

Beneficiary Involvement and Consultation Procedures

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides guidance on how Stoll will meet the commitments set down in its Beneficiary Involvement and Consultation Policy. This includes areas that are specific to our residents, specific to our other beneficiaries, or to both.
- 1.2 Stoll recognizes that the term 'beneficiaries' includes all who are offered a service from Stoll. 'Residents' refer to those who also receive housing.
- 1.3 Stoll aspires to best gather and make good use of customer feedback to influence decisions about all aspects of day to day service delivery. Formal resident consultation will at times be part of this, but Stoll also wishes to use face to face feedback, satisfaction surveys to provide it with on-going feedback in as near to real time as possible .

2. Participation and Information

- 2.1 Participation is already central to how Stoll operates. Stoll seeks to empower our residents and other beneficiaries to contribute meaningfully to decisions that improve their homes and the services they receive. Stoll is committed to a policy of openness and ensuring that our beneficiaries have access to information that enables them to participate in relevant decision-making processes. Stoll intends to meet and, where possible, to exceed best practice.
- 2.2 The following list identifies the type and format of information given to all residents, along with that which is readily available to them, should they require it:
 - Tenancy Agreement
 - Residents Handbook
 - Complaints Policy
 - Annual Service Charge Information
 - Information about Stoll's performance
 - Information about Stoll, its facilities and its staff
 - Service standards
 - Information on how residents can become involved in Stoll's services and facilities
 - Tenant support services – what is provide and how it can be accessed
- 2.3 The key policies that affect beneficiary experience at Stoll are available either on the Tenant's Portal or on Stoll's website.
- 2.4 Individuals who benefit from our Veteran's Nomination Scheme or other services Stoll provides without housing will receive information about their particular service and can access the following information:
 - Complaints Policy
 - Information about Stoll's performance
 - Information about Stoll, its facilities and its staff
 - Information on how beneficiaries can become involved in the governance and

review of Stoll's services.

2.5 Stoll will provide information about substantial changes to services that affect beneficiaries in a timely and appropriate manner.

How information is provided:

2.6 In addition to the above, we will provide information to residents and beneficiaries by way of:

- a. Day-to-day interaction between staff and residents
- b. Stoll's website
- c. Social media, such as Twitter and Facebook
- d. Individual letters
- e. Notices at Stoll sites
- f. Face to face meetings
- g. Residents' Handbook
- h. Leaflets
- i. Stoll newsletters
- j. Estate walkabouts
- k. Opportunities to interact with trustees (including observer attendance at Housing Service Committee meetings)

2.6 Beneficiaries may request other information from the Stoll's office. Any information requested in this way will only be provided if permitted by Stoll's Data Protection Policy.

2.7 Information will be provided in a format that is most suitable for the resident requesting it, taking into account any special needs or language differences.

3 Consulting:

3.1 Stoll will consult with residents about issues that will substantively affect their homes and/or the services provided to them by Stoll. Some consultation will by its very nature be formal, but Stoll also values day to day 'consultation' which provides feedback in real time. In particular, Stoll will consult residents about:

- i.) Proposals to alter existing tenancy agreements
- ii.) Proposals that would result in a significant change to:
 - a. Stoll's housing policy or practice affecting the management and maintenance of its housing;
 - b. The level of service provided by Stoll.
- iii.) Plans to carry out improvements or major repairs.
- iv.) Plans to redevelop properties.
- v.) Plans to carry out improvements to the environment.
- vi.) Plans to change the communal facilities/activities offered.
- vii.) Plans to transfer the ownership of housing stock to another landlord.
- viii.) Proposals to change the status of Stoll/Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation.
- ix.) Plans to move significant numbers of tenants, other than due to those moving under standard tenancy arrangements.

3.2 New and revised policies will be shared with members of the appropriate governance Committee, normally the Housing & Services Committee, which has resident members.

3.3 Stoll also provides support services to Veterans who are not resident at Stoll and will make a decision whether there is a need to consult such other beneficiaries on a particular issue on a case-by-case basis if an issue arises that may require it.

Who will be consulted

3.4 Where the subject for consultation will or may have considerable effect on all residents, Stoll will consult all residents.

3.5 Where the subject for consultation will or may have considerable effect on a particular group of beneficiaries, Stoll will consult directly with those affected (e.g. residents at a specific housing scheme).

Approach to consultation

3.6 Stoll will ensure that beneficiaries understand the nature of consultation, in order to ensure that they fully understand the purpose of the consultation exercise and to ensure that their expectations of the outcome are realistic.

3.7 A clear timescale will be identified for consultation.

3.8 Consultations are to glean information, to enable residents to better understand the situation and help Stoll to gauge opinion. Stoll will utilize the most appropriate method, or methods, for consultation on a particular matter based on the subject for consultation, who is to be consulted, and on the resources available for conducting the exercise. For significant changes to policy or service provision then a formal consultation over a fixed period of time might be most suitable, including a number of workshops and explanations of the proposals and plans in meetings and in writing. For smaller, operational matters, a more informal consultation might occur, either offering written submissions, or a group meeting. Such a group meeting could be a specific meeting convened to discuss the issue or a routine residents' meeting depending upon the nature of the issue.

