



COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing Health and Community

DATE: 19th June 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Co-option of Tenants Representatives
REPORT OF:	Julian Higson – Interim Director of Housing

REPORT SUMMARY

The report sets out proposals to co-opt representatives of Tenants Talkback into the Housing, Health and Community Committee for housing related items, in accordance with the Council constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- R1. Approve that Tenant Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Housing Committee where public housing items are to be discussed.**

- R2. Approve that the representatives of Tenants Talkback be co-opted onto the committee for the duration of the consideration of these items, and have the right to speak, but not vote.**

- R3. Request that the Corporate Manager (Estates) arrange appropriate training of the representatives.**

SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that the Housing Department provides effective and transparent representation of local people's views.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

It has been considered that no representatives from Tenant Talkback attend committee however, this would mean they have no say on matters affecting housing on behalf of the residents of the Borough.

This does not align with our Resident Engagement Strategy and had therefore been discounted as an option.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Members will be aware that Tenant Talkback is the group of Council Tenants and Leaseholders who meet regularly with Housing staff and Councillors to discuss various subjects that affect them. This is made up of Tenants and Leaseholders from different estates and areas in the Borough.

Talkback remains our main consultative panel, gaining feedback from Tenants and Leaseholders on all policies, procedures, and projects that the Housing department are working on. We also have 3 sub panels which discuss more specific issues relating to repairs, estates and policy.

Residents have recently re-launched resident engagement and are actively seeking to increase membership of the group and their voice across the borough.

The Tenant Participation Contact includes the following paragraph:

Two representatives from the Talkback Group are invited to attend the Housing Committee in a non-voting role. They are able to speak on housing-related items at the Chair's discretion.

In the previous operation of the Housing Committee this arrangement operated on an informal basis.

In order to maintain the commitment of the Tenant Participation Compact, it is recommended that Tenant Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Housing Committee where public housing-related items are to be discussed. The representatives will be able to speak but not vote. It is recommended that their right to speak be on similar basis of other members of the committee.

Representatives will not be able to participate when the committee goes into a closed session.

It is important that Talkback Representatives receive a similar level of training to other committee members to ensure they are confident in the process of the operation of the committee.

It is anticipated that Tenant Talkback will send the same individuals to each meeting, which will be helpful to ensure consistent understanding of the Committee process. However, it is also acknowledged that substitute representatives may also need to be sent.

Consequently, it is recommended that the Corporate Manager Housing Estates arrange appropriate training for a number of Tenant Talkback representatives to ensure both the regular delegates and any substitutes have had the benefit of appropriate training.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There are no financial implications of the recommendations.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Director of People and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312741/claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct legal implications.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

None

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

None

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Consultations have taken place with Tenant Talkback who agreed with the report. However, members consider that representatives should have the right to speak at the Committee and sent a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic and the Tenant representatives are able to provide additional feedback to the Council.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

None

REPORT AUTHOR: **Name:** Nicola Marsh
Title: Corporate Manager Housing Estates
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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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Annual report to Housing Committee

**1st Council
meeting of the
year.**