



# **RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT REVIEW**

# **CO-DESIGN PANEL REPORT**

**3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019**

**Phil Morgan Limited**

# Resident Involvement Review Panel Report Final

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## **Resident Involvement Review Panel Report**

### **Executive Summary**

This Panel report sets out a new way forward for resident involvement in Southwark. If adopted and implemented it will allow every tenant and homeowner a range of opportunities to be involved at a local community level, at an area level and at a borough-wide level, including different areas of interest and in different ways.

It will result in a fundamental change to the current structures for residents and staff alike and create the opportunity for involvement to result in improved services, informed policies and a different relationship between the council and empowered residents.

### **Recommendations**

1. That the council adopt the following vision:
  - a. To create empowered communities and treat residents with respect, and as customers
2. That the council adopt the following values:
  - a. That the council should develop a range of ways for residents to be involved
  - b. That the council should be transparent, honest and show integrity when working with residents
  - c. That there should be accountability for all in positions of responsibility
  - d. That there should be mutual respect between the council and residents
  - e. That the council should empower residents and put people first
  - f. That involvement should reflect the diversity of the resident population and reach out to all residents
  - g. That the council should ensure value for money and money spent treated as if it were one's own
  - h. That the council should collaborate with residents to find positive solutions
  - i. That the council should communicate successfully with residents

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- j. That the impact of involvement should be measured and reported openly
3. Capturing impact would be supported by inclusion of a question on future surveys about “does your landlord listen to you and act on your views?”
4. The council should adopt an approach of ensuring that all properties are covered by at least one face-to-face involvement event each year. This already happens where Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) exist but it should be expanded to estates and to street properties where TRAs don't exist. Where a TRA doesn't exist the council should organise an annual meeting as well as be prepared to engage with self-organised groups. This would ensure that all residents would be able to discuss their community and their services with the council each year whether a TRA exists in the estate or not. To support that approach the Panel agreed four principles for any meeting or group:
  - That all Tenants and Homeowners in the area/estate are invited to attend and take part
  - That notice of at least 14 days is given
  - That all attending meetings show good conduct to each other<sup>1</sup>
  - That all attending meetings respect equality and diversity
5. The council should make proposals for a “red button” approach whereby feedback received at these meetings is analysed alongside other sources of qualitative service feedback (such as official complaints) to identify systemic service issues and respond accordingly.
6. That the model constitution for TRAs should be revisited to reduce jargon and the bureaucracy involved for TRA officers through a co-design process.
7. That the council should continue to support TRAs being set up where this is wanted by residents.
8. That the Code of Conduct for all resident meetings is reviewed.
9. That the current Area Housing Forums be replaced by five new Housing Forums, mirroring the housing management areas, with two each in the larger areas and one in the smallest. These Forums would be open to all council tenants and homeowners in their respective area. They would need a clearly defined role, have a standard agenda and should include housing service performance and could also be a place for ‘red button’ for systemic issues identified by residents to be escalated. The agenda for the new Housing Forums should be resident driven with digital polls conducted of residents on topics for the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> This extends to all meetings

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10. That the council commits itself to engaging with tenants and homeowners on the following strategic areas:
  - a. Value for Money
  - b. Major Works Planning
  - c. Consultation approaches
  - d. Communication
  - e. Performance (including satisfaction)
  - f. Resident scrutiny
  - g. Creating new and renewal of housing policies
  - h. Regulatory compliance
  
11. That the council sets up a menu of involvement to cover the above strategic areas including:
  - a. Co-design processes
  - b. Fixed Groups
  - c. Task and Finish Groups<sup>2</sup> (which might cover the consultation process and Major Works planning)
  - d. Conferences
  - e. Digital involvement (see below)
  - f. Resident inspectors
  - g. Reading Groups
  - h. Surveys
  - i. Discussion Groups
  
12. That the above be considered as a 'ring of involvement' supporting and informing strategic discussions between tenants, and homeowners, with the council.
  
13. That the council sets out reasonable expectations for any strategic group for tenants or leaseholders. These should include:
  - a. That it should be accountable
  - b. It should be clear who was a member of the body
  - c. That it should represent homeowner/tenant views and concerns
  - d. It would receive input from homeowners/tenants
  - e. That there should be a code of conduct
  - f. Members should seek out views of peers
  - g. To ensure robust governance there should be an annual review
  - h. That time limits be set on membership
  
14. That there is no more than one strategic body for homeowners.
  
15. That the structure for strategic engagement includes both coverage of cross tenure strategic issues and there be coverage of single tenure issues.
  
