

Committee	Dated:
Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee	16/01/2017
Subject: Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Decision
Report author: Kirsty Leitch, Community and Children's Services	

Summary

This report is presented to outline the purpose of the Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy. It sets out the key principles of our work and what we expect to achieve in 2017-18. The corresponding Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy Principles Diagram summarises the strategy and the four key principles.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Approve the Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy to support the shaping of this work in the Housing & Neighbourhoods department. This will support officers in their work and offer clarity to residents about what the department is looking to achieve.

Main Report

Background

1. The Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy was first published in 2014. The strategy led to a number of notable successes:
 - An active Housing User Board (HUB) with a membership of 180 residents
 - Events and activities organised on estates by residents. The publication of our 'Community Events Toolkit' has given both residents and staff more confidence to plan and organise activities.
 - Residents consistently putting in over 500 hours per quarter into their community and being recognised through the Time Credit programme. 46% of those earning Time Credits have not given their time before and 69% report their level of social contact has increased as a result.
 - The publication of our Tenants Handbook which puts all information for tenants in one place.
 - Weekly bulletins that go out on all estates with key updates.
 - Working more closely with residents for example, having a joint resident and staff working party to coordinate and facilitate our Residents Celebration Day.

2. Overall, the impact of the strategy can best be seen in the results of the 2016 Resident Satisfaction Survey, in which:
 - 96% of sheltered and 90% of general needs residents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. This has increased significantly across both sheltered and general needs since the 2015 satisfaction results. It is an increase in satisfaction of 7% for sheltered and 14% for general needs residents.
 - There has been an increase of 6% in satisfaction levels with how we listen to views and act upon them amongst general needs residents.
 - 88% of general needs and 93% of sheltered residents are satisfied with the information we provide about their housing.

Current Position

3. The new Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy has been developed to continue and expand on the work of the 2014 strategy. Consultation has been carried out with staff across the Housing & Neighbourhoods teams and with residents.
4. This strategy is the public-facing document which provides residents with our Resident Communications and Engagement vision and the principles we will adopt to ensure success.
5. The strategy will offer clarity to residents over what we are looking to achieve and support to officers in their community development and communications work. An action plan will be developed for each principle so we can clearly measure the implementation and success of the strategy
6. This strategy will develop upon the work of the 2014 strategy and build on achieving success in slightly less developed areas such as, supporting social wellbeing and setting up our Community Connectors project. Our ambition is to achieve Landlord Accreditation through the Tenant Participation and Advisory Service (TPAS) who will measure and accredit our work against our four key principles.
7. There is no legislative requirement for landlords to undertake consultation, other than Section 21 consultation with leaseholders under the Landlord & Tenants Act of 1985. Because of the lack of formal requirements, this strategy has been developed with regard to existing good practice within the department and across the City, good practice amongst other social landlords and recommendations made by TPAS.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. Having and using a Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy supports two priorities in the Department of Community & Children's Service Business Plan These are:
 - Priority 4: Homes and communities – Developing strong neighbourhoods and ensuring people have a decent place to live.

- Priority 5: Efficiency and Effectiveness – delivering value for money and outstanding services.

Conclusion

9. In conclusion, this strategy has been developed as a matter of good practice to support officers in their work, and to assist with the understanding and expectations of our residents.

Appendices

The following are attached as appendices:

- Appendix A - The Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy
- Appendix A1 - The Resident Communications and Engagement Strategy Principles Diagram
- Appendix A2 - Protocol on Estate Meetings & Drop-ins
- Appendix A3 – Protocol for Working with Groups

- Appendix B - The Equality Analysis for the Resident Communication and Engagement Strategy

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