

REPORT TITLE: TENANT VOICE STRATEGY UPDATE

Meeting	Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel
Date	15 December 2025
Cabinet Member	Cllr Moses Crook Deputy Leader and Transport and Housing
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No N/A
<p>Purpose of Report</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide the G&R Scrutiny Panel with an update on progress in delivering the Tenant Voice Strategy, including the implementation of the refreshed engagement framework introduced in September 2025, and to outline how these developments are strengthening compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.</p> <p>The report also aims to provide assurance that the self-assessment process undertaken across all consumer standards continues to drive continuous improvement and transparency in housing services, whilst embedding a consistent approach to tenant engagement across all service areas.</p> <p>In addition, the report seeks to highlight the wider organisational and cultural changes achieved since the transfer of the Tenant Voice Team to the Governance and Improvement Service in June 2025, which has established stronger oversight, clearer accountability, and a more joined-up approach to delivering engagement and assurance activities.</p>	
<p>Recommendations</p> <p>It is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the progress made in delivering the Tenant Voice Strategy since its introduction in October 2024. • Recognise the significant structural and cultural changes achieved following the transfer of the Tenant Voice Team to the Governance and Improvement Service in June 2025. • Support the ongoing implementation of the strategy to ensure compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (TIAS) and delivery of the Council's commitments under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. • Endorse the continued integration of tenant engagement across all housing and related service areas to ensure engagement is recognised as an organisational, rather than a service-specific, responsibility. 	

Reasons for Recommendations

These recommendations seek to provide assurance that tenant engagement within Kirklees Council is progressing in line with the approved strategy and regulatory expectations.

The Tenant Voice Strategy (October 2024) established a framework to embed tenant influence across all aspects of housing service delivery. The subsequent transfer of the Tenant Voice Team into the Governance and Improvement Service provided an opportunity to strengthen oversight, align engagement with governance and assurance functions, and ensure a consistent, evidence-based approach across all consumer standards.

The refreshed engagement framework introduced in September 2025 has created a critical path for engagement, starting with internal staff engagement to test feasibility and accuracy, followed by structured tenant engagement on key policy changes, service updates, and reviews of existing service effectiveness. This process ensures that engagement is purposeful, tenant-led, and aligned with the Council's principles of transparency, inclusivity, and accountability.

The recommendations also align with the Council's statutory responsibilities as a registered social housing provider under the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards, ensuring continued compliance through quarterly self-assessment and targeted improvement actions.

Resource Implications

The transfer of the Tenant Voice Team into the Governance and Improvement Service has been delivered within existing staffing budgets.

To support the strategic oversight and successful delivery of the Tenant Voice Strategy, a Service Manager role is being recruited to provide dedicated leadership and ensure coordination across operational and governance functions. In parallel, a service review is being undertaken to ensure that the team structure and roles are fully aligned with strategic objectives and operational priorities. This review is focused on optimising resources to strengthen tenant engagement and deliver on the Council's Transparency, Influence, and Accountability obligations, and is not intended to reduce staffing but to ensure that the right capacity and skills are in place to meet current and future needs effectively.

Date signed off by Executive Director and name

5 November 2025 - David Shepherd, Executive Director of Place

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?

NA for Scrutiny report

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?

NA for Scrutiny report

Electoral wards affected: All
Ward councillors consulted: N/A
Public or private: Public
Has GDPR been considered? N/A

