

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 01st August 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Recruitment of Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives to the Housing Review Board

Report summary:

This report seeks to outline a refreshed approach to recruitment of Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives to the Housing Review Board.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the HRB note the content of this report, and approve the proposed new 'Tenant Representative Job Description' and application form.

Reason for recommendation:

It is noted that recruitment for tenant and leaseholder representatives has been difficult in recent years, and we are now in a scenario where four of the five tenant positions are vacant. Therefore, it is felt to be essential that a refreshed approach is taken to attract additional interest and wider demographic representation and ensure future tenant scrutiny of our Council's Housing Services.

Officer: Andy King

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; If we do not take a refreshed approach to tenant and leaseholder recruitment, we risk not recruiting to the Tenant Representative vacancies.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

1 Background

- 1.1 The Housing Review Board (HRB) is an overview committee, which reviews matters relating to the Council's landlord and housing management functions.
- 1.2 The Board continuously review the housing service's policies and performance; considers and approves new initiatives, and promotes continuous improvement in housing services for tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.3 This is a pivotal function that has real drive and influence on the scrutiny and strategic aims of the Council's Housing Service.
- 1.4 The Housing Review Board consists of 5 Council member representatives; 5 tenant representatives (of which 1 can be a leaseholder); and 2 independent community representatives. The Board elects its own Vice Chair, and they meet at least 4 times a year.
- 1.5 The non-councillor members are known as co-opted members and have the right to vote.
- 1.6 To be a Tenant/Leaseholder Board Member, one must be either a residential tenant in a property owned by East Devon District Council or a residential leaseholder where East Devon District Council are the freeholder.
- 1.7 In recent times, recruitment to Tenant Board Member's has been difficult. It has been observed and fed-back to Officers that some of the restrictions on membership for co-opted members has put up roadblocks for some tenants who otherwise would have been interested in applying.
- 1.8 Additionally, some tenant members who have been on the board in recent years have not attended regularly, and so it is suggested that expectations surrounding attendance are reviewed.
- 1.9 The HRB is now in a position where four out of the five tenant/leaseholder seats are vacant, so it is paramount that we take a refreshed approach to membership and recruitment.

2 Proposals

- 2.1 A new job description for the 'Housing Review Board Tenant Representative' has been created (see *Appendix 1*).
- 2.2 The key alterations to this job description are outlined as follows:

- 2.2.1 Attendance at Meetings – it is proposed that the expectations for Tenant Representative’s attendance at board meetings is brought in line the expectations set out for Councillors. Therefore, the job description prescribes that board members are required to attend at least one meeting every six months.
 - 2.2.2 The meeting attendance section of the job description is also updated to reflect the change from 5 meetings per year to 4 quarterly meetings, with the possibility of extraordinary meetings being called if necessary.
 - 2.2.3 Requirements and Exclusions – a new section of the job description designed to provide clarity on areas that at times have been considered ambiguous.
 - 2.2.4 Person Specification – updated to ensure a focus on our commitment to train and support new members and further set out the expectations of the role.
- 2.3 Additionally, a new HRB Tenant Application Form has been created to reflect the revised job description and ensure a clear and easy to follow process for application (see *Appendix 2*).
 - 2.4 The form ensures applicants have acknowledged and self-assessed against the eligibility for standing for board membership, and provides opportunity for them to put forward their desire and passion for being a tenant representative.

3 Next Steps

- 3.1 It is recognised that a refreshed approach and efforts are needed to encourage participation of tenants and leaseholders in the HRB.
- 3.2 If the recommendations of this report are approved by board, we will then start a programme of recruitment efforts that will include social media, direct communications to tenants, and approaching involved tenants to promote the role.
- 3.3 We are also hopeful for the commitment of Councillors on the HRB and beyond to advocate for the opportunity to tenants they may interact with in the course of their service in their respective constituencies.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications requiring comment.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications requiring comment

Equality Impact Assessment



Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes and other resources, available on the [intranet](#)

Version	1	Date Completed	11/07/2024
Description of what is being impact assessed			
To request approval of the revised job description and application form for tenant representatives on the Housing Review Board.			
Evidence			
What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups?			
We have measured our requirements against the Council's people policies as benchmark to ensure a fair and accessible process for tenants wishing to apply to be on the Housing Review Board.			
Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?			
Feedback from tenants in our involved tenant groups has been taken into account when reviewing the requirements of the job description. Housing Review Board are being consulted also.			

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. The Council also has a legal duty to have due regard to armed forces personnel when carrying out healthcare, housing and education functions. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, assess the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The job description has no requirements that exclude or disadvantage someone due to their age. However, it should be noted that applicants will need to be over the age of 18 by-proxy of the requirement for them to be a named tenant or leaseholder. 	☐	☐	☒
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The job description does not exclude or disadvantage anyone due to disability. We have ensured that the application form offers alternative formats and support with completing the application. 	☐	☐	☒
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	☐	☒	☐
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	☐	☒	☐

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race and ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact has been identified that is specific to this equality group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Protected group	Summary of impact			Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
<p>Negative outcomes action plan Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.</p>						
Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete		
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.</p>						
<p> </p>						

Completed by:	Andrew King
Date:	11/07/2024
Approved by:	
Date:	