



RYKNELD HOMES LTD
Report to the Board
27 July 2021

Report of Head of Neighbourhoods

Community Involvement Strategy 2021 to 2024

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To approve the Community Involvement Strategy 2021-2024
- 1.2 To approve the Community Involvement Workplan 2021/22
- 1.3 To approve working arrangements between the Operational Board, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and other involvement groups.

REASONS FOR PROPOSAL/REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce and gain approval for:
 - The Community Involvement Strategy 2021 – 2024 (appendix 1)
 - The Community Involvement Strategy Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2)
 - The Community Involvement Team's Workplan (appendix 3)
 - The working arrangements proposed for the Operational Board, Tenant Scrutiny Panel and other involvement groups (appendix 4)
- 2.2 Rykneld Homes' (RHL) Community Involvement Team is dedicated to empowering our customers to help North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) and RHL continuously improve housing throughout the district. The strategy sets out how RHL will continue to work with NEDDC to help achieve its vision so North East Derbyshire is:
 - Clean and attractive
 - A place where people are proud to live and work
 - A place where people will prosper
 - A place where people feel safe, happy and healthy
- 2.3 The Community Involvement Strategy also confirms our approach in working with the wider community to support groups and develop projects that enhance local areas and improve wellbeing in line with 2.2 above. All projects are contained within the Community Involvement workplan. The key themes include:
 - Improving people's health, both physical and mental
 - Bringing the community together and reducing social isolation
 - Improving opportunities for children and young people
 - Enhancing the environment

- Tackling unemployment
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Encouraging volunteering

2.4 At RHL and NEDDC we believe that customers are at the heart of our organisation. We want engagement to be meaningful and accessible for customers to help shape our services. It is therefore included within this report options of how the Operational Board will lead the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and other involvement groups to provide a customer perspective on service improvements and delivery.

Operational Board

2.5 The Operational Board provides customer focused research, which robustly challenges policy practice and performance to ensure RHL provides a high quality Housing Service, that holds customers at the heart of the organisation. The Operational Board is authorised to discharge the following functions:

- Provide assurance to the main Board on the quality of service delivery against agreed performance indicators.
- Assist in supporting the process of establishing performance indicators.
- Act as a “critical friend” on behalf of customers and residents, providing advice to Rykneld Homes and its Main Board, in relation to its Housing Service delivery and reviewing policies and strategies.
- Review customer satisfaction
- Ensure customers are consulted before major changes to Housing services are implemented. Form an integral part of the governance of Rykneld Homes through effective links with the main Board.

Tenant Scrutiny Panel

2.6 This is a customer panel of volunteers who conduct scrutiny project to monitor performance and quality of service. The methodology includes such things as customer surveys, site inspections and desktop research and assessments of performance. They produce a formal report after each project giving feedback and recommendations for service improvement.

2.7 The Operational Board can therefore utilise the skill and resource of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and other groups in order to review service quality and conduct research for their consideration and to contribute to the overall responsibilities of the Operational Board.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Community Involvement Strategy and Workplan

3.1 The Community Involvement Strategy has been developed in full consideration of the impact of the Covid pandemic and the annual workplan for 2021/22 has committed to projects that can be delivered with restrictions in place if required.

- 3.2 The Community Involvement Strategy complements the NEDDC vision and priorities by designing projects that meet these objectives as well as identifying local community-based schemes.
- 3.3 The Community Involvement Workplan can be flexible if circumstances change, or new opportunities are identified. RHL have a Community Involvement Team who are formally trained in several aspects of community project work to ensure we can deliver inhouse projects as well as working in partnership with existing groups and organisations.
- 3.4 The strategy confirms RHL's commitment to the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter (appendix 5) and the proposals in the government's social housing white paper. This demonstrates our belief customer engagement is central to delivering a successful housing service. By signing up to the Charter we are making a commitment to:
- Inclusive relationships with our customers
 - Valuing the voice and influence of our customers and seeking this out to improve services
 - Providing clear, accessible communications
 - Being accountable to our customers
 - Providing quality services
 - Having simple and accessible routes for customers to report to us when things go wrong

Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel Working Arrangements

- 3.5 The governance structure for RHL now includes a customer focussed Operational Board. This report considers the interface between the Rykneld Board, Operational Board, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and other involvement groups. By agreeing a structure (appendix 4) that accurately describes and demonstrates the working arrangement between the different elements of RHL's governance framework we can also provide necessary assurances to NEDDC of our commitment to meaningful customer engagement.
- 3.6 The proposal is for the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to receive their work plan directly from the Operational Board with an option for a member of the Operational Board to be co-opted on to the Scrutiny Panel for the duration of the project. The panel will then complete their scrutiny work, produce any recommendations for service improvement that will be submitted to the Operational Board, who will then produce an accompanying report to be presented at the main Rykneld Board.
- 3.7 The Community Involvement Team will provide necessary support to both the Operational Board and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to assist in project and report completion. They will be available to conduct a skills audit and arrange appropriate training for members of each group where required.

FINANCE, VALUE FOR MONEY & SOCIAL VALUE

(PLEASE INCLUDE ANY PROCUREMENT ACTIVITY REQUIRED)

- 4.1 The Community Involvement Team will deliver all projects within their existing budget and assist community groups apply for external funding if this is available.
- 4.2 All activities and projects delivered by the Community Involvement Team are recorded and assessed each year in terms of overall social value. This looks at the changes we have facilitated in relation to equality, improved wellbeing and environmental sustainability. The model used (HACT – UK social value bank) draws from principles underlying social accounting and audit, sustainability reporting, cost benefit analysis and evaluation practice.
- 4.3 The Community Involvement Strategy commits to producing an annual report. This will showcase their work over the past 12 months and will include project outcomes, community benefit and social value.
- 4.4 The Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny working arrangements have no additional financial impact. All costs will be contained within existing budgets.
- 4.5 As service improvements are made as a direct result of the work the Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel achieves, value for money and efficiencies will be recorded and reported on as part of the Community Involvement annual report.

LINKS TO THE BUSINESS PLAN, PERFORMANCE AND COMPLIANCE

- 5.1 The new 2021 - 2024 Community Involvement Strategy aligns with NEDDC corporate priorities, local priorities, the expectations of the Together with Tenants Charter and the Social Housing White Paper.
- 5.2 The recent Social Housing White Paper will see greater importance placed upon the way landlords manage estates and tenancies and will require more detailed reporting on customer satisfaction. The work to be undertaken by the Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel will analyse customer satisfaction data to inform their recommendations for service improvement.

RISKS AND IMPACT

- 6.1 If the working arrangements between the Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel are not approved, alternative arrangements will be required from Board to inform any future proposals.
- 6.2 Risks associated with the Community Involvement team are contained within the corporate/operational risk assessment alongside mitigating actions. Individual projects also have their own risk assessment to ensure the safe delivery of work.

EQUALITY [How does the proposal(s) in this Report have regard to:]

- 7.1 The Community Involvement Strategy has an associated Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 2).
- 7.2 Members of all involvement groups, including the Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel have or will be undertaken Equality and Diversity training.

HEALTH & SAFETY (H&S) / HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) / ICT

- 8.1 H&S : All projects and activities undertaken by the Community Involvement Team as contained within their workplan will have an individual risk assessment to ensure safe delivery.
- 8.2 HR : No HR items to consider within this report.
- 8.3 ICT : No ICT items to consider within this report.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION ISSUES

- 9.1 If approved the Community Involvement Strategy will be published on the Rykneld Website.
- 9.2 Each project undertaken by the Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel will have an associated scoping document and a communication and consultation plan. This will provide structure, clarity and focus for their work.
- 9.3 Service improvements made as a result of the recommendations received by the Operational Board will be communicated back to those who took part in any consultation and published within the Community Involvement annual report.

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Background Papers:	None
List of Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Community Involvement Strategy 2021 – 2024 Appendix 2 – Community Involvement Strategy Equality Impact Assessment Appendix 3 – Community Involvement Workplan 2021/22 Appendix 4 – Operational Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel working arrangements Appendix 5 - National Housing Federation Together with Tenants Charter