

TENANT PARTICIPATION- DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

Introduction

1. The meeting of the Housing Act Implementation Working Group, held on 19 September 2001, considered a paper (WFHAI-10) which asked the Working Group to decide whether all the available resources should simply be allocated to landlords on the basis of an agreed formula or, alternatively, if some of the resources should be top sliced for centrally funded initiatives.

2. It was agreed that the main focus should be on resourcing landlords directly, but that funding a team of development officers was a good idea in principle. It was acknowledged, however, that there were a range of practical issues that needed to be resolved before this could be taken forward. This was remitted to the Tenant Participation sub-group for further discussion.

Development Officers

3. The thinking behind the Development Officers posts (sometimes known as Capacity Building Officers), is that they would have responsibility for facilitating and promoting good practice in tenant participation for Local Authorities and RSLs landlords. By resourcing these posts, the tenant participation agenda could be driven more pro-actively. Landlords would also have a resource to call all in helping them. The weakness is that there a significant number of structural and practical problems in managing and implementing these posts. These will be fully aired in the meeting.

4. Firstly, the Sub- Group needs to discuss the practical issues surrounding the employment of Development Officers. Possible areas for discussion are detailed below and we would be grateful if you could give some thought to these before the meeting:

- How should the Scottish Executive determine where they should be based
- What kinds of organisation would be suitable to host development officers?
- How should development officers be recruited?
- How many do we require?
- Should we have one main development officer leading a team or development officers of the same grade?
- Who should employ them?
- Where should they be based?
- Fixed Term Appointment for how long?
- Who do the report to?
- Geographical issues
- Any other issues

This will be a major source of discussion on the day.

5. An indicative job description and person specification for the work of a team of Development Officers is attached at Annex A. This is has been drawn up through internal discussion within the Executive. It should be seen as a starting point for discussion and as an

aid to resolving the wider issues. The Sub-Group needs to consider the role of the Development Officer and what he/she is expected to achieve. Once this is agreed the job description and person specification can be modified in line with it.

Way Forward

6. The Sub-Group is asked to:
- Discuss and agree on the practical issues surrounding the employment of Development Officers.
 - Agree on the role of the Development Officers

Housing Division 2
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PROPOSAL FOR TENANT PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

The first question is what is it we are trying to achieve through the development officer role? What will constitute successful outcomes for the Scottish Executive?

Outcome

- Landlords to be aware of their obligations under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 in respect of tenant participation.
- Landlords to be in constructive dialogue with tenants about the content of the landlords tenant participation strategy.
- Landlords to have successfully reviewed their current practice and identified future action that they will take.
- Landlords to have a good understanding of the ways in which good tenant participation can happen and the tools available to support this in practice.

Therefore this leads to a job description and person specification which captures the following:

- 1) To promote the new obligations on landlords in respect of tenant participation provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 2) To organise and contribute to national and local events on tenant participation.
- 3) To prepare information material for landlords about new statutory arrangements for tenant participation.
- 4) To develop and deliver customised training for landlords on tenant participation matters.
- 5) To offer ad hoc advice to landlords on how they might review current practice, including the development of a checklist to assist self-assessment.
- 6) To promote local networks and partnerships between landlords to share good practice in tenant participation.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Skills		
– Written communication	X	
– Oral communication	X	
– Presentation skills	X	
– Managing conflict	X	
– Influencing	X	
– Self-starter	X	
Knowledge		
– Tenant/community involvement	X	
– Local authority/housing associations – decision making	X	
– Housing legislation		X
– Awareness of equality issues in accessing services.	X	
Experience		
– Tenant participation/community involvement	X	
– Policy development		X
– Training and development		X
Qualifications		
– Willing to travel/work evenings/weekends	X	
– Community involvement qualification		X
– Housing qualification		X
– Car driver		X