

**Title:** Proposal for a Tenant Conference – Spring 2024

**Information/Discussion Report – Discussion**

**Recommendations:** The DMC is asked to note the report and comment.

**Report Summary:** This report provides information on the proposed Residents Conference, the initial idea and plans to fruition co-produced with residents.

## 1. Background and Context

Chairs of the five District Management Committees (DMCs) wrote to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Georgia Gould, in May 2023 to propose holding a tenant conference.

At that time, the topics suggested for consideration are summarised as:

- Development, support and monitoring of tenants and residents' associations (TRAs) – particularly in using more up-to-date and accessible methods of communication and engagement with residents.
- how to extend traditional TRA activities to a wider range of residents of varied tenures, beyond the 'usual suspects' to enable greater involvement of groups that are sometimes harder to engage.
- Opportunities for TRAs to share experiences and success stories of their good practices in engaging residents and being more transparent and more representative of the communities within their area of benefit.
- The council's difficult funding decisions, and how residents can be engaged in such hard choices particularly in relation to the capital and repairs programmes.

The proposal for a conference was immediately welcomed as one of several ways of widening tenant engagement and listening to the views of residents, particularly in light of the new social housing regulations calling for clear demonstration of tenants views being taken into account in decisions relating to their housing services and the safety of their homes. As a result of the programme of tenant engagement already planned for the year ahead of door-knocking, 'Estate Action

Day' events on various estates, and involvement events with residents living in street properties, it was decided that such a tenant conference would be in mind for spring of 2024.

## **2. Initial thinking**

2.1 On 23 October, DMC chairs came together with Ododo Dafé, Head of Innovation & Improvement, to share initial thoughts on various aspects of planning for the tenant conference in order that DMC attendees and wider tenants have something against which they can also contribute ideas. The headings below summarise the initial thoughts and options.

### **2.2 Involving others in the thinking and planning**

How to involve tenants? Eg through an easy online or mobile phone based survey – either presenting ideas, or voting from a selected list - using Google, Survey Monkey or something similar.

CASP

Leaseholder Forum

Fire Safety Panel

Housing Residents' Panel

Possibly reaching out to the local authority area Youth Parliament

### **2.3 Scope of invitations**

Invitations made to all residents.

### **2.4 Methods of publicising the event**

Tenant newsletter, email, text messaging, social media, posters, word of mouth, TRA reps, DMC meetings and communications.

### **2.5 Venue**

In view of potential large attendance, venue such as 5 Pancras Square – good it able to use space outside too – eg with a canopy; Swiss Cottage library if it has a high capacity; or possibly other local venues with space for large and smaller discussions and stalls

### **2.6 Day of the week**

Preferably a Saturday

### **2.7 Number of events**

Possibly one event, possibly over a number of weekends

### **2.8 Timings**

All day event although people can pop in for specific times presentations, workshops, activities or discussions that may be of specific interest to them

### **2.9 Topics for large group presentations with discussion, or for smaller workshops that people can choose**

Need to consider how many is possible in the given time - eg three to five?

The topics below are an amalgam of thoughts from DMC chairs, common areas mentioned by residents, and feedback so far from the Estate Action Days currently taking place:

<b>Property repairs and maintenance related topics</b>	<b>Other topics</b>
Repairs Capital works Fire safety work Lift repairs Future of gas boilers and what replaces them Leaks, condensation, mould and damp	Allocations policy Grounds maintenance Caretaking service ASB CCTV provision Training for TRAs and residents Modern IT support for TRAs The future of HS2 land at Euston Estate Regeneration and CIP HRA and low reserves Use of TRA rooms and/or community halls Focus of young people's concerns - eg spaces for start-ups, target of ASB, mentoring, apprenticeships... How to...?

**2.10 Potential keynote speakers for debate topic**

Resident speaker

Staff speaker

External speaker eg on social housing regulation; on tenant involvement, Housing Ombudsman

**2.11 Stalls of possible interest**

Contractors – BTU, Gem, Apex, Viola, Idverde, Open View, Lush

Others – eg fire service, advice sector, Camden employment support, creative activities to try, police, cost of living, Age UK

**2.12 Other thoughts**

Sponsorship or support from eg Google, Youtube, British Library, HS2, Travel Lodge

Potential for recording some of the event – eg keynote sessions and Q&A

### 3. Camden Council potential tenant consultation topics

This section is from a landlord perspective and contains items that the Council would like to consult tenants about to understand more about what can be done, some items that will feed into the Council's updated tenant engagement strategy, some matters that tenants have raised in various discussions, and some areas of accepted good practice.

These will be topics that residents can take part in throughout the day – eg on an engagement stall, a workshop, or through social media. Examples are below, however tenants might suggest other areas on which they would like to be consulted or engaged:

- 3.1 Your housing service – **what does great look like?** Or what does transparent look like?
- 3.2 Understanding **barriers to tenant participation**. What would encourage more people to participate, and in what sort of ways? (ie menu of participation)
- 3.3 What **information** you would like to receive, and how you'd like to receive it
- 3.4 Your thoughts - **training and support** for TRA reps or tenants generally
- 3.5 Main **issue of concern** for your estate
- 3.6 Categories for estate or **TRA awards**
- 3.7 **“What if...?” sessions** - tenants can pick their own topic for discussion or later consideration among smaller groups. For example, “What if...
  - Everyone felt safe on our estates?
  - Young people made decisions relating to their estates?
  - There was a lot of community connection and people didn't feel lonely, isolated or left out?

### 4. Outline actions and timeline

Action	Date
DMC conversations	28 November to 6 December 2023
Gather more feedback from residents through TRA and DMC feedback and online survey	
Research and decide on suitable venue and dates	by end December 2023
Consultation on topics - eg in tenants quarterly newsletter, Housing News	Copy deadline possibly mid-January 2024
Arrange speakers, workshops etc	Once tenant choices known and dates set
Publicise event in tenants quarterly newsletter, Housing News	Copy deadline possibly mid-April 2024

**Report Ends**