16. That the council consults on options for strategic bodies.

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<sup>2</sup> A Task and Finish Group is a group set up as a sub group of larger project group that specifically looks at one item that needs to be delivered... the 'Task'. Once that area of work has been completed, the group disbands... the 'Finish'... and the work is then assimilated back into the larger project group.

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17. That the council consults on how tenants and homeowners are selected to any strategic bodies.

18. That there should be a Communities Fund. This should include the following:

- a. It should be available to communities
- b. There should be clear objectives and outcomes for the fund and accountability for delivering those outcomes
- c. TRAs, TMOs, Resident Groups and community organisations (with clear support from the community) would be eligible to bid for funds
- d. The council should support applications from looser groups without a TRA or a bank account
- e. Set objectives for the fund including consideration of:
  - Estate cohesion and inclusion
  - Community development
  - Support for TRAs
  - Digital training
  - Welfare Reform, including signposting
  - Quality of life
  - Impact
- f. There should be an open and thorough process for communicating about this fund stating the purpose, how to apply, what requirements there were and the importance of impact from what the fund supported
- g. There should be a group consisting of councillors, officers and residents that would decide applications based on a transparent process as well as the precise criteria to be used. This group would review impact annually and apply learning for future fund objectives and criteria

19. That there should be a borough-wide fund or funds. This should include the following:

- a. There should be clear objectives and outcomes for the fund(s)
- b. That those objectives include advice and support for tenants and homeowners including working groups
- c. That there is accountability for all receiving funding for delivery of objectives and outcomes
- d. That there are appropriate and applied mechanisms for dealing with conflicts of interest
- e. That there is efficient decision making with other parallel funding processes
- f. That strategic body or bodies working with the council sets the objectives, decides upon applications, review impact annually and apply learning for future fund objectives and criteria

20. The Panel agreed three pilot projects for digital involvement covering:

- a. Major works
- b. Communication

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### c. Sounding board

The council should draw up costs and plans, including co-production, to implement these.

21. The Panel acknowledged that the council also houses residents with other specific tenure types, such as: Temporary Accommodation, Sheltered and Extra Care Housing, Supported Hostels and Travellers, who should be part of future involvement approaches.
22. That the council draws up an action plan to implement these recommendations and work with tenants and leaseholders to ensure they are introduced.

### Background

23. The council commissioned Kaizen/Social Engine in 2017 to carry out a review of the Resident Engagement structure. That review<sup>3</sup> had input from over 1,000 residents and set out a number of challenges for both the council and the current resident engagement structure. That structure has been in place for over 30 years and increasingly strained in its ability to represent all tenants and homeowners, and find ways in which they can be engaged. There was a lack of awareness of the current structures and funds available and insufficient attention to impact of those structures and funds. There was also a lack of a council-wide vision about the purpose of resident engagement.
24. The council, in line with its manifesto commitment to “work with tenants, residents and homeowner groups to find new ways to engage so that more people can have their say”, agreed to set up a co-design panel of residents to review the housing engagement and involvement structure.

### Recruitment of Panel

25. The council agreed that there be an independent Chair for the Panel. Following a procurement exercise I was appointed as Chair.
26. The Panel was composed of
  - 1 Representative from Homeowners Council
  - 1 Representative from the MySouthwark Homeowners Board<sup>4</sup>
  - 1 (Tenant) representative from the Youth Council
  - 7 Residents with little or no previous experience of formally participating in the involvement structure (5 Tenants and 2 Homeowners)
  - 1 Officer from the Communities Division

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<sup>3</sup><http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=6124&Ver=4>

<sup>4</sup> Initially the representative had come from the MySouthwark Homeowners Agency. The Homeowners Council expressed concerns about this arrangement. The representative for later meetings was a member of the MySouthwark Homeowners Board.

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- 1 Officer from Resident Services
  - 1 Officer from Organisational Transformation
27. In addition the newly appointed Tenant and Home Owner Involvement Team Leader, responsible for implementing the Review recommendations, also attended and contributed to all meetings.
28. The Tenants Council were invited to send a representative but decided to boycott the work of the Panel. Attendance is recorded at Annex 1.
29. For the seven resident places there was a recruitment exercise involving all TRAs and Area Housing Forums and over 5,000 tenants and homeowners. Over 90 applications were received and I reviewed all applications for their interest, availability and representativeness in terms of tenure, age, gender, ethnicity and where they lived in the Borough. Those not selected were invited to join a Sounding Board to review and comment on the Panels discussions and draft recommendations.
30. There was a resident majority on the Panel.

