

Public Document Pack



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23 September 2022

Dear Councillor

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT a meeting of the **CABINET** will be held at these offices (Council Chamber) on Monday 3 October 2022 at 11.00 am when the following business will be transacted.

Members of the public who require further information are asked to contact Kate Batty-Smith, Democratic Services Officer on (01304) 872303 or by e-mail at democraticservices@dover.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicky', written over a horizontal line.

Chief Executive

Cabinet Membership:

T J Bartlett	Leader of the Council
M Bates	Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services
N S Kenton	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment
D P Murphy	Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education
O C de R Richardson	Deputy Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Community and Corporate Property
C A Vinson	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Digital and Climate Change

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Page 5)

To receive any declarations of interest from Members in respect of business to be

transacted on the agenda.

3 **RECORD OF DECISIONS** (Pages 6 - 11)

The decisions of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 September 2022 numbered CAB 27 to CAB 33 (inclusive) are attached.

ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OR OTHER COMMITTEES

To consider any issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny or other Committees not specifically detailed elsewhere on the agenda.

BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK - KEY DECISIONS

4 **DOVER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PUBLICATION (REGULATION 19) AND SUBMISSION (REGULATION 22)** (Page 12)

To consider the attached report of the Planning Policy and Projects Manager.

Responsibility: Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment

EXECUTIVE - KEY DECISIONS

5 **DOVER DISTRICT TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-27** (Pages 13 - 49)

To consider the attached report of the Head of Housing.

Responsibility: Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education

6 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 - REQUEST FOR INCREASE IN HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF** (Pages 50 - 55)

To consider the attached report of the Head of Regulatory Services.

Responsibility: Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services

EXECUTIVE - NON-KEY DECISIONS

7 **DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME (DOVER 2024 - 50 YEARS OF SERVICE)** (Pages 56 - 60)

To consider the attached report of the Chief Executive.

Responsibility: Leader of the Council

8 **STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD - QUARTER ONE 2022/23** (Page 61)

To consider the attached report of the Head of Leadership Support.

Responsibility: Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Digital and Climate Change

9 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC** (Page 62)

The recommendation is attached.

MATTERS WHICH THE MANAGEMENT TEAM SUGGESTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE AS THE REPORT CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED WITHIN PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS INDICATED AND IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE PROPER OFFICER CONSIDERS THAT THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN MAINTAINING THE EXEMPTION OUTWEIGHS THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN DISCLOSING THE INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE - KEY DECISIONS

10 **SERVICED SELF-BUILD PLOTS** (Pages 63 - 67)

To consider the attached report of the Head of Finance and Investment.

Responsibility: Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education

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- Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees. You may remain present throughout them except during the consideration of exempt or confidential information.
- All meetings are held at the Council Offices, Whitfield unless otherwise indicated on the front page of the agenda. There is step free access via the Council Chamber entrance and an accessible toilet is available in the foyer. In addition, there is a PA system and hearing loop within the Council Chamber.
- In order to facilitate the broadcast of meetings there have been cameras set up in the Council Chamber that communicate with Microsoft Teams Live. This enables meetings held in the Council Chamber to be broadcast for public viewing through the Council's website. These meetings are only available for viewing live and the Council does not retain copies of the broadcast.

The meetings in which these cameras will be used include meetings of: (a) Council; (b) Cabinet; (c) General Purposes Committee; (d) Governance Committee; (e) Planning Committee; and (f) Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- Agenda papers are published five clear working days before the meeting. Alternatively, a limited supply of agendas will be available at the meeting, free of charge, and all agendas, reports and minutes can be viewed and downloaded from our website www.dover.gov.uk. Minutes will be published on our website as soon as practicably possible after each meeting. All agenda papers and minutes are available for public inspection for a period of six years from the date of the meeting.
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- If you require any further information about the contents of this agenda or your right to gain access to information held by the Council please contact Kate Batty-Smith, Democratic Services Officer, democraticservices@dover.gov.uk, telephone: (01304) 872303 or email: democraticservices@dover.gov.uk for details.

Large print copies of this agenda can be supplied on request.

Declarations of Interest

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a Member has a new or registered DPI in a matter under consideration they must disclose that they have an interest and, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed in advance that the DPI is a 'Sensitive Interest', explain the nature of that interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a DPI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation permitting them to do so. If during the consideration of any item a Member becomes aware that they have a DPI in the matter they should declare the interest immediately and, subject to any dispensations, withdraw from the meeting.

Other Significant Interest (OSI)

Where a Member is declaring an OSI they must also disclose the interest and explain the nature of the interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a OSI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation to do so or the meeting is one at which members of the public are permitted to speak for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter. In the latter case, the Member may only participate on the same basis as a member of the public and cannot participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter and must withdraw from the meeting in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

Voluntary Announcement of Other Interests (VAOI)

Where a Member does not have either a DPI or OSI but is of the opinion that for transparency reasons alone s/he should make an announcement in respect of a matter under consideration, they can make a VAOI. A Member declaring a VAOI may still remain at the meeting and vote on the matter under consideration.

Note to the Code:

Situations in which a Member may wish to make a VAOI include membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items; where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person; or where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position. It should be emphasised that an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI.

Record of the decisions of the meeting of the **CABINET** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 5 September 2022 at 11.00 am

Present:

Chairman: Councillor T J Bartlett

Councillors: M Bates
N S Kenton
D P Murphy
C A Vinson

Also Present: Councillor E A Biggs
Councillor D R Friend
Councillor K Mills
Councillor H M Williams
Councillor C D Zossedler

Officers: Chief Executive
Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)
Head of Assets and Building Control
Head of Commercial Services
Head of Governance and HR
Head of Planning and Development
Planning Policy and Projects Manager
Planning Policy Officer (Planning and Development)
PR and Marketing Officer
Democratic Services Officer

The formal decisions of the executive are detailed in the following schedule.

Record of Decisions: Executive Functions

Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 27 5.9.22 Open Key Decisions No Call-in to apply Yes Implementation Date 13 September 2022	<u>APOLOGIES</u> It was noted that an apology for absence had been received from Councillor O C de R Richardson.	None.	To note any apologies for absence.	
Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 28 5.9.22 Open Key Decisions No Call-in to apply Yes Implementation Date	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> There were no declarations of interest.	None.	To note any declarations of interest.	

13 September 2022				
Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 29 5.9.22 Open Key Decisions No Call-in to apply Yes Implementation Date 13 September 2022	<u>RECORD OF DECISIONS</u> It was agreed that the decisions of the meeting held on 4 July 2022, as detailed in decision numbers CAB 15 to CAB 26, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.	None.	Cabinet is required to approve the Record of Decisions of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 July 2022.	
Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 30 5.9.22 Open Key Decisions Yes Call-in to apply Yes Implementation Date	<u>DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME</u> It was agreed: (a) That the revised Dover District Council Local Development Scheme, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be brought into immediate effect. (b) That £50,000 be taken from the Regeneration Reserve to cover additional costs needed to deliver the Local Plan.	None.	The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timetable for the production, consultation and adoption of key planning documents that will form part of the Council's Local Plan. The revised	

13 September 2022			LDS supersedes the previous one published in November 2021 and takes account of changes resulting from the District Local Plan and a number of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.	
Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 31 5.9.22 Open Key Decisions Yes Call-in to apply Yes Implementation Date 13 September 2022	<u>ENERGY COMPANY OBLIGATION 4 (ECO4)</u> It was agreed that the appointment of a contractor by a direct award through the FUSION 21 framework be approved.	None.	Under the Energy Company Obligation, energy companies are obliged to provide funding to improve the energy performance of homes occupied by low income, vulnerable and fuel-poor households. It is proposed that a direct award should be made to a contractor who has access to ECO	

			funding in order to allow the Council to continue to identify suitable households and deliver energy efficiency measures for the poorest residents of the district.	
Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 32 5.9.22 Open Key Decisions No Call-in to apply Yes Implementation Date 13 September 2022	<u>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2021/22</u> It was agreed: (a) That the Annual Governance Assurance Statement 2021/22 be approved, and the Leader of the Council and the Head of Paid Service be requested to sign the statement on behalf of the Council. (b) That the Governance Committee be asked to accept the Annual Governance Assurance Statement 2021/22 alongside the 2021/22 Statement of Accounts.	None.	The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that the Council conducts at least annually a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and reports on the extent to which it complies with the Local Code of Corporate Governance.	
Decision Status	Record of Decision	Alternative options considered and rejected (if any)	Reasons for Decision	Conflicts of interest (if any) declared by decision maker(s) or consultees (if any)
CAB 33	<u>APPOINTMENT OF TIDES LEISURE CENTRE PROJECT ADVISORY</u>	None.	To appoint a	

<p>5.9.22 Open</p> <p>Key Decisions No</p> <p>Call-in to apply Yes</p> <p>Implementation Date 13 September 2022</p>	<p><u>GROUP</u></p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(a) That Councillor Trevor Bond be appointed to replace Councillor Derek Murphy on the Tides Leisure Centre Project Advisory Group.</p> <p>(b) That the membership of the Tides Leisure Centre Project Advisory Group for the Council Year 2022/23 be confirmed as: Portfolio Holders for Community & Corporate Property (Chairman); Finance, Governance, Digital & Climate Change (Vice-Chairman) and Planning & Environment and Councillors Helen Williams and Trevor Bond.</p>		<p>replacement for Councillor Derek Murphy on the Tides Leisure Centre Project Advisory Group (PAG), and approve the PAG's overall membership for the Council Year 2022/23 to bring it into line with the other PAGs whose memberships are appointed annually.</p>	
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The meeting ended at 11.15 am.

DOVER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

Due to the size of this report and its supporting documentation, this item has been published as a supplementary paper.

Subject:	DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL DRAFT TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022–2027
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 3 October 2022
Report of:	Louise Taylor, Head of Housing
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Derek Murphy, Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report:	To seek Cabinet approval of the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 for consultation purposes and agreement for wider formal consultation with stakeholders and service users.
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Recommendation:	<p>1. That Cabinet approves the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy and Action Plan at Appendix 1 for consultation purposes.</p> <p>2. That Cabinet notes and approves the draft consultation plan for the Tenant Engagement Strategy for formal consultation with tenants and leaseholders for a 4-week period.</p> <p>3. That Cabinet delegates to the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education, authority to consider the consultation responses and to make any minor amendments arising therefrom and thereafter, and to adopt this document on behalf of the Council with effect from 7 November 2022. Should more significant amendments be considered desirable, the matter shall be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.</p> <p>4. That Cabinet delegates to the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education, authority to make future minor amendments to the strategy as required.</p>
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The way in which landlords engage with their tenants and leaseholders is changing and both nationally and locally there is a significant push to ensure tenants have a genuine say in how their homes and services are managed.
- 1.2 This strategy has been developed against a backdrop of demands for greater transparency and accountability in the social housing sector following the Grenfell Tower tragedy. The publication, in the wake of Grenfell, of the Government’s Social Housing White Paper ‘The Charter for Social Housing Residents’ will result in a more robust regulatory regime overseen by the Regulator of Social Housing, more emphasis upon tenant satisfaction as a performance measure and greater intervention by both the Regulator and Housing Ombudsman if required.
- 1.3 The draft Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 (appendix 1) sets out how the housing service will strengthen relationships, give an effective voice to our tenants and leaseholders

and increase the opportunities they have to work with us. It has been developed in collaboration with tenant and leaseholder representatives and is intended to help Dover District Council develop stronger, more inclusive tenant engagement activities in the future.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 As a registered provider of social housing, Dover District Council must comply with the regulatory framework developed by the Regulator for Social Housing. This framework has three economic standards (applicable to housing associations only) and four consumer standards. The standard set for resident involvement is the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment (Consumer) Standard and covers:

- (i) Customer Service, Choice and Complaints.
- (ii) Involvement and Empowerment.
- (iii) Understanding and Responding to Diverse Needs of Tenants.

2.2 Underpinning the Regulators approach is the concept of co regulation. This means that boards and Councillors who govern providers' service delivery are responsible for ensuring their organisation is meeting the Regulator's standards and are open and accountable in their approach. Co-regulation also requires providers to encourage and support their tenants to engage with the shaping and scrutinising of service delivery.

2.3 The Regulator of Social Housing is currently reviewing its Consumer Standards and consulting with social landlords regarding the introduction of a fifth standard requiring all social landlords to use and report upon a suite of national tenant satisfaction measures. It is expected these will be introduced from April 2023.

3. The Social Housing White Paper – 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents'

3.1 In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy the Government published its Social Housing White Paper, The Charter for Social Housing Residents. This paper was heavily informed by lessons learnt from the disaster and focuses upon tenant health and safety, landlord accountability and transparency and greater tenant empowerment. At its heart is a desire to see a cultural shift in the way in which housing providers interact with their tenants and leaseholders. In terms of effective tenant engagement landlords are expected to:

- (i) Seek out best practice and consider how they can continually improve the way they engage with their tenants.
- (ii) Support more effective engagement with tenants by giving them the tools to influence their landlord's and hold them to account.
- (iii) Review the professional training and development of their officers to improve the service delivery arrangements for service users.
- (iv) Be more transparent with the publication of their service and performance standards.

3.2 The recently published Social Housing (Regulation) Bill will move significantly beyond the current arrangements for sector regulation and introduce proactive consumer regulation by the Regulator for Social Housing. It also strengthens the role of the Housing Ombudsman Service.

4. Strategy Aims

4.1 Since the return of the housing service to the Council in October 2020 officers have worked hard to consult with tenants and leaseholders about the services we are delivering and to listen to what they are telling us and act upon their feedback.

4.2 The draft Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 (appendix 1) sets out how the housing service intends to strengthen relationships and the voice of tenants and leaseholders taking into account:

- (i) Feedback from residents.
- (ii) Feedback from housing staff.

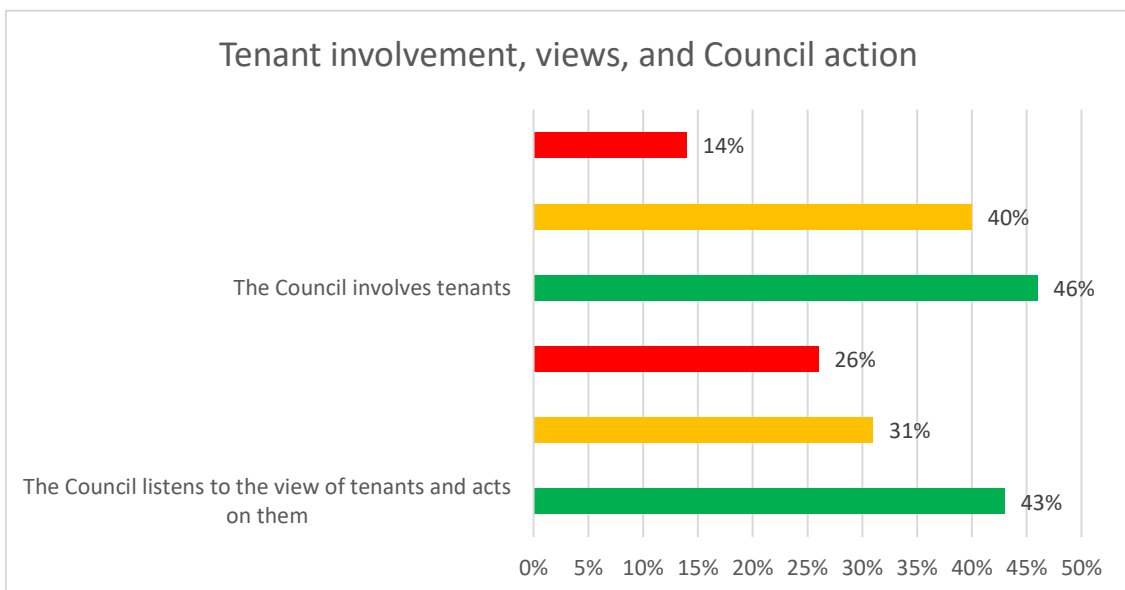
- (iii) Current best practice in involvement from social housing.
- (iv) Current and future legal and regulatory requirements.

