

Committee:	Tenants 'and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum
Date:	28 February 2008
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – Right to Manage Process
Responsible Officer:	Gwyneth Allen
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Camilla Bath
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1

## **Section 1 – Summary**

Update on the Right to Manage process in Harrow's Council Housing.

### **FOR INFORMATION**

## **Section 2 – Report**

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed on the 23 June 2005, following conclusion of the Housing Stock Options Appraisal to investigate, the potential for establishing a Tenants' Management Board (TMB), supported by an Independent Tenants' Advisor Service and other resources as necessary. In December 2006 First Call were appointed as Independent Tenant Advisor. The ITA

was selected by resident representatives, supported by officers, from a list of accredited companies experienced in resident empowerment.

- 2.2 With local authority and resident support, First Call were successful in applying for Section 16 funding, from the Housing Corporation, for a borough wide Pre Feasibility Study based on an investigation of the “Right to Manage”.
- 2.3 Starting in the summer of 2007 First Call has worked with tenants and leaseholders to gauge the level of interest in a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) managing part or all of the council’s housing stock.
- 2.4 To date, 82% of residents who responded to the survey supported more investigation into the setting up of a TMO. A Residents’ Steering Group has been formed to explore the options in more detail. A briefing session was held on the 8 Oct 2007 where First Call explained the Right To Manage (RTM) legislation, outlined the role of the Residents’ Steering Group and the next steps in the development of Tenant Management. The Steering Group is now up and running and HFTRA are represented at the group to ensure that they are kept informed at all stages of the process.
- 2.5 In light of resident support for further investigation of TMO options, it is now necessary to decide which model would be the most appropriate to progress to the Feasibility Stage. It should be noted that under current arrangements, Feasibility Studies are fully funded by the Housing Corporation. This is referred to as S16 funding.
- 2.6 In order for any S16 activity in Harrow to enter the Feasibility Stage, there are a number of requirements to be fulfilled:
  - A constituted Tenants’ Organisation must sponsor RTM activities OR a new body must be established
  - Membership Drive – 20% of secure tenants and tenants overall (including leaseholders) must join the TMO or the newly constituted body
  - Vote of TMO/or newly constituted body members on Right to Manage Motion
  - Majority of TMO/similar body members who vote must be in favour of exploring tenant management further
  - RTM Notice must be distributed to tenants and leaseholders living within the defined area of the proposed TMO and served on the Council in the prescribed format.

This work will take place between now and the end of April 2008.

- 2.7 The Residents Steering Group has decided that they would like to explore the feasibility of area TMO's. It was felt that an area approach would deliver solutions that could appeal to tenants and leaseholders.
- 2.8 A local area approach has been agreed with the four areas as follows:
- Central Harrow
  - West Harrow
  - East Harrow
  - South Harrow
- 2.9 The areas have been selected on the basis of concentrations of council housing, road and public transport links. As the Central Area contains the largest number of tenants' and leaseholders' of the four areas the next stage of the consultation will begin in this area.
- 2.10 In order to enter the next stage of the work in Central Harrow, a Tenants Organisation with an approved constitution must be set up and Council tenants and leaseholders must demonstrate their support. In the next few weeks Council tenants and leaseholders will be visited and asked whether they want to join Central Harrow TMO. **See Appendix 1**
- 2.11 Joining the TMO is much like being a Tenants' and Residents' Association (TRA) member and will mean that tenants and leaseholders can vote on whether they wish to conduct a Feasibility Study (the next stage in the TMO process) Residents can remain a member of their local TRA when they join the TMO if they so wish.
- 2.12 If at least 20% of tenants and leaseholders in Central Harrow join the TMO, a vote will be organised to enter in to the next stage of the process. This will take place at a public meeting (supported by online and text voting) where the group's constitution will be adopted.

### **Section 3 – Further Information**

- 3.1 First Call has a dedicated Right to Manage worker who is managing the process in Harrow, Liz Michael. Liz has been attending Tenant Association meetings to answer questions and encourage membership of the Steering Group. If you would like Liz to attend a meeting or if you have any questions for Liz you can contact her on FREEPHONE 0500 291999 or email [harrow@first-call-housing.com](mailto:harrow@first-call-housing.com)

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

For further information please contact: Carol Yarde – Service Development  
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