### Approach

31. At its first meeting the Panel considered the background to the Review and the Panels Objectives. Additions are shown in italics. These were agreed as followed:
- Panel meets to decide its order of business and methods of working (including review of Kaizen report)
  - Panel discusses and develops a vision of how the involvement structure should look and work
  - Panel considers engaging with communities including the role of TRAs and Area Housing Forums
  - Panel considers strategic engagement with tenants and Home Owners and the role of Tenant Council, MySouthwark Board and Homeowner Council
  - Panel considers use and management of Tenant and Homeowner funds
  - Panel considers digital involvement<sup>5</sup>
  - Panel reviews Chair's draft report and produces final report and recommendations
32. The Panel also agreed the Chair's role, a Code of Conduct and its approach going forward. For all meetings there were papers with links to

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<sup>5</sup> This was originally set out by the council as *Panel considers management of TRA halls*. Following a meeting with the Tenants Council Cllr Cryan agreed that this not be considered by the Panel. Given TRA halls were not part of the Kaizen Review this makes sense and it is likely that the Panel would have recommended a more thorough audit and review of the current arrangements for TRA halls rather than propose a way forward.



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reports, other landlords' websites and publications, combined with a Chair's briefing providing an overview of the meeting's discussions.

### **Transparency**

33. All papers for, and minutes of, the Panel's work have been published on-line. Views of residents, stakeholders and officers have been shared with the Panel.

### **Evidence**

34. To support the Panel's work there have been a series of briefings, case studies, links and summaries for each meeting. The Case Studies and links are a valuable resource going forward for engaged residents, staff and councillors.

### **Panel Review**

35. A review of the work of the Panel will be undertaken by Peter Walters on behalf of Housing Quality Network (HNQ). This will seek views of those involved in the process about how it went and lessons to be learned for the future. The tightness of the timetable was an issue, was loosened, and will feature in my feedback.

### **Meetings**

36. I am grateful to the following for giving up their time to meet with me and share, openly, their views about the background, current situation and way forward:

- Southwark TMO Committee
- Ledbury TRA officers
- Ina Negoita
- Liz Errington
- Barbara Walsh
- Hilary Dobson
- Fiona Buist
- Martin Kovats
- Eva Gomez
- Stephen Douglas
- Michael Scorer
- John McCormack
- Mark Compton-James
- Cllr Stephanie Cryan
- Cllr Leo Pollak
- The Homeowners Council for inviting me to their conference as an observer and to discuss the work of the Panel at their meeting.

37. I welcomed the discussion with the Southwark Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) Committee. There are 17 TMOs in Southwark and they represent an important level of engagement of residents. Whilst this report does not cover TMOs directly I would continue to emphasise the importance of the TMOs and their residents in any involvement opportunities going forward.

38. I would also like to thank all members of the Panel for their time and contributions.

### **Strategic Vision**

39. The Panel received a presentation on the council's Fairer Future Promises by Michael Scorer, Strategic Director for Housing and Modernisation. It also considered criticism by Kaizen of a lack of overall vision for resident engagement and the potential for involvement shown by the 54% of residents interested in being involved in the Kaizen Report. The Panel considered two reports by Amicus Horizon and Family Mosaic into resident involvement, five case studies and feedback from the Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team.

40. Finally it considered vision and values from a range of (anonymised and mostly but not exclusively housing organisations).

41. The Panel then set out a vision, combining its interest in communities and services, backed up by a series of values.

### **Vision**

42. To create empowered communities and treat residents with respect, and as customers.

43. Values

- a. That the council should develop a range of ways for residents to be involved
- b. That the council should be transparent, honest and show integrity when working with residents
- c. That there should be accountability for all in positions of responsibility
- d. That there should be mutual respect between the council and residents
- e. That the council should empower residents and put people first
- f. That involvement should reflect the diversity of the resident population and reach out to all residents

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- g. That the council should ensure value for money and money spent treated as if it one's own
  - h. That the council should collaborate with residents to find positive solutions
  - i. That the council should communicate successfully with residents
  - j. That the impact of involvement should be measured and reported openly
44. The importance of communication was reinforced for me by my attendance at the Homeowners Council Conference. The value around impact was reinforced through the discussion I had with the Southwark TMOs about power and involvement making a difference, and further by feedback from the Sounding Board. The value around diversity was reinforced by all my contacts in Southwark.
45. Feedback had been sought from the Sounding Board on vision and values and the Panel considered this. As the feedback was consistent with the vision and values as set out, the Panel made no further changes.

