

Tenant participation review appendix B

Findings and recommendations from the TPAS SMART review

1. Summary

The tenant participation advisory service (TPAS) assessed housing and landlord services against 7 national engagement standards:

1. Governance and transparency
2. Scrutiny
3. Business and strategy
4. Complaints
5. Information and communication
6. Resources for engagement
7. Community and wider engagement

Below are the recommendations for improvement.

2. Desktop review - TPAS recommendations

STANDARD 1: GOVERNANCE

Recommendation 1: Overall this is a standard where the approach can be strengthened to explicitly state a clearly defined role for residents in the governance of the organisations' Housing and Landlord Services area within the HRA plan and related documentation such as terms of reference for active groups and forthcoming Engagement Strategy.

BCC should clearly state the reason and purpose for enabling the role of residents, or, in other words the why. We suggest being really clear about how the implementation of the Tenant Engagement and Involvement Strategy will contribute to achieving the HRA strategic aims and enables a role for residents within the governance of BCC Housing Services. By Governance we mean how the Housing Service operates, is managed and its people are held to account rather than just in an advisory capacity. The Housing Management Board should be reviewed in more detail to assess the potential for strengthening its role as a vehicle for a greater resident role in governance and strengthen evidence of resident voices within decisions.

We also suggest a decision and influence map is developed as part of the Engagement Strategy that highlights who makes key service related decisions, how resident voices are sought and evidenced within decisions, communicated to other tenants and open to challenge and scrutiny.

BCC should also consider how residents are able to;

- o Monitor BCC Housing compliance with consumer standards and key groups able to develop a relationship with the 'Responsible Person' (as defined in the Social Housing White Paper – the Charter for Social Housing Residents)
- o Monitor BCC Housing compliance with health and safety standards (including those set out by the new Building Safety Regulator)
- o Monitor BCC Housing broader performance in relation to satisfaction
- o Set an Engagement Influence budget with BCC Housing
- o Have oversight of resident training and succession planning
- o Decision making via evidence-based reports from all engagement and involvement activity
- o Obtain evidence of the customers' experience through its proactive links with the wider customer base

Recommendation 2: We feel that there is accountability at BCC but is an area that can be strengthened and suggest that all activities are assessed to ensure that they are outcome focused, by this we mean that the activity is making a difference across improving services and service standard performance, building stronger communities and increasing value for money.

We further suggest that BCC considers how to improve communication around 'how BCC are held to account' through clear feedback about how activities are part of the approach to accountability, and to see how you can bring additional assurance that the customer voice does influence decision making, through reporting and publishing discussions where customer voices have been considered.

BCC could also look to broaden the number of those engaged by reviewing the elective process for forum members to join the Housing Management Board and a member of this group to join the Bristol Homes Board. We would suggest this can become tokenistic rather than encouraging tenants with the right skills and lived experience to work strategically. This will also help to alleviate personal issues raised inappropriately and enable more opportunities for new residents to become more involved.

There needs to be a stronger and clearly defined opportunity for tenants within the governance of the housing services area and more information on the roles and outcomes of each group once reviewed and developed.

Recommendation 3: We feel the above is a standard that BCC should be developing a strategic approach for and in partnership with residents, towards ensuring an environment of mutual respect and to particularly pay attention to the repairs service area.

Recommendation 4: Combined with developing a new engagement strategy and service standards, we suggest that consideration is given to how insight feeds into continuous improvements and to consider a 'You said We did' type of communication. This is a simple and often effective way to give feedback on how involvement (by any means) links to service improvement and change.

We suggest that BCC also explore how to report back to tenants the discussions and priorities developed at the local housing forums and from the activities and outcomes from the three service user groups. (We note the You said we did area on the councils consultation hub and are specifically suggesting this is extended to involvement within housing services).

Recommendation 5: Communicate who is the lead and responsible for BCC meeting the consumer standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing.

STANDARD 2: SCRUTINY

Recommendation 1: This is an area that we agree needs to be strengthened with a focus on the role of the scrutiny panel as part of the 'clearly defined role for tenants in governance'. Review as suggested in theme 1 above and clearly set out the relationship between scrutiny and staff for the service area under scrutiny activity.

We suggest that commitment to supporting the tenant led scrutiny approach is included in service area delivery plans for example, to help embed the approach to scrutiny all service areas need to have a supportive commitment and positive response to scrutiny.

Recommendation 2: Sharing of information and outcomes as a result of scrutiny can be developed through rolling recommendations completed and communicated to all tenants and staff. We suggest that reference is made to tenant scrutiny formally within the Housing Management Board terms of reference and sets out how they will receive recommendations and respond and to keep the panel and wider residents updated.

Recommendation 3: Look at how the scrutiny panel utilise task and finish groups recruited from the database to encourage wider views as well as how tenants voice and insight information is used to evidence recommendations.

STANDARD 3: BUSINESS AND STRATEGY

Recommendation 1: We would like to see how BCC develop the new Engagement strategy to enable regular monitoring and assessments of impact and value of the strategy and delivery of service standards in collaboration with residents and as part of this to develop the inclusion of levels of influence and time needed. We would suggest that a 'Voice of the customer (resident) report' is considered for development to capture and sets out in detail key feedback themes and targeted action to improve.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the approach to engaging tenants and leaseholders in building safety needs to be addressed urgently, sprinkler works are intrusive, going into resident's homes, residents need to be highly engaged throughout this process.

Recommendation 3: Is in relation to standard 5 and 6 where there is no evidence available, as the strategy has not been developed. To include agreed timeframes to ensure that all engagement activities provide enough time to hear and consider resident views is an area that should be focused on as the Engagement Strategy develops. To include a clear and

consistent method for reporting back to residents how their views have been considered in all engagement activities is an area that should be included in the Engagement Strategy.

Residents are consulted in a timely and effective manner on any change in landlord or significant change in the management arrangements was not a focus for evidence gathering as part of this review however we would expect there to be a recognition of this commitment within the developing engagement strategy.

STANDRD 4: COMPLAINTS

Recommendation 1: We suggest that BCC engage residents in the development of your complaints service approach and continuous learning and development from complaints, with all improvements widely publicised to residents and staff.

Recommendation 2: Complaints, including those determined by the Housing Ombudsman, are documented, widely communicated and consistently publicised to all stakeholders and engage residents in reviewing your approach to complaints, policy and procedures including the HO self assessment, we would suggest a task and finish approach with previous complainants who have had lived experience of the service.

Recommendation 3: BCC should consider how to encourage resident involvement in complaint handling through the formation of resident panels or other activity.

STANDARD 5 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Recommendation 1: In relation to meeting standard 1, 3 and 6 to develop how you make performance information available to all residents on a consistent basis and an information sharing protocol or agreement/charter to set out how formal groups and individuals can request additional information.

STANDARD 6: RESOURCES FOR ENGAGEMENT

We suggest that standards 2 and 5 could be strengthened.

Recommendation 1. BCC need to make tenants who are involved and staff 'feel good' again, think about a recognition scheme to highlight outcomes achieved for staff and tenants. Shout out more about the positive impacts and news stories as a result of engagement.

Recommendation 2. Consider a cross service team (Engagement Advocates/champions) to develop the new approach to tenant engagement and involvement, also involve tenants to review your plans and take ownership of progress.

STANDARD 6: COMMUNITY AND WIDER ENGAGEMENT

There were no recommendations for **Community and Wider Engagement** other than developing a more communications of outcomes form the Local Housing forums in line with the community development stories mentioned as good practice.