

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Homes Sub-Committee</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>9 July 2024</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-29</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Susmita Sen, Corporate Director of Housing</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Mary Larbie, Director of Housing Management</b> Email: <a href="mailto:mary.larbie@croydon.gov.uk">mary.larbie@croydon.gov.uk</a>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Councillor Lynne Hale, Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Mayor</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>  <i>(* See guidance)</i>	<b>No</b>	
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>	

## 1. RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 1.1. Attached at Appendix 1 to this cover report is a report, ‘Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-29’ which is due to be considered by the Executive Mayor at the Cabinet meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2024.
- 1.2. This report has been included on the agenda for of the Homes Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2024, to allow the Sub-Committee the opportunity to review the proposals and consider whether it wishes to submit any comments or recommendations for the consideration of the Executive Mayor when making the decision.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Sub-Committee is asked to: -
  1. Review and note the Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-29, and:
  2. Consider whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations to be taken account of by the Executive Mayor when making the final decision on the Strategy at the Cabinet meeting on 15 July 2024.

### **3. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

#### **3.1 Drivers for developing the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy 2024 to 2029**

3.2 In May 2021, the Regulator of Social Housing found the Council to be in breach of two of the Regulator's Consumer Standards: The Home Standard and the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard.

#### **3.3 Residents' Charter**

The tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 raised serious questions for everyone involved in social housing. Besides the significant actions being taken by social landlords with regard to the Fire Safety Act and the Building Safety Act to keep council residents safe in their homes, Croydon Council needed to respond to concerns about how much and how well we listened to the views and concerns of our council residents.

3.4 It is clear that in the past we have not always listened to residents sufficiently, nor always treated residents with the respect they deserve. The housing services we provided were undoubtedly poorer because of this deficit.

3.5 In December 2022 the Council formally adopted the Residents' Charter which was developed with residents and overseen by members of the Tenant and Leaseholders' Panel, to give residents a stronger voice in the development of policy and decisions that affected them as tenants and leaseholders. The Residents' Charter key principles include treating residents with respect, being transparent with our residents about how we are performing, giving residents a voice and encouraging meaningful decision-making activities.

#### **3.6 Housing Transformation Programme**

In December 2022, Cabinet approved a Housing Transformation Programme to work closely with residents to transform the services provided by the Housing Directorate and return to compliance with the Regulator's Consumer Standards. The development and adoption of the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy is a key project within the programme and a key building block for the Housing Transformation Programme as a whole that provides the essential engagement, influence and transparency for residents in the future.

#### **3.7 Voluntary Undertaking**

As part of the voluntary undertaking given to the Regulator of Social Housing following the breaches, the Council specifically undertook to put in place an engagement strategy for the council's housing residents which would set out how residents will be engaged in decision-making, information-sharing and consultation. The strategy proposed for full council adoption is that strategy which has been updated to take account of the revised Consumer Standards which came into force on 1 April 2024 as set out below.

#### **3.8 New Consumer Standards**

From 1 April 2024, there are new consumer standards that set out the consumer standard requirements the Council must meet going forward:

- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints when necessary, influence decision-making and hold their landlord to account. This standard incorporates the published requirements on Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) that came into force from April 2023 under the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment (TI&E) Standard. The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard replaces the TI&E Standard. This standard is the focus of the current report.
- The Safety and Quality Standard – requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants.
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard – requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
- The Tenancy Standard – sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes and for how those tenancies are managed and ended by landlords.

3.9 The development and delivery of the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy is key in supporting Croydon in responding to the challenges and requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the revised consumer standards and the [Tenant Satisfaction Measures](#), in particular “Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.” (Tenant Satisfaction Measure TP06).

3.10 Housing Services have not waited for the Consumer Standards to be confirmed, nor await the approval of this Resident Engagement Strategy, to begin to improve our resident engagement procedures and practices in line with the Residents’ Charter. Over the previous year the Housing Service has proactively involved residents in:

- The procurement of Repairs and Maintenance contracts
- The revision and update of the Lettable Standards for void properties
- A co-design of new cleaning standards for Croydon’s housing estates
- Formed a Reader’s Panel of council tenants and leaseholders to give their views and advice on new policies.
- Key to the success of the Regina Road resident consultation was the design, delivery and implementation of a Landlord Offer, where we outlined our promise to deliver on commitments made and a pledge to commit resources to support ongoing full consultation.

- Conducted surveys and sought feedback on the Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy, asset management strategy and the 2023 and 2024 rent increase.

### **Methodology for developing the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy 2024 – 2029**

- 3.11 The Resident Engagement Strategy 2024 – 2029 has been co-designed with residents. In the summer of last year, the Council held 20 vision and mission sessions with tenants, leaseholders, staff, and partners to identify the long-term vision of our housing services, and what ‘good’ housing services looked like. The feedback from these sessions reinforced the need for a strategy that reflected resident’s aspirations.

## **4 CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Over 200 involved and non-involved residents were invited to take part in the design of the Resident Engagement Strategy 2024 to 2029. As a result, a group of residents were involved in co-designing the strategy and subsequent Resident involvement Framework.

**Appendix 1.** Draft Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-29

**Appendix 2.** Cabinet Report - Housing Resident Engagement

**Appendix 3.** Consultation and Engagement Report

**Appendix 4.** EQIA Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-2029

**Appendix 5.** Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-2029 - Structure