

2012 Tenant Engagement Strategy Update

Item 7
March 26, 2012
Tenant and Community Services Committee

To: Tenant and Community Services Committee Report: TCSC:2012-14
From: Chief Executive Officer (Interim)
Date: March 13, 2012 Page 1 of 3

PURPOSE:

To provide the Tenant and Community Services Committee an update on the key Community Health Unit - Tenant Engagement Initiatives planned for 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Tenant and Community Services Committee receive this report as an update.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Community Health Unit will focus on seven major initiatives in 2012.

1. Review of the Tenant Engagement System

Toronto Community Housing's Tenant Engagement System (TES) has been a core component of the corporation's community engagement and tenant services strategies since its inception. Currently the Tenant Engagement System is completing its first three year term since being approved by the board in November 2009.

In 2012 the Community Health Unit will lead the Tenant Engagement Reference Committee's (TERC) review of the TES. The overall goal is to improve the system and ensure a more positive impact on tenants. The comprehensive review includes a series of consultations and surveys resulting in formal recommendations being submitted in Q2 to this committee.

The Community Health Unit has scheduled its tenant representative election for October 2012. The election will be part of the implementation of the recommendations made by TERC. The overall goal of the tenant election is to increase local and central tenant participation and reduce staff administrative costs.

2. Children and Youth Initiatives

Toronto Community Housing's children and youth initiatives are designed to create a bridge between engagement at the building level and increase leadership skills beyond local boundaries. In 2012 the Community Health Unit will increase the number of city-wide

partners to provide a full range of education, employment, pro-social and leadership programs with an overall goal to reduce costs and increase successful tenancies.

Youth engagement initiatives will focus on 100 youth leaders across the city participating in a youth safety ambassador initiative. The overall goal is to reduce the number of low level anti-social incidents by 10%; the corporation's costs related to these incidents; and the community perceptions of "lack of safety." This initiative will include city wide partnerships with Toronto Police Services and other community agencies working on environmental safety design training.

The Community Health Unit is increasing access to programs that encourage physical activity. In 2012 the Unit will leverage external funding and in kind support from nine different partners to deliver four active living programs. The overall goal will be to expand community program services to over 1400 tenants (children and youth) and create 80 new employment opportunities for youth within our communities throughout the year.

3. Tenant Animation

The Community Health Unit will increase its tenant animator initiative in its six revitalization communities and energy retrofit communities. The Community Health Unit will be working in collaboration with the Development Division to increase awareness and support from tenants, agencies and other key stakeholders in the six communities undergoing revitalization. Tenant Animators will be trained to conduct surveys, outreach, and other engagement activities to gain support in achieving the overall goals of revitalization.

The Community Health Unit will be working in collaboration with the Smart Buildings Unit on the energy retrofit program and is partnered with the Ontario Power Authority. The Community Health Unit is tasked with developing and training tenant animators in each community to help increase tenant behaviours towards energy savings. – resulting in considerable cost saving to the corporation.

4. Social Investment Fund

The Community Health Unit will continue to administer the Social Investment Fund (SIF). In 2012, there were 21 one-year projects approved for allocation. The Social Investment Coordinator will continue to oversee and monitor each recipient group; ensuring they are in compliance with the conditions for funding. The overall goal is to ensure that the SIF grants are improving the quality of life within Toronto Community Housing communities benefiting from funded programs. At this time, SIF funding has not been approved beyond 2012. Staff are exploring partnership opportunities that will provide similar investments to tenants to help to improve the quality of life within Toronto Community Housing communities.

5. Staff and Tenant Work Group Development

The Community Health Unit will lead the three Staff-Tenant Works Groups (Governance, Communications and Finance). The overall goal is to create a series of forums and opportunities for Toronto Community Housing to work with tenants and apply a tenant

engagement lens to key Community Management Plan initiatives. The Work Groups will review key policies, products and guidelines and make recommendations to the Executive. In 2012, the overall goal is to increase tenant consultation (through the Work Groups) on key policies, products and guidelines before they are approved by the Executive.

7. Collaboration with the City of Toronto

In 2012, the Community Health Unit begun working with the Social Development, Finance and Administration Office's senior management team to review services provided within or around Toronto Community Housing communities. The outcomes of this collaboration are as follows: (1) identify possible duplication of services or service cuts; (2) identify and improve opportunities to leverage or expand relationships with internal and external partners (i.e. TPS); (3) help inform a comprehensive process to map out availability of external service providers, and (4) participate in implementing the expansion of the "Strong Neighbourhoods" plan.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

The implications for Toronto Community Housing of the seven initiatives undertaken by the Community Health Unit are: increased tenant participation locally and centrally; increased services to our communities; and reduced costs to the corporations. Risks have been minimized as each initiative undertaken leverages funds, creates partnership or reduces overall costs to Toronto Community Housing.

"Len Koroneos"

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