

TENANT PARTICIPATION COMPACT REVIEW

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the Tenant Participation Compact Action Plan which was reviewed on 22 August 2001 at a Tenant Liaison Meeting.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In 1999 the Government made funds available to Local Authorities to enable them to develop Compacts and encourage more tenants to become involved in the management of the properties in which they live.
- 2.2 In September 1999 the Tenant Involvement Steering Group (TISG) adopted a model for consultation and production of the Compact. The TISG relied heavily on the base model contained in the Government Good Practice Guide.
- 2.3 The Action Plan appended to the Compact is a general one for the whole of the District. Tenant representation comes principally from the Western part of the District (the Rochford and Great Stambridge Tenants Association having been disbanded in December 2000) and wholly from those who occupy sheltered housing or linked bungalows. Concern, therefore, has to be expressed that around 72% of tenants are unrepresented, but this has not been for the want of trying.

3 ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 The Action Plan concentrates on ten key objectives, five of which were identified by all tenants in the Autumn 1999 Tenant Survey. They cover:-
- Working to reduce crime and disorder
 - Doing repairs quickly
 - Improving neighbourhoods
 - Keeping rents low
 - Improving older flats and houses
 - Consultation
 - Training
 - Political liaison
 - Performance monitoring
 - Tenant Participation and Compact development
- 3.2 The Action Plan is regularly reviewed and updated as part of the liaison process with the Tenant Representatives.

- 3.3 This last occurred on 22 August 2001 when Officers, Tenant Representatives and the Sub-Committee Chairman were in attendance. The updated Action Plan is attached for Members consideration. The sixth (last) column shows the latest position on each objective.
- 3.4 The emerging picture from the Plan is that lack of resources has prevented many of the initiatives being achieved on time. This is especially so as far as Tenant Group work is concerned. Much of the work falls on the shoulders of the Chairman of the Rayleigh and Rawreth Tenants Association with little support from his membership. This is an ongoing problem which will be addressed by the TISG in the next cycle of meetings.

4 PROGRESS

- 4.1 A full complement of staff in the Housing Management Division will now permit some of the deferred work to progress without deterioration of the core services. Where appropriate, deferred work has been redated beyond the original planned completion date with the agreement of all parties.
- 4.2 This completes the Annual review of the Compact. The next review will be in Summer 2002.

5 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RECOMMENDS**

That the amended Tenant Participation Compact Action Plan be noted.

Steve Clarkson

Head of Revenue & Housing Management

Background Papers:

Good Practice Guide 1999

For further information please contact Steve Clarkson on:-

Tel:- 01702 - 3120

E-Mail:- steve.clarkson@rochford.gov.uk

TENANT COMPACT ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan shows how the Council (Officers and Members) and the Tenants and Leaseholders will progress the issues raised in it. It is framed around the Key Objectives prioritised by a Tenants Survey carried out late in 1999. This set the Agenda for improvement over the next two years.

The Tenant Liaison Panel will review progress against the Action Plan not less than six monthly.

Objective	Tasks and Action	Who	Time Scales	Expected Outcome	3rd Review
1. Working to reduce Crime and Disorder	a. Review Tenancy Agreement and strengthen areas associated with Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour and bad neighbourliness	RDC	1 April 2000	Better policing of the Tenancy Agreement and action taken against transgressors	Completed 1.4.00
	b. Work together with other agencies to reduce the	RDC + Tenant Groups	1 April 2001 (some reduction)	Better environment in which to live. Reduce fear of crime.	Rochford Garden Way identified as a problem. Various agencies working to

	number of incidents of criminal damage, particularly vandalism and graffiti, on Council estates		1 April 2004 (significant reduction)		alleviate problems. May help to install concrete planters – investigate £130,000 in 2001/2 Capital Programme for Regeneration Works
	c. Formulate a policy on abandoned vehicles on Council Estates	RDC	1 October 2000	Areas cleared of dangerous vehicles and illegally parked cars/vans.	Reporting to Committee. Hoping for amnesty to hand in cars free of charge Completed Feb 2001
	d. Identify areas where improved estate lighting would make a significant contribution to tenant safety	Tenant Groups	1 December 2001	All existing lamp columns functioning and new columns installed where necessary	Monitor At 1.8.01 no areas identified other than Clavering Court
	e. Participate in the St. A.R. Project to improve the environment in St Andrews and	RDC + Tenant Groups	Ongoing to March 2002	Reduced crime levels Reduced fear of crime	Seemingly nothing identified by tenants for their estates. "Planning for Real" completed TG & RDC trying to find local

