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| REPORT TO: | HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES | AGENDA ITEM: 10 |
| DATE OF MEETING: | 9th JUNE 2016 | CATEGORY: DELEGATED |
| REPORT FROM: | PERFORMANCE AND POLICY MANAGER | OPEN |
| MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT: | MARTIN GUEST (595940) martin.guest@south-derbys.gov.uk | DOC: |
| SUBJECT: | RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT ARRANGEMENTS | REF: |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | ALL | TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCSO1 |

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members note the changes made to our resident involvement arrangements along with the achievements set out in 3.10 and 3.11 and plans for 2016/17 set out in 3.12.

2. Purpose of Report

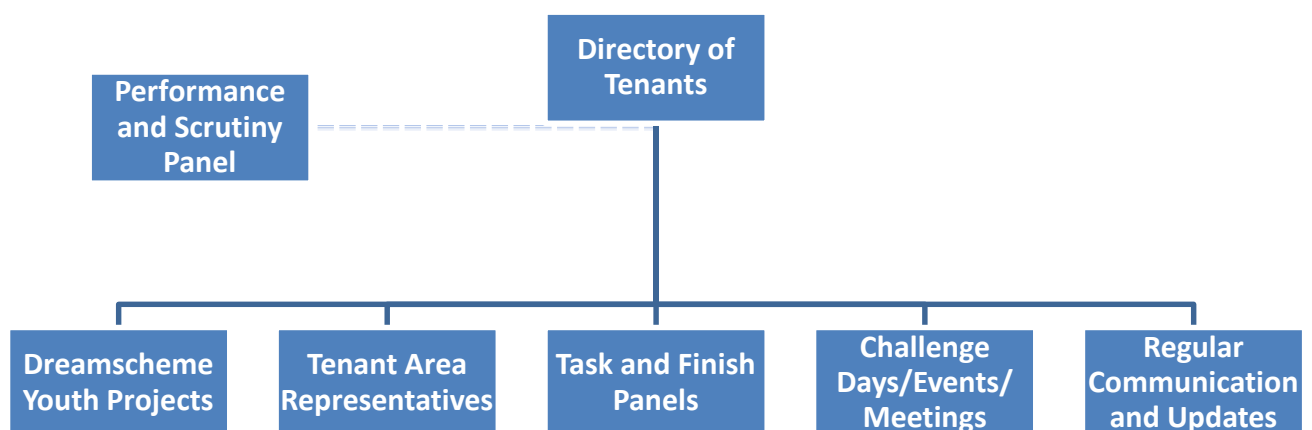
- 2.1 This report sets out the changes in our resident involvement structure over the past 3 years and details the achievements through this structure and the plans for the next 12 months.

3. Detail

Tenant Involvement Structures

- 3.1 The Council, in conjunction with its tenants, set up a formally constituted tenants group in 2001; initially they were called TACT (Tenants Advisory and Consultation Team), the aim of forming the group was to work in partnership with the Council's Housing Services team and contribute to the decision making process with regard to the provision of housing related services. In 2006 the group was relaunched as the South Derbyshire Tenants Forum.
- 3.2 In 2014, this Council were advised by its tenants that, due to problems with recruiting to constituted positions within the tenants forum, a decision had been taken by the tenants to become a non-constituted group. Officers held discussions with tenants over the format of any future involvement, with an agreement that a non-constituted group would exist, and be known simply as the Tenants Panel. Officers wrote to each member of the Forum providing the required 21 days' notice of the intention to dissolve the forum as per the constitution, with the group being wound up in June 2014.

- 3.3 The new un-constituted Tenants Panel was set up from June 2014 and met on a quarterly basis throughout 2014 and 2015.
- 3.4 It was agreed with tenants that the new arrangements would be reviewed after 12 months and this took place in late 2015. The review found numbers of tenants recruited or wanting to be involved in this formal group had dropped and a number of the members had either left or stood down due to ill health. A meeting of the panel in February 2016 was held to discuss the way forward and it was decided by the tenants in attendance that there was no future continuing with the Panel arrangements and that tenants wanted to pick and choose what projects they wanted to get involved with and therefore a directory of involvement was set up.
- 3.5 In light of the changes referred to above, officers worked with its involved tenants to review membership of the Tenants Performance and Scrutiny Panel. A recruitment drive was followed by a joint training exercise with Derwent Living, with SDDC tenants undertaking a Chartered Institute of Housing Level 3 Award in Resident Scrutiny.
- 3.6 Following successful completion of this course in late 2015, the Tenant Performance and Scrutiny Panel now has an expanded membership. Over the next 6 months the new Panel will undergo a full induction programme with Housing Services to enable them to gain a greater understanding of the works undertaken by the Service. This will assist the Panel with their scrutiny of Housing Services operations more effectively. A programme of these reviews will be delivered in late 2016/early 2017.
- 3.7 A diagram of the key elements of the new approach resident involvement is shown below:



