FULL EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM B

Function being assessed:

**Implementation of Resident Scrutiny Panel at Kingston Council**

The aim is to recruit residents reflective of the demographics of the tenant and leaseholder base. Terms of Reference (ToR) and code of conduct have been drafted as part of the process and take into account diversity issues. The ToR details what the Scrutiny Panel can expect from the Council and what the Council’s expectations are of the Scrutiny Panel. The Code of Conduct sets out what behaviors are expected from both parties.

Is this a new function or a review of an existing function?

Although this is a new function residents are already participating in various ways to support the decisions being made about their housing. This includes residents interviewing potential members of staff, becoming a member of the sounding board, assisting in the selection of new contracts and becoming a member of their local Residents Association. There is a long standing resident association movement in Kingston under the umbrella body of the Kingston residents’ Federation. The Federation meets with Council Officers regularly to discuss housing related matters through the Resident Participation Review Group (RPRG).

What are the aims/purpose of the function?

Many landlords have introduced resident scrutiny as a means of implementing co-regulation.

Under the Localism Act 2011, the Tenant Services Authority, who were the regulator of the social housing sector, was disbanded and replaced by the Homes and Communities and Agency (HCA). As part of the revision of the regulatory framework whilst the monitoring of economic standards is retained by the regulator, the monitoring of consumer standards has passed to landlords who are requested to work with their residents to review housing service provision. The aim is for residents to be more empowered and to have a say in the decisions made about their housing, leading, ideally, to an increased level of community cohesion in the UK).

As set out in the draft ToR the key objectives of KRiSP are as follows:

- Provide an opportunity for residents to scrutinise the Council’s delivery of its housing services, performance and policies and challenge the provision and management of the service.
- Ensure that the Council’s housing services meet residents’ current needs and their mid to long-term aspirations for the quality of housing services, and are delivered to a good standard.
• Make recommendations to senior managers and elected members on how and where housing services should be improved.
• Provide an opportunity for greater ownership and involvement in the housing service by tenants and leaseholders.
• Drive continuous improvement in the delivery of quality housing services.
• Support the drive for improved value for money.

Once the Panel have undertaken a scrutiny investigation and assessed the evidence they will report their findings and recommendations for improvement to the Housing Consultative Committee (HCC) and occasionally to the P&S Committee if the recommendations have significant financial or policy implications.

Is the function designed to meet specific needs such as the needs of minority ethnic groups, older people, disabled people etc?

KRiSP will benefit all those living in council housing or who are leaseholders on council estates. The purpose of scrutiny is to ensure that residents have greater ownership of decisions made about the homes they live in. In order that decisions are made that reflect the opinions of our diverse community, the aim is that the Panel will reflect the community it serves.

What information has been gathered on this function? (Indicate the type of information gathered e.g. statistics, consultation, and other monitoring information)? Attach a summary or refer to where the evidence can be found.

A demographic profile of our tenants and leaseholders involved with our Resident Sounding Board (approx 65 residents) has been produced. This has highlighted the following:

- Almost half of involved residents are 60 years old or over, although a smaller proportion are of our tenants and leaseholders are 60 years old or over.
- There are proportionately less BME tenants involved when compared to the overall tenant base.
- Disproportionately more men are involved than women.
- Disproportionately more people with disabilities are involved.

It is important to note that there are some data gaps especially for leaseholders as not all demographic information is available.

We can conclude, therefore that there are demographic differences between our involved residents and residents in general. The establishment of KRiSP will aim to address this balance.

Initial applications show a tendency for more men and older residents to apply. Action has been taken to remedy this situation by targeted phone calls and a campaign on our estates to attract more diverse applicants.
Does your analysis of the information show different outcomes for different groups (higher or lower uptake/failure to access/receive a poorer or inferior service)? If yes, indicate which groups and which aspects of the policy or function contribute to inequality?

The analysis shows that residents that are currently involved with the housing service are not wholly reflective of the demographic composition of all tenants and leaseholders. Whilst this is does not contribute to inequality, as everyone is able to be involved, it means that any recommendations or decisions may be skewed. However, data analysis was only viable of the sounding board and this does not represent all resident involvement activities, for example, membership of resident associations.

Scrutiny Panel members will be provided with induction and training to enable them to understand the importance of representing all parts of their community. This will include training on diversity and equalities.

Are these differences justified (e.g. are there legislative or other constraints)? If they are, explain in what way.

Some of these differences can be explained but that does not mean that they are not insurmountable. For example, residents who are involved tend to be older as they have more time to commit.

What action needs to be taken as a result of this Equality Impact Assessment to address any detrimental impacts or meet previously unidentified need? Include here any reasonable adjustments for access by disabled people. Include dates by which action will be taken. Attach an action plan if necessary.

Below is a list of issues identified after reviewing the demographic data, along with the actions taken to date and the actions planned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scrutiny Panel to be as representative of the resident profile as possible</td>
<td>Communications and recruitment campaign aimed at attracting a wide mix of residents</td>
<td>April – September 2013</td>
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<td>Focus groups during the day and evening to understand barriers to involvement</td>
<td>April – September 2013</td>
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<td>Utilising social media, such as twitter, to appeal to younger residents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Promoting KRiSP at sign-up’ – new tenants are often younger people</td>
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<td>Raise awareness amongst voluntary sector</td>
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<td><strong>Ethnically fractionalized resident</strong></td>
<td>Using GP surgeries, libraries and community groups to promote KRiSP as there are 55 different languages spoken between residents and there is no clear group that is the majority.</td>
<td>April – September 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Disability fractionalized resident base</strong></td>
<td>There is no clear group that is the majority. We will therefore be recruiting in places many people go regardless of their disability, such as GP surgeries.</td>
<td>April – September 2013</td>
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<td><strong>Accessible application system</strong></td>
<td>The application system is accessible to all residents. All out-of-pocket expenses are covered, including travel costs, child care costs, relief care costs and costs associated with any special needs provision such as Braille or audio</td>
<td>June – September 2013</td>
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<td><strong>Mandatory training for all members of the Scrutiny Panel</strong></td>
<td>A comprehensive training programme has been devised for successful applicants to prepare them for being part of the Panel which will include diversity and equalities</td>
<td>October 2013 - ongoing</td>
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When will you evaluate the impact of action taken? Give review dates.

*Resident scrutiny will reviewed in the latter part of the 2014/15. Performance and impact assessment measures have been developed to support this. The review will also the actions in the EqIA.*

Assessment completed by:

**NAME:** Debbie Hunter  
**SERVICE:** PMO / Strategic Housing Programme  
**DATE**

Please send your completed assessment to your service head. A copy should then be sent to the Equality Adviser.