### **Communities and TRAs**

46. The Panel was grateful to representatives from the Ledbury TRA for attending a meeting and sharing their experiences of being involved. The Panel acknowledged the substantial work and achievements of the TRA and invited them to stay for the rest of the discussion.
47. The Panel thought that TRAs are very valuable and important and should continue to be supported. This should include supporting TRAs being set up where this is wanted by residents. TRAs should welcome both tenants and homeowners equally, and be prepared to welcome street property residents into their membership.
48. Whilst TRAs are valued the council should adopt an approach of ensuring that all properties are covered by at least one face-to-face involvement event each year. This already happens where TRAs exist but it should be expanded to estates where TRAs don't exist and to street properties. Where a TRA doesn't exist the council should organise an annual estate based meeting. This would ensure that all residents would be able to discuss their community and their services with the council each year whether a TRA exists in the estate or not. The meeting should work to a set agenda and include feedback.
49. To support that approach the Panel agreed four principles for any meeting:

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- That all Tenants and Homeowners in the area are invited to attend and take part
  - That notice of at least 14 days is given
  - That all attending meetings show good conduct to each other
  - That all attending meetings respect equality and diversity
50. The Panel further considered the issue of behaviour, agreed that the principle of good behaviour should extend to all meetings and the Code of Conduct be reviewed to ensure it was robust in terms of setting expectations and ensuring these are enforced.
51. The Panel discussed and agreed a “red button” approach whereby feedback received at these meetings is analysed alongside other sources of service qualitative feedback (such as official complaints) to identify systemic service issues and respond accordingly.
52. The Panel also agreed that the model constitution for TRAs should be revisited to reduce jargon and the bureaucracy involved for officers. Following my discussion with the TMOs I propose that this should be through a co-design process with TRAs.
53. The Panel agreed that support and recognition could be given to self organised or single-issue groups set up in communities where there were no TRAs or interest in setting one up.
54. The Panel acknowledged that the council also houses residents with other specific tenure types, such as: Temporary Accommodation, Sheltered and Extra Care Housing, Supported Hostels and Travellers, who should be part of future involvement approaches.

### **Area Housing Forums**

55. The Panel then considered the future of Area Housing Forums. Given that these are based around areas for housing management that no longer exist it was hard to see the rationale for the Forums continuing in their current form (and there should have been a discussion when the housing management areas were changed). The Panel was also concerned that the sheer scale of meetings people needed to attend to participate – 10 TRA meetings and 10 Area Housing Forums each year (and more if involved in one of the councils) was both off-putting and unsustainable. The Panel did think that an ‘in-between’ structure would be useful but was sceptical about whether merging with Community Councils, as proposed by Kaizen, would give enough emphasis to housing matters. However the ‘open to all’ approach of Community Councils was welcomed.
56. The Panel thought there should be that there should be five new Housing Forums, mirroring the housing management areas, with two each in the bigger areas and one in the smallest. These Forums would be open to all council tenants and homeowners in their respective area.

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They would need a clearly defined role, have a standard agenda and should include housing service performance scrutiny function. They could also be a place for 'red button' for systemic issues identified by residents to be escalated.

57. The Panel considered further how the five new Housing Forums might work. They supported the idea that the agenda should be resident driven including polls conducted of residents on topics for the meeting. There is an opportunity to create an active on-line community with a dedicated and interactive website. The Panel also supported the opportunity for networking. A possible draft agenda might include:

- Key Performance Indicators
- Ad hoc polls for top two topics to be discussed
- Red Button issues
- Complaints summary
- You Said We Did feedback from previous meeting
- Report back from strategic body or bodies
- Networking opportunity
- 'Sandpit' session before the meeting to raise individual issues

58. The Panel noted that advocacy services might be needed to support residents who do not have English as a first language.