1 Executive summary

1.1 Background & Context

- 1.1.1 Since the introduction of the Tenant Voice Strategy, Kirklees Council has made measurable progress in embedding tenant engagement across its housing services. The strategy aims to ensure that tenants' voices are clearly evident in decision-making, that services are shaped by tenant feedback, and that satisfaction and trust are strengthened through openness, transparency, and accountability.
- 1.1.2 In June 2025, responsibility for the Tenant Voice function and Customer Experience Service was transferred from Housing Management to the Governance and Improvement Service. This move has embedded tenant engagement and feedback as a collective responsibility across the whole of Homes and Neighbourhoods rather than a discrete housing management activity. By positioning the Tenant Voice Team within Governance and Improvement, the Council has created a new lens for assurance and accountability, ensuring that the voice of the tenant informs decision-making, performance monitoring, and service improvement at every level. This integration has also strengthened the relationship between tenant engagement, quality assurance, and compliance functions, providing greater transparency to Scrutiny and Cabinet through regular reporting, self-assessment, and the development of new performance indicators for monitoring engagement outcomes and regulatory compliance. The new governance-based approach supports a cultural shift across services, reinforcing that tenant voice is central to how the Council listens, learns, and delivers improved housing outcomes.
- 1.1.3 As part of the service's quarterly quality assurance self-assessment against the Consumer Standards, a robust baseline has been developed identifying both strengths (including strong governance, established relationships in local communities, and a growing culture of transparency and responsiveness) and areas for improvement (including inconsistent communication, fragmented tenant data, limited diversity of engagement, and underdeveloped evidence of tenant-led influence).
- 1.1.4 In response, a comprehensive high-level action plan (2025–2027) has been implemented. It focuses on improving diversity and inclusion, building trust and relationships, developing tenant leadership, and increasing visibility of outcomes through "You Said, We Did" reporting. This is underpinned by an operational engagement framework which seeks to ensure that that issues for discussion are tenant-identified, engagement activity is prioritised, and all services are accountable for upholding engagement principles.
- 1.1.5 Whilst there is still significant work to do to achieve compliance, this work collectively delivers the ambitions set out in the Tenant Voice Strategy, ensuring alignment with both regulatory requirements and the Council's wider objectives of focusing on customers; living within its means; being kind, inclusive and proud; collaborating and connecting; taking responsibility; listening and responding; and getting the basics right.

1.2 Operational Engagement Framework

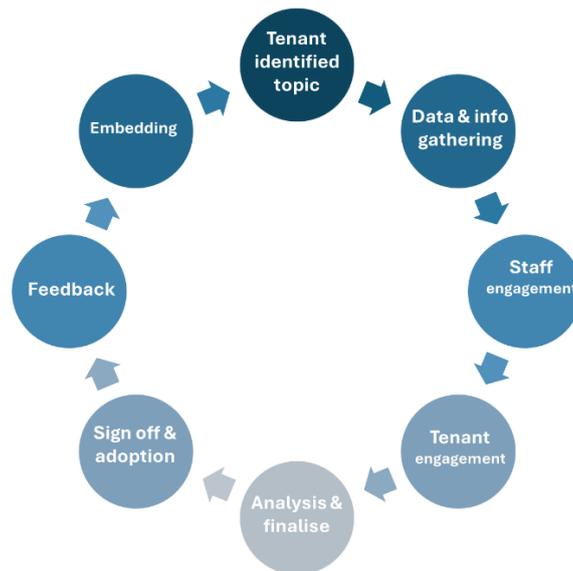
- 1.2.1 In September 2025, a new Engagement Framework was introduced to enable the operational delivery of the Tenant Voice Strategy and ensure full alignment with the Council's principles. The framework provides a structured, evidence-based model for engagement, embedding tenant voice as a shared responsibility across all service areas. It ensures that engagement activity is systematic, inclusive, and directly linked to service improvement and governance assurance.

1.2.2 The framework is built on core engagement principles — *clarity, variety, representation, inclusivity, communication, transparency, and commitment* — which ensure that services communicate openly, make every attempt to include all affected tenants, and demonstrate how feedback influences decisions. This has established a strong foundation for organisational buy-in and commitment, helping to shift engagement from being seen as a specialist function to being recognised as everyone’s responsibility, supporting the service cultural shift.

1.3 Critical Path for Engagement

1.3.1 Within the engagement framework, a critical path has been developed, setting out a clear, repeatable process that begins with staff engagement before progressing to tenant engagement. This sequencing ensures that operational insights and practical constraints are fully understood before engaging tenants, resulting in more informed discussions and realistic proposals. This also ensures that staff, who will be responsible for embedding any change, are represented and have buy in.