- 3.8 These key elements are explained in more detail below:

Directory of Tenants – details of those tenants interested in contributing to service delivery reviews would be kept on a directory. As and when opportunities for involvement came up the Council would contact those interested to provide tenants the opportunities to become involved.

Performance and Scrutiny Panel - will monitor any Housing Services operational activity from a tenant perspective.

Dreamscheme projects – given the positive impact on the community, we will continue to work on with the children of our tenants, and younger people from with our communities to make a difference to our estates and the wider community.

Local tenants' area representatives – these provide a valuable grass-roots opportunity for involvement. We currently have 11 across the district and over the next two years we plan to increase this number to 20 in order to provide support and advice for new tenants in their communities.

Task and Finish projects – involving residents to look at such topics as Universal Credit, Publications, and how we deliver our Capital Programme.

An annual event for all involved tenants - this will be held in February each year from 2017. Its focus will be to give tenants opportunities to see what has been happening during the year, to hear about any changes planned for the service, and to get involved in planning and delivering these changes.

Twice yearly informal meetings will be held with the Housing Management Team, providing an opportunity ask any questions, discuss topical issues, and receive an overview of performance including highlighting successes achieved through working in partnership, and to discuss future plans.

A quarterly Tenant Participation update, sent by email, will keep involved tenants informed on the progress of major projects and consultations taking place in Housing Services.

3.9 The aim of the new approach to resident involvement is to:

- Offer our customers the opportunity to make a real contribution to the decisions that affect their homes and communities.
- Increase the number of involved tenants, by offering a variety of involvement methods to meet the needs of our customers.
- Support local structures of involvement to deliver projects and events within local communities, improve neighbourhoods and contribute to our vision of creating homes and places where people want to live.
- Work towards removing barriers that prevent customers getting involved.
- Develop effective scrutiny – so tenants and leaseholders can set standards for services, monitor performance and hold us accountable for service delivery.
- Measure the impact of customer involvement and feed this back to customers.
- Ensure customer involvement provides value for money and meets our customers' needs and aspirations.

Tenant Involvement Achievements

3.10 Over the past 3 years, and working closely with our involved tenants, The Council has supported the delivery of a number of major projects including:

- Dreamscheme Youth Projects in Overseal, Newhall, Etwall, Swadlincote Town Centre and Skate Park.
- An annual Can you Dig It gardening competition.
- An annual Christmas Hamper Scheme.

3.11 We have also worked with tenants to:

- Review and develop the Council's HRA Business Plan which sets out the long term plan for the Council's Housing Stock.
- Input into our New Build programme.
- Develop the Community Food Hub Scheme at Oaklands Village in Swadlincote.
- Make changes to our policies, practices and procedures to ensure that we are delivering customer focussed services.
- Draft and produce a bi-annual Housing News which is distributed to all tenants.

Tenant Involvement Action Plan

3.12 In future months we plan to work with our involved tenants on our following activities:

- Working on projects coming out of the Housing Asset Management Strategy.
- Development of the roll out of SMS/Email as a key means of communication with tenants.
- Further involvement in the Council's New Build Programme.
- Supporting the youngsters to deliver the Dreamscheme Allotment Project in Midway.
- Supporting our vulnerable tenants through the gardening and low level support project being delivered through the South Derbyshire CVS.
- Meeting with Housing Officers to identify issues as part of estate walkabouts.
- Holding a number of Challenge days to look at hot topics such as Universal Credit and other welfare reform issues to help us shape services to support our tenants.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 None

5. Corporate Implications

5.1 South Derbyshire District Council's vision is being delivered through actions in the Corporate Plan 2016-21. Our approach to resident involvement supports the following aims contained in the new Corporate Plan

- People
 - Enable people to live independently
 - Protect and help support the most vulnerable, including those affected by financial challenges
- Outcomes
 - Maintain customer focus

6. Community Implications

6.1 Increasing the opportunity for tenants to input into the way we deliver our Housing Services will have a positive impact for our communities.