

Appendix 1

THE MORAY COUNCIL

DRAFT TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2003-06

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Foreword

The Moray Council – its Elected Members, officers and tenants - welcomes the opportunity to publish this first Tenant Participation Strategy for Moray. Having decided last year to retain the ownership and management of the housing stock, we are seeking to improve the condition of our housing and related services. We recognise that an essential part of this is increasing tenant participation in the decision making process.

In Moray we have had a Structure for Tenant Participation since 1999 and we welcomed the legal requirements for Tenant Participation included in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. We agree wholeheartedly with the national key principles for tenant participation and seek to apply them in all that we do.

The Strategy recognises that for tenants to be empowered they must have knowledge, information, skills, confidence, authority and choice. I hope that The Strategy will become part of a sound foundation for tenant participation in all aspects of our Moray Council Housing Service and commend all those who have contributed to its production.

Cllr Jennifer Shaw
Vice Chairman – Community Services Committee
The Moray Council

Section 1.

Introduction

This is the first Moray Council Tenant Participation Strategy and it is intended to cover the period from April 2003 until April 2006. It is our intention to continually monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and formally review it on an annual basis.

Tenant Participation is about tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about

- housing policies
- housing conditions; and
- housing (and related) services

It is a two way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power. Its aim is to improve the standard of housing conditions and service.¹

National Background

In 1999, The Scottish Executive published the National Strategy for Tenant Participation “ Partners in Participation” which had been formulated by a working group consisting of tenants, landlords and housing agencies. The Strategy illustrated the Executive’s commitment to effective tenant participation in Scotland.

The Strategy set out key principles for good tenant participation which are :-

- tenant participation requires a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, elected and committee/board members, and housing officers at all levels, working together towards a common goal of better housing conditions and housing services.
- tenant participation practice should be seen as a continuous process where information, ideas and power are shared, common understandings of problems are strived for and a consensus on solutions is worked out.
- good tenant participation allows all parties to contribute to the agenda. All participants require to have all the information needed to consider issues properly; that information requires to be clear, timely and accessible and to take account of equal opportunities concerns.
- Processes of decision making should be open, clear, and accountable.

¹ Partners in Participation – The Scottish Office 1999

- Adequate time should be given to tenant representatives to consider the issues properly.
- Tenants should have the opportunity to work out a common view in advance of meeting landlord's representatives.
- good tenant participation requires the landlord to recognise the independence of tenants' organisations.
- good working relationships evolve gradually and are flexible to adapt to local circumstances.
- tenants' organisations require adequate resources for organisation, training and support.
- tenant participation in rural areas must be tailored to suit the particular circumstances and needs of tenants in such communities.
- tenant participation must meet the requirements of the legislation surrounding equal opportunities. Good practice in participation removes barriers to effective participation arising from ethnicity, geographic location, special needs, language difficulties, learning difficulties, age, sexual orientation, or disability.

These principles are fully endorsed by The Moray Council and its tenant representatives and underpin the strategy.

Codes of Practice

A number of codes of practice have been published by the Scottish Executive on aspects of tenant participation.

Tenant participation in best value sets out how tenants may be involved in the process of reviewing the service, setting standards, targets and indicators and monitoring the service, within the overall context of seeking continuous improvement.

Tenant participation in stock transfers identifies how tenants might be involved in the consideration of stock transfers.

The Code of Practice for tenant participation in rural areas highlights ways of encouraging participation in areas where communities are dispersed. It also identifies the difficulties that tenants in rural areas may experience in accessing information and encourages a flexible approach to the dissemination of information. It also identifies the resources (including training) that will enable tenant groups in rural areas to function effectively.

The best practice identified in these codes has been used to inform the Tenant Participation Strategy in Moray.

Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

The National Strategy stated that “to underpin these principles, a statutory right to participation will be introduced, matched by duties on landlords”. This was enacted in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

The Act includes provisions giving new rights to tenants of local authorities and registered social landlords in relation to tenant participation and consultation.

It requires local authorities to establish and maintain a register of Tenant organisations.

Section 53 (1) of the Act sets out the requirement for the development of a Tenant Participation Strategy to be in place by March 2003.

Links to other strategies

It is important that the Tenant Participation Strategy links with the other strategic plans in Moray.

