

Meeting of Executive Members for Housing and Adult Social Services and Advisory Panel

4th June 2007

Report of the Head of Housing Services

Revised Tenant Participation Compact: York Customer Involvement Compact for Housing

Summary

1. This report introduces the revised Tenant Participation Compact: 'The York Customer Involvement Compact for Housing'. The Compact was approved by Housing Management Team (under delegated authority) on 2nd May 2007 and is brought to the Executive Member for information.

Background

2. The last Tenant Compact 'Getting on Board' was reviewed in 2003, and ran until 2006. The attached document is a refreshed and revised version, taking into account revised *National Framework for Tenant Participation Compacts* issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in 2005.

Consultation

3. The tenant compact panel, made up of representatives from Tenants and Residents groups and the Federation of Residents associations were involved in the review and development of the document, and a presentation setting out the proposed changes was made to the April 2007 meeting of the York Federation. Officers from the Neighbourhood Management Unit have also contributed to its development.

Options

4. None: this report is for information only.

Analysis

5. The attached document covers all the minimum core standards set out in the National Framework for Tenant Participation Compacts, and reflects work undertaken with the tenant compact panel to review the existing agreement. Residents were keen to aim for a short, user friendly document, and to this end the attached has been produced. Several parts of the compact will require more detailed procedures to sit behind them containing the detail, and this will

be reviewed as part of the procedure review process. Much of the work in developing tenant involvement further is set out in the Mature Partnership Agreement between Housing and the Neighbourhood Management Unit (NMU). The format of the document is for illustration only: the NMU are currently working on design ideas for the final document.

6. Several strands in developing customer involvement in the housing service are already underway: the NMU are undertaking a programme of work designed to assess the current capacity of resident associations (RA's) and the Federation, raise ambitions and establish firm objectives, and support new development. To date this has included :
 - Supporting the Federation through a series of 3 workshops in which they set themselves key objectives, re-wrote their constitution in line with these, and drafted an action plan which will begin to fulfil the objectives.
 - In collaboration with the Federation, undertook a capacity audit of the RA's (modelled as 'The Big Stocktake') which established the current level of activity, ambition and capability for RA's; and identified a set of shared objectives for raising the capacity, level of activity, and engagement with tenants and residents in their areas. The exercise culminated in the 'The Big Stock-take's Big Feedback', a event in which just under 50 residents participated.
 - An 'Every Action Counts' workshop on sustainability actions which landlords, tenant organisations, and tenants at large can support.
 - An ongoing programme of training, and visits to see best practice; which will be reviewed shortly in the light of the capacity audit exercise.
 - Some of the benefits of this work to date include:
 - a raised level of interest from RA members, and a focus on next steps and new development;
 - early signs of 'new blood' in RA committees, and a wider age range represented (as reflected in the attendance at the 'Big Feedback' event;
 - re-engagement and interest in the Federation, from RA members who had previously lapsed in involvement, and from RA members not previously taking a consistent interest;
 - partnership links with Future Prospects, Adult Education, and Learning and Culture, which will go to support objectives around training, and engagement with young people
 - A more 'outward looking' perspective from RA's and Federation alike, with plans for public meetings, better communication, and local projects.

Corporate Priorities

7. The compact links to the corporate objective to improve focus on the needs of customers, and to improve the way the council and its partners work together. Customer involvement is also pivotal to the objective to improve the quality and availability decent, affordable homes in the city, particularly in developing clear service standards for what tenants can expect, and consultation around modernisation works.

Implications

8. The implications associated with this report are:
- **Financial** - The cost of design and print of the document, can be met from the Service Development Printing Budget.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** - None
 - **Equalities** - The compact covers many of the areas central to an equalities impact assessment in terms of accessible meetings and communications. In so far as representation is concerned, it is known that participation in the service is mainly by older, white residents, and part of the work in taking the compact forward will be to expand the methods of involvement on offer, and to look to involve hard to reach groups. Residents groups funded by the council are expected to be non-discriminatory in their activity.
 - **Legal** – None, the National Framework for Tenant Participation is good practice, rather than a legal document.
 - **Crime and Disorder** - No Crime and Disorder Implications
 - **Information Technology (IT)** - No IT implications
 - **Property** - No Property Implications
 - **Other** - None

Risk Management

9. The revised Compact and associated action plans aim to make participation in the housing service more accessible, and in turn to increase levels of satisfaction with participation. Tenant Satisfaction with Opportunities for Participation is a Best Value Performance Indicator and one which has an impact on the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rating. Satisfaction among tenants in York with opportunities for involvement is currently 57%, this is an increase on 55% in 2006, but below the bottom quartile threshold of 68.2%.

Recommendations

10. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member that:
- The Executive member notes the contents this report.
- Reason: To inform the Executive Member

Contact Details

Author:

Alison Leech

Service Development Manager

Housing Services

Tel No. 01904 554362

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Steve Waddington – Head of Housing

Services

Report Approved

Date 10/05/2007

Specialist Implications Officer(s) Financial – Jayne Close, Housing Accountant

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Getting on Board – Tenant Compact 2003-6

ODPM – National Framework for Tenant Participation Compacts (March 2005)

Notes of Tenant Compact Panel Meetings.

Annexes:

Annex A Draft Tenant Compact Document