

REPORT TO:	Executive Board
REPORT NO:	HHE/27/18
DATE:	12 June 2018
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor David Griffiths (Place - Housing)
CONTACT OFFICER:	Julie Francis (Tel: 01978 315436)
SUBJECT:	Updated Tenant & Resident Association (TARA's) Funding Recognition Criteria
WARD:	N/A

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek approval from Members for the adoption of the minor changes to the regulation of Tenant & Resident Associations (TARAs).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 On 13 May 2014, the Executive Board approved the updated Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs) Recognition Criteria.
- 2.2 Funding is currently available, from the HRA budget allocated for tenant and leaseholder engagement, to TARAs which meet the recognised criteria.
- 2.3 Since the approval of the criteria, the Wrexham Tenants' Federation has ceased to operate. This has resulted in a gap in the regulation of TARAs for the purpose of administering the grant funding provided by the Council and ensuring correct governance, particularly at Annual General Meetings held by TARAs. This role was previously undertaken by the Tenant's Federation on behalf of the Council.
- 2.4 The proposed amendments will ensure that TARAs continue to receive relevant support from the Council following the closure of the Wrexham Tenants' Federation.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **That Members approve the updated funding criteria for Tenant and Resident Associations.**

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that Tenant and Resident Associations across the County Borough continue to receive relevant support from the council following the closure of the Wrexham Tenants' Federation.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 Tenant and Resident Associations are defined groups of tenants, leaseholders and/or residents who work within a defined area. This could be a local estate or a smaller area such as blocks of flats. They are open to everyone who lives within the specified boundaries of the association. TARAs can be open to private residents however as funding is provided through the HRA, the focus is on tenant involvement over resident involvement.
- 4.2 The Council encourages and supports the formation of TARAs, as they act as representative voices for, and are an excellent platform for communicating information to, the communities they serve.
- 4.3 The Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Strategy 2018 – 2021 supports TARAs as one of the involvement platforms for tenants to be engaged with the housing service.
- 4.4 Funding is available and provided to TARAs which meet a recognised set of criteria provided by the Council.
- 4.5 Currently there is one TARA which has applied for funding and there are a further 7 associations which operate across the County Borough but do not meet the required criteria to receive funding. The Council is equally committed to working with all TARAs for the betterment of their communities. All the associations are recognised and supported by the Council, through officer attendance at meetings where invited.

Current active TARAs are:

- Afon TARA – established 1988
- Cefnwide TARA – established 1986
- Pant TARA – established 1998
- Pentre Gwyn TARA
- Rhosnesni TARA – established 1993
- Ruabon TARA – established 1996
- Smithfield TARA – established 1980
- Wynnstay TARA

A further three TARAs are currently in the process of formation in the following areas:

- Chirk
- Maesydre
- New Broughton

4.6 Since the approval of the criteria, the Wrexham Tenants' Federation has ceased to operate. This has resulted in a gap in the regulation of TARAs for the purpose of administering the grant funding provided by the Council and ensuring correct governance, particularly at Annual General Meetings held by TARAs. This role was previously undertaken by the Tenant's Federation on behalf of the Council.

4.7 To ensure that Council funding provided to TARAs continues to be awarded in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, it is proposed that changes be made to the Funding Recognition Criteria for TARA's:

- The requirement for an equal opportunities policy has been included in the Funding Recognition Criteria in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Council can assist TARAs in the production of their policy if required.

4.8 The proposed new criteria is outlined below:

- The TARA must be open to membership to all tenants within the agreed boundary of the association and the association must have signed sponsorship from at least 10 tenants from different households within the boundary;
- The TARA must adopt a constitution, which the Council can assist in producing if required;
- TARA must have an equal opportunities policy, which the Council can assist in producing if required;
- The TARA will liaise closely with their local estate office on housing management and maintenance issues and invite the Estate Manager to the AGM as a minimum;
- The TARA will liaise regularly with their local Elected Member(s) and invite Elected Member(s) to the AGM as a minimum;
- A minimum of 4 open meetings must be held each year including an AGM to which all tenants can attend;
- Officers/Committee of the TARA will be elected at the AGM and at least two Wrexham Council tenants must be one of the elected officers (Chair/Deputy Chair/Secretary/Treasurer);
- A nominated Council Officer to be invited to attend the AGM and witness that appropriate governance takes place;
- Accounts must be kept and audited annually, and verified by a nominated Wrexham Council Officer;
- The TARA must provide an article on its activity for publication in the Housing Hotline at least twice per year and for publication on the WCBC Housing website;
- Each TARA is encouraged to host a Facebook Community page to publicise its activities and meetings;
- Applications for grant will be made to the nominated Wrexham Council Officer by application on a standard application form. This will show the number of properties represented and include a copy of the Constitution, a set of audited accounts as approved by AGM and copies of minutes of all open meetings held in the previous year, along with a letter of support from the Local Member. The Council will then make the annual payment to the TARA directly;
- Grant to be paid annually April – March in one 100% payment to the TARA;
- Grant to be tiered, dependent on size of area represented from £50 - £350 + 50p per property, e.g., Sheltered scheme group under 50 members would get £50