The Moray Community Plan

The overarching plan is the Community Plan which was produced in partnership with other local agencies and concentrates on how the partners can deliver better services to the public. It includes a summary of the vision for the future in Moray. The overall aim of the Community Plan in Moray is –

‘to increase the quality of life for all sections of the community within Moray’

The Community Plan has three overarching themes to take forward this vision. These are community involvement, social inclusion and sustainable development. In developing these themes, The Moray Council has produced a range of plans and strategies, which are the vehicles for delivering services which have at their centre the three themes and the vision for Moray.

The Moray Council Corporate Plan

The Moray Council Corporate Plan is a summary of the vision for Moray and sets out the Council’s corporate priorities and targets for the medium term. It recognises that

“the Council has a leading role in the community and aims to improve the quality of life for all people in the area by working with and for the community and by delivering quality services within the available resources and powers.”

It has a direct link to The Tenant Participation Strategy in that, a stated objective of the Corporate Plan is; -

“ Develop the Council’s capacity for community leadership, and by working with communities and partner agencies, seek to continually improve the quality of life for local people.”

Community Learning Strategy

The Community Learning Strategy for Moray was launched in October 2000 it has 5 key objectives:

- To increase communities involvement in learning.
- To improve basic skills such as in numeracy, literacy and new technology.
- To support young people in Moray, particularly those most vulnerable.
- To develop communities ability to improve their quality of life.
- To encourage healthy lifestyles.

As part of the strategy eight Local Community learning plans have been produced in a partnership between local community and voluntary groups and agencies across Moray. Community Learning Plans will play an increasing role in supporting groups including Tenants groups to participate fully in The Community Plan process. The objectives of the Community Learning Strategy directly link to Objective 2 of the tenant Participation Strategy, in that they will assist in the development of the training plans for tenants groups.

Community Safety Strategy

Community Safety is high on the agenda for tenants groups in Moray. The Strategy is seen as an important link to the aim of the Tenant Participation Strategy, “ to work with tenants to ensure the provision of a quality housing service in Moray”, in that both are concerned with the development of community awareness and responsibility.

The Community Safety Strategy for Moray was launched in September 1999 and is reviewed every three years. The strategy was developed in recognition of the need to:

- Make Moray a safer place in which to live, work and visit;
- Ensure that community safety is a priority for all service providers;
- Tackle community safety on a broad basis;
- Reduce crime and in particular young people’s involvement in crime;
- Reduce the fear of crime, harassment and intimidation;
- Provide support for victims of crime;
- Develop a culture where people and communities are more aware of their responsibility for their own safety.

The strategy has been developed by the Community Safety Partnership, which consists of representatives from a range of stakeholders, including Police, Fire, RAF, The Moray Council, and the Local Enterprise Company.

The Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Review

Increasingly the Council looks to the Voluntary sector to provide services on its behalf, while the Community sector are often used to support consultation activities. Over the last decade these sectors have expanded significantly and are required to fulfil a range of complex and often conflicting roles. This growth has taken place without any clear strategic planning, without consideration of support and infrastructure needs for the sectors and without an agreed “vision” for the future. The Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Review has been initiated by the Community Planning Partnership to ensure that the process is designed to enable wide-spread involvement of all stakeholders in both those who are providers of services and those who are in receipt of services. Tenants make up an important part of the stakeholder group and the review therefor will inform and assist the Tenant Participation Strategy in achieving its objective of “developing and promoting the role of tenants in the process of policy formation, service review etc.”

Local Housing Strategy

The Council has participated in the piloting of the Local Housing Strategy process, and produced a Consultative Draft Local Housing Strategy in April 2002.

The Local Housing Strategy is the major strategic document for housing in Moray and many of the priorities for action contained in the Local Housing Strategy affect the people of Moray whether they are renting or buying their homes. In relation to the Council’s role as landlord, the Local Housing Strategy identifies the objective –

‘to provide maximum opportunities for tenant participation and empowerment throughout the social rented sector’

The Tenant Participation Strategy is an important part of the strategic planning process in that it underpins policy development and service improvements for the housing service.

How the strategy was developed

As part of the process of developing this strategy, the Council has worked with tenant groups in Moray. In June 2002, an outline draft of the strategy was published and comments were sought on the issues identified within the draft.

A small working group of officers and representatives from the Moray Tenant Core Group met to discuss how the strategy might be developed in the light of comments received on the outline draft.

A further draft was produced for consultation and comments were received from a variety of stakeholders including, staff, the Tenants Core Group, local area forums, Community Councils, Grampian Police and Elected Members.

