

 <p>Northwards Housing North Manchester's Council Homes</p>		Report to: Northwards Housing Board 9 March 2015		Item No: <h1>12a</h1>	
Title:		Resident Involvement			
Date:		4 February 2015			
Author:		Mike Stevens	Tel No:	0161 720 5827	
E mail:		mike.stevens@northwardshousing.co.uk			
Confidential:		No			
For: (Please tick action required)		NOTING ✓	DISCUSSION	APPROVAL ✓	
PURPOSE OF REPORT					
To update the Board on the consultation which has been carried out about future arrangements for resident involvement. To ask the Board to approve implementation of new arrangements from April 2015.					
RECOMMENDATION					
The Board is asked to note the outcome of the consultation and approve implementation from April 2015 of new arrangements as set out in the report.					
IMPLICATIONS					
Risk Management		In seeking to improve our arrangements for resident involvement, the proposals within the report are intended to mitigate against the risk of failing to meet customer expectations or failing to meet the requirements in the housing management specification which forms part of our management agreement with the Council.			
Regulatory & legal compliance		The proposals within the report are intended to enhance our ability, within the resources available to us, to meet the requirements set out in relation to resident involvement in the housing management specification which forms part of our management agreement with the Council.			

Consultation/Consideration:

	Yes, No or N/A:	Name:	Date:
Sub-Committee:	No		
Area Panel:	Yes	All	January 2015
Task Groups:	No		
Ward Councillors:	No		

1. Background

1.1 In November 2014 the Board considered a report reviewing resident involvement arrangements and proposing a new set of arrangements for the future.

1.2 The Board gave in principle agreement to the new arrangements as the basis of consultation with involved residents as to the detail of how the new arrangements will be implemented. The Board agreed that a further report would be brought back confirming the detailed arrangements for implementation from April 2015.

2. Consultation

2.1 We have consulted involved residents about the proposed changes. This included discussing the proposed changes with: the area panels; the high rise forum; the performance monitoring group; and Tenants' View. There was overwhelming support for the proposed changes, with just one person saying that they hadn't changed their view that we should return to the "old style" panels which we disbanded in September 2013.

2.2 This was however very much a minority view, and Board members will recall that we disbanded the panels in their original format because attendances had fallen and the panels were struggling to find members. The overwhelming view among panel members at that time was that the panels had very much run their course and it was time for a change. Nothing has happened in the meantime which suggests that there would be any more of an appetite for that kind of forum if we were to resurrect it now.

3. New arrangements

3.1 There was therefore broad agreement that we should proceed to implement the new arrangements as follows:

- An updated and rebranded "involved residents network" - in essence a list of people who have expressed an interest in being involved (and who haven't been excluded for some reason).
- Two or three events a year by open invitation to the above and linked into our business planning and annual general meeting processes. We will establish a "planning group" of involved residents to help us plan the agendas for these events.
- Area panels which are convened annually for the purpose of deciding what to spend the environmental budgets on. This could consist of one meeting or more depending on local requirements. Timing of these would be tied into capital programme planning, and membership would be by open invitation to members of the "involved residents network" in each area.

The new arrangements also entail the following:

- (i) Tenants' view will continue to operate as it does now
- (ii) Tenant and resident groups will operate and receive support, and (as far as is reasonably practicable given the level of resource available) we will continue to encourage and support the formation of new groups where interest is expressed
- (iii) We will continue to support the high rise forum, leaseholders' forum, retirement housing forum, LGBT forum and other specific or ad hoc forums as agreed

- (iv) Support for Tea Mobile and other locally-based community events will continue as far as is reasonably practicable given the level of resource available
- (v) Performance monitoring will be incorporated into the work of tenants' view, as opposed to being the focus of a separate group
- (vi) In addition to the above, consultation will take place on more specific matters by the most appropriate method using the network (see above) and more widely where appropriate. This could involving convening the area panels on an ad hoc basis.

3.2 The intention in all of this is to create strong links into the digital inclusion agenda: looking at ways of getting people involved above and beyond more "traditional" methods, and stimulating more involvement via social media if that is something people want.

3.3 It is intended to implement these new arrangements from April 2015.

3.4 Board members noted in November 2014 that the new arrangements would make better use of staff time and as such would enable us to look at whether we would as a result be able to make a saving in relation to staffing costs. Further information about this is contained in budget papers currently before the Board.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Board is asked to note the outcome of the consultation and approve implementation from April 2015 of new arrangements as set out in the report.