4.3 The strategy recognises the hard work and commitment of existing involved residents and highlights the need to strengthen the voice of underrepresented groups and extend our reach through a programme of accessible and flexible involvement opportunities that are tied together through the new framework.

5. Strategy Development

5.1 The Strategy has been developed over the course of the last 12 months and has been informed by feedback and material from a range of sources. Last summer the housing service organised a full scale tenant satisfaction survey (STAR). Over 550 council tenants and leaseholders responded to this and analysis of the results has helped us focus on service delivery areas we need to improve.

Key:



Green = Satisfied or very Satisfied. Red = Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Amber = neither satisfied or dissatisfied

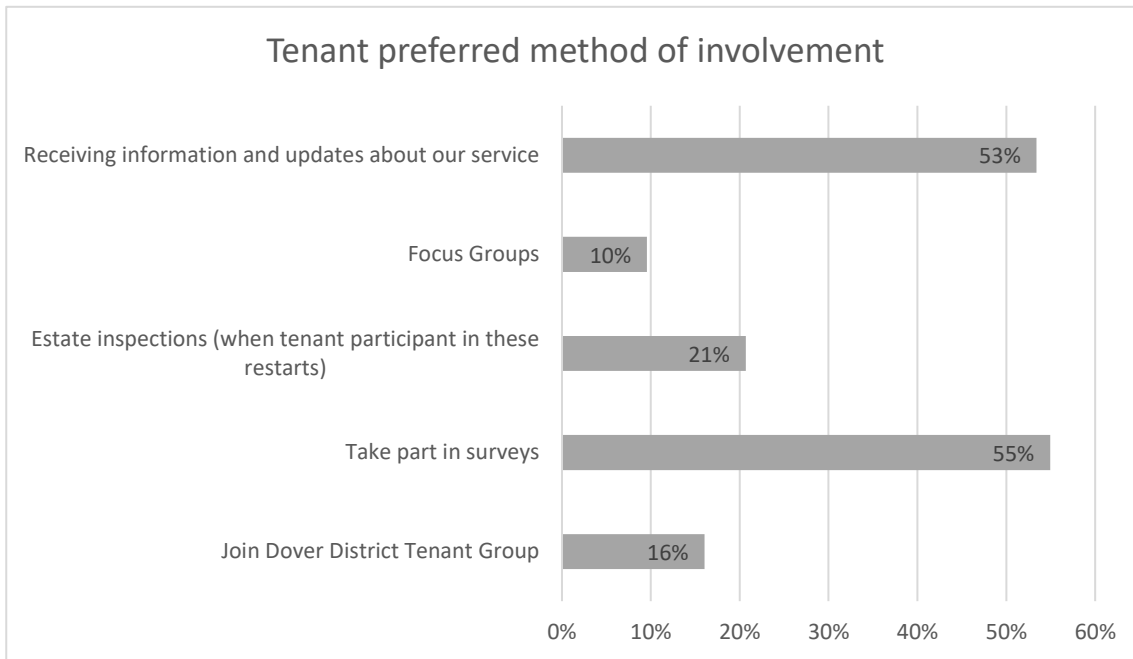
5.2 When questioned about their satisfaction with the way in which the Council involves tenants and listens and acts upon their views, the results show that although there were many tenants satisfied with this there were also a higher number of respondents who were indifferent compared to other questions asked.

This suggests that possibly:

- (i) Our tenants are content with the way they are being included and informed by the Council; or
- (ii) There is a lower level of interest in involvement.

It is clear however that more can be done to encourage tenants to be actively involved at some level and to understand the benefits that this can bring.

5.3 The survey also asked tenants what their preferred method of involvement would be. The results show that there was a strong preference by tenants to get involved by either taking part in surveys, or by receiving information and updates about services. The Tenant Involvement Strategy has taken into account the information gleaned from the full-scale tenant satisfaction survey and in particular the types of activity that tenants and leaseholders have indicated they would be most interested in.



- 5.4 Between February 2022 and April 2022 a series of workshops took place with a focus group recruited to help develop the engagement framework. This included tenants (some of who had previously been engaged with the housing services and others who had not), leaseholders and staff. A number of consistent themes emerged from the workshops and these have been used to inform the strategic priorities and the 'menu' of opportunities that underpins the engagement framework.
- 5.5 Between May and August the draft priorities and engagement opportunities were consulted upon more widely through:
- (i) Discussion with the Dover District Tenant Group.
 - (ii) A full online survey for all tenants and leaseholders with covering information and links to it featured in the tenant newsletter sent by post to all households in July 2022.
 - (iii) A staff survey.
 - (iv) Semi structured interviews and meetings with the Councils sheltered housing tenants.
 - (v) Survey reminders sent to all 437 members of the housing specific Keep Me Posted Forum.
- 5.6 The feedback received from tenants, leaseholders and staff has been both helpful and consistent, with a clear aspiration to work in partnership to help improve services. In all approximately 120 service users and staff have contributed to the development of this strategy.
- 5.7 Those who contributed frequently cited the following as essential ingredients for successful resident involvement:
- (i) Honesty and Trust.
 - (ii) Transparency and accountability.
 - (iii) More and different opportunities to meet diverse needs.
 - (iv) Support for tenants to make a difference.

6. Strategic Priorities

- 6.1 Building upon the work undertaken in the last 12 months four key strategic priorities have been identified. These are:

- (i) Priority one – Breaking down the barriers to being involved. Tenants and leaseholders want us to make it easier for their voices to be heard and to try to ensure that all tenants can feel there are opportunities for them regardless of their circumstances, abilities, and characteristics.
- (ii) Priority two – Rebuilding the trust that tenants have in Dover District Council. There has been a recurring theme in the comments given by tenants and leaseholders that Dover District Council has the opportunity to build a better relationship with its tenants after years of management by East Kent Housing.
- (iii) Priority three - Increased offering and a wider variety of opportunities to encourage more people to be involved in ways that suit them. Tenants are keen that there be a range of ways in which they can share their views with their landlord. This needs to take into account that individuals wish to be involved in different ways and to varying degrees.
- (iv) Priority 4 - Supporting tenants to be involved. The respondents to our survey all felt that it was important that the Council support tenant and leaseholder involvement with guidance, encouragement and training where needed.

7. The ‘Menu’ of Engagement and Action Plan

- 7.1 The engagement framework includes a variety of ways in which service users can be involved. These form a ‘Menu of Opportunities’ and include ways to be involved at a more formal level where the time commitment required is higher, through to simply picking up and reading the newsletter.
- 7.2 The need for so many households to communicate with each other through online platforms during the pandemic has transformed the way in which large sections of the population communicate with each other still. Wherever possible we will be promoting opportunities for engagement through digital channels and enabling tenants and leaseholders to engage with the housing service in ways that suit their lifestyle.
- 7.3 The strategy reflects our hope that offering digital and online channels of communication will increase the diversity of the customers that we engage with especially if they are able to do so from their own homes and at times that suit them. It should result in less reliance on (but not a complete move away from) face-to-face meetings and make engagement more easily accessible and appealing to a wider group of tenants with different backgrounds.
- 7.4 We recognise however that this isn’t suitable for everyone and that there are tenants who are digitally excluded or choose not to interact in this way. For those we will continue to provide more traditional methods of engagement ie by telephone and with face to face meetings.
- 7.5 The action plan sets out the actions we propose to take to help us meet the four priorities and demonstrate to tenants and leaseholders our commitment to work in partnership with them to help shape and improve the services we offer. All actions listed in the Action Plan are aimed at achieving one or more of the above priorities.

8. Wider Consultation

- 8.1 A significant amount of feedback has already been received from tenants and taken into account in the development of this strategy. To reflect this, it is proposed that a shorter online consultation take place with tenants, leaseholders and stakeholder of 4 weeks. This will be through the Council’s website, targeted awareness raising among tenants and leaseholders through social media posts and reminders sent to those who are already signed up to our keep me posted service.

9. Identification of Options

- 9.1 Option 1: Approve for consultation the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy and delegate to the Strategic Director (Corporate Services) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Port Health, Skills and Education authority consider the consultation responses and to to make minor revisions to the strategy following the outcome of the consultation exercise

and thereafter adopt formally the Strategy. In the event that consultation responses are received which make more significant revisions to the Strategy desirable, a revised versions will be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

9.2 Option 2: Not approve the Tenant Engagement Strategy

10. Evaluation of Options

10.1 Option 1 - is the recommended option because the proposed structure has been designed to maximise the ways in which tenants and leaseholders can get involved with the housing service.

10.2 Option 2 - is not the recommended option as it is a requirement for local authorities (under the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing) to involve and engage their tenants and therefore to do nothing would place the authority at risk of challenge.

11. Resource Implications

11.1 The Tenant Engagement Strategy will be delivered within existing resources in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). A range of opportunities to be involved with the service are already in place and the strategic ambition is to build upon these.

12. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

12.1 The strategy seeks to increase the level of engagement and communication with residents via digital channels to improve access for residents whilst minimising the impact on the environment. Increased engagement and communication should bring about improvements for tenants in their home environment.

Corporate Implications

13.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy have been consulted in the writing of this report and have no further comment to add (AC)'

13.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

13.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed which highlights potential positive impacts for several protected characteristic groups. Members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

13.4 Other Officers (as appropriate): None received.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Dover District Council Draft Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022 - 2027

Appendix 2 - Proposed consultation plan

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Regulator of Social Housing Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-involvement-and-empowerment-standard/tenant-involvement-and-empowerment-standard-2017>

The Social Housing White Paper: A Charter for Social Housing Residents https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/936098/The_charter_for_social_housing_residents_-_social_housing_white_paper.pdf

Contact Officer: Louise Taylor, Head of Housing

Dover District Council

Tenant Engagement Strategy



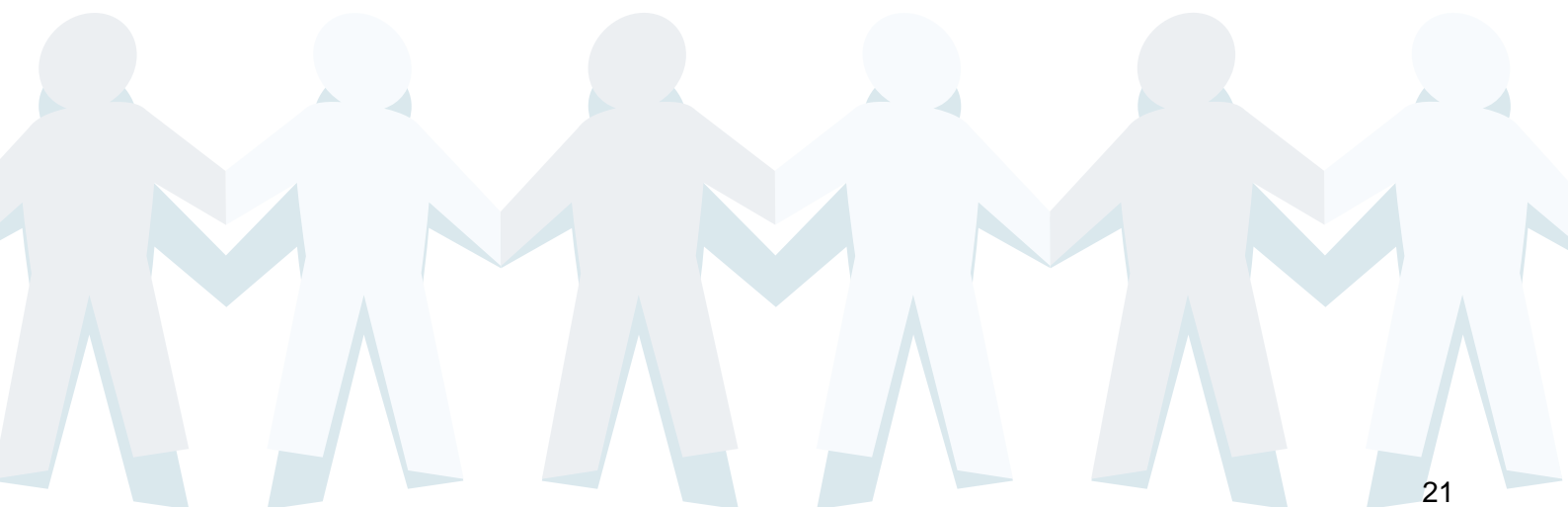
Working together to make a difference
for tenants and leaseholders
throughout the district

**HOUSING
SERVICES**



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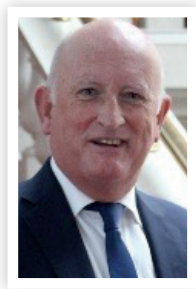
1. Joint Foreword

The way in which social housing landlords engage with their tenants and leaseholders is changing and there is a powerful push at national and local level to make sure that tenants have a real say in how their homes and services are managed. At Dover we want tenants and leaseholders to be at the heart of the housing service, and we recognise that we can only understand whether we are delivering the right services to the right standard if we have inclusive, representative, and active tenant engagement to support us.

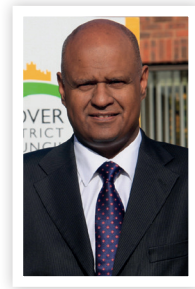
This strategy has been developed against a backdrop of change for social housing landlords. In the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire and the publication of the Government’s Social Housing White Paper, ‘The Charter for Social Housing Residents’, more robust regulation of social housing landlords is planned and now more than ever social housing landlords must ensure that their tenants have an effective voice.

Rapid changes in technology and our use of them during the Covid pandemic mean that tenants and leaseholders can be involved, using their phones, in person or on screen. We want to harness this change and ensure a range of opportunities exist for all service users who want to be involved. Tenants have been involved in formulating this strategy from the start and we are grateful to the Dover District Tenants’ Group (DDTG) and dedicated Focus Group who have given up their time to help develop this document.

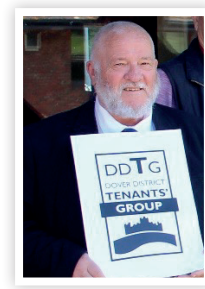
We all have a part to play in building successful engagement opportunities and we are committed as Members, Tenants and Officers to working together to improve services.



