

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 6

REPORT for meeting to be held on 27 February 2014

Options for enhancing councillor knowledge on housing

Summary:

At the meeting of the 28 November 2013 scrutiny committee, members received the annual housing report. This was an opportunity for members to talk with the tenant representatives and to gain an overview of the work that had been undertaken over the past year.

Noting the successes of the tenant involvement work the committee felt that there were certain areas where they wished to strengthen their own knowledge. There should also be an opportunity for the consideration of the scope of the member role and engagement in housing, since the new social housing framework had come in. This meeting will be used to explore these issues.

Conclusions:

To assist this process members are asked to consider the questions at section 1 of this report. Also, a brief presentation will be given at the start of the meeting which will outline the current picture and opportunities for member engagement.

Recommendation:

That the scrutiny committee explores the questions detailed in section 1 of this report and in doing so, work with officers in developing an approach moving forward.

Contact Officer:

Scrutiny Officer – 01603 212491
stevegoddard@norwich.gov.uk

1. Taking stock and moving forward

- 1.1 What has changed as a result of the new social housing framework for tenant engagement?
- 1.2 To begin with, it might be useful to take stock of the training and information sharing that has already been developed and provided, and:
 - a) Ask how this might differ from what tenants have received, and the reasons for this?
 - b) What the universal knowledge and training needs for tenants and members might be?
 - c) In what ways does the member role differ from that of the tenants?
 - d) To support this, what do members feel they require greater focus on to assist them in their role?
 - e) Is there anything else that might be undertaken to help facilitate the role of members in housing? If so, how can this be captured to add value to the way the council delivers its housing service?



Councillor engagement in housing in the city

Scrutiny

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Opportunities to engage

Cabinet

Scrutiny

Liaison boards

Budget setting process

Annual rent setting process

Capital investment programme

Continued...

Corporate plan

Tenancy strategy

Housing strategy

Annual report

TLC (tenant and leaseholder community
magazine)

Continued...

Dedicated portfolio holder for housing

Weekly meetings with portfolio holder

6 weekly meetings with shadow portfolio
holders

Annual review group

Local opportunities

Tenant summits

Events and activities

Tenant and resident associations
walkabouts

Task and finish groups

Patch panels

Neighbourhood agreements