



## Communications Strategy

**This strategy aims to ensure that the Trust communicates in the most effective ways, which will lead to improvements in the way our services are delivered by Colleagues.**

<b>Date of Approval</b>	
<b>Responsible Director</b>	Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Strategy Monitoring Body</b>	Tenant Scrutiny Committee
<b>Resident Input into Strategy</b>	Tenant Scrutiny Committee
<b>Dates for Strategy Review</b>	Full review date June 2012
<b>Linked strategies</b>	RI Strategy, E&D Strategy, VFM Strategy,

## **1 Introduction**

Parkway Green Housing Trust recognises that effective communication is vital to delivering value for money, customer focused services. This strategy seeks to ensure all stakeholders receive timely, accurate information in a format that appreciates their diverse needs. The strategy provides a framework to effectively improve the customer experience through enabling the workforce and proactively improving services.

## **2 Strategy Outcomes**

Greater choice for customers interacting with the Trust, and using the Trusts services. The latest technologies are utilised, reducing costs whilst improving customer services and efficiency.

Greater colleague understanding of internal and external communication mechanisms and how effective communication can increase customer satisfaction.

All stakeholders have an understanding of what the Trusts seeks to achieve and receive timely, accurate information in a format that appreciates their diverse needs.

## **3 Strategy Definition and Scope**

To provide clear direction for all communication and promotional activities using creative and innovative methods to achieve the strategy objectives and to ensure consistently high standards of communication.

## **4 Parkway Green's Values**

The strategy will ensure we deliver the following;

- i. Putting customers at the heart of what we do
- ii. Delivering value for money as part of our overarching communications strategy
- iii. Ensuring our colleagues understand the importance of effective communication and are equipped to communicate effectively with a wide reaching audience.

## **5 Key Objectives**

The delivery of the strategy is focused on achieving five strategic objectives;

- i. Utilise technology to engage and involve customers
- ii. Improve communication with customers
- iii. Promote the services of Parkway Green Housing Trust
- iv. Improve communication across all business areas to enable more effective cross-working sharing information and best practice
- v. Linked strategies such as ICT and People strategy enable innovative methods of communication.

## **6 Parkway Green Stakeholders**

The Trust has a varied audience with many different stakeholders;

<b>Customers:</b>	Tenants Leaseholders Prospective Tenants Local Residents
<b>Colleagues:</b>	Board Members Colleagues
<b>Other Stakeholders:</b>	Manchester City Council Local MP/ Councillors Airport Group Other RSL's Contractors / Suppliers Tenants and Residents Associations Tenants Services Authority Homes and Communities Agency Greater Manchester Police Manchester Fire & Rescue Connexions / Local Schools Supporting People

## **6 Objective 1: Utilise technology to engage and involve customers**

Resident Involvement is a key to the core aims and objectives of Parkway Green and in order for this to be achieved, effective two ways communication between the Trust and our residents is essential.

In order to achieve this, the Trust intends to give residents the chance to influence all communication to the wider residents' body. Engaging tenants in the delivery of the communication service will assist with all materials being sent out in a clear format that customers both understand and like to read.

All communication subject to resident influence will contain the 'Residents Approved' stamp.

### **Current Methods Of Engagement Include;**

- Meetings
- Residents Associations
- Focus Groups
- Email
- Website
- Text Messaging
- Telephone Surveys
- Road Shows and Open Days
- Newsletters and Postal Surveys
- Officer Contact
- Networking
- Media Coverage

## **Technological Improvements To Be Developed**

There are many ways to engage tenants using technology. IT is important that the Trust embraces new technologies as this will improve overall customer access to products and services and achieve increased efficiencies.

The website provides instant access to a range of services for customers and a wealth of information. It is important the 'look and feel' of the website is refreshed to reflect customer needs and expectations.

New technologies are interesting and fun and are generally a lot quicker than the most traditional forms of communication. Providing 'real time' solutions to day to day contact. A number of effective methods that may be used going forward are;

- Mobile Phone Applications
- YouTube
- Social Networking Sites e.g. Facebook and Twitter
- Online Publications e.g. Website and Blogs
- On Line Discussion Forums
- Podcasts
- Interactive use of the Website

### **7 Objective 2: Improve communication with customers**

This Strategy aims to ensure that all audiences have equal access to our services, whilst recognising that some audiences may require more support than others. In order to respond to this need, good communication is essential. The Trusts use of STATUS survey data, profiling information and the objectives within the single equality scheme underpin effective communications with all our customers.

### **8 Objective 3: Develop and promote the services of Parkway Green Housing Trust**

This strategy seeks to promote the values and direction of the Trust as it enters the next phase having delivered the 43 promises, supporting delivery of the Trusts strategic plan.

It is crucial that the Trust continues to utilise the feedback provided about our services. We will encourage and support the positive image of our community, support local schools to help them meet their targets and provide new opportunities for young people to engage in the community.

We also are working in partnership with different companies and the local authority to build a positive image about our services and to promote working for community with community.

### **9 Objective 4: Increase Colleague understanding and awareness of the business culture, its vision and values**

The environment in which the Trust works is constantly changing, and an understanding of the Trust's vision and values for the future is essential. We need to

understand how our work can contribute to the Trust's strategic aims and we must communicate clearly with each other if we are to work effectively as individuals or in teams to help in delivering the Trust's aims.

We need to build on the generally high level of support given with the Chief Executive's briefings to ensure the Trust's vision and values are understood by all colleagues:

- Encourage an environment where colleagues feel able to communicate freely and can contribute to shaping the Trust's vision.
- Explore new ways of presenting this information more regularly, including better contact with all colleagues for e.g. staff newsletter, communications panel.
- Provide regular feedback on how we are progressing towards the Trust's vision.
- Clearly demonstrate the links between the Trust's vision, service plans and individual/team responsibilities and targets.
- Encourage feedback to enable colleagues to feel their contribution towards the strategic aims is recognised and where difficulties arise, these are addressed positively, not critically.

#### **10 Objective 5: Improve communication across all business areas and enable more effective cross-working sharing information and best practice**

There is no "one size fits all" approach to communication at the Trust. This strategy does not specify, for example, a particular format or frequency for communication; it is for each colleague/team to agree the appropriate approach locally.

#### **11 Strategy Success Measures**

Performance of this strategy will be measured in the following ways

- i. Increase in customer satisfaction
- ii. Increase in customer and colleague satisfaction
- iii. Increase in value for money on all communication activity

##### **Increase in customer satisfaction**

- Increase in customer involvement
- Customer satisfaction with the 'new look' website.
- Customer satisfaction on the new communications tools

##### **Increase in colleague satisfaction**

- Increase in colleague satisfaction as part of the Sunday Times Top 100 survey.
- Increase in outcomes from the internal communication panel.

##### **Increase in value for money on all communication activity**

- Increase in customers accessing Trust literature (e.g. newsletter, leaflets) on line.
- Increase in the number of customers accessing 'The Park Way' on line

- Increase in number of contacts via text message
- Evaluation of the impact of PR activity with customers
- Evaluation of the impact of PR activity with other key stakeholders