

Housing Scrutiny Themed Review: Resident Engagement

Proposed Response

Recommendation	Accept, Amend or Reject the recommendation	Organisation	Comments
Recommendation 1: That the new Resident Involvement Strategy explores all possibilities to enable digital engagement with residents, whilst ensuring that there are digital inclusion offers in place	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations	<p>The Resident Involvement Strategy (RIS) which has now formally been agreed at Cabinet has identified digital engagement as a key priority.</p> <p>The strategy commits to providing a range of ways for residents to be involved.</p> <p>We know that resident involvement is most successful when it is planned around the lives and interests of residents. We will offer a wide range of involvement opportunities that provide flexibility so that residents can be involved to the degree and level that they choose. Specifically, over the lifetime of the strategy we will aim to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a virtual involvement panel with a clear incentives package to support sign-up and engagement levels• Offer regular virtual meetings, focus groups and bitesize briefings on subjects of interest to residents <p>The strategy has also identified the need to improve digital connectivity.</p>

			<p>We know that residents have busy lives, and we want to make use of digital technology to make it as easy as possible for residents to be involved. We want to build on the progress we have made and explore innovative and emerging technologies to reach more people, more effectively and offer engagement options that are dynamic, fit for purpose and appropriate to resident's needs.</p> <p>We recognise that some residents face barriers to engaging digitally, the strategy therefore seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align with LBWF's Digital Inclusion strategy, following cross departmental recommendations and working to address areas of identified digital exclusion <p>Digital Inclusion sessions will continue to be targeted to older and disabled residents through our social value offer delivered by our contractors.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: That all Council staff working in housing services are involved in and responsible for the implementation of the new Resident Involvement Strategy</p>	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations	<p>The service accepts that more work needs to be done to ensure that resident involvement/engagement is better understood as everyone's role.</p> <p>We will deliver a programme of staff training on resident involvement supported by residents (these maybe delivered as lunch & learn sessions) for different housing staff teams and this has been included in the delivery plan. Through this we aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop staff Involvement Champions to assist staff to increase skills and knowledge and build strong and effective relationships with resident

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build a strong talent bank of staff skilled in involvement
Recommendation 3: That the new Resident Involvement Strategy maintains its commitment to be inclusive, and builds on this work in line with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations	<p>The RIS has made a specific commitment around Inclusivity. We will ensure that we continue to be inclusive and representative. We want all residents to be involved regardless of age, disability, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and will provide the support needed to enable this.</p> <p>Particular barriers to involvement have been identified in the strategy and specific support offers developed to address these.</p>
Recommendation 4: That as part of the ongoing building engagement resident strategy, there is continued focus on communication, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improving communication with harder to reach groups, particularly those who do not have English as a first language - prioritising pictorial or graphic designs, particularly for immediate or urgent signage such as fire escapes - ensuring information on fire risk assessments is made 	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations/Housing Assets	<p>The Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy has been agreed and has a delivery plan specifically picking up on the need for better/improved communication. New signage and information have been consulted on with residents on the Building Safety Group.</p> <p>Trained volunteer resident building safety champions will also play a crucial role in supporting communications with wider residents on a local level.</p> <p>There is ongoing work on approaches to making building safety information more accessible to residents and these will be informed through resident involvement.</p>

available to residents in the most appropriate and comprehensible way			
Recommendation 5: That services continue to promote fire safety information to leaseholders and tenants on a regular basis	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations/Housing Assets	The housing communication plan identifies key channels to promote fire and building safety related messages and information on a regular and routine basis.
Recommendation 6: That, when legislation has been finalised, services report back to the committee on how the Accountable Person is held responsible	Accept	LBWF – Housing Assets/ Housing Operations	Housing Assets – to note.
Recommendation 7: That the STAR panel is supported to implement a formal process between recommendations and Council responses	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations	Currently recommendations from STAR panel meetings are minuted and actions/responses are recorded and followed up. Also, as part of the independent scrutiny function, for each audit, an action plan is developed by residents and progress reported to the STAR panel. A discussion will be held with STAR panel members and the independent resident mentor to explore how these processes could be further developed/strengthened and ToR will be reviewed as needed.
Recommendation 8: That the Council continues to support the STAR panel, both in providing independent advisory services to train	Accept	LBWF – Housing Operations	The service follows best practice in supporting involved residents to be as effective as possible through regular training and independent mentoring. Current contract for independent support is in place

members, and in ensuring members are involved in Council policies that affect them			until 31 March 2023 and will be re-procured ahead of this date to maintain continuity.
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