement that has been shown to work well for many people. Holding a separate event for homeowners will allow the council to have face to face discussion with non-resident leaseholders whilst also having a different space to engage with the people who live in the council homes.

Resident Involvement Fund (RIF)

82. Details of the current arrangements for resident involvement funding were set out in the previous report presented to Cabinet in June 2019.

Proposals consulted on

83. The original proposal was for a new Resident Involvement Fund (RIF) to replace existing separate funds for tenants and homeowners to be calculated using the same formulas currently in place giving an approximate annual budget of £676k.
84. The new RIF would fund the TRA annual grants (circa £178k) and servicing of the

resident involvement structure including training (circa £162k). The remainder (circa £364k) would be split in two halves. One half would be devolved to Ward Forums to be agreed by ward councillors and spent in accordance with borough-wide objectives on council estates and residential properties. This would be added to the Tenants and Residents Social Improvements Grants (TRSIG) funding divided by ward. The other half of the fund would be for agreed strategic objectives and subject to decision by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Modernisation on advice from the Tenants and Homeowners Forum. Strategic spending would be expected to deliver identifiable and measurable outcomes for tenants and homeowners. It would also be used to enable Tenants and Homeowners to arrange an annual Tenants and Homeowners conference.

85. It would be a cabinet member for housing management and modernisation decision, taking on advice from the Tenants and Homeowners Forum, to decide what funding is allocated to third party organisations and whether this is allocated via grants or contract.

Consultation Findings

86. The most recent consultation showed that:
- 61% (412) strongly agree that TRA grants should be allocated at local level
 - 67% (446) strongly agree that the council should allow applications from residents if there is no TRA and it is clear the activity is supported by and will benefit tenants and leaseholders.
 - 72% (484) strongly agree that councillors should work with local residents to determine local priorities for spending the resident involvement fund.
87. A small number of respondents stated that councillors should not be involved in local decisions for this funding. A few comments were made on the theme of fairness in distribution of funding and accountability. A number of people commented that the funding application process should be simplified and training on how to complete good quality applications provided to residents.
- 64% (428) strongly agree that some funding should continue to be allocated borough-wide to delivery outcomes that benefit both tenants and leaseholders.
 - 73% (491) strongly agree that some funding should continue to be used to provide access to independent advice services.
88. The co-design panel recommended that there should be a Communities Fund with clear objectives, outcomes and accountability. It also proposed that TRAs, TMOs, resident groups and community organisations should be eligible to bid for funds, but that the council should also be able to support applications from looser groups without a TRA or a bank account.
89. The Kaizen/Social Engine review showed that over two thirds (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 way funding is currently allocated. It was also noted that there is an over-reliance on outputs rather than delivering outcomes and opportunities that benefit local communities.