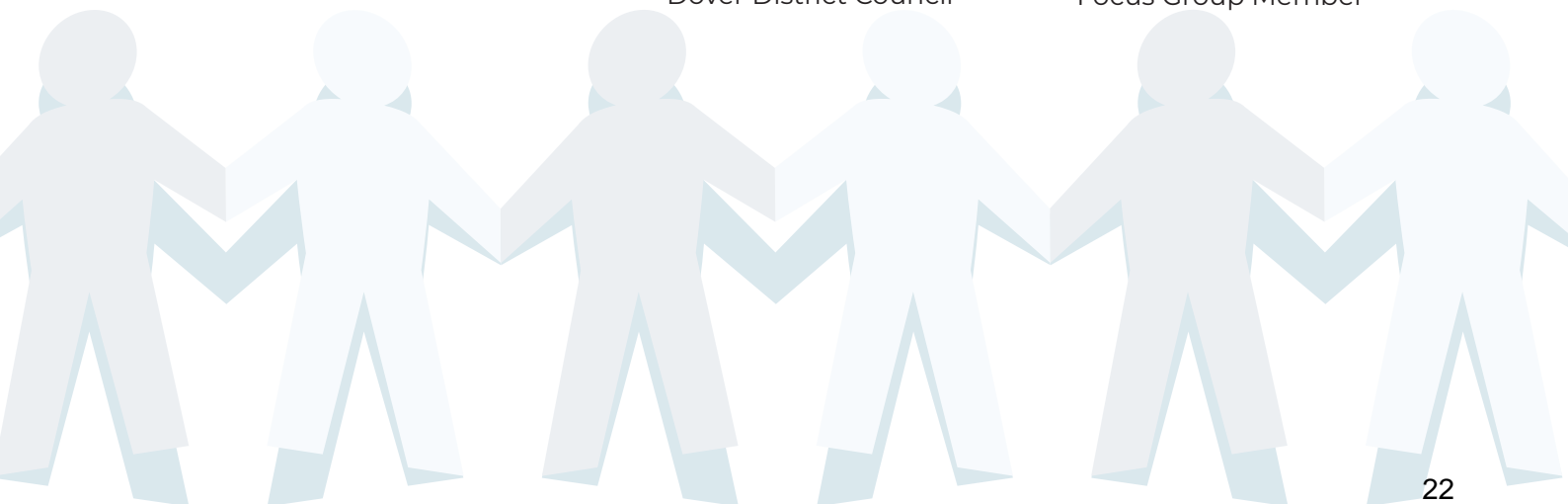
Cllr Derek Murphy
Portfolio Holder for Housing



Nadeem Aziz
Chief Executive,
Dover District Council



Neil Drakley
Chair of DDTG and
Focus Group Member



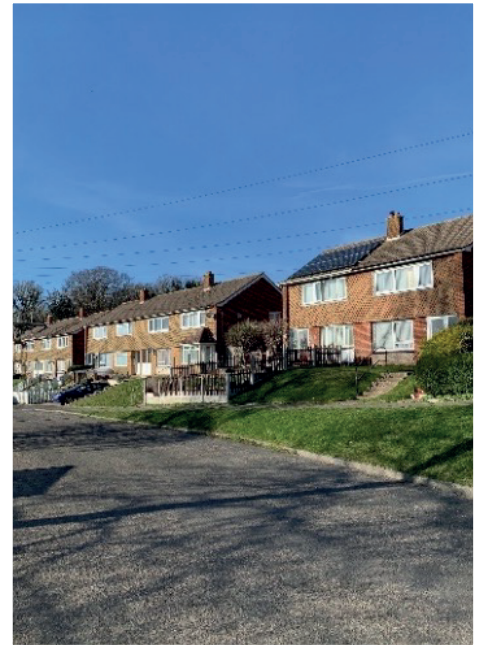
2. Introduction

Dover District Council (DDC) owns and manages 4341 affordable rented properties, 95 interim accommodation, 428 leasehold properties and 32 shared ownership properties.

On 1 October 2020, DDC brought its housing management service in house for the first time in 9.5 years. In that time, the way tenants want to engage with their landlord has changed. With more online opportunities and increasingly mixed tenure estates, the involvement service must evolve to ensure we are listening and acting upon what we are told.

Tenant engagement takes many forms, but its core objective is to listen to residents and proactively use their feedback to influence, shape and improve services. As a landlord, the Council will strive to provide a varied and broad list of engagement activities and tools to ensure there is an opportunity to be involved for those who want it. This strategy sets out how we will work in partnership with our tenants and leaseholders to shape and deliver a high-quality housing service in the Dover District. It will build upon the good initiatives already in place but recognises that there are still improvements that can be made so that tenants remain involved and are consulted and included at whatever level they choose to be.

To formulate this strategy, we worked closely with a focus group of tenants, the Dover District Tenants' Group and members of our 'Keep Me Posted' group. We want to acknowledge and thank them all for their time and support for this.



3. What is Tenant Engagement?

Tenant Engagement (also known as Tenant Involvement) is a commitment from us, the landlord, to listen to, and act upon the views and recommendations of tenants and leaseholders who are directly impacted by the services we deliver.

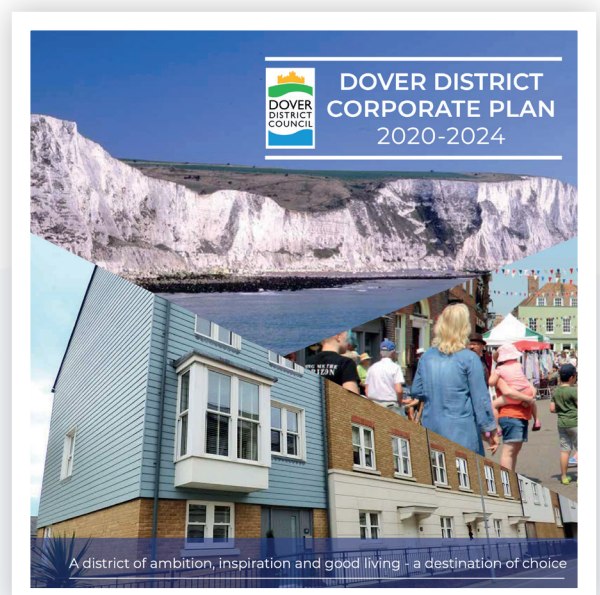
We want tenants and leaseholders to tell us what they think of the services we offer, for example repairs and housing management. We want them to help us improve how we communicate with them, eg through our website, by phone or letter, and we want to understand from customers what effect our decisions and choices have on them and how we can make improvements, from decisions about the type of playground equipment or front door colours we choose right through to bigger decisions about how the service works.

Resident and community engagement is vital and the Government’s Charter for Social Residents and the Regulator for Social Housing’s regulatory framework both underpin and reinforce the importance of landlords having consistent, continuous and meaningful engagement with their tenants.

4. Dover District Council’s Corporate Objectives

Dover District Council wants to be a district of ambition, inspiration and good living and has bold and ambitious plans for a sustainable future for residents living in the district. The Council’s Corporate Plan is designed to encourage, facilitate and deliver a stronger local economy, with opportunities for everyone to reach their ambitions. Some of the objectives associated with Housing and the Community are:

- Enable a range of good quality affordable homes for our residents in an attractive environment
- Work to build healthy, resilient and sustainable communities, where residents have good access to facilities and transport links to further their wellbeing
- Invest in our Council Housing stock, working with partners to keep people supported and healthy in their own homes.



5. Regulatory Considerations

5.1 Regulator for Social Housing

The Regulator of Social Housing is the body that oversees standards in the social housing sector. It has a regulatory framework setting clear standards for landlords to meet. There are currently four consumer regulatory standards with which Local Authority housing providers must comply and the Regulator is currently consulting with landlords regarding a fifth consumer standard based upon tenant satisfaction that it intends introducing in the winter of 2022. For the purposes of tenant engagement, the council must follow the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard which has the following three sections:

- Customer service, choice and complaints
- Involvement and empowerment
- Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants.

The Regulator of Social Housing has made it very clear that it expects social landlords to adopt its principles of co-regulation. Co-regulation is intended to bring elected members, tenants and officers together to scrutinise collectively their landlord services and make sure that these are delivered effectively and comply with all regulatory requirements.

Social Housing Landlords, including the Council are encouraged to support and provide tenants with opportunities to fully engage with the co regulatory approach and to be able to hold their landlord to account if standards are not met.

5.2 The Social Housing White Paper

The Social Housing White Paper sets out the Government's vision for improved social housing management and is informed by national consultation with tenants, landlords and other stakeholders. The Charter for Social Housing Residents sets out how registered housing providers must deliver this vision.

The Charter contains 7 expectations:

1. To be safe in your home. We will work with industry and landlords to ensure every home is safe and secure.
2. To **know how your landlord is performing**, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, **so you can hold it to account.**
3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong ombudsman who will give you swift and fair redress when needed.

"Engagement can take many forms, but the crucial factor is that it is tailored appropriately. There will be tenants who want to proactively engage with the policies of their landlord, and others who simply want to know that their landlord is thinking of them in the way it implements change and is keeping them informed. We expect all landlords to tailor their engagement in the future."

From the charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper

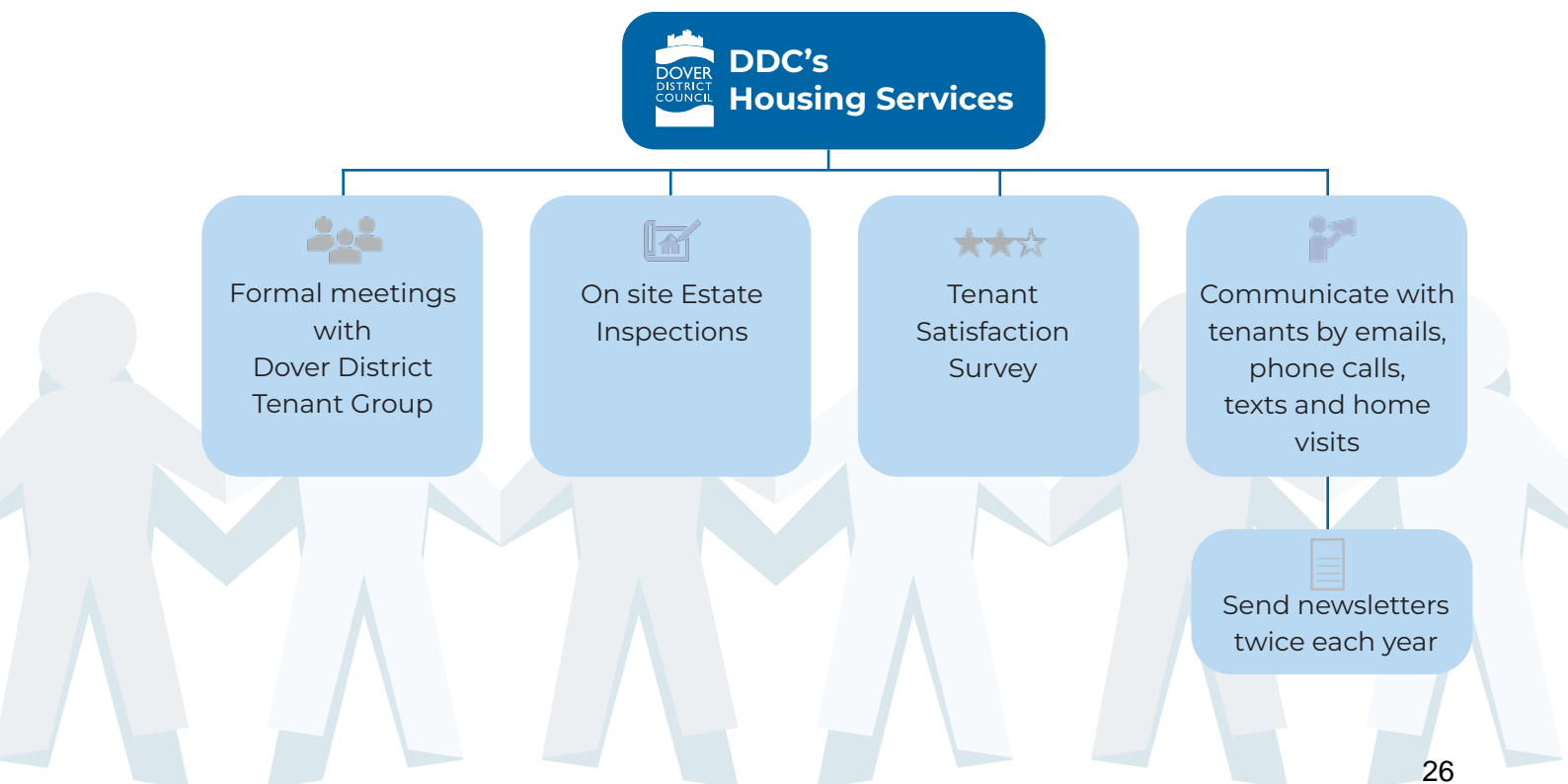
4. To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.
5. To **have your voice heard by your landlord**, for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its Board. The government will provide help, if you want it, to give you the tools to ensure your landlord listens.
6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.
7. To be supported to take your first step to ownership, so it is a ladder to other opportunities, should your circumstances allow.

6. Our Current Structure

Since the Housing service was bought back in house to DDC, officers have continued to work with existing groups and engage in a range of activities to increase the opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to share their views with us.

We have worked closely with Dover District Tenants' Group, which has been established for many years. This independent group works closely with the Council to share views and make recommendations for improvements in service delivery. Throughout the pandemic the group met with officers online and easily adapted to this way of working.

While the existing engagement structure works well, there is more that can be done to involve residents in different ways and overcome barriers. This is how we currently engage with our tenants and leaseholders.



7. How Did We Consult Tenants in the Formulation of This Strategy?

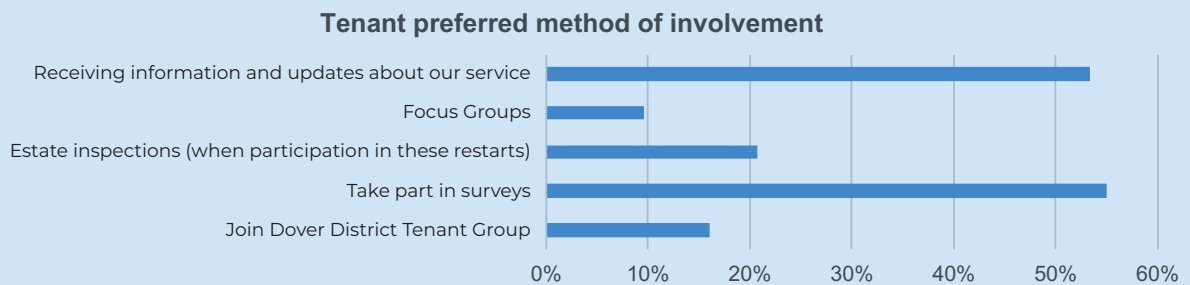
To help us identify ways of encouraging more tenants to become involved we worked closely with a dedicated focus group. This group was made of tenants from across the district who came forward when we advertised for group members to help develop the strategy at the 'ideas' stage. We have used the insight provided by this group of enthusiastic tenants to help DDC build a menu of opportunities through which to engage with tenants.

To ensure that as wide a variety of customer voices as possible be used to influence this strategy, we also used data and feedback from our whole district tenant satisfaction survey completed in summer 2021, the views of members of the Dover District Tenant Group, the outcome of semi structured question and answer sessions with our sheltered housing residents, and the 437 members who have proactively signed up to our housing Keep Me Posted service.