59. The Panel noted that if Local Housing Networks are held quarterly there would be 20 meetings per year compared to the current 96 Area Housing Forums each year. This releases a considerable level of resource to support the new involvement opportunities

### **Borough-wide Engagement**

60. The Panel noted the current arrangements for borough-wide and strategic engagement, the criticisms of the Kaizen review of those arrangements and the outstanding need for regulatory compliance. The Panel then considered the following topics for engagement:

- The need to cover value for money
- The importance of major works planning to leaseholders, where project groups could be set up with local residents where the council would welcome earlier engagement.
- The need for robust consultation approaches
- The currently low level of satisfaction with housing services, including in comparison with similar landlords and the importance of service standards
- The frustration shown at the Homeowners Conference about communication
- The need to ensure regulatory compliance and resident scrutiny
- The need to engage residents with producing effective and easily understood policies.

61. The Panel discussed the option of all of this being considered by one or two strategic groups alone. I raised the idea of a “Ring of Involvement” with a range of mechanisms for involvement supporting and informing a strategic structure. The idea that one or two strategic bodies could populate all these mechanisms was neither practical nor desirable.

62. The Panel considered a menu of involvement<sup>6</sup> including:

- Co-design processes
- Fixed Groups
- Task and Finish groups<sup>7</sup> (which might cover the consultation process and Major Works planning)
- Conferences
- Digital involvement including use of MySouthwark Account, emails and social media
- Resident inspectors
- Reading Groups
- Surveys

This would need to be communicated widely to tenants and leaseholders.

### **Strategic Structure**

63. The Panel then considered how a strategic structure might work. This proved the one area where the Panel found it difficult to reach a consensus. The Panel did agree two principles – that there be coverage of cross tenure strategic issues and there be coverage of single tenure issues. The Panel considered three options in line with these principles:

- A cross-tenure strategic body with coverage of single tenure issues through either a single group or groups
- Two single tenure groups who would meet jointly with the council of cross tenure strategic issues
- A cross-tenure strategic body with a specific homeowner group

64. The Panel also acknowledged the following:

- The emphasis that should be placed on the wider ring of involvement, with more opportunities for involvement, experiences and voice

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<sup>6</sup> Proposed Value: *That the council should develop a range of ways for residents to be involved.*

<sup>7</sup> A Task and Finish group is a group set up as a sub group of larger project group that specifically looks at one item that needs to be delivered... the 'Task'. Once that area of work has been completed, the group disbands... the 'Finish'... and the work is then assimilated back into the larger project group.

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- That involvement, in line with the agreed value “That the impact of involvement should be measured and reported openly”, should make a difference to the quality of services received and satisfaction of residents
- That residents were interested in volunteering
- The difficulty in translating that interest into active participation
- The benefits of Task and Finish Groups
- The need for involvement to drive cultural changes within the council
- That any strategic body not be seen as ‘hierarchical’.
- That any approach be reviewed regularly

### Leaseholders

65. The MySouthwark Homeowners Agency was created to provide a focus on improving services to Homeowners following some particularly poor satisfaction results. The MySouthwark Homeowners Board was created to provide homeowners input into the work of the Agency. The MySouthwark Homeowners Board is a manifesto commitment from the 2014 local elections.

66. At that time the Homeowners Council was not well placed to play the role envisaged and the Board was created. The subsequent uplift in the governance in the Homeowners Council means that if the Agency was being set up today then it is debatable that the Board would be created. Thus we have a situation which is untenable to all involved who all agree that this needs resolving.

67. The Panel heard how the Homeowners Council was constituted of volunteers, had produced a strategy and held open meetings. There had been an improvement in how it operated and this was supported by the council. There was an acknowledgement that the current structure had too many steps to gain election to the Homeowners Council that they were seeking to address.

68. The Panel felt that there should only be one strategic body for Homeowners, but within the wider involvement approach proposed and set out expectations for how it should operate:

- That it should be accountable
- It should be clear who was a member of the body
- That it should represent homeowner views and concerns
- It would receive input from homeowners
- That there should be a code of conduct
- Members should seek out views of peers
- To ensure robust governance there should be an annual review

69. The Panel was aware of the role of LAS2000, a group of homeowners independent of the council and welcomed that role continuing.

## **Tenants**

70. Despite there being no input from the Tenants Council, the Panel felt that the principles set out for a strategic leaseholder body should also apply to any strategic tenant body, with the inclusion of time limits.

## **Selection of members of Strategic Body or Bodies**

71. During its initial discussions on the expectations for the Strategic Body or Bodies the Panel stated this should include elections. It also discussed time limits for membership, which was common in other voluntary groups and would ensure that new people had the opportunity to be involved.