Final proposal

90. The council will establish a new **Resident Participation Fund**, this will replace the current Tenants Fund, Homeowners Fund and TRISG grants. The total funding will be increased from £860,000 to £900,000. This fund will need to benefit people who live in council homes as it will be funded by tenants and homeowners. It will fund the following activities:
- i. **Half (£450,000) will go to grassroots activity to fund:**
 - a. **Core Grants for TRAs** (currently £178,000): These are grants paid annually to all fully established TRAs covering council homes. The amount TRAs receive will be unchanged. TRAs covering 240 or less tenancies will continue to receive £1,300, with TRAs covering more than 240 tenancies continuing to receive an additional £5.50 per tenancy as is currently the case.
 - b. **Resident Participation Small Grants (£272,000):** This will provide funding for small grants of up to £5,000 to support projects and activities that bring tenants and residents together and improve their wellbeing. These grants will fund projects and activities that primarily benefit people who live in council owned homes. Applications will be open to established and emerging TRAs and TMOs as well as constituted local groups that can evidence that the application has been developed by and for people living in council homes. Decisions on the grants will be made by the Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Modernisation based on recommendations from a panel of tenant and resident representatives.
 - ii. **Half (£450,000) will cover Southwark wide activity.** Decisions on this funding will be made by the Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Modernisation based on recommendations from the Joint Tenants and Homeowners Forum, this will include funding for:
 - a. **Independent Support and Advice Services (£260,000):** This will fund Southwark wide independent support and advice services for council tenants and resident homeowners, including those provided by Southwark Group of Tenant Organisations as well as other advice services. These services will be commissioned on behalf of tenants and residents by the council based on priorities set by the Joint Tenants and Homeowners Forum in consultation with wider tenants and resident homeowners. It is anticipated that this will be through multi year contracts. The council will work with the Joint Tenants and Home Owners Forum to monitor the performance of these services.
 - b. **Training (£100,000),** to support the active participation of tenants and residents in their local community, including training that support people to set up and run all aspects of TRAs
 - c. **Other resident participation activities (£50,000),** including meetings, conferences and travel and other activities that support effective resident participation
 - d. **Administration of the above grants/contracts (£40,000)**
91. To provide time for the commissioning of contracts for independent support and advice services, the current grants for these services from the tenants and homeowners funds to the Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations and Citizens Advice Bureau will be extended for a further six months to the 31 September 2020 with funding from the new Resident Participation Fund.
92. Currently the formula for TRA Core Grants requires a budget of £178,000, if more homes were to be covered by TRAs in future, funding for the Resident Participation Small Grants will need to be reduced to cover this cost.

Rationale

93. The proposal reflects the feedback from residents that more resources should be made available too support grass roots community projects and for greater transparency of how resident participation funding is used. It also resolves a long-standing anomaly of the current system in that all tenants and homeowners pay in, but around 40% are excluded from applying for funding as they do not have a TRA. The proposal also allows the council and resident representatives to ensure that the significant sums spent on borough-wide services meet residents' needs and are value for money through the review, commissioning and monitoring of service providers.

Involving people who are not council tenants, leaseholder or freeholders

94. Resident participation also needs to take account of the needs and circumstances of those to whom the council is a landlord but who do not fall into the general needs category. This includes residents of sheltered and extra care housing and those placed in temporary accommodation. In addition, Southwark runs four Gypsy and Traveller sites and manages three supported hostels.

Temporary Accommodation (TA)

95. The council provides temporary accommodation to those who it has accepted a duty to house, but for who it cannot (yet) provide permanent accommodation.
96. Unlike general needs tenants, those in TA are not secure tenants, but occupy their homes on the basis of non-secure tenancies or licenses. Despite its name, temporary accommodation often lasts for months or years. Though TA residents do not pay into the resident participation fund, they receive housing management services and are part of their local community.
97. Council estate properties: there are around 800 TA households living in Southwark Council estate properties. In accordance with the TRA model constitution, as legal residents, those in TA are entitled to participate in their local TRA.
98. Family hostels: the council runs 17 family hostels with 349 units. Where a hostel is located within a TRA area, residents are entitled to take part in the life of the TRA. Where there is no functioning TRA, the council can arrange an annual meeting for residents.
99. Private sector: of the 200+ households placed in private sector accommodation, more than a quarter are located in other London boroughs. The Resident Involvement team will support the TA management team to ensure that these residents are informed about service standards and their rights as a tenant and to have the opportunity to have their say.

Sheltered and Extra-Care Housing

100. Sheltered housing – sheltered housing is used by older or frailer residents who can manage a degree of independent living. Almost all the council's 20 sheltered schemes now have their own TRA which is supported by sheltered housing staff. Resident Services will continue to work with the remaining schemes to establish TRAs.
101. Extra-care – there are only two extra-care schemes, providing accommodation with onsite carer support to very frail residents. One of these is located at a sheltered housing unit and has its own TRA. Resident Services is looking to establish a TRA at

the other in conjunction with the care provider.

102. Residents living in council owned temporary accommodation, family hostels, sheltered housing and extra care housing will also be able to participate in Local Housing Forum, Tenants and Homeowners Forums and the Residents Online Panel.