The comments from the above have influenced the format and content of this the Tenant Participation Strategy for Moray.

The Council also enabled the Core Group to appoint consultants to assist in the process of identifying gaps in support etc, which the strategy could then address. The identified gaps have been used to inform the Action Plan Section 4.

The Tenant Participation Strategy is intended to be a “living document” which all stakeholders continuously review and one which continuously develops and grows, as their relationship develops. The strategy is a framework enabling all those involved in both the delivery of the housing service and its associated services, together with those who are the recipients or future recipients of the housing service, to work towards continuous improvement in the housing service.

Section 2. Tenant Participation in Moray

Tenant participation can cover a range of activity and it may therefore be helpful to consider participation under specific headings. These recognise that tenants may wish involvement at varying levels.

Participation – in decision making and monitoring processes.

Consultation and dialogue – creating opportunities for tenants to give views prior to decisions being taken, for example through a process of commenting on draft policies etc. creating opportunities for tenants to link into existing community groups such as the Community Councils.

Information – in either verbal or written form, but without opportunity for feedback/comment

The Council carried out a survey of tenants in 2001, as part of the Option Appraisal on the future ownership and management of the Council's housing stock². Part of the survey sought views from tenants on their future involvement in the housing service. A majority of tenants wished to be kept informed through newsletters etc and were happy to give their views through mechanisms such as surveys. However, the numbers of tenants wishing active involvement through attending meetings or joining a tenants group was low. The tenant participation strategy should therefore recognise that tenants may wish to participate at varying levels.

Participation

The Moray Council introduced a structure for tenant participation in 1999. This structure enabled local tenants to form groups (Area Housing Forums) supported by Area Housing Teams and to nominate representatives from each local forum to the Moray Council's Tenants Core Group. Currently there are eight constituted local area forums.

These are: -

| | |
|----------|---|
| Elgin - | Bilbohall Roths Lossiemouth Garmouth, Urquhart, Llanbryde and Lochhills – (G.U.L.L.) |
| Forres - | Forres |
| Buckie - | Speycoast |
| Keith - | Speyside Keith |

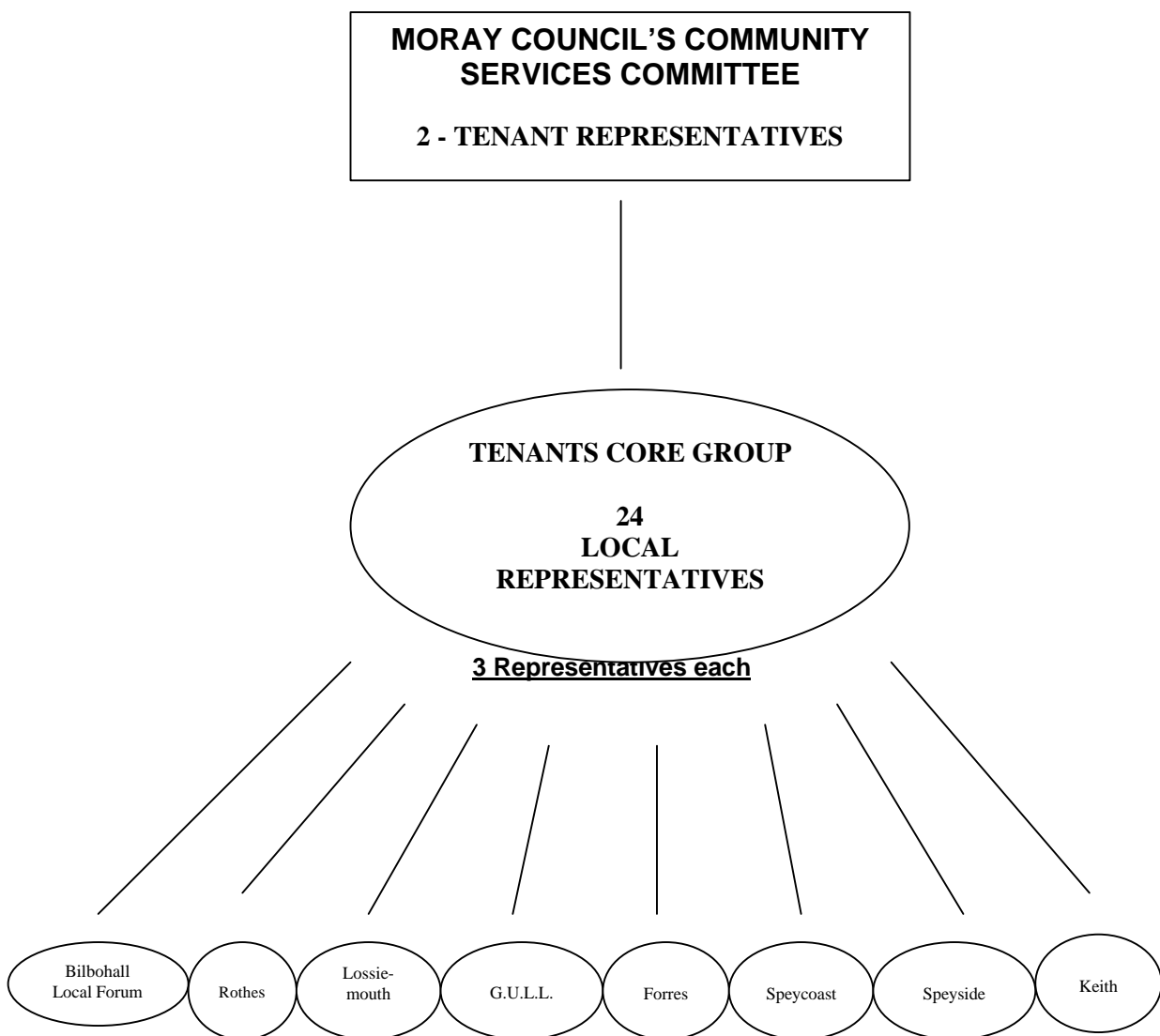
Local Area Housing Teams and the Tenants Core Group actively encourage tenants to form neighbourhood groups to develop into Local Area Forums.

