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Title of report: Tenant Engagement Strategy 2024-2027

Report : Tenancy Services is committed to improving the way we work and engage with our tenants and leaseholders. We want them to hold us to account and have opportunities to become actively involved in shaping the housing service. To that end we will be introducing a new Tenant Engagement Strategy. This Strategy will set out the Council's overall approach to tenant engagement and defines the vision and priorities. It aims to set out the direction for tenant engagement and supports our commitment to involving tenants in shaping and scrutinising services.

What evidence/data is being used to support this equality analysis? Please select all that apply.: Customers complaints/comments, Issues arising from Area Committees, Findings from surveys, focus groups & consultations, Analysis of service data (e.g I-card)

Service area: Tenancy Services

Corporate Manager: Gaviin Fisk

Corporate Manager email: gavin.fisk@ipswich.gov.uk

Links to supporting documents where available: Draft Tenant Engagement Strategy 2024-2027

Please upload any supporting documents: Tenant Engagement Strategy 2024 - 2027 for Design Feb 24 (1).docx

What is proposed?: Implementation of a new Tenant Engagement Strategy

Why are the changes being introduced?: Since the adoption of the existing strategy there has been an increased focus on Social Housing Providers and how they interact with their tenants. The implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 will lead to Social Housing Providers having to comply with Consumer Standards, having to demonstrate that they understand who their tenants are and engage meaningfully with them.

The Tenant Engagement Strategy will allow us to define a clear purpose for tenant involvement and engagement and demonstrate that the Council is actively improving the way it engages with tenants to ensure that the tenant voice is heard and

plays an important part in shaping the housing service

What evidence is being used to support this Equality Impact Assessment, and how is it being used?: Tenant data from the Housing Management System. Tenant Satisfaction Surveys data. Tenant Representatives. Canvassing of Tenants.

How will this change be implemented?: Following consultation a report will be prepared for Council Executive with a recommendation that Executive approves and adopts the new Tenant Engagement Strategy and authorises the Head of Servicer for Tenancy Services to take all necessary steps to implement it. An Action Plan will be developed to underpin the whole Strategy. A Steering Group that includes tenants will oversee delivery of the action plan and progress will be reported regularly to tenants.

Age: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants of all ages will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. A key objective is to increase opportunities for tenant involvement. This includes implementing, in conjunction with tenants, the model of tenant engagement so tenants can get involved in a way that suits them. This will include removing any barriers to participation so all tenants have an opportunity to be represented regardless of age.

Disability: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. The Strategy will include a review of options available for involvement so tenants can get involved in a way that suits them. The Strategy aims to remove any disadvantage or barriers to participation, which includes any that may be as a result of a disability. This will include ensuring any meeting venues are accessible and local, providing a loop system at meetings, providing Information in a range of ways and different formats ie braille, large print, audio and provision of sign language services.

Marriage & Civil Partnership: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. No particular impact has been identified for this group however increasing opportunities for engagement for all tenants will ensure that any tenant who is married or in a civil partnership is able to become involved in way that suits them.

Race: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. The Strategy aims to ensure that all tenants are represented and can become involved. This includes engaging with communities that are currently underrepresented and / or seldom heard from, particularly tenants from different black and minority ethnic communities and making every effort to accommodate cultural and religious needs.

Pregnancy & Maternity: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants and leaseholders will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. The Strategy aims to remove any disadvantage or barriers to participation, which includes any that may be as a result of pregnancy or maternity. This includes ensuring there are sufficient comfort and rest breaks in meetings and providing any additional support wherever possible that may be required to meet a need.

Religion or Belief: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. This includes ensuring that there are no barriers to involvement for tenants with different religions or beliefs. Every effort will be made to accommodate any religious needs or beliefs.

Gender Reassignment: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. The Strategy aims to remove any disadvantage or barriers to participation, which includes any that may be as a result of gender reassignment. This includes providing any additional support required for this group where an individual need is identified.

Sex: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants of both sexes will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. When implementing the new model of engagement consideration will be given to what circumstances or situation may limit a persons capacity or willingness to engage. In particular thought will be given to what may prevent men or women from engaging, such as caring or parenting responsibilities and work patterns etc. and how these barriers to participation can be removed.

Sexual Orientation: Positive

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Engaging with tenants of all sexual orientations will help to shape and improve the Council's Housing Services and decision making. The Strategy aims to remove any disadvantage or barriers to participation, which includes any that may be as a result of sexual orientation. This includes providing any appropriate support that may be required so tenants can become involved.

I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives: I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives

The report helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation' in the following way(s): The Tenant Engagement Strategy actively seeks to seek feedback and involve all tenants in the delivery of its housing services. All Tenant Engagement activities or events will be accessible to all.

The report helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s): Tenants will be encouraged to become more involved. We will be implementing the new model of tenant engagement in conjunction with tenants so that they can become involved in a way that suits them and also be supported to become involved. This includes removing any barriers to participation. There will also be a focus on the communities that are currently under represented and/or seldom heard from.

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s): Improving the communication between the Council and its tenants and using what we are told to improve our services

The new provisions will be reviewed in the following way(s): A steering group will oversee implementation of the Strategy and associated action plan. Progress will be reported to tenants regularly, through Area Housing Panels, Tenant Get Togethers, tenant Times and the Annual Report.