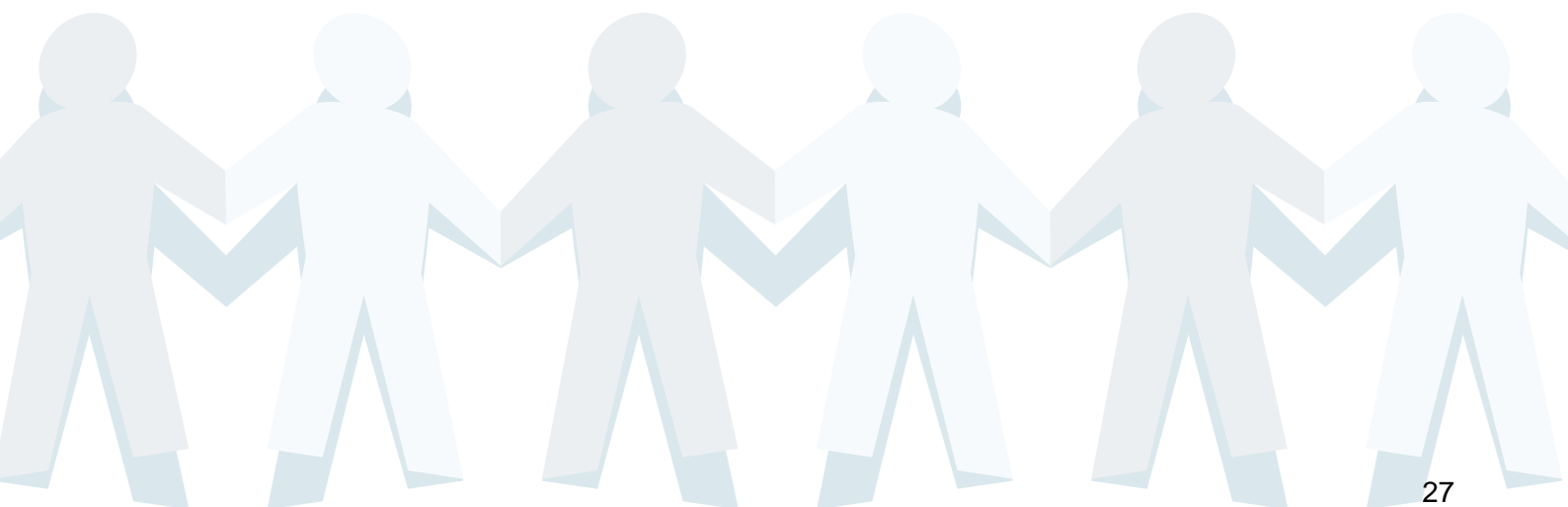
Tenant Satisfaction Survey

In 2021, Dover District Council conducted a tenant satisfaction survey, sent to all tenants and available online to complete.

We asked tenants what their preferred method of involvement is, these are the results:



These results indicate that tenants are more interested in receiving information and participating from home or their local area than attending formal meetings.

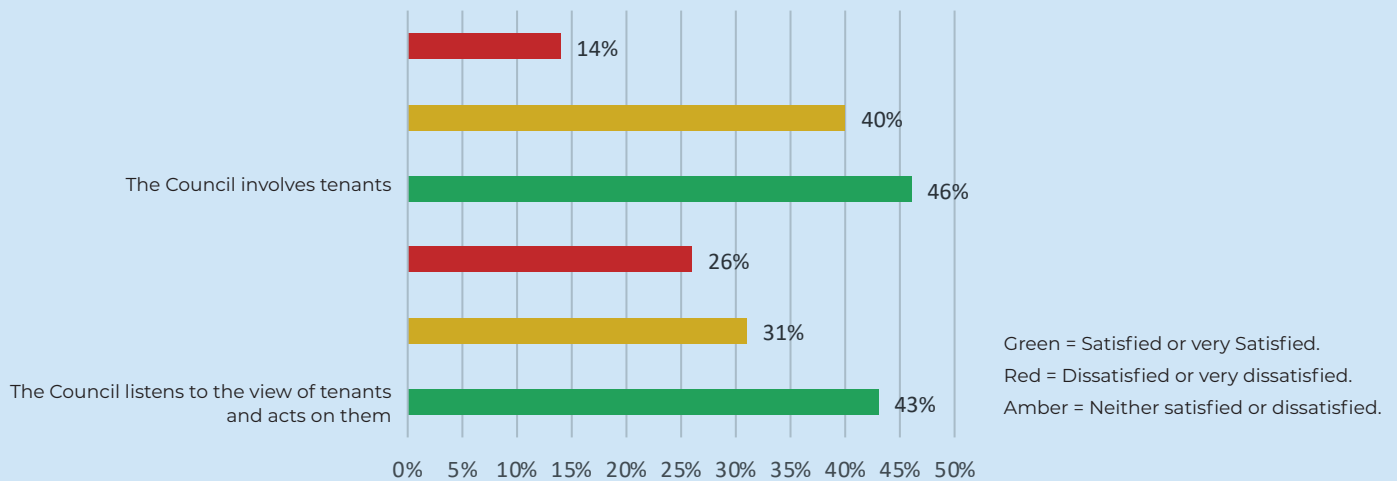


When questioned about their satisfaction with the way in which the Council involves tenants and listens and acts upon their views, the results show that although many tenants felt satisfied with how the Council involves and informs them, there were also higher levels of indifference compared to other questions asked, which may suggest one of two things:

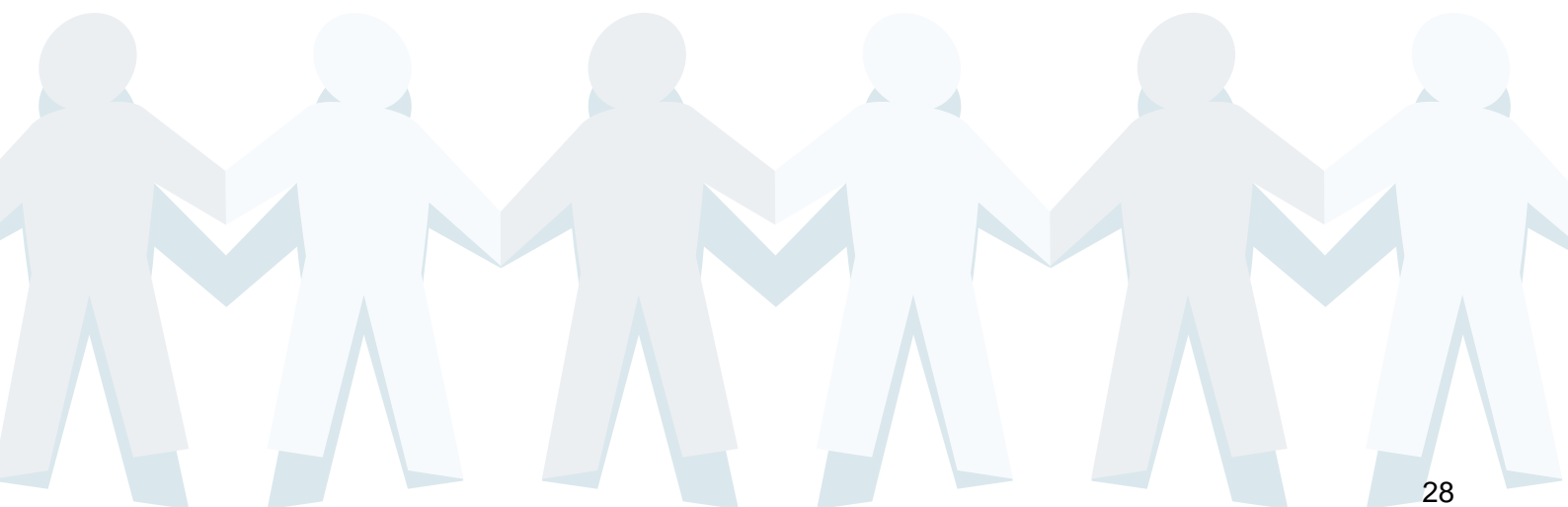
- a. that tenants may be content with the way they are being included and informed by the Council; or
- b. the high indifference could be attributed to low interest in involvement.

It is clear however that more can be done to encourage tenants to be actively involved at some level and to understand the benefits that this can bring.

Tenant involvement, views, and Council action



Information taken from the from the DDC Tenant Satisfaction Survey summer 2021



8. Barriers to Involvement

Although there are clear benefits to tenant involvement, not just to the service but to those involved, we understand that not all tenants want to join in. For some this is because they choose not to but for others there are barriers that make involvement more difficult. As a social housing provider we need to be aware of these barriers and seek to overcome them.

To help us understand what potential barriers there might be we asked our tenant focus group. They came up with the following and some suggested solutions.

Barriers identified:	Solutions identified:
Work and family constraints such as busy lifestyle, work commitments and school runs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online feedback methods • Arranging meeting times at agreed times and locations and possibly evenings • Offering hybrid meeting solutions so that tenants can join from home.
Difficulty getting about due to physical or mental illness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hybrid options for meetings when equipment becomes available • Increased events at a community level • Wheelchair access, disabled parking and hearing loops
The cost of getting to meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant reasonable expenses policy to be agreed to outline travel expenses.
Lack of skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant training and ongoing support • Descriptions and red, amber, green (RAG) status in data to provide explanations and visual representation • Additional options for survey responses if online isn't suitable.
English not first language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting to training and services to overcome literacy or skills based barriers • Descriptions and RAG status in data to provide explanations and visual representation.
Disinterest in the landlord service and apathy for getting involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visibility of involvement options on website and newsletters • Increase promotion of successful projects and 'you said we did' to increase trust in services

Through the priorities and actions in our Tenant Engagement Strategy, we hope to be able to proactively engage with tenants who may ordinarily struggle to be involved in their housing service. We will create an equalities group, who can delve deeper and establish a range of inclusive involvement opportunities and challenge the service.

9. Digital Inclusion and Hybrid Working

Digital by default is a government initiative, launched in 2010, to make public services easy to access online. This shift is across all public services and included the first online only census held in 2021. The Covid pandemic has also seen more households than ever before communicating with each other through online digital platforms. For many this has been something they have been able to move to quite easily and enjoy. We want to harness this willingness to use digital platforms and will offer a raft of engagement activities that can be done online.

Benefits of online services to many of our tenants include:

- No need to travel to meetings, saving time and money
- Ease of involvement by joining in from the comfort of your own home
- 24/7 access to information, logging and reporting. Great for those that work or have busy days
- Providing information once, and all that access it will receive the same information, eliminating human error and mixed messages.

The balance of those online is much higher than those not and Office of National Statistics (ONS) data suggest that the number of those not online is decreasing every year.

Whilst the availability of digital services is enjoyed by many, there is a section of people who either choose to not be online or are not online for other reasons. This could be financial or skills based. We also recognise that the rural nature of some parts of Dover District can pose connectivity challenges for some of our residents and exclude them from effective engagement online.

It is important for the tenant involvement service to engage across all groups of tenants and leaseholders and therefore our strategy and engagement opportunities offer ways to engage to suit those online as well as those that prefer more traditional methods. Examples of these include:





- 'Hybrid meetings', a mixture of online meetings and in person meetings
- A group of tenants who conduct surveys from home
- Newsletters published online in addition to being printed and posted to addresses
- E-newsletters via DDC's 'Keep Me Posted' for those signed up online
- Community events.

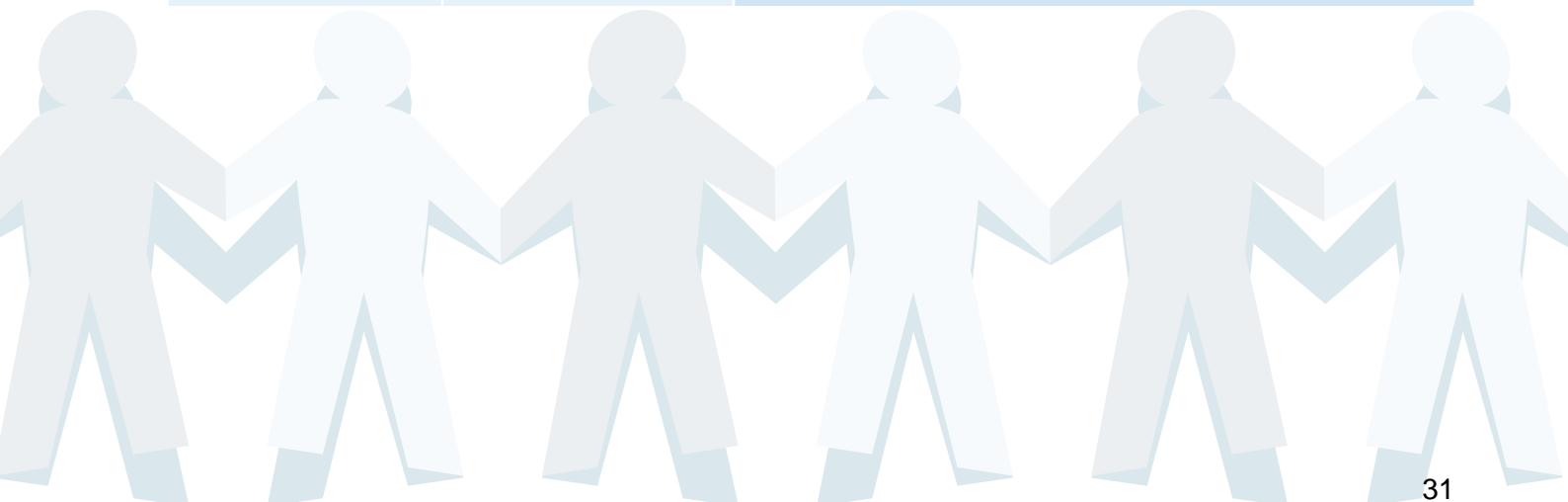
"In January to February 2020, 96% of households in Great Britain had internet access, up from 93% in 2019 and 57% in 2006 when comparable records began."

Source: ONS Internet access - Great Britain: 2020

10. Our Plans for the Future and Key Priorities

Through our work with tenants and leaseholders we have identified 4 key priorities. Each action point on the action plan will relate to one or more of these priorities:

	Breaking down the barriers to being involved by:	Making it easier to have tenants' voices heard
		Striving to ensure no one is discouraged from becoming involved due to circumstances, abilities, and characteristics
		Increasing visibility by providing information about the housing service and what we're up to.
	Rebuilding the trust that tenants have in Dover District Council by:	Listening to points of views
		Working with tenants in constructive ways
		Being visible by providing regular examples of how service has improved using tenants' input
		Providing ways tenants' influence can drive tangible change
	Increased offering and a larger variety of opportunities to encourage more people to be involved in ways that suit them by:	Special interest groups now added to the menu of involvement
		Newly renamed Estate Walkabouts and community events for local level involvement
		Greater opportunities to provide feedback.
	Supporting tenants to be involved through training, guidance and support.	Providing timely administrative support for tenant groups and meetings
		Being approachable and regularly offering support and guidance in housing matters.



How will we achieve these?

Priority One – Breaking down the barriers

We want all of our customers to have the opportunity to be involved if they want it in ways that are convenient for them. To do this we will:

- Increase the options for engagement to ensure that they are inclusive and offer our tenants and leaseholders opportunities to engage in ways that require various degrees of commitment
- Continually review and consider the barriers to engagement based upon feedback from our tenants
- Provide support, resources and training so that tenants and leaseholders can engage with us
- Assess the impact of all our involvement activities in collaboration with tenants and report back on the difference involvement has made.

