

Committee:	Tenants 'and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum
Date:	11 November 2008
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – Right to Manage Process
Responsible Officer:	Gwyneth Allen Divisional Director Adults and Housing Services
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane Portfolio Holder for Adult and Housing Services
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – see Agenda Item 4 – minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2008

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 initial 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 was established and HFTRA formed part of 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, a decision was made to adopt an area model to progress to the Feasibility Stage. It should be noted that under arrangements applying at that time, 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 were 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 has now been completed and 3 RTM notices have been served on Harrow Council.

2.7 The Residents Steering Group 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

East Area's meeting was not particularly well attended or located and for this reason it has been decided to reconvene the meeting.

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 began in this area.

2.10 In order to enter the next stage of the work in Central Harrow, West Harrow and South Harrow, Tenants Organisations with an approved constitution have been set up with support from Council tenants and leaseholders.

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 At least 20% of tenants and leaseholders in the 3 areas have joined the TMO, and a vote was organised to enter in to the next stage of the

process. This took place at a public meeting (supported by online and text voting) where the group's constitutions were also adopted.

Membership Drive (April/July 2008)

AREA	ELIGIBLE TENANTS	MEMBERS	ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS	MEMBERS
Central Harrow	2316	518 (22%)	2588	565 (22%)
East Harrow	1369	318 (23%)	1603	339 (21%)
South Harrow	1693	377 (22%)	2054	443 (21%)
West Harrow/Pinner	727	157 (22%)	1009	205 (20%)

RIGHT TO MANAGE VOTES

Central Harrow – Tuesday 24th June
 West Harrow – Tuesday 1st July
 East Harrow – Thursday 17th July
 South Harrow – Tuesday 22nd July

- Invites to all Members
- Posters on Estates
- “Digivote” System
- Postal Votes

AREA	TENANTS IN FAVOUR	TENANTS AGAINST	RESIDENTS IN FAVOUR	RESIDENTS AGAINST
Central Harrow	38	8	46	8
South Harrow	19	2	22	4
West Harrow/Pinner	7	2	13	2

2.14 Following TLCF on the 22 July, where concerns were raised regarding the RTM process in Harrow, a meeting was held between Council Officers and Officers from FIRST Call, where FIRST Call presented their findings and addressed these concerns.

2.15 It was agreed that Harrow Council would support the RTM Feasibility Applications to the Housing Corporation, but that due to concerns relating to complaints received from tenants and leaseholders at TLF regarding resident engagement, Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reviewing the process applied by First Call in engaging tenants and that support for First Call's work may be completely withdrawn if Scrutiny substantiates the concerns.

2.16 It was also agreed that a communications protocol is drawn up between Harrow Council and FIRST Call that completely eliminates the confusion that has been evident during this process to date and that the protocol continues to involve a process of regular liaison with the Tenants, Leaseholders, Members and Council Officers.

2.17 Financial Consideration

There are no immediate costs identified with the proposal at this stage, however any future costs around the development of this initiative would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process for the HRA.

Section 3 - Contact Details and Background Papers

For further information please contact: Carol Yarde – Service Development Manager 020 8420 9660 carol.yarde@harrow.gov.uk
--