	Roche Wards of Rochford				representation
f.	<p>Highway improvements and better standards on estate roads and private parking areas.</p> <p>Survey “hot spots” and report to RDC</p>	Tenant Groups	<p>October 2000</p> <p>Move to Apr 2002</p>	<p>Speed reduction</p> <p>Better driving standards</p> <p>Vacant parking places</p>	<p>Move to April 2001</p> <p>At 1.8.01 no problems identified other than Coronation Close, Gt Wakering caused by narrow roads and refuse vehicles having to mount kerbs</p>
g.	<p>Better controls exercised over Drug and Alcohol Abuse</p> <p>Better reporting of incidents</p>	RDC + Tenant Groups	<p>Immediate and ongoing</p>	<p>Reduced evidence of abuse (inc needles)</p> <p>Less linked crime</p>	<p>Included in Tenancy Agreement. Must not use premises to distribute illegal drugs.</p> <p>All reported incidents dealt with promptly by police</p>

	h. Include clause in Tenancy Agreement appropriate to Domestic Violence	RDC	April 2000	Reduced levels of reported domestic violence.	<p>Problem in Middlemead – Report to Community Safety Officer which has now been resolved.</p> <p>All staff trained by D.V. Officer</p>
	i. Forge closer links with other agencies to help prevent Crime and Disorder and Anti-Social behaviour	RDC + Tenant Groups	October 2000 and ongoing	New partnerships formed.	Progressing
	j. Create a Housing Officer post specifically to address issues relating to working to reduce Crime and Disorder and to liaise regularly with tenant group	RDC	<p>October 2000</p> <p>Move to Apr 2001</p>	Officer in Post and working to reduce Crime and Disorder/liaison	<p>Monitor But move to April 2001</p> <p>No longer felt appropriate - DELETE</p>

2. Doing Repairs Quickly	a. Review the existing arrangements for reporting repairs	RDC + Tenant Groups	August 2002	Quicker response to repairs	Monitor Housing Project Officer to Review by May 2002
	b. Review existing arrangements of canvassing tenants views on the quality of repair/ maintenance	RDC	October 2000	Regular reports to Tenant Liaison Group on Performance	Suggested Return Comments by phone or postcard. Not to be completed in presence of Contractor. Completed July 2001. Telephone Survey now undertaken
	c. Try to reduce waiting times for repairs	RDC	December 2000	Regular reports to Tenant Liaison Group on Performance	Investigate whether to do repairs after tenant moves in – or give decoration allowance Completed June 2001
	d. Introduce an appointment system for planned maintenance and improvements	RDC	December 2000	Regular reports to Tenant Liaison Group on Performance	Complete April 2001. N.F.A. - DELETE

	and monitor effectiveness				
3. Improving Neighbourhoods	a. Identifying areas most likely to benefit from a proactive improvement programme	Tenant Groups	December 2000	Schedule to be considered by Housing Committee	Tenant Reps concerned about windows at The Lavers and other environmental work Included in Capital Programme 2001/2 Hedge Planting in Warwick Drive - DELETE-
	b. Identify funding for areas of improvement such as landscaping, graffiti removal and better estate management	RDC	January 2002	Report to Housing Committee	Some areas already identified and work completed as part of Estate Management Programme., Grounds Maintenance in Essex Close. Planting out recommended.
	c. Identify projects for community involvement,	Tenant Groups	March 2001	Better community spirit and 'good citizenship'	Minutes/Agenda for Community Services & Finance & General Purposes

	community halls, meeting places for young adults, mother and toddler groups, older citizen groups				to be provided to Tenant Group Chairmen. No further projects identified at 1.8.01
	d. Ensure high standards of grounds maintenance and estate management. Clearance of rubbish when reported	RDC	July 2000 Move to Oct 2000 Results Jan 2001	Customer survey with satisfactory results	November 2000 Survey revealed high levels of satisfaction with tenants. Individual areas of improvement identified.
	e. Caretaker services extended to all areas of the District	RDC	December 2000	Frequent and regular visits by Estate Caretaker - good visual presence	On target – may be possible to expand. Rochford areas now covered on a regular basis.