Priority Two - Rebuilding the trust

We want our tenants and leaseholders to have trust in us that we will provide the best services we can with the resources we have and listen and act upon their concerns. To do this we will :

- Be open and transparent in our communication and decision making
- Provide timely and accurate performance information about how we are doing
- Make it as easy as possible for our tenants to report their concerns to us, especially if these relate to health and safety, and make sure we respond quickly to deal with these
- Use our communications with tenants to reinforce key messages about our services and tenant health and safety
- Introduce new customer satisfaction measures, in line with the proposals set out in the Government's Social Housing White Paper and publish the results
- When things go wrong make sure we learn from this and change the way we do things by monitoring complaints carefully. Publish this information on our website
- Include our tenants and leaseholders when we set our service improvement plans
- Strengthen our tenant scrutiny arrangements.

Priority 3 - Increased offering and a larger variety of opportunities

We recognise that not all tenants want to be involved in the same way and want to make sure that we offer a variety of opportunities calling for varying degrees of commitment to suit more people. We will achieve this priority by:

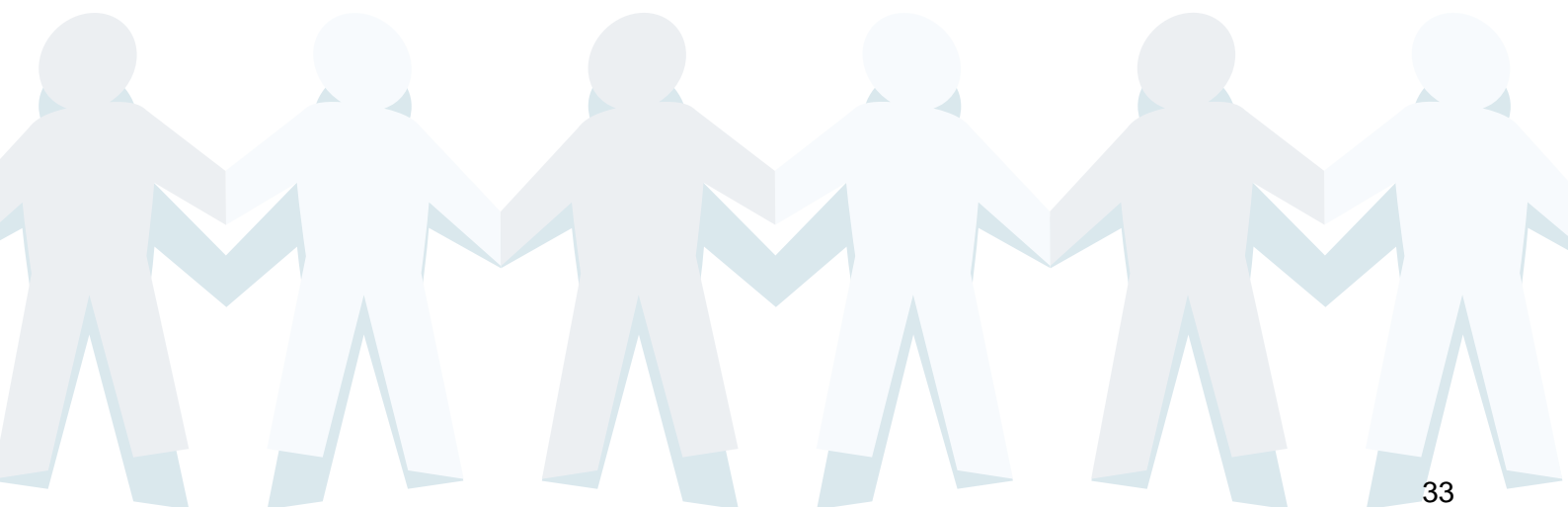
- Using a range of engagement methods that includes digital channels to make sure we capture feedback and new members who might otherwise not be able to participate
- Offer opportunities that involve our tenants and leaseholders in estate improvements so that they can help us create attractive areas to live
- Involve tenants in our investment decisions especially where these relate to building safety
- Measure the impact of tenant involvement to make sure it offers value of money and makes a difference.

Priority 4 - Supporting tenants to be involved

We also recognise that we will need to offer training, learning and support to all involved tenants to develop their skills and confidence to be effective in their involvement.

We will do this by:

- Providing opportunities for training and development to tenants and leaseholders who want to have more involvement
- Producing our information in a more meaningful and understandable format
- Increasing the amount of information about the service that we include in our newsletters for everyone to read
- Supporting meetings through advertising, providing administrative support and providing timely and relevant information
- Ensuring that staff are aware of the role of involvement and encourage and support tenants who want to work with us.



11. Resources to Support Tenant Engagement

DDC has a dedicated resource to support tenant engagement in the shape of our Tenant Involvement and Continuous Improvement Officer (TEO). The TEO is largely responsible for the successful implementation of this strategy and action plan and for the ongoing support of groups, meetings and managing resources.

In addition to the TEO, it is important for a culture of tenant engagement to be embedded throughout the Housing and Asset teams, and to ensure tenants are involved with staff at different levels in activities such as procurement, improvement works at a local level or with Housing Officers on walkabouts or community events.

Financial support

We acknowledge that supporting tenant engagement does incur associated costs, many of these costs such as printing, staffing costs and consumables are absorbed by the housing management budget as a whole, but there are more specific costs such as:

- Payment of expenses for tenants and representatives to attend meetings
- Independent advice
- Training and development, attendance at external consultation events and tenant conferences
- Promotional information and materials
- Purchase of equipment.

These costs will need to be attributed to a Tenant Involvement budget and DDC is committed to annual meetings with finance staff to set a budget for the forthcoming year.

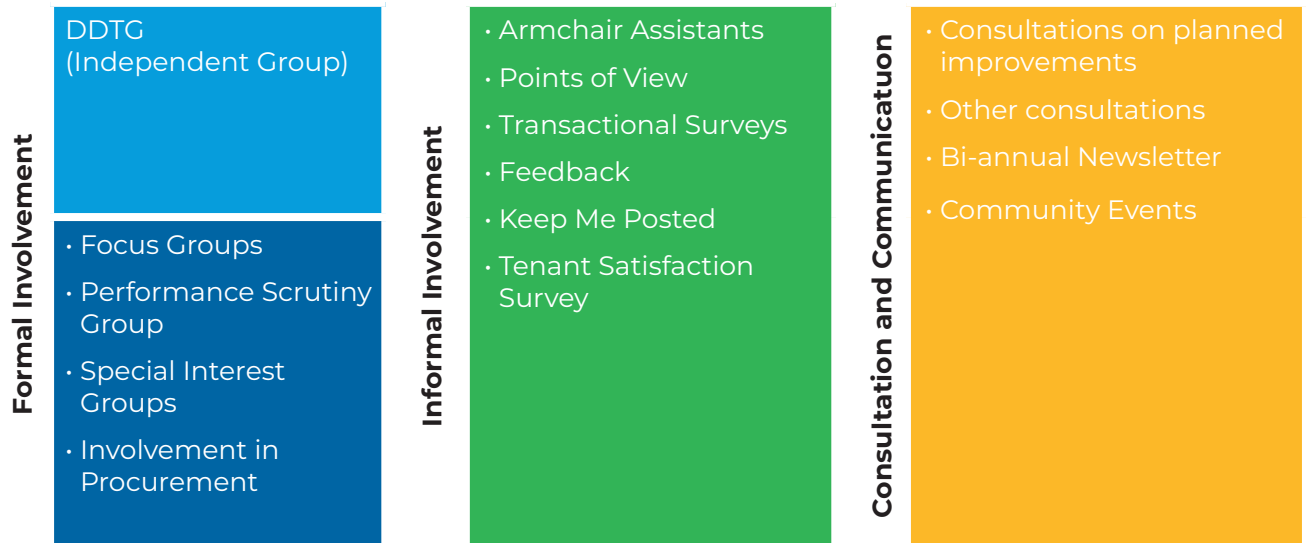
Working with others

We understand that we can't do this all on our own, we will ensure we will join other teams and agencies to work together in partnership on projects and events. In addition to the engagement opportunities that the housing service offer, our team members help support resident associations and community groups worked with by our colleagues in the Community Development team.

We endeavour to work collaboratively with other Dover District Council teams including Waste Services, our contractors, local Councillors, community groups and other stakeholders.



12. Tenant Involvement Framework



Our revised tenant engagement framework includes a menu of opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to be involved. We recognise that not everyone wants to be or can be involved in the same way and the menu reflects this. The menu offers opportunities to be involved simply by reading our newsletter right through to being elected chairperson of one of our formal groups. Each of the ways that tenants and leaseholders engage with us will take up varying amounts of their time and we have tried to identify this in the menu which is shown in full at the end of this strategy.

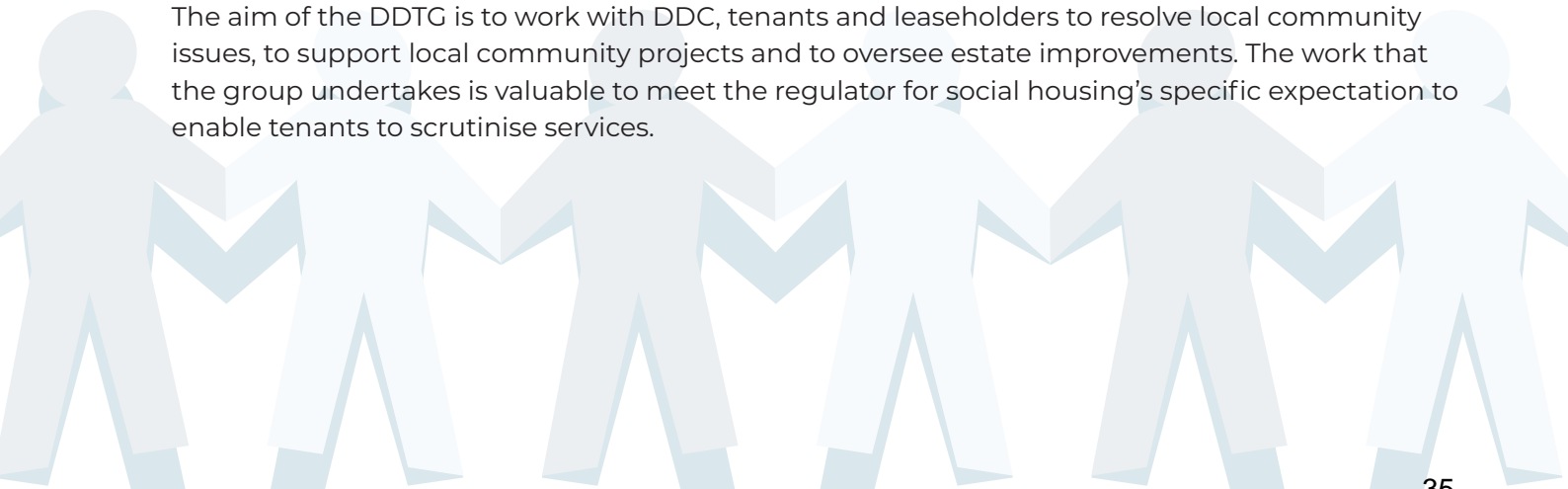
12.1 Formal involvement

The Tenant Involvement framework includes opportunities to be more ‘formally’ involved with the housing service. This might be through membership of the Dover District Tenants’ Group and/or our focus groups and tenant panels.

Dover District Tenants’ Group (DDTG)

The Dover District Tenants’ Group (DDTG) has been in existence for many years. It is an independent group with 12 membership places and tenants and leaseholders from across the district can apply to join.

The aim of the DDTG is to work with DDC, tenants and leaseholders to resolve local community issues, to support local community projects and to oversee estate improvements. The work that the group undertakes is valuable to meet the regulator for social housing’s specific expectation to enable tenants to scrutinise services.



The Dover District Tenants' Group supports the following functions:

- Provide feedback and make recommendations regarding the Council's housing related policies and strategies
- Raise local & community issues, not individuals' issues, with DDC on behalf of tenants and leaseholders and recommend solutions
- Scrutinise the service provided by using performance and research-based approaches, with a view to make recommendations for service improvements
- Support and/or promote community projects which benefit DDC tenants and leaseholders
- Oversee estate improvement programme and help decide how the budget is spent on projects throughout the district.

Focus groups/tenant panels

There will be times where more in depth and outcome driven involvement will be required. This might be to help write and implement a strategy, make changes to processes, or speak to a particular group of residents.

Focus groups and tenant panels allow tenants and DDC to join forces and disband once the project has been completed. This is a 'Task and Finish' style of tenant engagement.

Special interest groups

One of our key priorities is to break down barriers, one of the ways we can do this is to speak to tenants who perhaps have a different perspective that we want to hear from. This could be from under-represented groups or collections of tenants with protected characteristics that may find it harder to engage traditionally.

These groups are interchangeable based on the needs at the time. For example, we may have a project or desire to speak to tenants who are below a certain age or young parents, we would then set up a method of engagement based on the preferred method of that group.

Similar to focus groups, these groups can be a 'task and finish' style of involvement, focusing on one topic or they could be longer running, looking at a wider variety of topics and areas.

12.3 Informal engagement

● Tenant Surveys

In addition to the large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey, sent to all residents, it is an important goal for us to implement more surveys to ascertain tenants' thoughts by targeting tenants at the end of a service received. An example of this is the anti-social behaviour (ASB) satisfaction surveys to collect data on how positive or negative the tenants' experience was with the housing team.

Feedback forms are available to complete 24/7 on DDC's website. Printed feedback forms are also available at community events.

We will continue to gather tenants' opinions via a variety of methods.

● **Armchair assistants**

A new involvement opportunity for tenants to be added to a 'Keep Me Posted' mailing list to receive regular surveys and opportunity to provide service feedback

● **Points of view members**

Distribution list of residents to hear about services and opportunities to respond

● **Social media**

We are aware that many of our tenants are on social media. Other providers have created groups and pages to directly communicate with tenants, provide information and gain responses and feedback. We will look into this as a potential new resource.

● **Estate Walkabouts**

Previously known as Estate Inspections these offer an opportunity to be involved in person and join us once a year for a community event. DDC staff conduct inspections alongside stakeholders including contractors, councillors, tenants and leaseholders.

We have altered the name of these on the recommendation of members of our focus group who felt that the formality of the title inspection might put residents off and suggest that we were expecting them to act on anything they found. They felt that the term 'Estate Walkabout' more accurately described what was going on.

12.4 Engagement through communications

53% of tenants told us that their preferred method of involvement is to receive information and updates of the service.

This correlates with our involved residents who say that communication is key and they enjoy receiving new information via Keep Me Posted email updates and biannual newsletters.

We aim to provide a range of ways in which we will communicate with our residents.