72. There was later discussion around the merits of election and whether this might cover skills and diversity. The Panel also discussed how the strategic body/bodies were populated with tenants and homeowners. This included:

- Concerns that elections would create an us and them approach
- Concerns about how an election process would ensure that the expectations the Panel had set out for any strategic body would be met
- That there should be a 'gatekeeper' role helping ensure that interested residents were placed in areas of interest and in ways they wished to be involved
- That a selection process can feel like an interview and be off-putting
- That an election process can also be off-putting
- That there may be a mix of elections and selection
- That the current involvement structures don't always provide feedback at a local level
- That any resident scrutiny role would be best recruited through agreeing terms of reference with residents and then selecting against that role through independent recruitment
- Concerns that appointment would mean responsibility being surrendered to council officers and holding meetings behind closed doors
- Support for direct elections with an element of skill required

73. The Panel did not reach a consensus on this and agreed that the council consults on how tenants and homeowners are chosen for any strategic bodies.

## **Tenant and Leaseholder Funds**

74. The council allocates a portion of the rent collected from tenants (£13.78/year) and homeowners service charges (£10/year) to pay for some of the current involvement structure. This provides income for the Tenants Fund (£620,000 budget) and the Homeowners Fund (£190,000 budget including £40,000 from reserves). The Tenant Fund and the



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Homeowner Fund are overseen by the Tenant Fund Management Committee and Homeowner Fund Management Committee respectively, which make recommendations to Cabinet Member for Housing about how the funds should be spent. There is also the Tenants & Residents Social Improvements Grants (TRSIG) with a £244,000 budget in 2018/19, which is administered through a Grants Panel of six people elected by Area Housing Forums<sup>8</sup>.

75. The Homeowners Fund contributes 27% of the TRAs grants spent each year with the other 73% coming from the Tenants Fund.

76. This is not a levy and the Funds are part of the council's Housing Revenue Account. The council chooses to allow the two councils and the TRSIG grants panel to make recommendations through an annual report agreed by the Cabinet Member for Housing. The Kaizen Review is critical of the current arrangements for placing too much emphasis on outputs, internal controls and financial management rather than delivering outcomes and opportunities that benefit local communities. This criticism was supported by the weak outcomes for major recipients of funding including SGTO and the training posts<sup>9</sup>.

77. The Panel identified two separate approaches for future funding. Firstly there was a need for a community/TRA fund focused at a community level. Secondly there was a need for a borough-wide fund for strategic issues.

78. For both funds the Panel thought any approach should operate efficiently with other funds, have a clear focus on outcomes, applicants should be accountable for delivery and manage conflicts of interest appropriately.

79. For the community/TRA fund the Panel identified the following objectives (which may not be exhaustive) for consideration:

- Estate cohesion and inclusion
- Quality of life
- Community development
- TRA support
- Support for digital training (whilst noting the council's own support for digital training through libraries)
- Welfare reform, including signposting
- Impact

80. On welfare reform the Panel received a received a paper from David Eyles (Homeowners Council & Rotherhithe Area Housing Forum) on

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<sup>8</sup> This would have to change if the proposal to replace with five Area Housing Forums was adopted

<sup>9</sup> Please note this is not necessarily a criticism of performance just that that performance is not clearly captured

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residents with disabilities. It covered cuts in Government funding to the council, benefit changes and the profound impact on residents affected. The paper pointed out the knock-on effect on TRAs and community groups and argued for information and support for those impacted by changes. The Smith Institute has recently published Safe as Houses 2, detailing the increase in rent arrears for Southwark residents on Universal Credit. The Panel noted the importance of signposting in any training or guidance shared with TRAs and community groups and other sources of support.

81. The Panel identified the following as eligible to apply for funding:

- TRAs
- TMOs
- Resident groups
- Community organisations (with the support of resident communities)

82. The council should support applications from looser groups without a TRA or a bank account through the Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team. Groups receiving funding should be inclusive of tenure and wider diversity.

83. The Panel supported an open and thorough process for communicating this fund stating the purpose, how to apply, what the requirements were and the importance of impact from what the fund supported.

84. The Panel supported setting up a group consisting of councillors, officers and residents that would decide applications based on a transparent process as well as the precise criteria to be used. This group would review impact annually and apply learning for future fund objectives and criteria. The process should be simple to apply for, administer and decide upon.