² Moray Council Tenant Survey Report – Craigforth July 2001

In 2000, an annual budget was devolved to the Area Housing teams, who in consultation with Local Area Forums identify and prioritise local housing related environmental projects. This has been a successful initiative as local tenants have been able to see improvements to their area as a result of the input from the Local Forum.

In July 2002, the Moray Tenants Core Group adopted a new constitution to reflect the requirements of the registration process outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

The Core Group elects two tenant members annually, as non-voting members of the Community Services Committee.



The Tenants Core Group has taken an active part in the development of The Moray Council's new Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement and the Short Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement, introduced in the Housing (Scotland)

Act 2001. As part of policy and procedure development and the consequence of legislative changes and how they will impact on tenants in Moray, the Tenants Core Group appointed The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to assist them with capacity building, preparation for registration and training.

Local forums and the Tenants Core Group meet at least monthly and are supported by housing staff. The Tenants Core Group was granted a nominal sum of £250 in September 2002 to assist in the basic administration of the group.

Consultation

The main vehicles for consultation with tenants in Moray has been through the Council produced newsletter 'Tenants Voice' and through the Core Group and Area Forums.

Since the inception of the Moray Council's Core Group in 1999 and the subsequent development of the local forums, the forums have been consulted on the development of a range of policies, including allocations, neighbour nuisance, void management and repairs.

Tenants' views have been taken in to consideration in the drafting of these policies and in the final proposals presented to the Community Services Committee.

In 2000, the Core Group assisted by an independent advisor took an active role in the Council's Option Appraisal which resulted in a recommendation for the retention of the housing stock in Moray and the continuation of the Council's role as landlord.

Information

The Council distributes a newsletter to all Moray Council Tenants, called the Tenants Voice, twice a year. The 'Tenants Voice' provides information to tenants about developments in housing in Moray, proposals for policy reviews, reports from each of the tenant forums in Moray etc. Examples of the range of issues covered in recent newsletters include, Option Appraisal, Budget setting/Expenditure on Repairs and Improvements, Local Housing Strategy, New Rights for Tenants – Tenant Involvement, the Moray Way, What makes a house a home – Empty Property Policy, Core Group Updates, Supporting People, Domestic Abuse

All tenants receive a handbook from The Moray Council. The current handbook is out of date due to changes in legislation. The Council has agreed that a new handbook will be produced, in consultation with service users.

Gap analysis

The Tenant Participation Advisory Service were appointed as consultants to ascertain gaps in the provision for active tenant involvement, to identify training needs and to discuss with local forums how to facilitate more local representation⁴.

