

TENANTS SERVICES AUTHORITY

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Tenants Service Authority (TSA) is the Government's new housing regulator formed as part of a wider re-organisation, which includes winding up the Housing Corporation and forming the Homes and Communities Agency. Peter Marsh, the Chief Executive of the TSA says the agency was created to 'champion what tenants want'.

Derby Homes has been recruited as one of 29 trailblazers to help deliver the TSA's National Conversation with tenants.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Housing Board South notes the development of the TSA and Derby Home's contribution.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 In 2007, Professor Martin Cave produced a review of social housing regulation called 'Every Tenant Matters'. One of the key recommendations of the report was the setting up of a regulatory body that went beyond governance and financial viability as the Housing Corporation had done.

The new regulator will 'empower tenants' and the system of regulation must 'ensure a clear system of accountability and responsiveness to tenants'. The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 which created the TSA, the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, also wound up the Housing Corporation.

- 3.2 Initially the TSA is focussing on housing associations and will regulate local authorities and arms length management organisations (ALMO's) from Spring 2010. The TSA will work closely with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to allocate funds to housing providers, taking into account customer involvement in the development of their services. The emphasis on tenant involvement is clearly displayed in the Act, which outlines the objectives and powers of the TSA.

3.3 The TSA, Derby Homes and The National Conversation

Derby Homes was invited to London in early January 2009 with other high performing landlords from housing associations, local authorities and ALMO's to be briefed on how to deliver the local conversations, which will form part of the TSA's National Conversation with tenants.

- 3.4 The National Conversation is the largest ever consultation with tenants in England, offering tenants a unique chance to have their say on what they think of their landlords, the services they offer and the areas of service that are most important to get right. The conversation will ensure that tenant's views are central to the development of the TSA's new standards framework. Ways in which tenants' can get involved in the National conversation include: questionnaires, attending regional events and landlord events.

Derby Homes will also use the TSA questionnaire's feedback to learn more about tenants' views on our services.

- 3.5 The 'Conversation' will be held in a number of phases:

- 'What tenants want' – meetings, focus groups and other interaction with tenants – January to March 2009
- Developing a TSA response - Late Spring/Summer 2009
- Statutory consultation period – Autumn 2009
- Switching on new powers – December 2009
- Local Authorities and ALMO's to come under the TSA remit – April 2010

- 3.6 Derby Homes is holding its local conversation event on the 26 January at the Tenant's Resource Centre and has invited 10 other landlords to observe and share the experience.

- 3.7 We have also helped the TSA to organise its 'Camper Van' Road show on the 20 of February in Osmaston and a City Centre location, where they will spend the day talking to tenants.

- 3.8 Landlords are also expected to involve prospective tenants and the Tenant Participation Team will ensure views are sought at appropriate locations.

The TSA does not have a remit to take the views of Leaseholders, who are protected by other relevant legislation.

4. LEGAL AND CONFIDENTIALITY IMPLICATIONS

The Tenants Services Authority (TSA) was created in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, Part 2, Chapters 1 to 8, Sections 1 – 28.

Landlords also have a requirement to consult customers under the Housing Act 1985, Section 105.

5. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The views of all tenants are being sought including Black and Minority Ethnic, Disabled and Lesbian Gay, Bisexual & Transgender groups. The information will be used to improve services for all? sections of society.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report

- Consultation
- Financial and Business Plan
- Legal and Confidentiality
- Personnel
- Environmental
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Health & Safety

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or the Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org - Tel 01332 711010

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Background Information:

Supporting Information: None