Supported Hostels

103. The council owns two and manages a third supported hostel. The hostels are used primarily by single men, many of whom have been rough sleepers. Residents can have extensive physiological or psychological problems and turnover in hostels is high.
104. Due to the particular needs of this client group, it is not considered feasible to establish TRAs in hostels. Instead, service information and the opportunity to have their say can be addressed through the onsite hostel staff at regular resident meetings in each hostel.

Gypsies and Travellers

105. Southwark's commitment to inclusion and respect for diversity includes its Gypsy & Traveller population. The council owns and manages four Traveller sites with 42 pitches. Residents are primarily families and are licensees. The fees they pay for their pitch and the services they receive are not part of the Housing Revenue Account. There are less than a dozen households living in Southwark Council homes who have identified to the council as Gypsy, Roma or Traveller.
106. The council is investing millions of pounds in refurbishing its Traveller sites and has a dedicated team that works closely with residents and the Southwark Travellers Action group (STAG) to enable Gypsies & Travellers to have their voices heard not only about the services they receive, but also wider community issues, such as consultation about nearby housing development or the Bakerloo line extension.
107. Site residents were included in the resident involvement review consultation and a meeting was held between the chair of the Southwark Travellers Action Group (STAG) trustees and the Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Modernisation. The Travellers Service and STAG will continue to facilitate engagement on a family and site basis. We will also encourage closer relationships between Travellers and local TRAs, including opportunities to use community facilities that do not exist on sites. The council will continue to capture all relevant information regarding Travellers who live in bricks and mortar to ensure their needs are addressed and will assist their participation in their TRAs.

Review

108. A review of the new resident involvement participation structure will be undertaken after the first year in order to assess its effectiveness and whether any adjustments might be needed, with a report back to cabinet by September 2021.

Policy implications

109. Homes England took over responsibility for the regulation of social housing providers in January 2018. It works with social housing landlords and tenants to improve the standard of services for tenants and residents. It took over responsibility for the regulation of social housing providers and monitors their performance. This includes a standard on tenant involvement and empowerment.

110. Local authorities also have a statutory requirement under s.105 of the Housing Act 1985 to put in place arrangements for consulting tenants on matters of housing management.
111. The council's Fairer Future Vision and the current Council Plan set the context for a relationship with residents based on trust, openness and transparency. The vision and plan describe a new relationship with citizens and customers that make more of the council's community leadership role. Part of this role is encouraging others to come together to do more, looking to the community to work with the council to provide solutions to the issues we face together.
112. In September 2017 the council adopted a Social Regeneration Framework for 'ensuring that the places where people live, now and in the future, create new opportunities, promote wellbeing and reduce inequalities so people have better lives, in stronger communities, and achieve their potential'.
113. In 2018 the council made eight new commitments aimed at making Southwark a fairer place to live where all residents have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Theme 1 is "A place to call home" and includes a commitment to work with tenants, residents and homeowner groups to find new ways to engage so that more people can have their say.
114. The proposals outlined in this paper also connect council housing participation with wider community engagement by integrating with structures replacing Community Councils.
115. In this context it is important that the council clearly states its commitment to effective engagement between the council and residents living in council homes and ensuring this is fit for purpose and reaches a broad and diverse range of our residents.

Community impact statement

116. The next steps set out in this report aim to enable the council to carry out more effective community engagement. It is intended that this will lead to improved engagement with all sections of the community. This is about improving the way the council supports strong, active and inclusive communities that are informed and involved in decision making and enable us to improve public services for everyone in the borough.
117. The approach proposed in this report recognises the diversity of our communities, the importance of community capacity building and the need to provide better and wider opportunities for communities to participate to influence service delivery, decision making and policy development in ways that suit them.
118. Whilst the council doesn't currently collect demographic data of those currently engaged in its consultation structures, anecdotal evidence shows that they do not make up representatives of our resident demographics. It is proposed that the new resident participation framework will routinely ask participants to voluntarily fill in demographic data so that going forward the council can assess how representative the mechanisms are and take action where they aren't.
119. An equalities analysis has been completed addressing both the proposals outlined in this paper and the next stage of consultation. While both elements comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, it is clear that council does not hold comprehensive

equalities data about all residents living in council housing. In implementing the new structure, the council will introduce systems for capturing equalities data so as to be able to authoritatively report on the success of the new structure in reaching out to all members of the communities.

