

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 95

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Survey

Date of Meeting: 10 May 2010

Report of: Director of Housing, Culture & Enterprise

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report shares with Housing Management Consultative Committee the research findings from the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Survey carried out in December 2009. It also highlights some ways in which the results will be used.
- 1.2 Housing Management are keen to ensure there are a variety of ways in which residents can influence decisions that affect them, and that the menu of options enables people to be involved in ways that best suit them. By so doing, we are better able to shape and deliver services having considered what matters most to as broad a range of residents as possible.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Housing Management Consultative Committee recommends that the Cabinet Member for Housing:

- 2.1 (i) Notes the findings of the survey
- 2.2 (ii) Approves with the potential ways in which interested people can become more involved than they are at present.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Purpose of the survey

- 3.1 The survey was carried out in order to achieve the following:-

- To gain an understanding of why some tenants and leaseholders are not more actively involved in their local tenant and resident association.
- To establish how those residents who do not want to be involved in their local association, for whatever reason, would still like to play a role in influencing the services they receive.
- To establish the key issues or service areas that tenant and leaseholders would like to be involved in.
- To develop a database of those tenants and leaseholders who are interested in becoming involved, and the ways in which they would like that to happen.

Methodology

3.2 A self completion questionnaire was sent to every tenant, joint tenant and leaseholder with the December edition of Homing In. Respondents were asked to confirm that their information could be held and used for the purposes of consulting and involving them, in ways that suit them best, to help improve the shape and delivery of our housing services.

Response

3.3 Of the 2,091 people who returned their questionnaires, 1698 (81%) are tenants and 295 (14%) are leaseholders. This information was not included in the remaining 5% of questionnaires.

From those responding, 1,802 people (86%) gave consent for their data to held and used for the purpose of contacting them to be involved in service improvement.

Resident and tenant associations

3.4 Among people who responded, 9% are active members of a local tenant or resident association, 11% are non active members, 7% are ex-members, and 74% have never been a member of a tenant or resident association.

3.5 The table below summarises, in descending order, the reasons given by the 1667 people who responded that they are not actively involved in their local tenant or resident association.

Reason for not being actively involved in my local association	Number	Percentage
I am happy with what the association is doing and don't need to get involved	516	31%
I just don't have the time	309	19%

Reason for not being actively involved in my local association	Number	Percentage
I am just not interested	258	16%
I don't know what they are	168	10%
I don't feel comfortable there	148	9%
I do not know when they meet	148	9%
I don't know of any local associations	146	9%
They meet at inconvenient times	139	8%
They are not representative of local people	77	5%
They are not for people like me	64	4%
Other	362	22%

3.6 The reasons given for not being involved in local associations varied by different demographic groups:-

- 40% of respondents under the age of 25 did not know what tenant and resident associations are. This compares to less than 5% of respondents age over 65. Similarly 23% of respondents under 25 also said that they did not know when they meet compared to less than 10% of those over 55.
- BME respondents are more than twice as likely to say that they don't know what tenant and resident associations are or don't know when they meet then are white British/Irish respondents.

Being involved

3.7 Among those respondents who consented for us to use their details, almost three quarters (74%) wanted to be more involved in the decisions that affect their local area, and just over two thirds (68%) wanted to be involved in the decisions that affect them as tenants or leaseholders.

3.8 Issues that respondent most wanted to be involved in were repairs and maintenance (44%), and anti social behaviour (30%).

3.9 Respondents were asked to select the ways they would like to be consulted or involved. They could select as many as they liked, and the table below summarises the findings in descending order starting with the most popular way.

Ways I would like to be involved in decisions that affect me	Number of people	Percentage
Questionnaires sent directly to your home	625	46%
Questionnaires sent with Homing In	437	32%
Local tenants associations	267	20%
Someone visiting you to discuss an issue	261	19%
Estate inspections	222	16%
Mystery shopping	204	15%
Established tenants groups	192	14%
Service review group or panels	188	14%
Informal residents groups	187	14%
Focus groups	164	12%
Electronic questionnaires via e-mail	164	12%
Residents conference	160	12%
Part of a citizens panel	157	12%
Someone phoning you and completing a survey	102	8%
Using twitter, Facebook or other on line media	68	5%
On line forums	65	5%
Other	29	2%

Demographic profile of people wanting to be involved in some way

3.10 There was a good cross section of residents who wanted their details to be kept for possible involvement in future service improvement work. The 1,802 people are not completely representative of what we know of our total resident profile; however it is very encouraging that each of the categories in the groups below do contain residents who are interested in becoming involved.

- Gender
- Age
- Sexuality
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Household composition
- Property type

While there is a broad range, the following categories within the groups are over-represented:-

- Age 45 – and over
- Residents with a long term limiting illness

And the following categories within the groups are under-represented:-

- Age 16 - 44
- Households with dependent children
- People from lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender communities

Use of results

- 3.11 As a result of carrying out this survey, we now have the flexibility of ensuring that our formal consultation process can be enhanced and informed by a wider variety of views and opinions. It also demonstrates that there is an enthusiasm and willingness of large numbers of residents to participate in shaping service delivery, when the opportunities are presented to them, in ways other than attending meetings. Examples of ways in which our consultation can now expand include more mystery shopping; increased testing of customer satisfaction; gathering suggestions on service improvement; and asking the same question to different audiences and through different channels to really obtain wide-ranging feedback.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The premise of the survey work reported here was to enable us to consult and involve residents in ways that suit them, and about matters that are of interest or importance to them. We now have a database of 1,802 people that will help us achieve this in a way that will enhance our existing consultative and tenant participation structures.
- 4.2 The Tenant Compact Monitoring Group have held two workshops this year to lead on work on our new Resident Involvement Strategy, and the results of this survey has influenced the development of the strategy.
- 4.3 Extensive consultations will be taking place through the coming months, and the results, along with the new Resident Involvement Strategy and Tenant Compact will be presented to a future Housing management Consultative Committee.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The costs of increasing resident involvement will come from existing resources within the 2010/11 Housing Revenue Account budget.

Finance Officer consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 14 April 2010

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 imposes a duty on the Council to maintain such arrangements as it considers appropriate to enable its tenants who are likely to be substantially affected by a matter of housing management to be informed of the Council's proposals and to make their views known. The innovative consultation methods identified by the report, if adopted, will assist the Council in meeting that duty. No individual's rights are adversely affected by the report's recommendations.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 16 April 2010

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The database of interested residents, created as a result of this survey, puts us in a better position to ensure we can obtain views from, and encourage involvement of, a much broader range of residents. Where groups may be under-represented in traditional engagement mechanisms, we now have easier access to people who can help residents achieve wider representation.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The sustainability implications of any chosen consultation and involvement methods need to be considered. This can include for example internet based methodologies with an increasing number of web based surveys and social media being encouraged as internet use continues to increase.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Our survey results have informed us that anti-social behaviour is one of the main concerns of residents (behind repairs and maintenance issues). Our expectation is that we will continue to improve our responses to anti-social behaviour by better understanding and engaging with local residents.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Increased resident participation offers a number of opportunities for us to really put residents and their views at the heart of everything we do. There are some risks inherent in balancing opposing views or in meeting expectations, but open engagement and communications can help mitigate this.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Any developments in our consultation and engagement mechanisms will be in line with our corporate Community Engagement Framework.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None