"Communication is key"
Neil Drakley, Tenant Focus Group

Communication

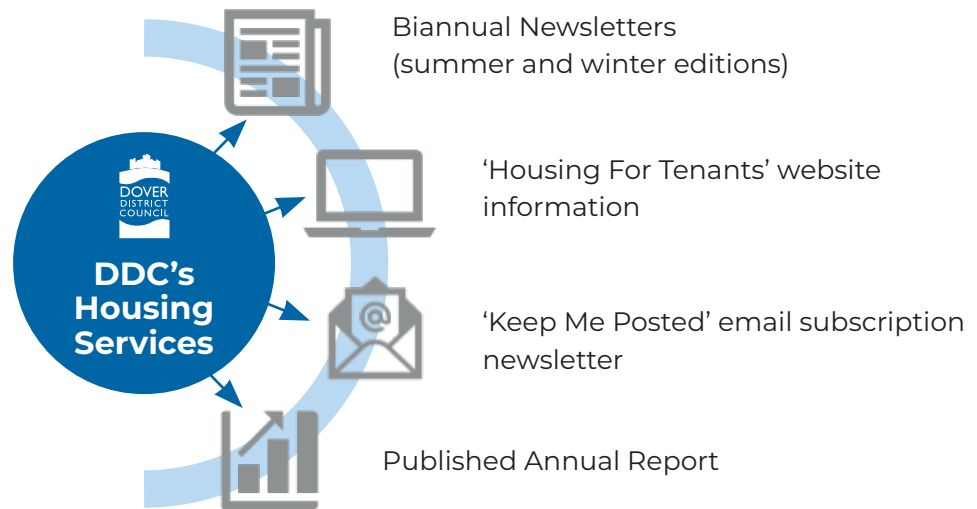
- Local consultations: for example, consultation with residents affected by a specific project
- Newsletters
- General letters/ emails and telephone calls to tenants and leaseholders
- Our website.

We will create a consultation framework to identify which projects would benefit from resident consultation and how that will be undertaken to provide fair opportunities to be involved in changes made to residents' own environments, blocks and estates.



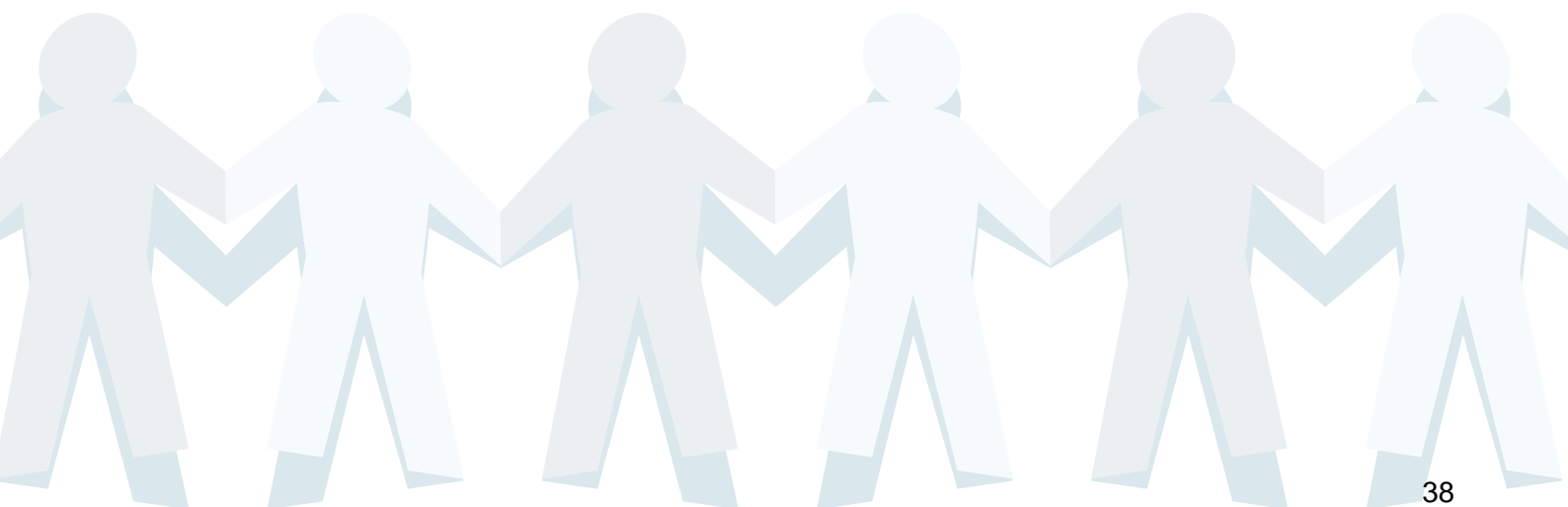
Publishing Tools

We use a variety of methods to publish information to tenants, both to their door (newsletters), to their inbox (Keep Me posted) or information they wish to seek on the website or in the Annual Report to tenants.



Information about our performance

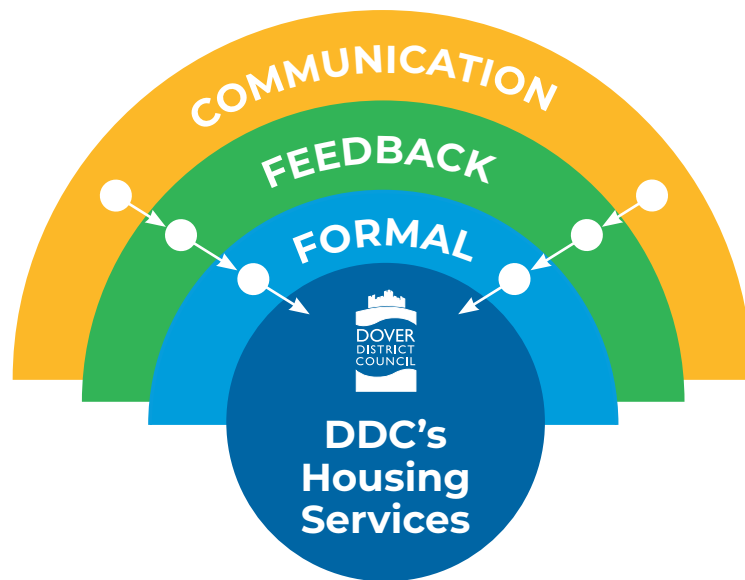
It is vital that to effectively scrutinise services, our tenants and leaseholders must have access to timely and accurate performance data. We will not only provide annual report data, but will publish our performance and service standards on our website.



13. How We Will Use Customer Feedback

We will make sure that we use the feedback we receive from a variety of sources to improve our service delivery arrangements and deliver improvements that make our estates healthy, safe and attractive places to live.

We will develop a consultation framework that we adopt whenever we do local estate based consultation exercises and the outcome of these interactive surveys will be to better understand what our residents are telling us about our plans for their area. This type of consultation feeds into our investment plans and asset management strategies.



14. Monitoring

The tenant involvement and empowerment standard's specific expectation states that providers must consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.

The strategy and action plan outcomes will be reviewed annually and we will use the following performance indicators and reporting tools to help us measure our success:

- Overall customer satisfaction taken from our annual tenant satisfaction survey
- Customer satisfaction with the measure in our annual tenant satisfaction survey around how many of our tenants feel we have listened to and acted upon their views
- The number of participants engaging with each of our involvement methods
- Impact assessments which demonstrate the valuable outcomes that have been achieved from particular involvement activities, allowing everyone to clearly see the value of involving tenants in all that we do.

15. Equalities

Different groups are protected in law (the Equality Act 2010) and DDC is committed to ensuring barriers to involvement are considered and minimised wherever possible.

An equalities impact assessment has been conducted to ensure fairness, access and inclusion of tenants in the influence of housing landlord services.

16. Menu of Involvement

Our menu of involvement includes a wide variety of ways residents can be involved with the landlord service; they include:



Formal Meetings (largest time commitment)

- Dover District Tenants' Group - Independent
- Special interest groups
- Focus groups
- Performance Scrutiny group



Informal Engagement Activities (moderate time commitment)

- Estate Walkabouts
- Litter picks
- Local targeted involvement for estate improvement or planned work
- Annual competitions
- Community events
- Completing surveys



Online Involvement (smallest time commitment)

- Armchair Assistants
- Consultations
- Feedback forms
- Completing surveys



Publications and one way communication

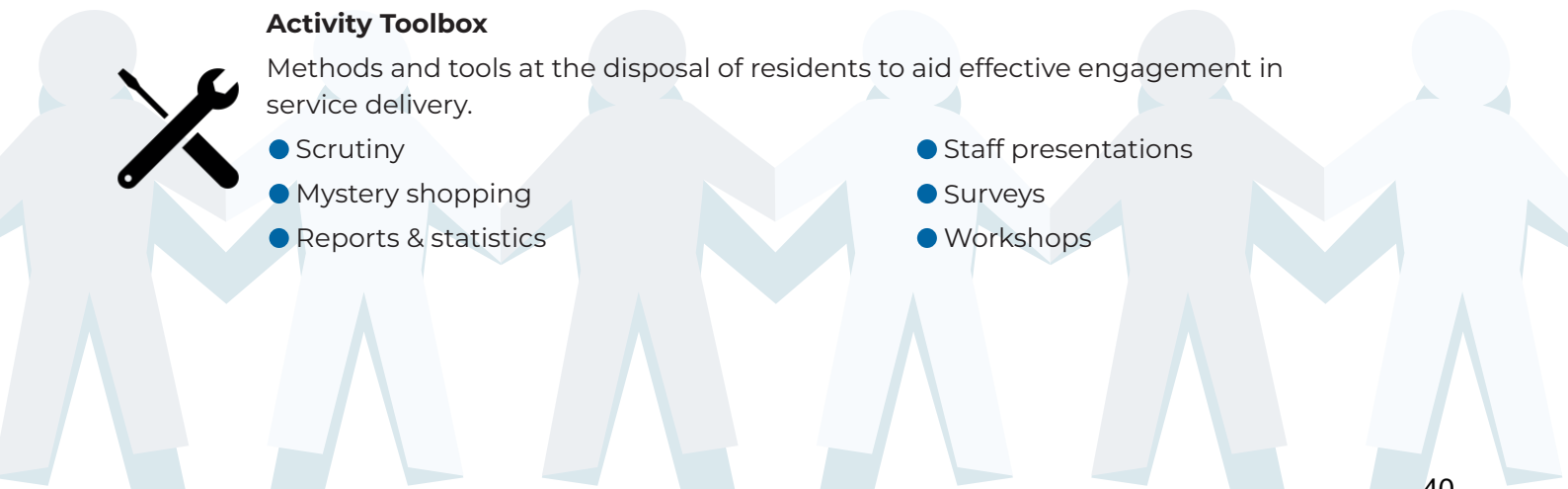
- 'Keep Me Posted' email updates
- Up to date and relevant website information
- Biannual printed and posted newsletter
- Investigate



Activity Toolbox

Methods and tools at the disposal of residents to aid effective engagement in service delivery.

- Scrutiny
- Mystery shopping
- Reports & statistics
- Staff presentations
- Surveys
- Workshops

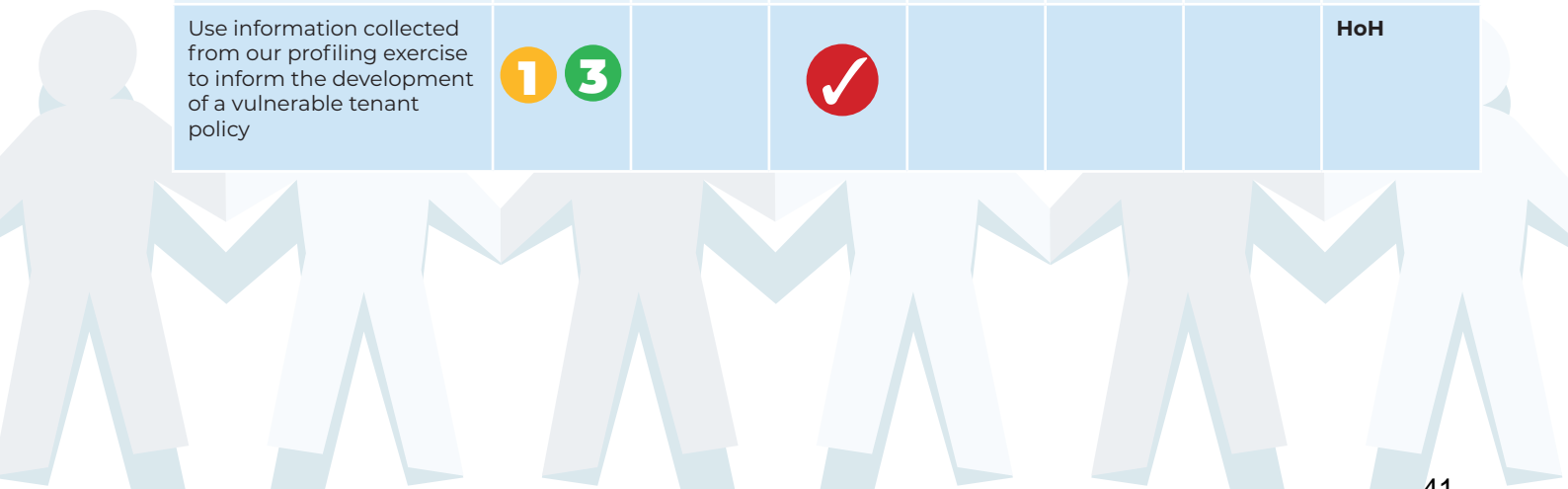


17. Tenant Engagement Strategy Action plan

Key objectives are set out in the section 10 in the Tenant Engagement Strategy and each action point complies with one or more key objectives. Actions are divided into groups of the following subjects:

- Creation of supporting documents
- Launching new and additional projects, groups and activities
- Publishing tasks
- Digital and technical
- Understanding our residents
- Supporting our residents

Action	Complies with Key Objectives	Year 1 By April 2023	Year 2 By April 2024	Year 3 By April 2025	Year 4 By April 2026	Year 5 By April 2027	Responsible Officer
Creation of supporting documents							
Write and agree Terms of References for Groups	3	✓					TEO
Write and agree Tenant Expenses Policy	1 4	✓					TEO
Create a consultation framework and toolkit to ensure consultations are carried out at local level for appropriate projects such as bin storage relocations, parking alterations, new signage, windows and doors, etc.	2 3	✓					TEO
Use information collected from our profiling exercise to inform the development of a vulnerable tenant policy	1 3		✓				HoH



Action	Complies with Key Objectives	Year 1 By April 2023	Year 2 By April 2024	Year 3 By April 2025	Year 4 By April 2026	Year 5 By April 2027	Responsible Officer
Launching new and additional projects and groups and activities							
Identify younger tenants living in our stock and try to engage them through information activities	1 3		✓				TEO
Conduct customer journey mapping exercises as a tool to identify where improvements can be made to services.	3		✓				TEO
Launch an Equalities Group to investigate and ascertain how we can ensure we are engaging with tenants with protected characteristics moving forward.	1 3	✓					TEO
Work with tenants to review Tenant Engagement Strategy, targets and monitor progress.	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	TEO
Working with Asset team to ensure that tenants are involved in planned work when they are directly affected by the work proposed.	2 3		✓	✓	✓	✓	AM
Develop a new customer satisfaction survey for a variety of areas, such as ASB, complaints and asset maintenance and use feedback from this to monitor our services.	3		✓				HM
Reintroduce the Estate Improvement Programme, using resident involvement to directly improve estates.	3		✓				TEO & AM
Rename Estate Inspections to Estate Walkabouts to encourage a more approachable community activity.	3	✓					TEO
Explore creation of Special Interest Groups and identify underrepresented areas.	1 3		✓				TEO

