

REPORT TO: Cabinet

MEETING DATE: 14 June 2016

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)

SUBJECT: Tenant Participation Strategy 2016-19

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy as the basis for effective tenant participation between now and June 2019.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses the Tenant Participation Strategy publication in line with its legal requirements under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The Tenant Participation Strategy is published in Members' Library Service (Ref: 72/16, June 2016 Bulletin).
- 2.2 That Cabinet recognises that the Strategy is a living document and that as such the action plan in particular will evolve as consultation with tenants and tenant organisations help inform the Council's future plans in this area.
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes that the success of the Strategy is dependent on good relationships being developed between the tenants' movement and Elected Members. To this end Elected Members will be invited to specific tenant participation training events in 2016/17 and are encouraged to attend.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced new rights for tenants and obligations for social landlords in relation to tenant participation and consultation.
- 3.2 These duties include:
- Councils and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) must prepare and publish a Tenant Participation Strategy. The Strategy must include

an assessment of resources required to ensure effective tenant participation. The Strategy should show how the Council intends to take the views of tenants into account, what matters the Council is likely to consult tenants about and the information that it will provide to tenants.

- The requirement to set up a publicly available Register of Tenants Organisations (RTOs) in line with guidance from the Scottish Government.
 - Landlords must ensure that the Tenant Participation Strategy complies with equal opportunities requirements.
- 3.3 The 2012–2015 Tenant Participation Strategy was approved by Cabinet in June 2012.
- 3.4 Prior to the conclusion of the 2012–2015 Strategy it was agreed with East Lothian Tenant’s and Residents Panel (ELTRP), who are the umbrella organisation for tenants and residents groups in East Lothian, that the 2012–2015 Strategy should first be reviewed before embarking on the development of a new Strategy.
- 3.5 This review of the 2012 Strategy involved the Tenant Participation Strategy Group comprising both Council staff and tenant representatives looking at the successes and challenges of the old Strategy.
- 3.6 The review of the Strategy included, but was not restricted to, consultation with tenants, tenant groups and staff.
- 3.7 The new draft Strategy was fully consulted on during January and March 2016.
- 3.8 Consultation methods used included, but were not limited to, letter, email, website information, a consultation event and a freephone service.
- 3.9 Comments, views and opinions expressed during the consultation period were recorded and form part of the Tenant Participation Strategy Consultation Register. This register and a report on the consultation are publicly available on the Council’s website or on request.
- 3.10 There was strong support for the new Strategy. All views were considered by the Tenant Participation Strategy Group and where appropriate reflected in the new draft Strategy.
- 3.11 Subject to formal approval, the Strategy will be formally launched at a joint event with ELTRP currently at the planning stage.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Tenant Participation Strategy recognises, links to and underpins other Council Strategies, including the Local Housing Strategy.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.
http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/2321/tenant_participation_strategy

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – The existing tenant participation budget will not be significantly impacted by the new Strategy.
- 6.2 Personnel – None.
- 6.3 Other – None.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 East Lothian Council Tenant Participation Strategy 2016-19 lodged in the Members' Library (Ref: 72/16, June 2016 Bulletin).
http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/5870/members_library_service
- 7.2 Tenant Participation Strategy Consultation Register & Report – available on Council's website.

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