120. In addition the Southwark Equalities and Humans Right Panel has considered at various stages the proposals and consultation and made comments which have been incorporated into the equality analysis and the recommendations found in this report.

Resource implications

121. The above resident participation framework changes can be delivered within existing budgets. Though no financial savings are planned, it is anticipated that productivity and satisfaction will increase due to more efficient use of resources. It is likely that a reorganisation of the resident involvement business unit staffing structure would be required in order to implement the above proposals.

Consultation

122. Between 2011 and 2013 the council undertook an Independent Housing Commission chaired by Jan Luba QC. It produced a report which challenged the council to think about the future of its housing stock. The council then embarked upon a wide ranging public engagement exercise, with dozens of events and multiple opportunities for everyone in the borough to get involved and to be heard.
123. The report stated that more effort should be made to change the “provider-user” culture that pervaded council housing in Southwark. It added that this could be partly achieved by actively seeking to engage residents more with housing management and setting local housing standards.
124. An independent review into resident involvement undertaken by The Kaizen/Social Engine then followed between April and May 2017 and included a large scale outreach programme across the borough, coupled with an online survey, focus groups and stakeholder interviews were used to engage over 1,000 local tenants and homeowners. The review also incorporated the opinions of council officers and Councillors and gathered evidence and experience from a range of other housing providers – both local authorities and housing associations as well as an assessment of other research on tenant engagement.
125. In September 2018 an independently chaired co-design panel with a majority of residents from a diversity of housing tenure, geography and demographics was set up. The panel received evidence in the form of written submissions from existing bodies, residents involved in current structures officers of the council, as well as papers prepared by the independent chair. The panel also spoke with resident representatives and council managers and it published its findings in January 2019 and a four week consultation period followed.
126. On 23 April 2019, the housing commission of the overview and scrutiny committee questioned the cabinet member for housing and modernisation and the director of communities about the consultation process to date.
127. Between July and October 2019 a final round of consultation took place. The consultation had over 1,100 responses and the feedback from that has been presented across this report and can be found in detail in Appendix 1. The consultation included targeted work and communications with specific groups including residents in

temporary accommodation, Gypsy and Traveller community, Southwark Disablement Association, Young Advisors and the Latin American Community among others.

128. The cabinet member for housing management and modernisation and officers also met with representatives of the existing consultation bodies – TC, HOC, AHFs, and STMOC to feed in their views to the consultation and discuss the way forward.
129. The latest and final round of consultation presented the detailed proposals for the new resident participation framework, a questionnaire, both in printed copies and an online version in order to offer a chance to as many residents as possible to share their views on the proposals, residents feedback was captured and presented in this report.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

130. The report recommends that cabinet note the proposals for a new framework for resident participation and seeks approval to implement the new framework in 2020.
131. The resident participation framework forms part of the council's arrangements to discharge its statutory obligation to consult with its secure and introductory tenants under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 (secure tenants) and similar provision in Section 137 of the Housing Act 1996 in respect of introductory tenants. These statutory provisions require the council to maintain such arrangements as it considers appropriate to enable tenants who are likely to be substantially affected by a matter of 'housing management' to be informed of any proposals and to make their views known. Any representations need to be considered in accordance with those arrangements. 'Housing management' for this purpose includes the management, maintenance, improvement or demolition of homes and the provision of services and amenities (but not including matters relating to rent or charges for services). Although not required by statute to consult on changes to rent and other charges, the council has, under paragraph 6e in the conditions of tenancy with council tenants undertaken to consult with Tenant's Council before seeking to make such changes.
132. There is no similar general statutory provision in relation to the council's long leaseholders although principles of fairness may require consultation be carried out in certain circumstances and there are specific consultation duties as to charges for works under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 which engage when 'qualifying works' are undertaken; for example, major works.
133. Local housing authorities in England are also regulated as "registered providers of housing" by the Regulator of Social Housing under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. It is a requirement that local housing authorities comply with principles and standards applied by the Regulator. Among the "regulatory standards" is the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard (July 2017). The standard includes a requirement that registered providers ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the formulation of policies and strategic priorities; making decisions about how housing-related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards; scrutinising performance; managing their homes; and managing repair and maintenance services.
134. The report sets out the consultation that has taken place and the outcome of that consultation. Cabinet should note that consultation undertaken by the council must meet a minimum standard of fairness if it is to be considered lawful. In order to ensure any consultation is fair, the law requires that consultation should happen when the

