

ARMS LENGTH HOUSING MANAGEMENT INSPECTION

Report of the Director of Derby Homes

SUMMARY OF REPORT

1. This report sets out the content and timetable of the arms length housing management inspection (ALHM) of Derby to be undertaken by the Audit Commission in September and October 2002.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the report.
- 2.2 To invite the Housing Inspectors to attend the Board meeting on the 29 August to outline the content, timetable and arrangements for the inspection and answer any questions from Board members.
- 2.3 To invite the Housing Inspectors to observe the Board meeting on 26 September 2002 as part of their inspection.

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The inspection report on Front Line Housing Management and Estate Sustainability, published in May 2002, was based upon an earlier inspection of the service under the management of Derby City Council.
- 3.2 In order to secure release of the conditional allocation of ALHM resources a favourable ALHM inspection report is required. This means an inspection will take place to examine:
 - the standard of housing management services being delivered to tenants
 - the current review of Improving and Maintaining Council Housing
 - the relationship between Derby Homes and Derby City Council
 - the governance arrangements of Derby Homes.

Detailed guidance and ALHM inspections is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.3 A single composition score will be produced from the ALHM inspection. The Audit Commission state that the main focus will be on the standard of housing management services to tenants. The inspectors will wish to be satisfied these have not and will not be adversely affected by organisational changes following creation of Derby Homes.

3.4 The timetable for the ALHM inspection of Derby is

w/c 26 August 2002 (or thereabouts)	Inspection team meet to focus inspection, agree respective roles, discuss, interview and reality checks and information requirements.
w/c 16 September 2002 (subject to confirmation)	Inspection Briefing to outline inspection arrangements.
23 September – 4 October	Inspection on site.
24 October at 2.00pm	Report presentation.
26 November 2002	Report publication date.

3.5 The inspectors have offered to attend Board meetings to outline the inspection progress. It is proposed that they be invited to the 29 August meeting for this purpose it is also proposed that they be invited to observe the 26 September 2002 meeting as part of the inspection itself.

3.6 All 8 inspections of round 1 ALMOs are due to present their reports between 24 October – 15 November 2002, the presentation in Derby being the second in this sequence. A draft report will be produced on this date with a view to publication no later than 26 November 2002.

3.7 A rating of 2 stars and promising or excellent prospects for improvement will enable Derby to secure the release of 50% of the conditional allocation. A three star rating will result in release of the full conditional allocation.

3.8 Confirmation of the inspectors findings on 24 October 2002 will enable the City Council to submit a final application for release of a Supplementary Credit Approval and additional revenue subsidy. It is anticipated that, if this necessary rating is confirmed, this will occur by the end of November 2002. This will enable additional spending to be incurred in 2002-03. It is anticipated that a report will be brought to the July Board on the issue of Area Boards. Agreement is required with ODPM on this issue before the release of funds.

CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

4. The contents of this report reflects consultation with the Audit Commission and the Local Authority Housing Division of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), formerly known as part of DTLR.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. As outlined in 3.7 – 3.8 resources are dependent on the outcome of this inspection.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The inspection will be carried out under the terms of the Local Government Act 1999.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7. Managers and key personnel will be made available to respond to the inspection prior to, during and after the period that inspectors are on site.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8. None directly arising from this report.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9. None directly arising from this report.

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