The Scottish Executive's Guidance on Tenant Participation³ includes a 'healthcheck' for landlords to consider in the preparation of the tenant participation strategy. This provides a useful framework for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the approach to tenant participation in Moray to date and formed the baseline for the TPAS report. The following strengths and weakness were therefore identified.

Strengths

- ✓ commitment from Elected Members and officers to the principles of tenant participation and the value of effective working relationships between tenants and the Council, as landlord
- ✓ an established structure for tenant involvement
- ✓ established processes to enable consultation on e.g. policy development with tenants through established groups
- ✓ tenant involvement in identifying and prioritising environmental projects within the local area
- ✓ regular consultation and dialogue on ongoing housing service delivery e.g. capital programme priorities, revenue budgets etc
- ✓ access to training for tenants
- ✓ budgetary provision for support to tenant groups (although not controlled by groups)
- ✓ mechanisms in place for the provision of information to groups and individual tenants
- ✓ An agreed structure for tenant participation in place

Weaknesses

- limited resources under the control of tenant groups
- some areas without tenant forums
- incomplete picture of training needs and requirements for tenants
- general lack of knowledge of the tenant participation/consultation provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and of tenant participation practice.
- lack of formal mechanism for forward planning on issues for involvement
- lack of definition and clarity between, local forums, tenants groups, the tenants core group, local housing staff and tenant representatives on committee, together with limited input for tenants groups into the wider consultation mechanism and inadequate feedback and engagement with the wider tenant constituency.

³ Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Guidance on Tenant Participation – Scottish Executive 2002

⁴ Capacity Building within the Tenant Participation Process – TPAS February 2003

- involvement of underrepresented groups including BME, young people and sheltered housing tenants in process
- provision for inclusion in process of non registered informal tenant groups
- the capacity of local housing teams to support the development of further tenant groups.

The findings from the TPAS report have been addressed in the Action Plan, in section 4.

Section 3 Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy is –

'to work with tenants to ensure the provision of a quality housing service in Moray'

The Council will seek to achieve this aim through the achievement of specific objectives. The objectives are supported by a detailed Action Plan which will form the basis of the monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved.

Objective 1 To support the growth of existing and new tenant groups in Moray.

To achieve the aim of the tenant participation strategy, it is essential that tenant groups are well resourced and supported, within the framework of the Registration process and that the benefits of registration are clearly identified for tenants. Actions to achieve this objective seek to provide established registered tenant organisations with resources to enable them to run their affairs autonomously. The Moray Council respects the rights of both individual tenants and unregistered groups of tenants to be part of the consultation process. Integral to this and the development of new groups, is the provision of support and encouragement. Officer support to groups who are not registered, or who may not wish to register, will be provided at the discretion of the Moray Council outwith the statutory provisions contained in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The Tenants Core Group will be encouraged to develop its role in supporting new and existing tenants groups.

Objective 2 To develop and promote the role of tenants in the process of policy formulation, service review etc.

While consultation on policies, service provision etc has been developed in Moray, there is scope for further development of the role that tenants play in these processes. Specifically, the Council will seek to involve tenants at earlier points in the review process, to enable tenants to identify the priorities for review. The Council will also seek to develop a structured consultation framework that sets out the minimum standards for consultation processes. Additionally, work will be undertaken to expand on the range of mechanisms used in consultation with tenants outwith formal groups.

Tenants will be encouraged, through training initiatives, to develop the mechanisms and skills to effectively communicate and facilitate an open dialogue to inform the decision making process.

Objective 3 To enhance and improve the range and detail of information available to tenants and tenant groups across Moray.

Information is essential to empowering tenants to participate and to play an effective role in commenting on policies, performance etc. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that appropriate resources are available to support the provision of information to tenants and will seek to expand the current level of information to tenants. The Council will continue to develop and explore a range of communication techniques to enhance the knowledge and participation of all tenants.

Objective 4 To develop training opportunities for Elected Members, staff and tenants across a range of housing activities.

Training opportunities are vital to enable tenants to participate. The Council will continue to co-ordinate, enable or provide training across a range of activities, including those identified in the Gap analysis. Where possible, opportunities for joint training with officers and tenants will be pursued.

Objective 5 To ensure that tenant participation activities in Moray reflect the principles of equal opportunity and are accessible.

Good practice in participation removes barriers to effective participation arising from ethnicity, geographic location, special needs, language difficulties, learning difficulties, age, sexual orientation or disability. The Council in partnership with tenants will identify existing barriers and develop an action plan to address the issues involved by March 2004. The Council will ensure that the facility for the provision of all communication in a variety of formats, which meet the needs of the diverse community, is available on request.

Objective 6 To monitor and review progress in achieving the aim and objectives of the strategy, jointly with tenants.

Preparation of the tenant participation strategy is not an end in itself. The strategy is intended to be an organic document that shapes the relationship the Council has with tenants both now and for the future. To ensure that the strategy develops over time to match needs and aspirations, a working group will be created from a range of stakeholders, including representatives from the Tenants Core Group, Local Forums, housing staff, and Community Education. This group will monitor and review progress regularly and will seek to update the strategy on an annual basis, to reflect the progress achieved.

Section 4 - Action Plan

| Action | | Who involved | Resources | Timescale | Measures of success |
|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Objective 1 : To support the growth of existing and new tenant groups in Moray | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Produce an information pack for tenants on organising a tenants group including model constitution | Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget Scottish Executive Funding | July 2003 | Pack in Place |
| 1.2 | Develop Core Group's role as supporting agent for new groups | Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget (training) | September 2003 Ongoing | Training taking place |
| 1.3 | Maintain a register of Tenant Organisations | Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | Register established – April 2003 | No of groups registered |
| 1.4 | Provide initial funding for tenant organisations | Housing Service | Housing Revenue Account Budget | HRA budget decision June 2003 | No. of groups funded Level of funding |
| 1.5 | Develop detailed appraisal of resources required to support registered tenant organisations | Core Group Area Forums Housing Service | Housing Revenue Account | Appraisal by - November 2003 | Report to committee Budget recommendation February 2004 |
| 1.6 | Encourage membership of national/rural tenant organisations | Core Group Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | Ongoing | Membership of national/rural groups |
| 1.7 | Develop Service Level Agreements between local Forums and Area Housing Teams | Area Forums Core Group Area Housing Teams Housing Service | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | By March 2004 | Service Level Agreements in place |
| 1.8 | Encourage joint working with tenants from RSL's | Core Group Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget Scottish Executive Funding | Tenant Conference November 2003 | Regular joint working |

| Objective 2: To develop and promote the role of tenants in the process of policy formulation, service review etc. | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| 2.1 | Develop a policy development framework that involves tenants | Core Group Housing Services Policy Development Groups | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | Framework developed by September 2003 | Framework in place |
| 2.2 | Ensure tenant representation in Best Value Reviews and the Housing BV Group | Core Group Housing Services Best Value Review Groups | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | Homelessness BV Review – to be carried out 2003/04 | Review reports |
| 2.3 | Involve tenants in shaping proposals for future areas of review in the Housing Service | Core Group Housing Services Best Value Review Group Best Value Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | Revise planned BV reviews in light of consultation – September 2003 | Revised timetable and content for BV Reviews |
| 2.4 | Develop the role of the Core Group in the co-ordination of consultation | Core Group Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget (training) | From April 2003 | Timescales No. of Consultations |
| 2.5 | Involve tenants in the development of service standards and targets | Core Group Housing Services Best Value Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | March 2004 | Service standards and targets |
| Objective 3 : To enhance and improve the range and detail of information available to tenants and tenant groups | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Develop Information Packs for all tenant groups detailing Council Services/ contacts etc | Core Group Housing Services TP Working Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | October 2003 | Information Packs |
| 3.2 | Involve tenants in development of Housing Service Website | Core Group Housing Services Website Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | March 2004 | A user friendly easily accessible Web site operational and publicised to tenants |
| 3.3 | Produce start-up packs for new tenant groups | Core Group Housing Services TP Working Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget Scottish Executive Funding | October 2003 | Start up packs |
| 3.4 | Develop revised Tenants Handbook | Core Group Housing Services SST Working Group | Scottish Executive Funding | October 2003 | Tenant Information Packs |