1.3.2 Each quarter follows a structured engagement and development cycle from topic identification (led by tenants), followed by data gathering to staff engagement, tenant engagement, analysis, sign-off, feedback, and embedding. This cyclical model ensures that engagement is continuous, measured, and demonstrably impacts service improvement.



1.4 Neighbourhood Forums and Local Engagement

1.4.1 From September 2025, the Council also introduced a refreshed approach to Neighbourhood Forums to make local engagement more dynamic and inclusive. Each quarterly forum now features representation from a range of Council services and partner organisations, offering tenants direct access to information and advice whilst showcasing the activity of Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs) to showcase their work. This model promotes collaboration, transparency, and community cohesion. The next Neighbourhood Forums will be held in December 2025, and into 2026 we are seeking to hold additional forums in less central areas.

1.4.2 Alongside the forums, a calendar of engagement events has been developed to ensure consistent, accessible opportunities for tenants to get involved. Recognising that there will be the requirement to build trust and relationships with our tenants before being able to embark on specific areas, phase one (October–January 2026) focuses on informal drop-in sessions across Kirklees before more formal engagement begins in February 2026.

- 1.4.3 From February 2026, the first phase of structured policy engagement will be delivered on repairs-related policies. *(This follows interim policies being developed to include legislative changes whilst recognising that final policies must include tenant feedback derived from engagement).* Engagement will be delivered through multiple channels, including surveys, focus groups, digital platforms, and in-person sessions, ensuring inclusivity and broad participation.
- 1.4.4 To strengthen awareness and engagement, all Ward Councillors have been provided with details of the programme of events and the aims of the new engagement framework. We are committed to ensuring that Councillors remain fully informed and actively involved, enabling them to effectively advise and signpost constituents. Moving forward, we will continue regular communications to keep Councillors up to date and engaged in the process. In areas where particular needs or issues are identified, we will work collaboratively with Councillors to organise engagement opportunities that raise awareness of services, share information with tenants, and create space for feedback and co-production wherever possible.
- 1.4.5 The Tenant Voice Team has experienced a degree of deskilling as a result of historically low levels of engagement activity, with much of the previous work being limited to survey-based approaches. To address this, we are developing a comprehensive workforce development plan to identify and implement relevant training opportunities that will rebuild and enhance the team's skills and confidence. This includes accessing training and best practice resources through our memberships with organisations such as HQN and TPAS. We are also actively seeking opportunities to visit and learn from similar teams within other housing providers to share experiences, observe effective practice, and strengthen our approach to tenant engagement. In addition, the corporate Consultation and Engagement Team within the Data and Insight Service is providing support and upskilling opportunities to further develop the team's capacity for meaningful, tenant-led engagement.

1.5 Strengthening Governance and Tenant Influence

- 1.5.1 The Tenant Led Panel (TLP) continues to contribute to decision-making through information sharing and regular engagement with officers. Members report feeling more informed and empowered with tenant members requesting and receiving more information enabling them to provide stronger scrutiny and challenge. Feedback and recommendations from the TLP are formally reported to the Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board (HNIB), ensuring a clear line of governance from tenant insight to strategic decision-making. A recruitment drive for more members to join the Tenant Led Panel and diversify membership is also underway.
- 1.5.2 The Tenant Voice Team is also working with Active Citizens and Place (within the Democracy Service) to maximise engagement opportunities, raise awareness amongst Elected Members, and build partnership capacity across the Council and community networks. All engagement opportunities are routinely sent to elected members for sharing with their constituents alongside social media campaigns, leafleting and sharing by partners and community organisations.

1.6 Performance, Communication, and Assurance

- 1.6.1 To ensure transparency and compliance, a new suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is being developed to monitor tenant engagement and alignment with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. These KPIs will be incorporated into the Homes and Neighbourhoods Performance Scorecard, reported monthly through governance and assurance channels.

