



TENANT INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT POLICY

Updated

July 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. EMSH (East Midlands Shelter for the Homeless) aims to deliver a high standard for all its service users and tenants. Through the active involvement of residents in the running and management of their home and neighbourhoods, we can better understand their needs to shape, deliver and maintain our services.
- 1.2. We aim to be able to provide a service catered to the needs of our service users and tenants. By working together with tenants we believe we can achieve these aims.
- 1.3. In the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard there is more focus on local mechanisms to resolve complaints and disputes, and an increased scope for more tenant involvement in repairs and maintenance.

2. AIMS

- 2.1. To promote resident involvement and communicate outcomes
- 2.2. To remove barriers to involvement to ensure all residents can be involved – not just the ‘usual tenants’
- 2.3. To measure and report on the effectiveness of residents involvement
- 2.4. To maximise impact of resident involvement activities
- 2.5. To be more accountable to our service users
- 2.6. Increase efficiency and cost effectiveness
- 2.7. Improve quality of service and quality of customers lives
- 2.8. Help us understand the needs of our customers
- 2.9. To ensure Board representation- structures in place leading to Board election or selections, should be representative of service user profile

representation.

2.10. The aims of this policy are therefore to:

- 2.10.1. Meet statutory and regulatory requirements
- 2.10.2. Ensure tenants are at the heart of the decision making process to shape our services
- 2.10.3. Provide a wide range of flexible involvement opportunities
- 2.10.4. Help us understand the needs of our tenants
- 2.10.5. Increase efficiency and cost effectiveness
- 2.10.6. Increase resident satisfaction
- 2.10.7. Improve quality of service and quality of tenants lives
- 2.10.8. Maximise impact of tenants involvement activities
- 2.10.9. Provide resources to support and enable effective involvement
- 2.10.10. Remove barriers to involvement
- 2.10.11. Measure and report effectiveness and communicate outcomes
- 2.10.12. Be more accountable to our service users and tenants

3. SPREAD OF INVOLVEMENT

3.1. The challenge is involving residents across a wide geographical area, differing economic status and diverse backgrounds. For example, some areas have a more ethnically diverse or more mature or more single person concentration than others. Whilst presenting challenges to support activities, it also offers opportunities to innovate.

4. TENANTS COMMITTEE (TC)

4.1. EMSH will produce a Tenants Committee, which is based on a minimum of

3 members from the tenant pool. TC will advise the board and represent the residents.

Tenancy Committee selection process

- 4.1.1. A letter is sent each year to all tenants asking if they would like to be a representative. If a tenants wish to be a candidate, then they must write back with a short statement as to why they believe they are suitable for the position and detailing whether they are able to carry out the position.
- 4.1.2. All candidates names and statements are posted out to all tenants, so that they are able to vote for whom they want to represent them.
- 4.1.3. The minimum of three candidates scoring highest will be selected to be a representative on the Tenancy Committee for a term of 1 year.

5. TENANTS COMMITTEE (TC) ROLES AND DUTIES

- 5.1. The aims and objectives of the Tenants Committee shall be:
 - 5.1.1. To represent and to promote the interests of all residents living in our area/organisation.
 - 5.1.2. To seek to improve conditions for the residents of the area/organisation.
 - 5.1.3. To work in partnership with the council and other agencies to achieve our aims.
 - 5.1.4. To represent the interests of residents in consultation with the local authority and other bodies.
 - 5.1.5. The Tenants Committee shall be non-party political and non-sectarian.
- 5.2. A representative and elected Tenants Committee is integral to an accountable resident involvement strategy.

- 5.3. The Tenants Committee acts as the main resident consultative body and shapes policy and strategy. The Tenants Committee's purpose and role is to ensure that residents are involved at the highest level of decision making, and that the strategic direction in service delivery reflects the needs and aspirations of tenants.
- 5.4. Meetings should focus on consultation, strategy and policy work. The TC is accessible to all, representative and accountable with clear links to the Board and is able to influence the activities and direction of the Association.

6. REVIEW OF TENANTS COMMITTEE

- 6.1. To meet the intended objectives of ensuring the Tenants Committee are representative, accountable and able, the following changes will be implemented:
 - 6.1.1. Meetings will focus on consultation, strategy and policy.
 - 6.1.2. Tenants from specific interest and service improvement groups
 - 6.1.3. Members will be elected for a maximum period of 3 years, at which point they may stand for re-election, for a further period of 3 years.
 - 6.1.4. Positions that cannot be filled through the selection process will be targeted at residents who will redress any imbalance.
 - 6.1.5. meetings will take place biannually with a tenants report presented to the board following the meeting
 - 6.1.6. Biannual meetings shall have a quorum of 2 committee members
 - 6.1.7. Annual General Meetings will take place annually and shall be open to all tenants/service users of EMSH

- 6.1.8. Annual General Meetings will have a quorum of 3 committee members and at least 1 other service users.

7. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 7.1. EMSH hopes to establish a Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee function will be to:
- 7.1.1. Monitor and scrutinise services and performance;
 - 7.1.2. to hold EMSH to account by overseeing the work undertaken and decisions made by the Board.
- 7.2. The overall aims of the Scrutiny Committee and purpose is to ensure scrutiny and challenge to EMSH's work and decisions (including Board) and make recommendations to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery to residents, subject to regulatory and financial constraints, and should complement and dovetail in with existing involvement structures.
- 7.3. We shall appoint 3 Independent members for the Scrutiny Committee that are not service users and have no link to EMSH staff or board members.
- 7.4. The Scrutiny Committee shall be established when a total of 25 service users is met.

8. LOCAL AREA REPRESENTATIVES

- 8.1. We currently work in one local authority and thus have the challenge of ensuring that local perspective is considered and influences decisions made by the TC.
- 8.2. We will look to work with the Nottingham City Council Community

Protection team for feedback on the community for the houses that EMSH is managing. We hope this will help us lease and tackle anti-social behaviour that occurs within the areas we are managing homes in.

9. COMMUNICATION

- 9.1. We will introduce web and telephone conferencing which will go some way to address any difficulties any representatives from any of the committees may have in attending board meetings.
- 9.2. The environmental benefits that web conferencing bring also shows our efforts to be greener wherever possible. The themes and proposed involvement structures within this policy provide the opportunity not only to deliver equality of access to residents, but also to identify where there are gaps in our approach that can be addressed. We will continue to use resident involvement as well as community development activities, events and literature to help us to engage and involve residents who are representative of the diverse communities which we serve.
- 9.3. Promoting community cohesion by providing opportunities for people of different backgrounds to work together to improve services. We will look to engage this group through social media and occasional activities such as football, theatre and cinema trips etc will be explored.

10. OTHER REPRESENTATION

- 10.1. Resident Insight will identify other representatives who would bring specific representation to the TC. Any partner organisation that we work with will be given opportunities to attend board meetings.

11. WIDER ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR RESIDENTS

11.1. Resident Insight will enable us to target specific resident groups. We will utilise a range of methods to involve these groups, such as interviews, seaside trips, incentivised events, e-forums, texting and technology based approaches.

12. RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE GOVERNANCE OF EMSH

12.1. All tenants of EMSH are eligible to be considered for membership of the Board. Details of how to be considered for membership of the Board are present in our governance policy.

12.2. Consideration will also be given to any governance related ethnic, religious or cultural targets.

12.3. The preferred method of Resident board members' recruitment will be through the Tenants Committee. As the TC is open to all residents, this should not present any barriers.

13. DEMONSTRATING AND COMMUNICATING OUTCOMES

13.1. To ensure that resident involvement activities are making a difference, evaluation of impacts will become a much more critical feature of the EMSH's resident involvement approach.

13.2. We will review involvement activities for:

13.2.1. Effectiveness –achievement of the objectives set by residents and the association

13.2.2. Popularity – resident take up and engagement in the activity

- 13.2.3. Access and Diversity – barriers to involvement. Reaching the people it needed to reach
 - 13.2.4. Value for money – costs, suggested improvements, savings or prioritised spending including funding, residents' time, staffing and other resources
- 13.3. Resident involvement in measuring impacts is critical. Therefore we will:
- 13.3.1. Engage residents in collecting information about the impact of their involvement
 - 13.3.2. Survey residents on satisfaction with their involvement
 - 13.3.3. Benchmark our performance against other landlords
 - 13.3.4. Look to ensure issues raised is actioned quickly
- 13.4. The Scrutiny Committee will help us evaluate what works well and identify weaknesses and areas for improvement. This group will also help to identify progress with the strategy and monitor action plans, as well as support the future development of our approach to involvement.
- 13.5. In terms of the cycle of communication that supports resident involvement, feedback and evaluation are important elements of a learning organisation. To encourage residents' confidence in the consultation process, and ensure ongoing support from residents and the wider community we will communicate the impact that their time and efforts have achieved.
- 13.6. We will establish and embed a system of recording and using resident testimonials which will be integral to this communication process. Resident to resident feedback can act as a powerful tool in encouraging involvement.

- 13.7. Visual testimonials will be obtained from residents and be uploaded onto the website. The films will show the benefits of involvement with residents testifying how their involvement has led to positive and tangible service improvements, thereby encouraging others to get involved.

14. DELIVERY, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 14.1. EMSH staff will drive the practical delivery of this strategy and work corporately to ensure that the vision is embraced by all directorates and embedded in service delivery. Progress against the strategy will be monitored by the board and an annual impact report produced for review.