



Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing Department

Executive Board

Date: 20th September 2006

Subject: The Future of Arms Length Management Organisations for Housing in Leeds

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report sets out the result of the ballot of tenants on the two options for the future of ALMOs in Leeds and asks the Executive Board to approve the three ALMO option

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report advises members of the Executive Board of the :

- Consultation with tenants on the alternatives of a single ALMO or three ALMOs
- Result of the ballot of tenants on the alternatives of a single ALMO or three ALMO's.

1.2 The report seeks the approval of the Executive Board to proceed with the establishment of three ALMOs in Leeds.

2.0 Background

2.1 A report to the Executive Board of 5th July 2006 set out the reasons for changing the configuration of ALMOs in Leeds. The report highlighted the :

- Changes to DCLG guidance on the size of ALMOs
- Reductions in stock numbers to date and the potential future reduction
- Difficulties in the governance relationships
- Financial viability for ALMOs in Leeds
- The DCLG's future vision for ALMOs

2.2 For all of the above reasons it was concluded that Leeds should not continue to operate with six ALMOs.

2.2 A report to the Executive Board in July recommended that the Council should ballot tenants on the options of 1 or 3 ALMOs. The 3 ALMO option will be constituted by W and NW, NE, E and the EASEL area of SE, and S with the remainder of SE. There was a broad consensus across the boards and amongst Members in favour of 3 ALMOs. It was agreed that the Council signalled its preference to tenants for this option and that tenants should be balloted on the two alternatives.

3.0 Information Events

3.1 Prior to the ballot commencing, Council officers, together with colleagues from the ALMOs, embarked upon three weeks of information sharing events at which an objective presentation of the options was given.

3.2 513 tenants attended 24 events across the city. The events were supported by an explanatory newsletter to all tenants which set out the pros and cons of the two options and explained why the review was necessary.

4.0 Ballot Result

4.1 The ballot ran from 14th August until 7th September and was conducted by the Electoral Reform Society. All tenants were allowed to vote, including joint tenants. In all 71,143 people received ballot papers. Tenants were able to vote by post, telephone and the internet in order to maximize the turn out.

4.2 The ballot paper gave a simple explanation of the reason for the ballot and asked tenants to choose between a single ALMO and three ALMOs. Tenants also received a newsletter to help them make a decision. The result of the ballot was :

Total number of eligible voters	71,143	100%
Total votes cast	25,192	35.7%

Votes cast for one ALMO	10,776	42.8%
Votes cast for three ALMOs	14,416	57.2%

4.3 Three ALMOs is, therefore, the preferred option of tenants.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 In view of the arguments set forward in the July report in favour of three ALMOs and the ballot result, the Executive Board is asked to agree that three ALMOs are created in Leeds.
- 5.2 The Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing is requested to begin the implementation process and to bring back proposals on future governance to the next meeting.