plus 50p per property, under 100 they would get £100 ... 200 = £200 etc. Up to a maximum of £350 plus 50p per property;

- In addition, approved TARAs will be entitled to deliver the Hotline newsletter within their own boundaries each quarter for which they will be paid 25p per property; and
- £100 start-up grant will be paid to each newly formed TARA. This payment will be made once the nominated Wrexham Council Officer verifies that the TARA is able to comply with the proposed recognition for funding criteria.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy Framework** – The funding criteria will, in conjunction with the Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Strategy, incorporate key planning principles of the Council Plan - ‘**consult and involve**’ and ‘**integrate and collaborate**’ and supports the Place well-being objective **PI1: Promoting good quality homes and regeneration**.
- 5.2 **Budget** – This activity is funded from the HRA and there is a budget allocated for tenant and leaseholder engagement.
- 5.3 **Legal** – No legal implications
- 5.4 **Staffing** – No staffing implications
- 5.5 **Equality/Human Rights** – An impact Assessment has been carried out and the Departmental Reference Number is HE/EIA/00144/2018. No negative impacts have been identified as the funding recognition criteria will assist in ensuring that TARAs are representative of the community they represent and that all members of the community will have the opportunity to become involved in the activities of the TARA.

Members are advised of their duty to consider the full Equality Impact Assessment which is available at <http://vmwinsgld/equalityisalive/Menu.aspx> report number HE/EIA/00144/2018. Members of the public can request a copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment from the Contact Officer named in the header box of this report. A summary of the Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 1.

- 5.6 **Risks** – The risk of not adopting the new criteria is not meeting the Welsh Government guidelines for providing the opportunity for all customers to be consulted and given the opportunity to engage in the service. This could result in the department not having a representative voice of the customer.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Consultation was undertaken with the tenants currently actively involved in tenant participation.
- 6.2 A report was reviewed by the Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership (Report No. HHE/25/18 which has recommended that the updated criteria be adopted following approval from Executive Board.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO.
Executive Board 29 June 2010 Review of Tenant Participation Function (CHPPO/75/10) Social Affairs, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee 20 October 2010 Review of Tenant Participation Function (CHPPO/120/10s)		
Executive Board 30 November 2010 Full Review of Tenant Participation Function (CHPPO/143/10)		
Social Affairs, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee 12 October 2011 Tenant & Leaseholder Participation Strategy 2011-2014 Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership 9 March 2012 Tenant Participation Outsourcing (HHPP/25/12)		
All Members Information Report November 2012 Tenant Participation Strategy Update (HHPP/117/12)		
Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership 25 October 2013 Proposed Service Level Agreement Wrexham Tenants Federation (HHPP/84/13)		
Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership 6 December 2013 The Future Delivery of Tenant Participation 2014/16 (HHPP/94/13)		
Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership 6 December 2013 The Future Delivery of Tenant Participation 2014/16 (HHPP/94/13)		
Homes, Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee 12 February 2014 Delivery of Tenant Participation (HHPP/11/14s)		
Wrexham Tenant & Member Partnership 25 April 2014 Tenant Participation (HPPE/31/14)		
Executive Board 13 May 2014 Delivery of Tenant Participation (HHPPE/41/14)		
Executive Board 21 October 2014 Tenant Participation (HHPPE/79/14)		
Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership 9 March 2018 (HHE/14/18)		
Executive Board 10 April 2018 (HHE/17/18)		
Wrexham Tenant and Member Partnership 27 April 2018 (HHE/25/18)		