

OPERATIONAL BOARD
11 JUNE 2020

ITEM A3

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

Report of the Head of Housing Management.

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A review of the Customer Engagement and Community Development Strategy 2016-19 is now overdue. We had hoped to begin shaping a new strategy with customers by now, but unfortunately this has been further delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has necessitated the diversion of resources to other areas.
- 1.2 Recent circumstances surrounding Covid-19 has forced Derby Homes to 'pause' traditional engagement methods and look at other ways to engage with customers. Over previous weeks and for the foreseeable future, social distancing and government guidelines will be a priority to ensure employee and customer safety.
- 1.3 This report outlines the scope of our ambition to develop the strategy together with our proposal for moving it forward during these exceptional times. We recognise that this is an important strategy. We therefore want to allow enough time to carry out meaningful consultation with a wide range of people who are representative of our customer base and co-produce a new strategy with customers. In order to do this effectively we are going to have to do it differently, with a greater focus on telephone and online working.
- 1.4 We are therefore proposing that the approval of this strategy is delayed until December 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the delay of the Customer Engagement and Community Development Strategy until December 2020.

3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure the Customer Engagement and Community Development Strategy 2020-23 is co-produced with customers.

4. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Derby Homes have a range of key performance indicators that show that the majority of our customers are satisfied with the services that we provide. Indicators include Tenant Satisfaction with Landlord (currently 95%), Tenant satisfaction with views taken into account (currently 78%) and Satisfaction with their neighbourhood (currently 87%). It is our aspiration to use the building blocks we already have in place and challenge ourselves to move from being 'good' to being 'great'.

- 4.2 In order to achieve this, it is important that we acknowledge how customers want to be informed, consulted and involved in the way we deliver our services. To achieve our ambition and recognise what even greater success would look like.
- 4.3 The ambition for our 2020-23 strategy is to:
- Co-produce the strategy with customers
 - Engage with as wide a representative of our customers as possible
 - Have an updated understanding of what our customers need to know and compare this to what we think our customers want to know
 - Effectively respond to feedback and demonstrate meaningful change
 - Understand the demographic of our customers for meaningful consultation.
 - Create a culture which recognises and values working with our customers
- 4.4 We have already established a number of ways that that we can inform, consult and involve customers. We want to take this opportunity to review the effectiveness of these. We also want to listen to under-represented customer voices, the aim being to ensure those people whose views are currently not represented are given a variety of ways to get their voices heard.
- 4.5 Over the last few years Derby Homes has expanded its services. This has included: Housing Options, Homeless service provision, an Extra Care scheme and some schemes for people with Learning disabilities. This means that our customer profile has changed and there is therefore a need to review, extend and tailor our engagement opportunities to ensure inclusivity of all customers.
- 4.6 In order to develop this strategy, we will look at ways that we can reach out to these customer groups to try and understand their views on engagement, and the best ways to capture their opinions moving forward. Further to this, we will establish Equality and Diversity involvement opportunities to show due regard to any service changes, policies and procedures which may affect the 9 protected characteristics and therefore eliminate any potential discrimination.
- 4.7 Recent circumstances surrounding Covid-19 has forced Derby Homes to 'pause' traditional engagement methods and look at other ways to engage with customers. Over previous weeks and for the foreseeable future, social distancing and government guidelines will be a priority to ensure employee and customer safety. The challenging circumstances led to a decision to focus on providing support to our most vulnerable tenants. In order to achieve this, we telephoned approximately 4,000 customers. This proved a very effective way to communicate with customers in a relatively short space of time.
- 4.8 Considering this success, and the restrictions currently in place regarding social distancing, we have postponed the planned door knock due to take place in September until we have reviewed and agreed the most effective methods of consultation moving forward.
- 4.9 The last Door Knock in September 2017 involved many different teams in Derby Homes over approximately 1 month. Over that time 2,000 tenants completed questionnaires.

- 4.10 During this time telephone and online contact calls may be more favourable to tenants. We will continue to work to ensure we reach a large customer base through alternative methods during this period.
- 4.11 We would also use this period to consult with our staff about how they can contribute to the development and delivery of the strategy.

5. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None

6 FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7 LEGAL AND CONFIDENTIALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8 COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None

9 RISK

- 9.1 If the consultation isn't carried out effectively there is a risk that we will not have a strategy that ensures that our residents have an opportunity to influence the services that we provide.

If Board Members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact:

Author: Lorraine Testro / Head of Housing Management / 01332 888675 / Email lorraine.testro@derbyhomes.org

Background None

Information:

Supporting None

Information:

This report has been approved by the following

Managing Director	Maria Murphy	26/05/2020
Head of Service	Lorraine Testro	14/05/2020
Head of Service – Finance & Income	Michael Kirk	14/05/2020
Head of Governance and Corporate Services -	Taran Lalria	18/05/2020
Company Solicitor		