85. Existing funding that could cover this includes:

- TRSIG £184,000
- TRA grants £228,000
- Small grants scheme for community events £30,000

86. For the borough-wide Fund the Panel identified the importance of setting clear objectives and outcomes for the fund. The Panel supported a strong level of advice and support for both tenants and homeowners, delivered separately. Other objectives discussed included holding resident conferences.

87. The Panel supported accountability for all receiving funding for delivery of objectives and outcomes. It also supported that there are appropriate and applied mechanisms for dealing with conflicts of interest.

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88. The Panel agreed there should be efficient decision making with other parallel funding processes and compliance with the council's constitution.
89. That Panel agreed that this be included in the role(s) of any strategic body or bodies working with the council and sets the objectives, decides upon applications, review impact annually and apply learning for future fund objectives and criteria.

### **Digital Involvement**

90. The Panel considered its own experiences, including on-line chat room and forums, and heard from Mark Compton-James, Head of IT and Digital Services, about the council's approach. His experience of Forums was that they were expensive to run in terms of time, needed policing and a different set of skills to current staff. However he reassured the Panel that the technology was the easy bit and emphasised the importance of co-designing platforms with residents.
91. The Panel identified three approaches for digital involvement:
- Major works, which would be locally based and a Panel priority for engagement
  - Communication, which would be thematic and a Panel priority for engagement and
  - Setting up a sounding board through emails which could widen considerably the number of involvement residents

### **Sounding Board**

92. The vision and values were shared with the Sounding Board<sup>10</sup>, who supported them. There was one point of challenge considered by the Panel on whether the value of working in collaboration with residents should be extended to cover other agencies, which the Panel decided not to accept.
93. Parts of the Panel's recommendations were shared with the Sounding Board<sup>11</sup>, who broadly supported them. There were three points of challenge concerning support for TRAs to be set up, (poor) behaviour shown at meetings and the failure to listen to resident views, all of which the Panel considered and made additions to this report.

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<sup>10</sup> Only a few responses were received.

<sup>11</sup> Only a few responses were received.

## Resident Involvement Review Panel Report Final

### Appendix 1 - Attendance Table

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Xolani Annakie	T	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Apol	No	No	No
Adebayo Daniels	T	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Hayley Zoil	T	Yes	Yes	Yes	Apol	Yes	Yes	Apol	Yes
Frank Gyan	T	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Omalara Daniels	T	Apol <sup>12</sup>	Yes	Yes	Apol	Apol	No	Yes	Yes
Mark Morris	HO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Teresa Fritz	HO	Apol	Yes	Yes	Apol	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ina Negoita	HOC	Yes	Yes	Sub <sup>13</sup>	Sub <sup>14</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>15</sup>	Yes
Hilary Dobson <sup>16</sup>	MYSHOB	Sub	Apol	Apol	Apol	Yes	Yes	Yes	Apol
Zahra <sup>17</sup> Gaed	YC	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Apol
Eva Gomez	LBS	Yes	Sub <sup>18</sup>	Yes	Sub <sup>19</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Sub <sup>20</sup>
Emily Nice	LBS	Yes	Sub <sup>21</sup>	No	No	No	Sub <sup>22</sup>	Yes	No
Sharron Smith	LBS	Sub <sup>23</sup>	No	Yes	Yes	Sub <sup>24</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Phil Morgan	Chair	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

John McCormack, Tenant and Home Owner Involvement Team Leader, was appointed at the start of the Panel's work. As he would be responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Panel he attended all meetings as Secretary and contributed to all meetings.

Michael Scorer, Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation attended meeting 2.

Members of Ledbury TRA attended meeting 3.

Mark Compton-James, Head of IT and Digital Services attended meeting 6.

<sup>12</sup> Accident on way to meeting

<sup>13</sup> Liz Errington

<sup>14</sup> Liz Errington

<sup>15</sup> Attended with Liz Errington

<sup>16</sup> Initially MySouthwark Homeowners Board asked Fiona Buist from the MySouthwark Homeowners Agency to attend, which she did for the first meeting. Then the Board agreed that Hilary Dobson would attend.

<sup>17</sup> Delay in being nominated until Meeting 7

<sup>18</sup> John McCormack

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Douglass

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Douglass

<sup>21</sup> Kamran Khan

<sup>22</sup> Rod Spence

<sup>23</sup> Natasha Brown

<sup>24</sup> Levi Burke

## Resident Involvement Review Panel Report Final

Cllr Stephanie Cryan, Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Modernisation, also attended and contributed to the final meeting of the Panel.