| Objective 4 : To develop training opportunities for Elected Members, staff and tenants | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|----------------------------|---|
| 4.1 | Develop an Annual Training Plan for tenants | Tenant Core Group Tenant Forums Housing Service TP Working Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget (training) | May 2003 | Number of training events Annual Report on Training activities |
| 4.2 | Facilitate joint tenant/staff training opportunities | Tenant Core Group Tenant Forums Housing Service TP Working Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget (training) Scottish Executive Funding | Ongoing | Number of training events Number of places |
| 4.3 | Develop links between tenant participation and community development | Core Group Area Forums Housing Services Community Development Service TP Working Group | | Ongoing | Number of training opportunities |
| 4.4 | Develop training to enhance tenant participation techniques for staff | Housing Services TP Working Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget (training) | March 2004 | Number of staff attending |
| Objective 5 : To ensure tenant participation activities reflect equal opportunities and are accessible | | | | | |
| 5.1 | Ensure that written information is available in alternative formats | Housing Services | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | As information is produced | Range of alternative formats |
| 5.2 | Maintain a register of tenants who require information in alternative formats | Housing Services | | Ongoing | No. of tenants identified Range of formats used |
| 5.3 | Identify barriers for groups who may be underrepresented in tenant group's e.g. young people, those with disabilities. Develop Action Plan to eliminate barriers | | | March 2005 | Barriers identified Action Plan development |

| Objective 6 : To monitor and review progress, jointly with tenants | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 6.1 | Establish Tenant Participation Working Group oversee strategy implementation | Core Group Housing Services Representatives from other Council and stakeholder groups TP Working Group Reports agreed Annual report on strategy implementation | | May 2003 | Group established Monitoring and Evaluation taking place |
| 6.2 | Produce annual report reviewing progress and revise strategy on annual basis | Core Group Housing Services TP Working Group | Housing Revenue Account Tenant Participation Budget | May 2004 and annually thereafter | Annual report on progress and achievements Identification of further actions |

Section 5

Scheme for Registration of Tenant Organisations in Moray.

The Moray Council is committed to encouraging local tenants to act collectively and take an active part in the management of the housing stock. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires a Local Authority to maintain a register of tenant organisation. To be accepted onto the Moray Council register a tenant organisation must be able to demonstrate the following: -

1. The organisation must have a publicly available written constitution that sets out:

- Its objectives and area of operation;
- How people can become members of the organisation;
- The way the committee will operate;
- How the business of the organisation will be conducted;
- How decisions will be reached democratically;
- How funds will be managed;
- Arrangements for public meetings;
- Arrangements for an annual general meeting (AGM);
- How changes can be made to the constitution

2. The organisation must have a committee that:

- (after the first year) is elected at an AGM;
- has at least five members;
- can co-opt others onto the committee during the course of the year;
- has elected office bearers;
- holds meetings that are open to any member of the organisation;
- can demonstrate that decisions are reached democratically;
- promotes equal opportunities.

3. The organisation must operate within:

A defined geographical area, which consists of all or part of a local area housing office area, a specified estate or group of properties within that area.

An area which includes housing stock owned and managed by the The Moray Council.

Membership of the organisation and participation in its activities must be open to all eligible Moray Council tenants within its defined area of operation,

The organisation must have appropriate accounting records and present an annual financial statement to the AGM.

The organisation must demonstrate that it is committed to representing the interests of its members and that, when consulted by the Moray Council, it can represent the views of the tenants of the Moray Council in its defined area of operation.

4. Application material to be submitted by the tenant organisation to the Moray Council with whom it is seeking to register:
 - The written constitution;
 - Names and contact addresses of committee members (identifying the office bearers);
 - A map and description of the area of operation; and
 - A statement setting out how the organisation plans to engage with its members and how it will represent their views.

5. A tenant organisation may have registration withdrawn by the council if the organisation: -
 - no longer meets the registration criteria
 - ceases to exist or does not operate; or
 - there is mutual agreement between the landlord and the tenant's organisation.
 -

6. A tenant organisation may appeal against the Moray Council's decision to:
 - Not register the organisation; or
 - Remove the organisation from the Register; or
 - Not remove the organisation from the register.

7. An appeal against a decision not to register or to remove a tenant organisation from the list must be made in writing to the housing division's Housing Programmes Manager who, in consultation with appropriate staff, will make a decision.

8. Where a tenant organisation is dissatisfied by the decision of the Housing Programmes manager they have the right to appeal to the Community Services Committee.

9. Where a tenant organisation remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Community Services Committee they have a right of appeal to:-

Director of Regulation and Inspection
Communities Scotland
Rosebery House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh EH 12 5YA

10. The Council will maintain a list of registered tenant organisations, which will be available to tenants and members of the public at the Local area Housing Offices, or by request.

Email: Munror@cvomm.moray.gov.uk