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**Report of the Strategic Landlord**

**Inner South Area Committee**

**Date: 18 September 2007**

**Subject: Political Nominations to ALMO Area Panels**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Beeston & Holbeck  
City & Hunslet  
Middleton Park

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council  
Function

Delegated Executive  
Function available  
for Call In

Delegated Executive  
Function not available for  
Call In Details set out in the  
report

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**Executive Summary**

As part of the ALMO review which reduced the number of ALMOs from six to three, 11 Area Panels were created across the city of which one will serve the Inner South area. The Area Panel will cover the City and Hunslet, Beeston and Holbeck and Middleton Park wards. Two elected members who are not part of the main Aire Valley homes ALMO Board are required to be nominated to the Area Panel.

**1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the Area Committee to nominate two elected members, who are not part of the Aire Valley ALMO Board, to sit on the ALMO Area Panel for the area.

**2.0 Background Information**

2.1 The ALMO review that was conducted in 2006 and came into being from April 2007 reduced the number of ALMOs in the city from six to three.

2.2 The reduction in the number of ALMOs meant that the ALMOs were better placed financially but less tenants and elected members would be involved in the running of the ALMOs.

- 2.3 At the July 2006 meeting of the Executive Board the principle of Area Panels was agreed. It was proposed that these Panels were set up to continue to develop tenant participation in the ALMOs as this had been seen as one of the major successes of the ALMOs in Leeds.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

- 3.1 Each Area Panel will be made up of six tenants, two local ward members who are not on the main ALMO Board and either a tenant or independent ALMO Board member.
- 3.2 A report was submitted to the Council's Member Management Committee recommending that Area Panels determined the local ward members to go forward onto the Area Panels.
- 3.3.1 Once nominated the duty of ward members on the ALMO Area Panels is to work with tenants to fulfill the terms of reference of the Area Panels. These are attached at Appendix 1. At all times the Area Panels will be responsible to the main ALMO Boards. There is no guidance from the CLG on political nominations to ALMO Area Panels and therefore there are no particular methods that have to be adopted.
- 3.4 In June - July 2007 Area Committees in the city nominated elected Members. South (Inner) Area Committee is the last Area Committee to nominate its elected members. Aire Valley homes cannot constitute an Area panel without its elected members appointed by the Area committee. In June 2008 Aire Valley homes will undergo an inspection by the Audit Commission Housing Inspectorate. Area Panels are a key component in the ALMOs' tenant involvement structure, and therefore a further delay in establishing the Area panels could have an adverse impact upon its inspection.

### **4.0 Implications For Council Policy and Governance**

- 4.1 None

### **5.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

- 5.1 None

### **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 Area Panels are a key component in the new ALMO arrangements in Leeds for building on the development of tenant involvement in the running and management of housing services in their areas.
- 6.2 The nomination of ward members will complete the set up arrangements of the Area Panels.

### **7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Area Committee is requested to nominate two ward members, who are not part of the main ALMO Board, to be members of the ALMO Inner South Area Panel

## **Appendix 1**

### **Area Panel Terms of Reference**

#### **Budget responsibility**

- Manage Area Panel budget, approving expenditure relating to:
  - Environmental schemes
  - Community safety schemes
  - Tenant Participation support
  - Tenant consultation
- Be consulted on specifications for contracts such as grounds maintenance and repairs
- Provide nominees for inclusion in tender evaluation exercises

#### **Business Plan and Delivery Plan**

- Identify and recommend priorities for inclusion in Company Business Plan and Service Improvement Plan
- Agree local priorities for inclusion in annual local action plan, including actions for continuous improvement on BVKPIs
- Monitor performance on activities
- Monitor expenditure on activities

#### **Tenant Inspection**

- Lead an annual Tenant Inspection of local service
- Lead regular tenant input into service monitoring e.g. estate walkabouts

#### **Performance**

- Monitor performance of local service by receiving regular reports on:
  - Lettings
  - Empty property turnaround
  - Repairs
  - Rent Collection
  - Complaints and feedback

#### **Tenant Participation**

- Support the development of Tenant and Resident Groups
- Manage the registration and audit process for registered tenant groups on behalf of the ALMO and in liaison with the Leeds Tenants Federation who will retain overall responsibility for the registration process.
- Consult with local T&R Groups and other representative groups on local service development
- Develop strategies to ensure inclusion of minority and hard to reach groups
- Negotiate local Compacts
- Operate small grants scheme from Area Panel budget

#### **Tenancy Management**

- Be involved in deciding how to enforce tenancy conditions in local area
- Receive regular reports on tenancy enforcement issues e.g. number of NISPs, ASBOs, details of targeted action
- Participate in relevant local partnerships e.g. community safety

#### **Repairs and Improvements**

- Agree tenant choice items on improvement programmes
- Participate in Board development of overall capital programme priorities and monitor implementation within local area
- Monitor responsive repairs performance and cost
- Monitor tenant satisfaction with repairs and capital improvements and make recommendations for improvements
- Participate in contract evaluation

#### **Lettings**

- Produce and administer Tenant Welcome information and induction/welcome for new tenants
- Analyse lettings information, including reasons for refusal and take action or make recommendations arising from this
- Make recommendations for Local lettings Policies

**Tenant Satisfaction**

- Monitor tenant satisfaction levels by use of surveys, analysis of complaints and feedback sessions with representative groups
- Recommend changes in service delivery identified through tenant satisfaction analysis

**Staffing issues**

- Be involved in induction of new staff based in local area
- Recommend changes in staffing levels or staffing designation in support of local service needs
- Nominate representatives for inclusion on recruitment panels where requested
- Agree work plans for local staff where relevant e.g. caretaking teams

**Service development**

- Be consulted on all policy issues under consideration by the Board
- Make recommendations to the Board for any changes to service policies