
PAYMENT FOR TENANT REPRESENTATIVES

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the payment of tenant representatives to secure a more active tenant participation in the management of social housing in Rochford.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.2 In July 1999 the Council set itself a target to increase tenant representation to around 1% in order to stimulate interest in Tenant Participation and the Compact which was developing. This meant increasing active participation in housing management to around 20 tenants.
- 2.3 At that time there were two Tenants Associations operating in the District. They were the Rayleigh and Rawreth Tenants Association and the Rochford and Great Stambridge Tenants Association. Unfortunately, the latter dissolved following the resignation of the Chairman in December 2000 which means that tenants in the Eastern part of the District are unrepresented.

3 LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 Currently the Head of Service and other senior staff associated with tenancy management and building maintenance meet with tenant representatives every other month. This generally coincides with meetings of the Housing Management Sub-Committee. The Chairman of the Rayleigh and Rawreth Tenants' Association has also been seconded onto this Sub-Committee as an adviser.
- 3.2 It has been found that in the past tenants have joined Tenants Associations for their own personal gain and, having achieved their aims, then leave. This has been a regular pattern experienced by both Tenants Associations. This does not make for a good working relationship as this type of tenant representative tends to focus on their own personal issues or local estate issues rather than the general housing scene, which the Council is attempting to encourage.
- 3.3 The Government Office Eastern Region has levelled criticism at our lack of tenant participation as this is not working towards the Government's intentions of tenant participation. The Government are devoting funds to improve tenant participation and the expansion and improvement of the Compact. This year £10,000 is pledged and a similar amount is forecast for next year.

4 PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE

- 4.1 A number of local authorities recognise the contribution made by tenants and encourage the formation of a Tenants Panel, the Members of which receive financial remuneration for their contribution. In this way, the Council is able to be selective in the make-up of the Panel so ensuring that all types of family are represented (including leaseholders) and that representation comes from all areas where Council stock exists.
- 4.2 The Head of Service is asking that Members now consider this approach as all other mechanisms have failed.
- 4.3 The "payment" would need to be at a sufficient level to attract participants but not so high as to make the remuneration the sole attraction.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Funds for this initiative would come from within the Housing Revenue Account and Government funding. There would be no material effect on the core budget.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Crime and Disorder features prominently in the Compact but little progress has been made to achieving the aims. This is principally because the existing Tenants Associations are sparsely patronised and the majority of the work falls on the shoulders of the Chairman.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RESOLVES**

That Members determine a policy on payments to tenant representatives. (HRHM)

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Background Papers:

None

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