

Housing Options – Report of the HRA Business Planning Group

Introduction

We were mandated as a sub group to consider the draft Housing Options Review report produced by Pennington Consulting and Support.

We have subsequently drawn up this report from the HRA Business Planning Group

Significant Issues that Should be Addressed in Management Arrangements for Housing Stock

We reviewed the groups work and identified the following as key drivers for change:

- significantly improving the quality of housing services
- improving access to services
- achieving effective tenant involvement in decision making
- safeguarding and achieving sufficient affordable housing in rural areas
- separating the strategic and landlord roles to improve delivery of both
- achieving high standards of accommodation and not just Decent Homes standard if tenants aspire to a higher standard

Management Options

We considered the range of management options and agreed that the following options should be explored further with tenants and Members before any final recommendation is made:

- ALMO
- Maintain Council direct management of stock with increased financial investment in order to achieve service improvements
- LSVT

Next Steps

We felt that work now needs to be done with a wider group of tenants and all Members. This work should concentrate on working with people to explore their aspirations for services and to then appraise options against these aspirations

The following work programme is suggested:

- Tenant roadshows in local areas to work with tenants to draw out what type of services they want to receive and what standards of accommodation they aspire to now and into the future – May/June
- Member “roadshow” on the same lines as for tenants – May
- Staff “roadshow” on the same lines as for tenants - May
- Member seminar on the Council’s strategic housing role and current Housing Strategy priorities - April

- Further work to understand the financial issues, including current debt and options
- Further financial work to understand the costs associated with each option
- An evaluation of each option against the Council's corporate and housing services specific objectives and tenants services and accommodation aspirations

Recommendations

We recommend that this paper be used as the basis of our report to Community Services Committee in March 2003