Action	Complies with Key Objectives	Year 1 By April 2023	Year 2 By April 2024	Year 3 By April 2025	Year 4 By April 2026	Year 5 By April 2027	Responsible Officer
Publishing tasks							
Encourage new tenants to sign up to Keep Me Posted at first contact with their housing officer.	1 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	HM
Publish Annual Reports and work with tenants to agree what our local offers look like each year	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	HoH
Increase promotion of successful projects and 'you said we did' to increase trust in services	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	TEO
Digital and technical							
Roll out hybrid meeting options for open meetings held in person at Dover District Council.	1 3		✓				TEO
Investigate the use of social media as a multimedia forum to enhance our engagement opportunities.	1 3		✓				TEO
Understanding our residents							
Increase understanding of our tenants by completing tenant profiling exercise, made easier by census data becoming available in 2022.	1		✓				TEO
Develop and carry out a 'lifestyle' questionnaire to gain greater understanding of our tenants and what their needs and aspirations are.	1 2		✓				TEO
Supporting our residents							
Agree annual Tenant Engagement budget with DDC Finance	1 4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	HoH
Establish a programme of skills training for our engaged tenants working with partners to identify opportunities for training to be supported by them. Review every 2 years.	4	✓		✓		✓	TEO

Abbreviations:

HoH: Head of Housing

HM: Housing Manager

TEO: Tenant Engagement and Continuous Improvement Officer

AM: Asset Manager



Consultation Plan

Name of Document	Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022 - 2027
Topic	<p>This consultation plan has been written for the consultation of the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022 - 2027.</p> <p>As a registered provider of social housing, Dover District Council must comply with the regulatory framework developed by the Regulator for Social Housing. This framework has three economic standards (applicable to housing associations only) and four consumer standards.</p> <p>The standard reflecting the role of resident involvement is the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment (Consumer) Standard and covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service, Choice and Complaints • Involvement and Empowerment • Understanding and Responding to Diverse Needs of Tenants <p>The provisions in the Social Housing White Paper, A Charter for Social Housing Residents also emphasizes that tenants should expect to have their voices heard.</p> <p>The draft Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 (appendix 1) sets out how the housing service will strengthen relationships, give an effective voice to our tenants and leaseholders and increase the opportunities they have to work with us. It has been developed in collaboration with tenant and leaseholder representatives and is intended to help Dover District Council develop stronger, more inclusive, and active tenant engagement activities in the future.</p>

Period	Considerable consultation has already taken place with tenants and leaseholders in the development of the strategy and it is proposed therefore that formal consultation be for a shorter 4-week period between Monday 10 October and Monday 7 November 2022.
Promotion and Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alerts on the Council website and Housing web pages • Views of all tenants and leaseholders have already been sought regarding the priorities and menu of opportunities section of the strategy in the summer edition of the tenant news magazine a copy of this and an online survey will be available on our website during the consultation period. • Keep Me Posted bulletin service to subscribers
List of Consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consult with the current Council tenants and leaseholders. • Wider consultation with internal departments.
Methodology	<p>Consultees will be informed of the consultation in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tenant newsletter sent to households in July 2022 advised all tenants and leaseholders of the development of the strategy and sought their views. • By Keep Me Posted bulletin service • Via advertisements / notifications on our website. <p>How will consultees be able to take part in the consultation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultees will be asked to review the content of the strategy, and complete a short survey • Links to the survey and information on how the survey can be completed will be provided on our webpages
Data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the survey has closed, we will review the feedback and data and if required, we will make amendments to the strategy.
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A compilation of feedback received together with any Officer / Member feedback (where applicable) will be reported back with the final version of the Strategy. • The report will be published on our website. Information will also be provided in the Autumn newsletter.
Costs	<p>We will endeavour to keep the costs to a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation work with tenants and leaseholders will be undertaken in-house. • Electronic communication will be our default position and preferred source of communication, however where a consultee has indicated their preference for a paper version of the survey, we will provide this. • Postage & printing – the tenant newsletter is sent twice yearly and information will be included in this mailout to save cost.

Equality Impact Assessment

Lead Officer:-	Perry DeSouza
Decision Maker(s):-	Cabinet & Council
Name and type of document	Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022 – 2027
Type of decision: -	Approval of Strategy for formal consultation with stakeholders
Date of decision	3 October 2022
Aims of the decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Intended outcomes • Key actions • Who and how many will be affected? 	<p>1. Aim</p> <p>The objective of the report is to seek Cabinet approval of the content of the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy and agree to its wider consultation with stakeholders and service users. Dover District Council as a social housing landlord must comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s regulatory framework, one aspect of which covers resident involvement. This encourages landlords to create an effective framework through which tenants and leaseholders can be involved with the management of the landlords service. The strategy also sets out how the Council will meet the ambitions set out in the Government Social Housing White Paper, A Charter for Social Housing Residents, in terms of commitment to offering service users greater opportunity to be involved and a commitment to greater transparency on the part of the housing service.</p> <p>2. Key actions and Intended outcomes</p> <p>The key priorities of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking down barriers for tenants to be involved • Rebuilding trust that tenants have in DDC • Increased offering and a larger variety of opportunities to encourage more people to be involved in ways that suit them • Supporting tenants to be involved through training, guidance, and support <p>3. Who and how many will be affected?</p> <p>As highlighted in the strategy, DDC currently has 4,896 properties with tenants of various tenures and tenant background which this document will impact on.</p> <p>The strategy aims to have a positive impact on tenants and leaseholders across the district and those with protected characteristics as identified in this assessment. The positive impact and method of engagement aims to enable and encourage tenants from all walks of life and backgrounds to increase their involvement with DDC through various methods of engagement as discussed in the strategy.</p>

Information and Research

- Summarize research and information that you used to prepare your proposals / preferred options
- What data did you use to research your proposals?
- List anything you found that will affect people with protected characteristics.

One of the provisions in the Social Housing White Paper, A Charter for Social Housing Residents states that tenants should expect to have their voice heard by their landlord, and it is hoped that through improved resident engagement by landlords, it will give residents a clearer voice so that they can help hold landlords to account.

In the development of the strategy, we consulted with a dedicated focus group purposefully established to provide feedback that was used to inform the tenant engagement strategy.

Consultation was also carried out with the Dover District Tenant Group (DDTG) our main tenant consultant group, residents living in our sheltered housing stock, the 437 members of the housing specific keep me posted group and the encouragement via articles in our summer newsletter that all tenants and leaseholders share their opinion of our draft strategic priorities.

Consultation with these groups highlighted several barriers the wider tenant population felt prevented them from involving themselves with DDC via surveys, focus groups and feedback. The barriers included:

- Work and family constraints (such as busy lifestyle, work commitments and school runs)
- Difficulty getting about due to physical or mental illness
- Travel expenses
- Lack of skills (e.g., literacy, mathematics, and computer/device literacy)
- English not first language
- Disinterest in the landlord service and apathy for getting involved

The Strategy addresses these barriers and sets out solutions which DDC will consider going forward to encourage greater tenant participation.

Along with tenant consultation, we used data from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey (TSS) 2021 to:

- Understand how tenants preferred to be engaged / involved
- Understand the best methods to involve tenants in the development of the strategy
- Understand what key issues were important to tenants that were raised in the survey

Data from the TSS 2021 survey is referred to within the strategy.

Wider research was also carried out to understand what other comparable organisations, both locally and nationally, were doing to engage and involve their tenants.

In the assessment and completion of this report, we have identified that there could be a positive impact to the following characteristics: Age, Disability & Race. This is for the following reasons:

- Residents will be given the opportunity to engage with the Council via different methods, rather than simply online. This could include completion of questionnaires in paper via post, over the phone and in person.
- Where engagement events are held in person, we will ensure that adequate facilities and resources are available to support disabled persons access to the event (for example, providing a wheelchair ramp).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If English is not a resident's first language, we will attempt to procure translations of documents so they can engage with us or provide details of where residents can access translation services themselves. An increased range of opportunities to be involved will include via digital platforms. It is hoped this will give access to forums that service users might otherwise be excluded from via the comfort of their own home with access to any specialist equipment, care arrangements or facilities that they have at home to support them.
<p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has there been any specific consultation done? What were the consultation results? Did the consultation analysis show any difference for people with protected characteristics? What conclusions did you draw from the consultation? 	<p>Preliminary consultation has been carried out with district tenants and leaseholders regarding how DDC should involve and engage with tenants, and what barriers there are to tenant involvement.</p> <p>Semi structured question and answer sessions were conducted with our sheltered housing residents and all tenants and leaseholders were invited to participate in our online survey seeking their views about our proposed priorities and opportunities to be involved. Full details of this were included in the tenant newsletter that went to all tenants and Leaseholders in July 22 and to all members of the housing keep me posted group.</p> <p>The views of staff in the housing service were also sought.</p> <p>Both internal review of current processes and applicable policies was carried out within the Housing department.</p> <p>A consultation with the Housing Policy Officer regarding the content and the potential impacts to those with protected characteristics and overcoming barriers.</p> <p>Further internal consultation with managers within DDC will take place once this document has been approved.</p>

Assessing if the decision is likely to be relevant to the three aims of the Equality Duty.	
Aim	Relevance Yes / No
Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization	Yes
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.	Yes
Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Yes

If you have decided that this decision is relevant to the three aims of the Equality Duty, use the section below to show how it is relevant and what the impact will be.			
Protected Characteristic	Relevance High/Medium/Low	Impact of the decision Positive/Neutral /Negative	Mitigations
Age	Medium	Positive	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.

Disability	Medium	Positive	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Gender reassignment	Low	Neutral	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Gender	Low	Neutral	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Low	Neutral	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Low	Neutral	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Race	Low	Positive	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Religion, Belief or Lack of Belief	Low	Neutral	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.
Sexual Orientation	Low	Neutral	None required. No negative impacts have been identified in the research and development of this strategy.

This Equality Impact Assessment must attach to any report throughout the decision-making process, to allow the final decision makers to have Due Regard.

Subject:	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976: HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF – REQUEST FOR INCREASE
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 3 October 2022
Report of:	Diane Croucher, Head of Regulatory Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Martin Bates, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services
Decision Type:	Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To consider the proposal submitted by the licensed trade to increase the maximum Hackney Carriage tariff within the Dover District due to rising costs of petrol and diesel.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

1. Approves the table of fares presented by the licensed trade.
2. Delegates authority to the Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services, to consider any objections received during the formal statutory consultation period, modify as appropriate, and take all necessary steps to bring the table of fares into operation.

1 Summary

- 1.1 The fixing of **maximum** fare levels in respect of Hackney Carriages is a statutory function of the District Council under the provisions of Section 65, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- 1.2 The formal statutory procedure for varying the fares requires the Council to publish a notice containing the proposed variation table in at least one local newspaper and specify a period of not less than 14 days from the first publication of the notice during which time objections to the variation can be made. If no objections are received, the table of fares will come into operation on the expiration of the 14-day period.
- 1.3 In the event of any objections being received, the Authority must consider those objections before bringing the table of fares into operation. The date on which the table of fares comes into operation, with or without modification, shall be not less than 2 months after the date on which it would have come into operation if no objections were received or if objections had been withdrawn.
- 1.4 The current Hackney Carriage table of fares came into force in January 2021, and is shown at **Appendix A**.

- 1.5 The Licensing Section received two proposals for a revised table of fares. The proposal received from the Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators is being considered through this report. The alternative proposal was dismissed as it was considered too complicated and confusing for the public. The licensed trade were asked to vote on their preferences. Of the 221 drivers contacted, only 42 responses were received. Of these, 33 were in agreement with the Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators, 8 preferred the alternative proposal and 1 felt there was no need for an increase.

2 Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The current tariff has been in place since 14 January 2021. The Dover Federation of Licensed Taxi Operators have now approached the licensing authority to review the tariff. They have presented a proposed revised table of fares (shown at **Appendix B**). The reason they have stated for requesting the proposal is the rising costs of petrol and diesel which have put the trade under extreme pressure.

- 2.2 The latest information shown in the August 2022 issue of the Private Hire and Taxi Monthly (see Appendix C) lists Dover District Council as having the 61st highest taxi tariff out of the 355 authority areas in the country. The table below shows how Dover compares to our neighbouring authorities in the ranking:

Authority	Ranking	Last increase
Canterbury	38 th	2022
Dover	61 st	2021
Ashford	142 nd	2019
Thanet	192 nd	2022
Folkestone & Hythe	202 nd	2012

- 2.3 A comparison has been made of the pump cost per litre of petrol and diesel since the last tariff increase and is shown below:

Date	Cost of Ultra Low Sulphur Unleaded Petrol	Cost of Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel
11.01.21	£116.14	£120.61
22.08.22	£171.14	£182.92
% increase	68%	66%

- 2.4 The tariff presented would be the maximum that can be charged, allowing Hackney proprietors to charge less if they wish.

- 2.5 This proposal would increase the fares as follows:

Tariff 1	1 mile journey	2 mile journey	5 mile journey	10 mile journey
Current	£4.70	£6.40	£11.50	£20.00
Proposed	£5.10	£7.10	£13.10	£23.10

3 Identification of Options

Two options have been identified.

- 3.1 **Option 1** is to approve the proposed table of fares put forward by the licensed trade and to facilitate the formal procedure of adoption, with authority to consider any objections received during the statutory consultation period delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services.
- 3.2 **Option 2** is to reject the proposed table of fares put forward by the licensed trade and retain the existing table of fares.

4 Evaluation of Options

4.1 Option 1 – Preferred option

The current tariff has been in place for 17 months. However, there is no doubt that the running costs of a licensed vehicle have significantly increased since the last rise in fares.

- 4.2 **Option 2** –It is appropriate that the Hackney Carriage fares are reviewed at this time as the running costs of a licensed vehicle have significantly increased. The rejection of this proposal is therefore not the preferred option.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 None.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 6.1 When the last proposal was submitted, it was cited that one of the reasons for the increase was to support the introduction of lower or no emission vehicles. It is anticipated that, if approved, some of the increase in fares may be used to finance the higher cost of replacing existing fleets with these types of vehicles.

7. Corporate Implications

- 7.1 Comment from the Finance Officer: Accountancy have been consulted and have no further comments (MR).
- 7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Governance & HR has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make.
- 7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>
- 7.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

8. Appendices

Appendix A – Current tariff

Appendix B – *Proposed table of fares put forward by the licensed trade*

Background Papers

All relevant correspondence and papers held within the Licensing Team database

Contact Officer: Rebecca Pordage, Licensing Manager x 42229



Hackney Carriage Table of Fares 14.1.21 onwards

Appendix A

Applies to all journeys within the District Boundary and to journeys outside the District Boundary if less than 100 yards between driver and hirer prior to the hiring.

TARJFF 1

For hiring commenced between 06:00 Pm and 12 Midnight each day

- For the first 400 yards or 1 minute and 20 seconds £3.40
 - For each succeeding 103.5 yards or 17 seconds **£0.10**
- thereafter or a combination of both.

TARIFF 2

For hiring commenced between 12 midnight and 06:00 AM each day

- For the first 400 yards or 1 minute and 20 seconds £5.10
 - For each succeeding 103.5 yards or 17 seconds £0.15
- thereafter or a combination of both.

