

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 AUGUST 2016

ANGUS TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING & PLACE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to present the Angus Tenant and Participation Strategy 2016-2019.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee

- (i) approves the Angus Council Tenant Participation strategy 2016-2019 as outlined in **Appendix 1** and;
- (ii) agrees to receive annual progress reports on its implementation.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Angus is a good place to live in, work in and visit
- Our communities are safe, secure and vibrant
- Individuals are supported in their own communities with good quality services

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Section 53 (1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a duty on local authorities and Registered Social landlords (RSLs) to prepare a tenant participation strategy which includes an assessment of resources required and a statement of the resources to be made available. The strategy must demonstrate how, as a landlord, the Council intends to involve, communicate with and listen to, tenants and residents.

3.2 The introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 requires Angus Council to report to the Scottish Housing Regulator annually on the achievement of the charter outcomes.

3.3 The involvement of tenants and others are central to the achievement of all the Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes. However, the tenant participation strategy focuses on the achievement of Charter Outcome 3 “Participation – Social Landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decision at a level they feel comfortable with.” The outcome describes what landlords should achieve by meeting their statutory duties on tenant participation, covering how social landlords gather and take into account the views and priorities of their tenants; how they shape their services to reflect these views and how they help tenants and other customers to become more capable of involvement.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1** Angus has a strong commitment and tradition of involving tenants in a variety of ways to ensure they have a real say in decision making, influencing services and monitoring performance. This is the 4th Tenant Participation Strategy for Angus and has been developed in partnership with the Tenant Participation Steering Group.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1** The aim for tenant participation in Angus is that “tenants’ views are at the centre of decisions about their Housing Service”. The successes achieved over the lifetime of the last tenant Participation Strategy has seen a shift in the approach in how we engage with our tenants and other people who use our services and we will continue to build on those positive relationships within our overarching locality approach.

- 5.2** It is recognised that different forms of involvement suit different people. We will continue to develop options that allow tenants to become involved in a variety of different ways. We currently have a number of Angus wide groups that tenants are involved in. Over the period of the strategy we aim to work in partnership with tenants at an Angus wide and local level, to review these groups and how they are organised. Current groups include:

- Tenant steering group
- Rent setting and finance group
- Scrutiny and audit panel
- Tenant participation strategy group
- Tenant’s (e-)panel

In addition to the above, over the last year we have developed a Tenant Led Service Review group who have conducted tenant led inspections in Angus. This initiative involved tenants reviewing housing services based on their priorities. As part of the service review, tenants have worked alongside Council staff to closely examine the service, in this case repairs, identify strengths and recommend areas for improvement. The group of tenants and staff set out and agreed a code of conduct for the duration of the review. Recommendations will be reported to the Housing Senior Management Team and Committee, where required, for approval.

- 5.3** To achieve all of the aspirations highlighted by tenants, staff and all other people who use our services, the aims of this strategy are to:

- Develop a range of opportunities for tenants to become involved
- Build networks and strengthen relationships between tenants within Angus
- Use resources and assets available to support tenant participation
- Provide support to improve the skills and confidence for tenants to become involved
- Provide opportunities for tenants to actively review our policies and processes
- Consult, listen, feedback and act on what our tenants tell us
- Make our communities better places to live
- Provide opportunities for tenants to share their experiences with others across Scotland.

- 5.4** These aims and outcomes will be supported by the current participation activity and structures which have evolved as a result of the work of the last Tenant Participation Strategy as well as agreed new locality planning arrangements.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with the delivery of the Tenant Participation Strategy are contained within existing budgets.

7. RISKS

Tenants and other service users do not actively engage with the tenant participation strategy and its groups.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An Equalities Impact Assessment is required on the grounds of gender and age.

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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Appendix 1 - Tenant Participation Strategy 2016-2019