<p>4. Keeping Rents Low</p>	<p>a. Undertake a fundamental review of the Housing Management function to ensure service is cost effective</p>	<p>RDC</p>	<p>December 2001</p>	<p>Report to Housing Committee or Auditors</p>	<p>Review of management functions in progress. Project to conclude in December 2001</p>
	<p>b. Ensure that arrears are kept low and not a burden to good rent payers</p>	<p>RDC</p>	<p>April 2000 and ongoing</p>	<p>Evictions where appropriate</p>	<p>On-going arrears reducing. 2000/1 best ever performance</p>
	<p>c. Establish a policy to end long-term empty properties – maximise rental income</p>	<p>RDC</p>	<p>October 2002</p>	<p>More rent collected</p>	<p>Housing Project Officer to consider in 2002/3</p>

	d. Ensure all those entitled to Rent Rebate have it paid	RDC	April 2000 and ongoing Completed this year – ongoing	Take-up campaign Better Publicity	Include details in “Welcome Pack”. Estate Officer will also advise Benefits are available. Officer going on Benefit Course
	e. Ensure contractors are employed at the most competitive rates	RDC	October 2000	Full review of contractors employed	On target. Completed October 2000
5. Improving Older Flats and Houses	a. Identify housing lacking and requiring central heating, provide full explanation of cost implication where refusal given	RDC	October 2000	Report to Tenant Liaison Group	On target. Capital programme report going to Housing Management Sub Committee 14.9.2000 All stock now had the opportunity to have gas C/H installed.
	b. Identify housing lacking and requiring replacement windows	RDC	October 2000	Report to Tenant Liaison Group	Programme nearing completion in 2001/2

	c. Identify housing requiring major improvement works	RDC	October 2000	Report to Housing Committee	Will mainly be re-roofing/structure problems. Survey out Summer 2001 but individual problems addressed: immediately
	d. Identify funding for a, b and c above	RDC	December 2001	Report to Housing Committee	On target
	e. Survey tenants asking what improvements they would like to see in the future.	RDC + Tenant Groups	May 2001	Survey results available	As 5(c) above
6 Consultation Matters	a. Develop and improve annual report and tenant news letter 'Your Home'	RDC + Tenant Groups	Ongoing	More tenant related articles	Tenant contribution sparse
	b. Undertake an annual consultation/survey exercise as in 1999. Analyse results	Rochford District Council Tenant Groups	November 2000 + November 2002	Report to Housing Committee	On target Government guidelines require biennial survey

	c. Aim to improve Membership to Tenant Groups in number, age spread and be participate	Tenant Groups + RDC	May 2001	Membership maintained at 1% +	No progress in this area at 1.8.01
	d. Consult on all matters relating to rights and obligations	RDC	Ongoing	Better consultation even on minor issues	Monitor
7. Training	a. Staff and Tenants Reps to receive regular training on Tenant Participation	RDC	Ongoing	Better Trained and able to deal with issues	Monitor RDC staff training complete. Tenants offered training courses but little take up.
8. Political	a. Establish strong links between Tenants reps and political policy in the decision-making process	RDC + Tenant Groups	Ongoing annually in May	Committee Advisors nominated	Committee Advisor regularly attends Sub-Committee
9 Performance Monitoring	a. Establish a mechanism	RDC	July 2000	Quarterly reports produced	QPRs now made available

	where Tenants reps. can monitor performance of Housing Management and Building Maintenance teams on a not less than 3 monthly basis				
10. Tenants Compact and Participation	a. Review the Compact on a not less than annual basis	RDC + Tenant Groups	Annually	Compact reviewed	On target
	b. Council's policy on Tenant Participation reviewed annually and TISG Members to attend Liaison Meetings on a regular basis	RDC	Annually in October and ongoing Move to 2001 Dec	Policy Review and better Councillor attendance	TISG meeting scheduled for Autumn Cycle

	c. Council to reconfirm its "Equal Opportunity in Rented Housing" policy annually	RDC	Annually in October	Policy reconfirmed	Finalised at HMSC 12.9.01 – DELETE-
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