3.9 Stoll will ensure that the following are applied to all consultation activities as appropriate in order to achieve maximum participation:

- a. Translation or interpretation facilities are made available, where appropriate.
- b. Meetings are held in accessible venues and are widely advertised in advance.
- c. Residents responses to individual consultations are treated confidentially

Feedback to residents following consultation

3.10 Stoll will ensure that residents receive feedback within an agreed timescale following a significant consultation.

3.11 Such feedback will look to include

- a. An analysis of the views expressed.
- b. Which aspects, if any, of the original have been modified as a result of the consultation.
- c. Why views/suggestions from residents have not been accepted, if that is the case.
- d. What the final proposal or position is and, if it is to be implemented, when it will come into effect.

3.12 The methods used for communicating feedback to residents may include the following:

- a. Individual letters

- b. Information in newsletters
- c. Follow-up meetings
- d. Information on notice boards.

Consultation methods

3.13 The following list of consultation methods represent ways in which residents would be most likely to receive communication. They also represent good practice:

a. Letters

Individual letters sent directly to residents providing information about proposals and advising of opportunities for residents to put forward their views on the proposals.

b. Regular Residents Newsletter

A newsletter is developed by the Charity's officers and will be produced for all residents quarterly. It may be used to seek the views of residents on any proposed housing management or policy changes.

c. Meetings

Meetings can be held with residents either on general or for specific issues, and at appropriate times, published adequately in advance, to present and explain proposals and to enable residents to put forward their views on the proposals.

d. Individual discussions

Officers will make themselves available for individual meetings so that individuals have an opportunity to clarify points that may be difficult to address at wider meetings.

e. Surveys

Stoll plans to conduct an annual satisfaction survey to assess resident satisfaction with particular services and the standard of services provided. It may also be appropriate to conduct a survey on a particular issue to ensure that residents are able to offer their views. This will be done, guided by confidentiality and clarity.

f. Working Groups

On specific issues, e.g. for those that might entail a number of decisions over a period of time, a working group might be the most effective way to consult. Stoll have used this before during significant refurbishment work. The timescale of the group and the remit for a working group will be determined upon formation.

4 Representative Groups

4.1 Stoll is committed to promoting and supporting appropriate representative groups who aim to represent all residents or beneficiaries on one or more sites or services. We would plan to involve such a body in consultations, but this would not replace our responsibility to consult all residents on certain issues in line with these procedures.

Supporting representative groups

4.2 Stoll will support residents to set up such a representative group.

4.3 Specifically, subject to capacity, Stoll may (where appropriate):

- a. Signpost training for those who undertake officer roles within representative groups;
- b. Provide access to meeting rooms and facilities;
- c. Provide advice on a constitution for a representative group, and on the monitoring of membership and the keeping of financial records if needed;

4.4 Stoll will require a group that wishes to be recognized as a properly constituted and representative body of residents to:

- a. adopt a constitution which promotes inclusion and best practice around resident representation. Stoll will be happy to support this process and suggest template constitutions.
- b. comply with the criteria set out in its constitution.
- c. ensure that its membership is fair and representative of the residents or beneficiaries it seeks to represent.
- d. Ensure that those who undertake officer roles within representative groups are elected fairly and openly.
- e. demonstrate a will to support all the community and to be a fair and balanced judge of opinion.
- f. demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity in accordance with Stoll's policy.
- g. have proper regard at all times to the legitimate wider interests of Stoll.

Monitoring representative groups

4.5 A manager will be nominated to interact with representative groups to provide support and guidance.

4.6 If a recognised group is, in Stoll's view, failing to meet these criteria in 4.4 they will be given guidance and assistance to meet the requirements in order to continue to receive the support of Stoll.

4.7 In extreme circumstances, where the representative group is comprehensively failing to operate in accordance with its Constitution or the standards set in paragraph 4.4, following the approval of Stoll's Chairman, Stoll will disband that group and facilitate a new election.

5 Beneficiary Involvement in Governance

5.1 At least one place will be made available on the Trustee Board for those who are residents or beneficiaries of Stoll, from any scheme or service. This is to provide a customer perspective on our governance activities.

5.2 To join the Board, a resident or beneficiary will have to follow the Governance Procedures as any other Member would, following time spent on a Committee, including in relation to length of tenure.

5.3 One or two places will be available on each of the Board Committees for residents or

beneficiaries. Vacancies will be advertised openly amongst residents and beneficiaries and, where vacancies exist, will be filled from volunteers who would first attend as observers.

- 5.4 Residents or beneficiaries will be elected onto Committees following an interview, led by the Chair of the Committee.
- 5.5 Resident/beneficiary members have the same status and responsibilities as other Board and Committee members, and serve in office on the same terms.
- 5.6 Committee membership (including residents/beneficiaries) will be reviewed annually at the Board of Trustees. This will be done following a standard appraisal process.
- 5.7 The Housing & Services Committee is an open meeting, except for confidential matters, which any resident or beneficiary may by prior request attend as an observer. No expenses may be claimed by observers, but meeting will rotate around sites to enable such participation.

6 Equal Opportunities and Diversity

- 6.1 Stoll will ensure that all information and consultation activity will be accessible to as many residents and other beneficiaries as possible, for instance through provision of interpreters, text in differing forms where needed (e.g. translated, in braille, delivered in audio etc.) and through ensuring that tenants and other beneficiaries can access meetings.