

ESTUARY HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD	Committee: FER 1 March 2017 (Review)
	Executive Team:
DIRECTORATE / DEPARTMENT: Performance and Customer Engagement AUTHOR: Cherish Hill – Senior Customer and Community Engagement Officer	Page: 1 of 5
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VERSION CONTROL

Date	Author	Version	Notes
2012	C.Dickens	1	Original Document
2014	C.Dickens	1.2	Reviewed with FER approval
2017	C.Hill	2	Updated February 17, taken to FER March 17

POLICY / PROCEDURE:

Working with the Federation of Estuary Residents Committee V.2

1.0 Purpose or Aim

- 1.1 As part of our commitment to involve residents in the development of our services some core standards for consulting the Federation of Estuary Residents have been agreed.
- 1.2 The framework is designed to set the level of expectation and commitment by both parties in the consultation and involvement for the Federation.
- 1.3 The framework will be developed and monitored regularly, to ensure that it remains relevant, as part of Estuary's commitment to Customer Engagement in line with regulatory standards.

2.0 FER Background

2.1 The FER was constituted in July 2003 and aims to promote the rights of all Estuary

residents regardless of ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

2.2 Act as a consultative body for any proposed additions or changes to service delivery.

2.3 Meet, liaise and consult with any relevant department of Estuary Housing Association and to act as a negotiating body with any organisation whose business directly or indirectly affects the residents of Estuary.

2.4 Co-operate with external organisations, other than members or associate members (Estuary Housing Association), on matters of common concern.

2.5 Promote and represent the interests of Estuary residents in matters which affect their rights and the management, maintenance and improvements of their homes, amenities and environment.

2.6 Assist and encourage the establishment of Residents Associations and Residents Groups and where necessary co-ordinate the activities of members and member organisations and to help them achieve their aims.

2.7 Ensure transparency by sharing relevant information to members on matters affecting the residents of Estuary Housing Association.

2.8 Assist in the selection procedure of resident board members to Estuary Housing Association's Board of Management.

2.9 Membership is automatic to all residents of Estuary Housing Association Limited, who will all annually be invited to express interest in joining the committee and invited to attend the Annual General Meeting.

3.0 Estuary Housing Association agrees that:

The Federation will be consulted on with any proposed changes to Association policies or any proposed new policies, directly affecting service delivery to residents.

Reserve a seat for the Chair of the FER on the quarterly Services Committee meeting.

The Federation will be involved in the development of all service strategies including representation on any stakeholder steering group, focus or core group

Officers of the Federation will be given the opportunity to attend inaugural meetings with new residents groups jointly with the Association's Customer and Community Engagement Officers.

The Federation will monitor agree the expenditure for the Estate Improvement Budget (EIB).

Estuary will fund or provide any training deemed necessary for Committee members to ensure that they are able to carry out the work of the FER

Estuary Housing Association will provide the Federation with at least one page in every edition of the Estuary News

Estuary Housing Association will work with the FER to plan and arrange their Annual General Meeting. This includes sourcing funding and recruiting new members.

Estuary will financially support the FER.

Estuary Housing Association will publicise the Federation's contact details and promote the work of the Federation of Estuary Residents on the Association's website. The content of the Federation information will be agreed by both Estuary and the FER

The Customer and Community Team will support the FER in organisation of meetings and administration, and will provide the main point of contact with Estuary Housing Association.

The FER Committee agrees that:

Officers of the Federation and Estuary Housing Association will work in partnership and all individuals will work on an equal basis.

Where residents have a decision making role they must comply with Estuary's principles of accountability, work within statutory guidelines and operate without prejudice or exclusion of any individual or group.

All members will work in line with their Constitution, succession policy and the FER code of conduct.

For all members to sign all key documents including the confidentiality agreement annually.

As a group the FER committee must continually encourage residents from all communities to participate in their work, including attendance to their bi monthly meetings.

The FER will keep EHA informed, via the Customer and Community Engagement Team, of any internal issues that may affect the professional standards of the group.

Any member that attends a meeting or training as an FER representative, they will ensure they give adequate feedback to the rest of the committee afterwards.

The FER will fully consider any proposals, documents or EIB applications submitted to them, taking into account the best interests of the residents they represent.

The FER will support the Scrutiny group in monitoring the approved recommendations progress in their service review reports.

Consulting with the FER Committee:

For staff wanting to consult with the FER, a minimum of 20 working days' notice prior to the relevant meeting should be requested to the Senior Customer and Community Officer.

The Senior Customer and Community Engagement Officer will place you on the FER forward plan and will advise the FER Officers. The Customer and Community Engagement Team will then advise the lead staff when it is suitable to present their report.

EHA staff will prepare a brief overview of consultation purpose, including any necessary timescales to the Senior Customer and Community Officer via email.

A minimum of 20 working days' notice should be given to any member of Estuary staff required by the FER, to be in attendance at a meeting.

Lead staff to prepare a report using the FER report template for the meeting. It should include: details of the consultation purpose, any new or proposed changes to existing services, draft paperwork or any other information which will be necessary for the FER committee to be able to reach an informed decision.

The Lead staff will send all paperwork via e-mail to the Senior Customer and Community Officer, no later than 10 working days prior to the meeting at which their consultation will be discussed.

Minor issues or changes can, in principle, be agreed by the FER Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and General Officer), via e-mail. This will be at the discretion of the Chair who will also set any timescales for feedback.

All invites for FER members to EHA meetings, Core Groups or Focus Groups, or any other involvement opportunity should be made via e-mail to the Senior Customer and Community Engagement Officer and Chair of the FER.

Estuary Housing Association will ensure that all documentation regarding policy and procedure will carry the FER approved stamp, to signify FER involvement in consultation process. The Lead Officer will ensure that the stamp is included on any published documents.

The FER may at any time agree the use of sub-groups of the committee to look at specific aspects of service delivery. These groups could include residents who are not Committee Members, but who have expressed an interest in a particular service area.

Dealing with Complaints

The FER secretary will e-mail details of any complaints received from resident/s to the Customer and Community Engagement Team who will then inform the Performance and Customer Engagement Manager to be dealt with appropriately keeping the FER informed of progress.

1. Dispute Resolution

Where FER does not agree with a decision of EHA, concerning the work of the FER, this will be raised by the Customer Engagement Manager with the Director of Housing and Communities, who will seek a consensual solution between FER and EHA. Where this is not possible the information from both FER and EHA will be reviewed and adjudicated. The decision of the EHA Chair of the Board will be final.

Where resolution can still not be reached after review by the EHA Chair of the Board, FER may request for an independent third party for mediation for example TPAS, HQN or another agreed external body.

Following this, if resolution can still not be reached, FER may request intervention by the Housing Ombudsman.

Equality & Diversity

At Estuary Housing Association (EHA) we value inclusiveness and we are committed to embedding equality and diversity at the heart of our work. We aim to be an inclusive organisation, where individual differences are respected, where staff, people who use services, as well as their families and carers, are treated with dignity and on the basis of their merits, abilities and needs, and where everyone has a fair opportunity to fulfil their potential without suffering discrimination or disadvantage.

Monitoring and review of the procedure

Bi-annually the Senior Customer and Community Officer will meet with the FER to review the framework principals and consider best practice.

Related documents

- FER Constitution
- FER Code of Conduct
- FER Succession Policy
- Resident Involvement Statement
- Resident Involvement Policy
- Resident Involvement Procedure
- Resident Involvement Service Guarantee
- Customer and Community Engagement Strategy