

Subject:	Tenants and Residents Associations Recognition Policy		
Date of Meeting:	10 September 2014		
Report of:	Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Becky Purnell	Tel: 29 - 3022
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) Recognition Policy outlines the requirements for a TRA in a council housing area to be recognised by the council.
- 1.2 The Policy updates the existing Recognition Policy and Model Constitution and brings the Policy in line with the Code of Conduct agreed at Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee in December 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Housing Committee agrees the proposed Recognition Policy and Model Constitution.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The TRA Recognition Policy went to the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee in April. Members referred the Model Constitution back to the July Area Panels for comments and these are included in section 5 below.
- 3.2 The Recognition Policy ensures that associations that are involved in making decisions on behalf of residents are able to show they are democratic, accountable and representative.
- 3.3 It brings the Policy in line with the Code of Conduct.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Continuing with the existing Recognition Policy and Model Constitution could save staff and association time; however bringing it in line with the Code of Conduct enables a more robust approach to financial responsibility, dealing with breaches and inappropriate behaviour, and ensuring compliance with current legislation.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Area Panels and Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group have considered these papers and their comments are summed up below.

5.2 Suggestions from January Area Panels on Draft Recognition Policy

- 5.3 There was general agreement for a minimum of four general meetings a year rather than four committee meetings in the Model Constitution.

- 5.4 After the East Area Panel information on the Codes of Conduct for staff and Councillors was added to the Code of Conduct.

- 5.5 After the Central Area Panel “by email” was added to “verbally, on web postings, or in writing” under the Discrimination and Harassment section of the Code of Conduct.

5.6 Involvement & Empowerment Group held 20/02/14

- 5.7 The Resident Involvement Team can help with filling in the Form was added to the Complaints Form.

5.8 Comments from July / August Area Panels on Model Constitution

- 5.9 There was general agreement for a minimum of four general meetings a year rather than four committee meetings in the Model Constitution.

- 5.10 The Panels agreed that no more than one association would be recognised in a residents’ association area.

- 5.11 Area of benefit was replaced with area of the residents’ association.

- 5.12 Agreement that in areas where there are freeholders or tenants of freeholders they should not be excluded from the association, but they should not have a vote on decisions relating to council housing budgets or policy.

- 5.13 A quorum for meetings will continue to be decided on locally, although guidelines are not set in stone associations are encouraged to think about the number of homes they represent.

- 5.14 Agreed to add that amendments to the Constitution should be publicised with the notice for the meeting to members and the Resident Involvement Team at least two weeks before a general meeting.

- 5.15 Agreed that giving a clear reason should be included in the line about calling a special general meeting.
- 5.16 Asked to add, “If the Area Panel rep or deputy fails to attend three Area Panel meetings without good reason or apology the association will be written to requesting that a replacement is elected at the next general meeting”.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There was an Everyone Counts survey at the City Assembly, on the consultation portal and in Homing In; 87% of respondents supported a Code of Conduct that clearly explains unacceptable behaviours and possible actions if not followed. This was the top answer.
- 6.2 Agreeing the draft Recognition Policy enables this to happen.
- 6.3 If agreed Housing will work with associations to adopt the Code of Conduct and if necessary review their constitutions.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Any costs of revising the policy such as staff time will be met from current budgetary provisions within the resident involvement team.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 06/03/14

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee acts in a consultative capacity in the discharge of the Council’s functions as a housing landlord. It is therefore appropriate for the Sub-Committee to be given an opportunity to comment on the new Recognition Policy before Housing Committee is asked to approve it.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 19/03/14

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as an appendix to the Draft Recognition Policy; it ensures that there will be training and support for residents

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 Supporting associations to be democratic and run effective meetings will help further develop a sense of community and place. Respectful behaviour will contribute to the health and happiness being of residents and staff.

7.5 Any Other Significant Implications:

None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft Recognition Policy

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Everyone Counts Report 2012
2. Recognition Policy and Model Constitution 1999