proposals are still at a formative stage; sufficient information should be given to enable the proposal to be intelligently considered; adequate time for responses should be given; and decision makers must conscientiously take into account responses to consultation when the ultimate decision is taken. Cabinet members should carefully consider the consultation findings when making a decision on the recommendations.

135. In the exercise of all its functions, the council must have due regard to the public sector equality duty in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Specifically to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, (b) to advance equality of opportunity and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics for this purpose are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Where any disproportionate effects are anticipated, the council should seek to mitigate where possible. It should also be noted that the duty is a continuing one and that if implemented, the impact of the new framework should be kept under review. Cabinet is referred to the community impact statement in this report.
136. The framework recommendations include provision for a member from each of the proposed Tenants Forum, Homeowners Forum and STMOC to be co-opted to the Housing Scrutiny Commission. The Housing and Environmental Commission is a sub-committee of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). The council's scrutiny function provides a challenge to the delivery of public services in Southwark and is a council committee subject to the provisions of the council's constitution.
137. Paragraph 4 of the OSC procedure rules in the council's constitution allow OSC and its sub-committees to appoint a number of people as non-voting co-optees, with the approval of the chair and vice chair of the OSC, who may be appointed to service for the full year or the duration of a specific task or review.
138. The report recommends the establishment of a new Residents Participation Fund. As to the making of grants from this fund, approval must be made in accordance with the decision making arrangements set out in the council's constitution; approval of grants to voluntary organisations of over £2500 is reserved for cabinet member decision.
139. With regards to paragraph 90.ii.a concerning the proposed procurement of external independent support and advice services, the council's Contract Standing Orders ("CSOs") state that, where the estimated contract value is above the applicable EU threshold for services, there is a requirement to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 following a publicly advertised competitive tendering process.

Strategic Director of Finance & Governance (FC19/031)

140. The strategic director of finance and governance notes the recommendations for the new Resident Participation Framework. This involves ending the existing funding streams for the Tenants Fund, Homeowners Fund and Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grants (TRISG) and replacing them with a new Resident Participation Fund, as set out in the report.
141. The proposed changes can be delivered within the existing budget, however, a reorganisation of the resident involvement business unit staffing structure will likely be required in order to implement the above proposals and a review of the framework will be undertaken after the first year.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Agenda and minutes of housing and community safety scrutiny subcommittee	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
Link: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=381		
Review of Resident Engagement - Report from the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Stephen Douglass 020 7525 7344
Link: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=5755&Ver=4		
Improving tenant and homeowner engagement in Southwark – a review Carried out by Kaizen and Social Engine	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Stephen Douglass 020 7525 7344
Link (please copy and paste into your browser): http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s73753/Appendix%20A%20Improving%20Tenant%20and%20Homeowner%20Engagement%20in%20Southwark%20A%20Review%20Carried%20out%20by%20Kaizen.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Consultation Findings
Appendix 2	Implementation Timeline
Appendix 3	Local Housing Forum Boundaries Map

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Kieron Williams, Housing Management And Modernisation	
Lead Officer	Michael Scorer, Strategic Director of Housing & Modernisation	
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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
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