- 1.6.2 Quarterly “You Said, We Did” reports are being captured to evidence the tangible impact of tenant feedback on service improvement and will be published on the Council’s Housing Performance webpage.
- 1.6.3 The first Tenant Newsletter was issued on 31 October 2025 digitally, distributed in print through community hubs and Council communication channels.
- 1.6.4 A dedicated Communications team for Homes and Neighbourhoods is also being established within the Council’s Corporate Communications Service, ensuring that all tenant communications are clear, accessible, and meet diverse needs. This will strengthen consistency and build tenant confidence in the Council’s transparency and responsiveness.

2 Information required to take a decision

- 2.1 N/A.

3 Implications for the Council

- 3.1 Delivery of the Tenant Voice Strategy directly supports the Council’s statutory responsibilities under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, ensuring compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard and providing assurance to the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 3.2 Embedding tenant engagement across service areas strengthens organisational governance and risk management, ensuring that lived experience informs decision-making, complaints handling, and service improvement. This also reinforces the Council’s commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion by ensuring that underrepresented groups are actively involved in shaping services that affect them.

3.3 Council Plan

Thriving People and Communities

- 3.3.1 Ensure people are living in homes that are modern, safe, and warm, addressing all outstanding issues in compliance relating to fire safety, water quality, and damp, mould, and condensation.

3.4 Financial implications

- 3.4.1 All activity to date has been delivered within existing budgets. A Service Manager for Resident and Engagement is being recruited to enable strategic oversight and delivery of the Tenant Voice Strategy.

3.5 Legal Implications

- 3.5.1 The Tenant Voice Strategy and associated action plan ensure that Kirklees Council meets its obligations as a registered provider under the Regulator of Social Housing’s Consumer Standards. Ongoing quarterly self-assessments provide assurance that the Council tracks compliance with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, mitigating the risk of regulatory breach.
- 3.5.2 Engagement processes are also designed to meet requirements under the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring all engagement activities are inclusive, lawful, and respectful of tenant privacy.

3.6 Climate Change and Air Quality

3.6.1 Tenant engagement activities will increasingly support the Council's broader environmental and sustainability objectives. Engagement events are planned to align with council-wide priorities, including climate action, health, and digital inclusion. Where possible, tenant feedback will be used to identify opportunities for community-led sustainability initiatives, local environmental improvements, and awareness of energy efficiency measures.

3.7 Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) or Human Resources

[Integrated Impact Assessments | Kirklees Council](#)

4 Consultation

4.1 The Tenant Led Panel has been actively involved in the design and development of both the Engagement Framework and the Action Plan. The Panel continues to play a key role in monitoring the implementation and progress of the strategy and framework, receiving regular updates and providing constructive challenge and assurance which is reported into the Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board. This ongoing involvement ensures that tenant influence is embedded within governance and that the voice of tenants remains central to continuous improvement.

5 Engagement

5.1 In preparing this report, key stakeholders have been engaged to ensure accuracy, completeness, and alignment with both strategic and operational priorities.

5.2 The Tenant Led Panel has been consulted throughout the development of the Tenant Engagement Framework and the associated Action Plan and continues to monitor progress.

5.3 Senior Management Team and Homes and Neighbourhoods Improvement Board have been engaged on the framework and associated activities.

6 Options

6.1 **Options considered**
N/A.

6.2 **Reasons for recommended option**
N/A.

7 Next steps and timelines

7.1 The delivery of the Tenant Voice Strategy will continue through the structured action plan, with the following key milestones:

Sep–March 2026: Implementation of the new critical path engagement approach with staff and tenants on repairs-related policies.

December 2025: Neighbourhood Forums

Quarterly: "You Said, We Did" reporting, self-assessment reviews, and updates to Scrutiny and Cabinet Members.

8 Contact officer

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9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

9.1 [Tenant Voice Strategy](#)

10 Appendices

10.1 None.

11 Service Director responsible

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