

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE Resident Engagement Strategy

Name/description of the issue being assessed

DATE 4 June 2015

Date the DIA is completed

LEAD OFFICER Michael Bull

Name of person responsible for carrying out the DIA.

1 Summary description of the proposed change

- What is the change to policy/service/new project that is being proposed?
- How does it compare with the current situation?

Medway Council Housing Services propose to introduce a revised resident engagement strategy for 2015-17.

The current Resident Engagement Strategy 2012-13 set out the following objectives

- Adhering to regulatory legislation regarding Resident Involvement
- Increasing the number of residents participating, to truly reflect the diverse population of Medway by introducing innovative ways in which to participate.
- Encouraging all residents to be actively involved in the decision making process with Tenancy Services.
- Providing involvement and participation opportunities at levels and times that are accessible to all.
- Reaching a wider resident profile.

From April 2012 the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) took over the regulation of all social landlords in England from the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). A revised regulatory framework also came into effect at the same time. The tenant involvement and empowerment standard has been revised to place greater emphasis on providers developing mechanisms to involve tenants in the scrutiny of their performance

The new Resident Engagement Strategy 2015-17 aims to adhere to the revised regulatory framework, widening the methods of participation and placing emphasis on resident scrutiny.

The proposed objectives for the new strategy are as follows

- Introduce **new methods** of involvement so that we can engage with a wider representation of our customers profile towards proportional representation

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- Focus all activities on **service improvement** and monitor outcomes
- Set up and support a new Resident **Scrutiny Panel**

In order to deliver the new objectives set out within this strategy the current resident involvement structure will need revising and restructuring. As such there will be a greater focus with online consultation rather than traditional methods such as forums.

The new structure features the merging of three forums into one (Estates, Tenancy and Repairs) to create purposeful engagement where a forum is called once a bank of items has been filled that we intend to consult our residents on. The existing Leasehold and Homes for Independent Living forums remain. The new structure also features a new Partnership and Performance Group (scrutiny).

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.
- Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

Below is the current break down of the profiling of our customers that engage with the housing service compared with our overall customer profiling. This evidence highlights the need for change to the current Resident Engagement structure to make it more representative of our customer base:

Age:

Age group	People bank	Customer base
18-30	3%	13%
31-40	10%	12%
41-50	16%	16%
51-60	22%	16%
61-70	25%	17%
71-80	18%	13%
81-90	7%	8%
91+	2%	2%

There is a greater representation of older people participating in resident engagement compared to their proportion in our customer base.

Disability

Disability	People bank	Customer base
Hearing Impairment	7%	20%
No Disability	61%	Unknown

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Limited Mobility	14%	45%
Literacy problems	3%	6%
Mental Health	7%	18%
Unseen Impairment	8%	40%
Visual Impairment	0%	12%
Learning difficulty	Unknown	4%

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	People bank	Customer Base
White British	95%	83%
Asian Indian	1%	1%
Asian British	0%	0%
Asian Pakistani	0%	0%
Asian Other	0%	0%
Black African	1%	1%
Black Caribbean	0%	0%
Chinese	0%	0%
Mixed White Asian	0%	0%
Mixed White and Black African	0%	0%
Mixed Other	0%	0%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	1%	0%
White Irish	1%	1%
White Other	1%	1%
Other	0%	0%
Unknown	0%	11%

Gender

Gender	People bank	Customer base
Female	59%	63%
Male	41%	36%
Unknown	0%	0%

Women are slightly under represented in the people bank compared to our customer base.

The revised strategy has been underpinned by a review undertaken by an independent consultant. The review recommended new involvement methods and a greater level of scrutiny. Following the review we facilitated a workshop

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with residents to consult and discuss what the main priorities for resident engagement are in addition to the structure, which have since been incorporated into both.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity			
Race			
Religion/belief			
Sex		✓	
Sexual orientation			
Low income groups			

4 Summary of the likely impacts

- Who will be affected?
- How will they be affected?

It is proposed that the new resident engagement strategy will advance equality by widening methods of consultation, making it easier for different groups to get involved. As an example it is hoped that a focus on online consultation will attract audiences that are currently underrepresented. This includes young people and people more restricted to the home such as people with limited mobility.

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5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- Are there alternative providers?
- What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?
- Can demand for services be managed differently?

The number of forums will decrease to make sure that are purposeful and outcome orientated. However there will still be some forums that will continue to ensure that residents without access to the internet will still have a chance to be involved.

We plan to publicise training opportunities for online/computer literacy by hosting sessions at our Resource Centre.

The strategy will be frequently monitored and the strategy will be reviewed if any adverse affects on any of the protected characteristic groups are identified.

6 Action plan

- Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Bank of customers that we engage with will be monitored to ensure that we target under represented groups of our customer base	Community Development Manager	March 2016
Publicise digital training opportunities	Community Development Manager	March 2016

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:

- to proceed with the change implementing action plan if appropriate
- consider alternatives
- gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

Housing services recommend proceeding with the change and implementing the strategy.

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8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that:

- the recommendation can be implemented
- sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned
- the Action Plan will be incorporated into service plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Stephen Gaimster



Date

16 June 2015

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

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Send completed assessment to the Corporate Performance & Intelligence Hub (CPI) for web publication