TARIFF 3

For hiring commenced between 18:00 on Christmas Eve and 06:00hrs 27 December and between 18:00 hrs on New Years Eve and 06:00 on 2 January:

- For the first 400 yards or 1 minute and 20 seconds £6.80
 - For each succeeding 103.5 yards or 17 seconds **£0.20**
- thereafter or a combination of both

EXTRAS

- For Hiring on Sundays, Statutory and Bank holidays **£1.00**
- For each article of luggage **£0.20**
- For each person in excess of 10 **£0.20**

MPV's that carry more than 4 passengers = + 50% of the above tariffs (1,2,3)

ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

During adverse weather conditions, defined as when the Stagecoach Bus Company withdraw their services due to adverse weather, the tariffs relating to distance and waiting time are increased by 50 per cent

SOILING CHARGE

- To cover cleaning and loss of income, where the interior of the vehicle is soiled (at the discretion of the driver) not exceeding £50.00

First 300 yards - 1 minute and 0 seconds £3:40
 Each succeeding 170 yards or 34 seconds £0:20

Summary of Tariff 1

1st Mile = £5.10
 Subsequent miles = £ 2.00
 2 mile journey = £7.10

Tariff 2:

00:00 midnight to 06:00 hours
 First 300 yards - 1 minute and 0 seconds £5:10
 Each succeeding 170 yards or 34 seconds
 £0:30

Summary of Tariff 2

1st Mile = £7.65
 Subsequent miles = £ 3.00
 2 mile journey = £10.65

Tariff 3:

18:00 hrs Christmas Eve and 06:00 hrs 27 December and between 18:00 hrs New Year's
 Eve and 06:00 02 January
 First 300 yards - 1 minute and 0 seconds
 £6:80
 Each succeeding 170 yards or 34 seconds £0:40

Summary of Tariff 3

1st Mile = £11.20
 Subsequent miles = £ 4.00
 2 mile journey = £15.20

Sundays And bank holidays
 £1:00

Sundays and Bank Holidays – No Change

Each Luggage
 £0:50

Luggage increase from 20p to 50p per item

Each person in excess of one
 £0:50

Each person in excess of one increase from 20p to 50p

Waiting time = £21 per hour (35p pm) – No change

This proposal would increase the fares as follows:

Tariff 1	Mile 1	Mile 2	Mile 5	Mile 10
Current	£4.70	£6.40	£11.50	£20.00
Proposed	£5.10	£7.10	£13.10	£23.10

Subject:	Dover District Council Transformation Programme (Dover 2024 – 50 years of service)
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 3rd October 2022
Report of:	Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Trevor Bartlett, Leader of the Council
Decision Type:	Non-Key Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To deliver a transformation/change programme across the Council, ensuring people (customers and staff) are at the heart of all we do, coinciding and building on 50 years of the council being in service in 2024.

Recommendation: To agree to the implementation of the proposed workstreams and project governance structure, to deliver the Transformation Programme

1. Summary

- 1.1 This Transformation Programme will implement a clear direction of travel for the council, to review and update the Council's practices and ways of working, ensuring an improved customer experience.
- 1.2 The programme will be delivered in phases, to recognise the scale of change, capacity and resources to deliver, alongside the need to maintain current service levels.
- 1.3 Phase 1, and the immediate issue, will seek to explore the current customer experience and improve our existing customer care and journey. This will largely be a training and performance management project and will deliver improved procedures, behaviours and expectations.
- 1.4 However, Phase 2 will be a larger piece of work and will explore software and digital solutions to enable improved data capture and analysis to target our activity, whilst continuing to invest in our website development and digital focus going forward.
- 1.5 Mechanisms will be developed to capture and monitor the impact of the outcomes and change.
- 1.6 As part of the programme, our training programmes, digital programme, working environment and practices will be re-invigorated to deliver the Council's ambitions. The programme will also recognise the need to build on, and evolve, the council's culture in a new working environment.
- 1.7 A full timescale and communication plan will be developed.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 It can be seen across the globe there are new approaches to how, when and where we work, following the Covid pandemic and progression of digital programmes. It is also widely acknowledged that DDC staff responded quickly and effectively to the unprecedented changes and demands that arose whilst the pandemic was active, supported by the, then newly, acquired MS365 programme.

3. It is no surprise the last couple of years have provided many challenges to organisations and individuals and post covid, the world has more agile working, changing and adaptive working spaces, greater emphasis on the use of technology and a renewed emphasis on work-life balance. Covid 19 has served to accelerate organisational changes to the Council's operations and services, with opportunities to further accelerate change and better understand the technology we already have, now greater than ever before. What must be at the heart of this new environment is the experience/journey of our customers when accessing our services. With these opportunities and access to technology we must deliver an improved customer experience.
 - 3.1 Building on the decisions to introduce MS365, the introduction of a Remote Working Policy, a new telephony solution, the One Public Estate programme, and the current review of the management structure, including the appointment of a third Strategic Director, this report proposes a co-ordinated approach to our change/transformation programme.
 - 3.2 The Council has not embarked on a change programme, or wider, collective, development of staff since the Leader as Coach programme in 2007. The Council is approaching its 50th birthday in 2024 and it is proposed the programme, supported by a number of workstreams, is launched in October 2022, with the training programme and changes to our working space and structures being implemented in Spring 2023, enabling us to be a 'renewed' Council for our 50th year. This will involve identifying the size, structure and skillset of our workforce and how it will operate to deliver the outcomes in our Corporate Plan, plus a transformed working environment to be as efficient and effective as possible.
 - 3.3 The lifting of lockdown restrictions has created a challenge for us all between shifting workplace attendance, the move to an effective hybrid working model, a genuine desire to change and progress our ways of working and an awareness of the costs of office buildings.
 - 3.4 This programme will take us on an exciting and challenging path to become a more adaptive and effective workforce, to take the best of both ways of working and create something even better than we had before and to make our decision making processes more nimble, whilst keeping our customer needs central to all that we do. The re-introduction of the PPR/Development Plan process with staff will help to define productivity outcomes and therefore, most importantly, will help to improve the customer experience. All these things together will help the Council on its journey to become a true employer of choice.

4. **Identification of Options**

- 4.1 Option 1 - The council can continue to operate in it's current capacity and format.
- 4.2 Option 2 - The outlined Transformation Programme can be adopted and changes implemented.

5. **Evaluation of Options**

- 5.1 Option 1 – The Council faces two major drivers for change. The first is to make significant financial savings in the face of the current levels of inflation, increasing demands and limited income and funding. The second is the new working environment following Covid and technological and social change.
- 5.2 Maintaining the current structure, size, processes and skillsets of the workforce will deliver marginal changes, but not the step change required in the current circumstances. For these reasons this is not the preferred option.

5.3 Option 2 - The Transformation Programme offers the opportunity to review and reflect new working practices, better trained and informed officers, and better use of technology to drive an efficient and effective council of the future. For these reasons this is the preferred option.

6. **Resource Implications**

6.1 Phase 1 of the programme: customer care and performance management training, will be funded from existing budgets

6.2 Phase 2 of the programme: changes to the business model and ongoing data capture/analysis, will require invest to transform funding and a subsequent report will be presented with budget implications.

7. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

8. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report. **Corporate Implications**

8.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no additional comments

8.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

8.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

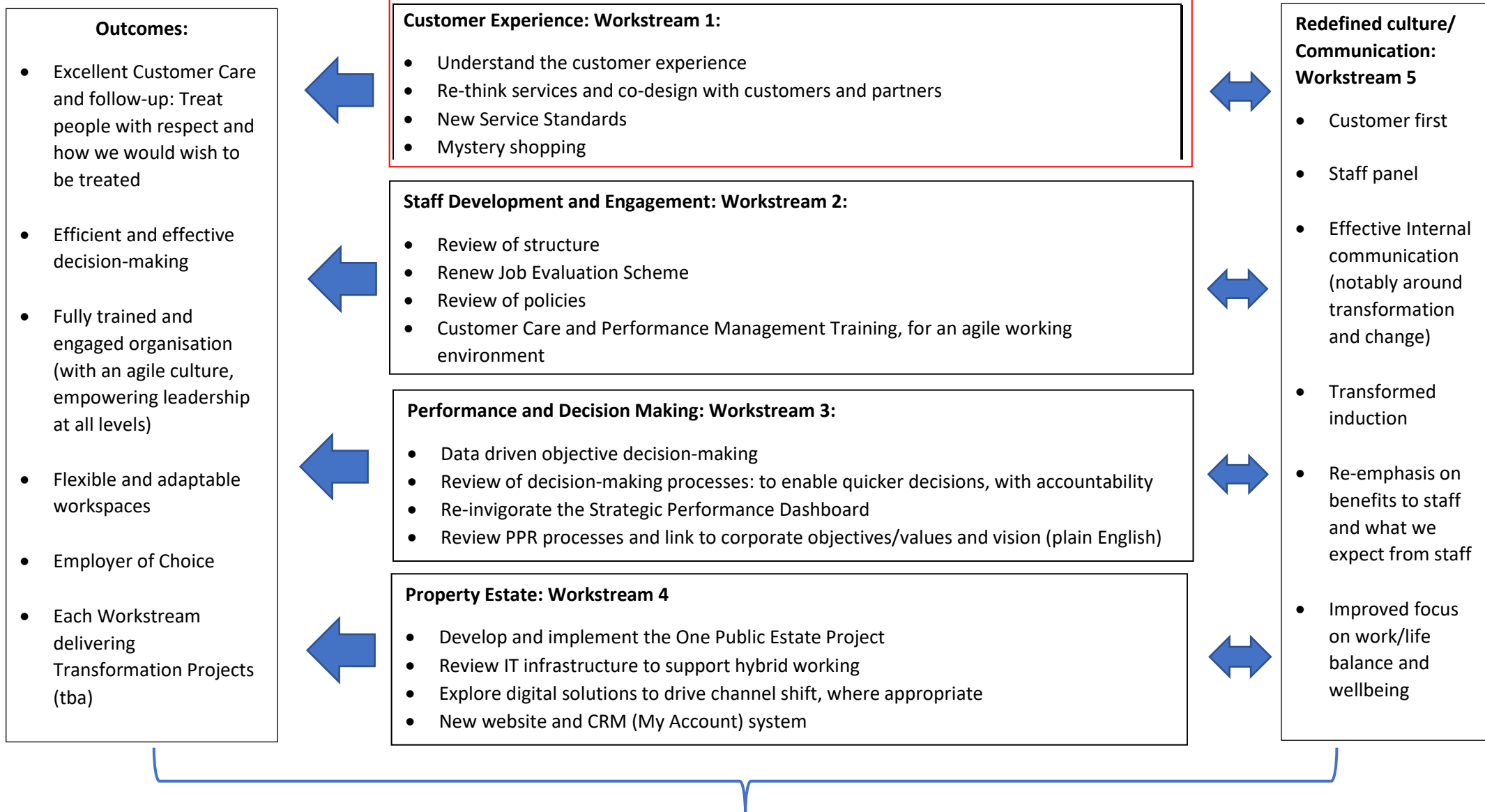
9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Transformation Programme Workstreams

Appendix 2 – Transformation Programme Project Governance Structure

Contact Officer: Michelle Farrow, Head of Leadership Support

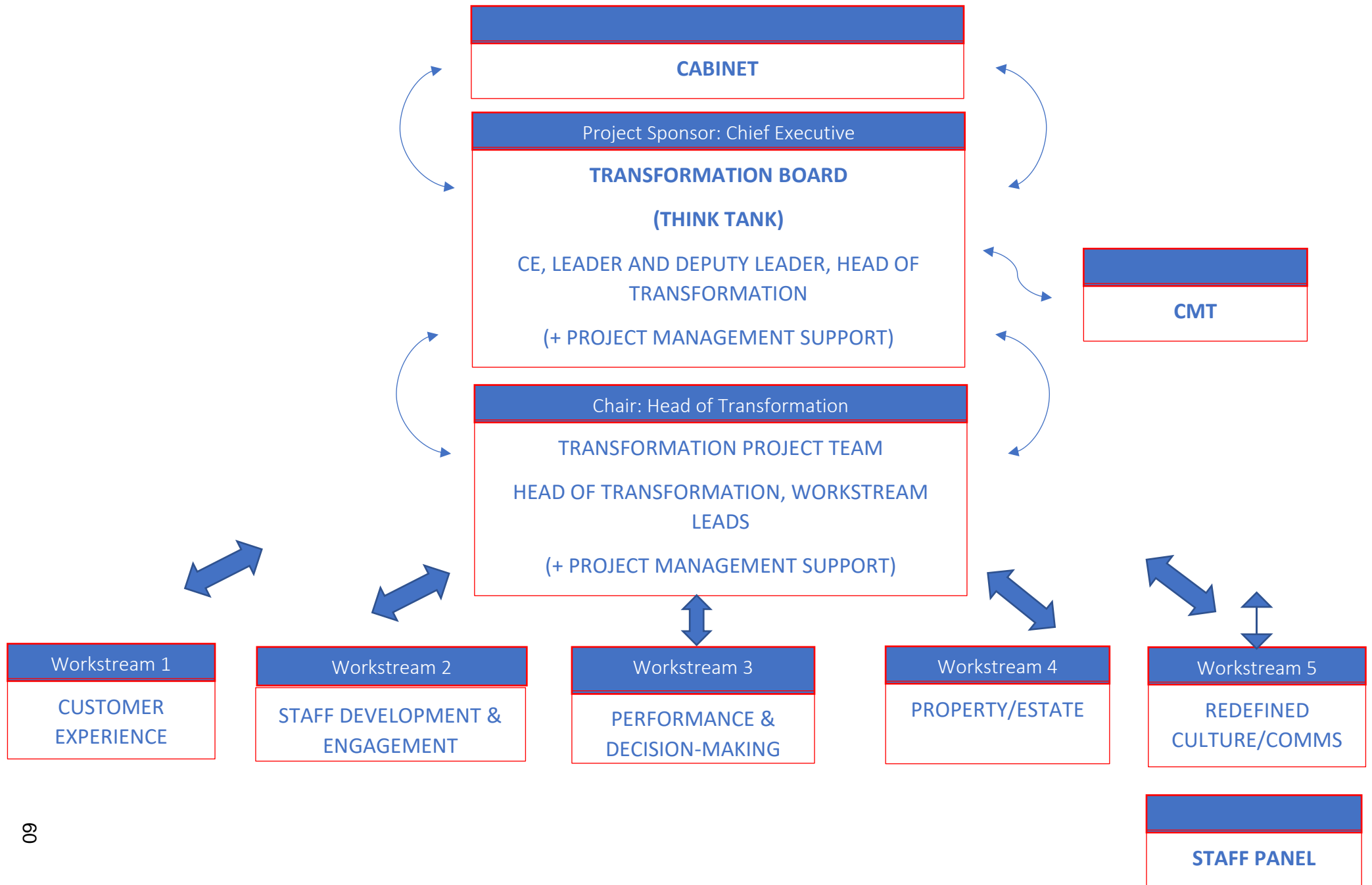
Dover District Council Transformation Programme (Dover 2024 – 50 years of service): Workstreams



Budget:

- Workplace Reviews: productivity, capacity, digital, data
- Innovation and transformation
- Re-design around customer journey and expectation
- Commercial investment/opportunities

Dover District Council Transformation Programme (Dover 2024 – 50 years of service): Governance Structure



STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

To consider the report of the Head of Leadership Support (to follow).

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

NON-KEY DECISION

EXECUTIVE

CABINET – 3 OCTOBER 2022

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Recommendation

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act set out below:

<u>Item Report</u>	<u>Paragraph Exempt</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Serviced Self-Build Plots	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted