



Participation Strategy

Policy Author: Hutton, Shelley	Policy Valid From: 10/05/2018
Policy Approved Date 10/5/18	Policy Review Date: 12/02/2022

Policy/Strategy Control Statement

1	Document Title	Participation Strategy
2	Date of Document (Created Date)	May 2018
3	Service Lead	Hutton, Shelley
4	Author	Hutton, Shelley
5	Date Approved and approved by who i.e. Service Delivery Project Board, Executive, Group Board, etc.	30/05/2018
6	Date last reviewed	January 2018
7	Amendment record	Amended dates General edit throughout to bring up to date. No major change Incorporated Tenant Participation Policy date 12/15 (so that can be deleted).
8	Next review date (Planned review Date)	12/02/2022
9	Staff Consultation	Head of Housing
10	Other Services Consultation	N/A
11	Customer Consultation	Talkback members at a Scrutiny Focus Panel Meeting

		<p>Jan 18. Sent to RTOs – consultation period 19/2/18 to 30/3/18.</p> <p>Sent to Chair and Vice Chair of the Sheltered and Amenity Forum – consultation period as above.</p>
12	Equality Impact Assessment: insert priority as agreed with E/D team, Insert date copy of EIA sent to E/D team.	Approved
13	Confirm that document meets current legislative requirements	Yes
14	Further Information/Comments	N/A
15	Sign off of statement by Author and Service Lead (name and date):	Shelley Hutton 9 May 2018

Policy Applicable To

<p>Business Area: Castle Rock Edinvar</p> <p>Applicable to: Castle Rock Edinvar</p>

Amendment Sheet Record

Revision Date	Description of Changes	Approved By	Date Approved

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Please summarise the current policy requirements and how this is changed in the new policy.

The Housing Scotland Act (2001) requires us to have a regularly reviewed Strategy. Minor amendments were suggested by tenants and these have been incorporated.

Please explain the reason for changes/improvements/new policy.

Due for review

Please explain any new actions required to put the policy changes into practice.

None

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This is an evolving document which will be under constant review by both customers and the Board.

We want your views on the Strategy and any other ideas that you might have on improving participation at any time.

An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on this Strategy in October to December 2015. This is available on request.

Our Commitment

We are committed to facilitation effective participation to encourage customers help to shape the service we deliver.

Castle Rock Edinvar is committed to:

- ◆ Looking for new ideas and better ways of delivering an excellent service;
- ◆ Consulting customers and taking those views into account when making decisions;
- ◆ Developing and maintaining effective and inclusive opportunities for participation including new ways of involving customers to give them a range of options to suit them;
- ◆ Ensuring we comply with Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 in relation to participation;
- ◆ Ensuring we comply with the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator to involve customers in measuring performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter;
- ◆ Developing and maintaining an effective relationship with the Board of Castle Rock Edinvar;
- ◆ Developing and maintaining effective and inclusive methods for customers to scrutinize Castle Rock Edinvar services;
- ◆ Developing and supporting residents groups where required;
- ◆ Compliance with the Equalities Act 2010 and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate fully taking account of individual needs;
- ◆ Investigating and implementing a broad range of tools and methods to overcome barriers faced by minority groups and ensure inclusion for our diverse range of customers taking into account diversity, linguistic and literacy barriers, poverty and cultural sensitivity.

Consultation Standards

Consultation means putting proposals to customers, giving them enough time to respond as they wish, listening to and taking account of their views and explaining the reasons for staff and Board of Management decisions.

General Standards

- ◆ Use the most appropriate methods to suit the task.
- ◆ Keep accurate records of the consultation.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of the exercise.

Standard 1 – be clear and honest about consultation

We will be honest about what we can and cannot do. We will be clear about the effect of any financial or legal restrictions.

Standard 2 – be clear about the purpose of the consultation

We will tell customers:

- ◆ Why we are asking them to get involved in the consultation;
- ◆ What may change as a result of the consultation;
- ◆ What cannot be changed, if anything—we will be honest;
- ◆ Who will be involved and why they have been chosen;
- ◆ All the steps we will take to involve customers;
- ◆ When and how any final decisions will be made and who will make them;
- ◆ The name, department and contact details of the person who is managing the consultation;
- ◆ How we will feedback on the outcome of the consultation;
- ◆ How to complain about the process.

Standard 3 – Provide clear information

- ◆ All information will be written in Plain English. This may include email campaigns, postcards, letters, invitations, reports, draft documents, posters and adverts. It can be made available in other forms where requested and this includes large type, Braille, audio CD, other languages and other methods as developed. We can also arrange face to face meetings and telephone conversations where necessary.
- ◆ We will monitor how accessible the information is through a variety of methods including surveys and face-to-face dialogue.

Standard 4 – Timescales

Enough time will be allowed for effective consultation before staff or the Board take any final decisions on service or policy changes.

For general guidance the following is set as a minimum:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| ◆ Surveys and other written responses | 21 days depending on the size of the survey or document (in case people are on holiday we can accept them later); |
| ◆ Meetings | 10 days minimum; |
| ◆ Individual meetings | 10 days minimum notice for consultation meetings (not for |

- ◆ Papers out to residents groups visits by Housing Officers and other staff);
- ◆ 4-6 weeks depending on frequency and timing of their meetings.

We will be sensitive to diversity needs and take recognition of religious/cultural events.

Standard 5 – Methods of Consultation

A variety of methods of consultation will be used. When planning an exercise, the most appropriate method/s will be chosen to ensure the most effective and inclusive consultation. We must ensure that individuals as well as groups are consulted.

Effective consultation and involvement may include:

Written consultation – examples include

- ◆ Sending written information directly to individuals and groups and inviting feedback.
- ◆ Using the newsletter to give information and inviting feedback.
- ◆ Writing out to individuals and groups asking them for their views on specific policies, parts of policies or proposals.
- ◆ Using surveys to gather views of individuals or groups.
- ◆ Using voting sheets – particularly useful in sheltered housing.

We recognise that written consultation can be limited for people with visual impairments, poor literacy skills or English as an additional language. Where we know this we can make alternative arrangements.

Face-to-face consultation – examples include

- ◆ Actively seeking the views of certain individuals, organisations or groups by meeting with them. We will allow time and space for support to be arranged where required.
- ◆ Holding general meetings, special meetings or focus groups (regular or one-offs).
- ◆ Visiting other groups to present proposals and to get feedback.
- ◆ Calling together special discussion groups.
- ◆ Asking individual tenants their views as and when they are seen by staff for other reasons e.g. home visit, coffee morning at sheltered housing development.
- ◆ Through tenant forums and panels.
- ◆ Ensuring appropriate interpretation is provided where needed.

Telephone consultation

- ◆ Actively seeking the views of certain individuals, organisations or groups by telephoning them.
- ◆ Supplementing written consultation with follow up phone calls.
- ◆ Using telephone surveys to gather the views of individuals or groups.

Standard 8 – Feedback

- ◆ Feedback on the process and outcome of the consultation exercise will be shared on the [website](#) and other non-digital methods where needed.

Standard 9 – Assessment of Consultations

- ◆ Each consultation exercise will be assessed to see if it has been effective.
- ◆ We may use feedback sheets or verbal feedback at the end of sessions to gather views from the participants on the process.
- ◆ They will use the following criteria:
 - Did we achieve what we set out to achieve?
 - Did we manage to get effective involvement?
 - Was any group not represented? Do we know why?
 - Were the participants clear on what the exercise was about?
 - Was there enough time for the exercise?
 - Did we use the best consultation methods in hindsight?
 - Were the records accurate and useful?
 - Did we give feedback to those who participated and to others?
 - Did we use the right resources? e.g. venue, transport, staff etc.?
 - Did we take into account individual needs?
 - Was it value for money?

Standard 9 – Resources

Groups

Castle Rock Edinvar will fund tenants' and residents' organisations, groups and forums which meet the necessary criteria – although they do not have to be formally registered to receive funding. We will be flexible to meet the needs of existing and new groups. Funding Application forms are available on request at any time.

Training

Castle Rock Edinvar will fund some places for involved customers on training and conferences such as those run by Tenants' Information Service and Tenant Participation Advisory Service, in accordance with individual learning needs and budget availability.

Meetings

Room Hire

We will arrange and pay for room hire (unless it is for funded residents organisations). We will use any appropriate available convenient meeting space. Care will be taken to ensure that venues are fully accessible.

Catering

Normally basic refreshments will be organised for short meetings. Longer meetings may make it necessary to provide food. We will take into account dietary requirements.

Transport

We will arrange and pay for transport if it is necessary to enable participants to attend. This may include public transport, taxis, Handicabs, and bus hire. We can also pay mileage in accordance with the expenses policy.

Caring Costs

We will reimburse caring costs (child and other). As a general rule this is for registered care providers only. We will assess the need to provide on-site childcare facilities on a case by case basis and will only use registered childcare providers.

Staff

Staff will attend if required by a tenants' or residents' association.

Evaluation and Review of Participation Strategy

This will take place at least every 3 years. Please forward any suggestions and general feedback to scrutiny@castlerockedinvar.co.uk

Complaints

Any complaints about any part of the consultation process will be taken using the Castle Rock Edinvar Complaints Procedure. Communication needs will be fully catered for.