

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS AND VOID SPEND

Report of the Director of Derby Homes

SUMMARY OF REPORT

1. A report was brought to the Derby Homes Board at its meeting on 25 July 2002 identifying an overspend of £175,520 against a target spend of £383,866. The Board requested that an update report be brought to the next meeting detailing the current position and steps taken to tackle the issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That the Board notes the report.

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Officers have identified an increase in electrical upgrades required on empty properties. This increase is due to changes in Health & Safety legislation. Derby Homes has no discretion in whether or not to carry out this work. A sum of £200,000 has been transferred from the capital allocation to reflect the increased expenditure estimated for 2002/03.
- 3.2 Senior Technical Officers have re-visited void properties to monitor the repairs being ordered to bring properties up to the minimum lettable standard. These inspections have highlighted a possible increase in criminal damage/tenants damage in the South East area of the City. Officers are satisfied that expenditure has been justified on these properties.
- 3.3 Following discussions between the Maintenance Manager and Responsive Maintenance Manager a sum of £500,000 will be allocated from capital resources for the improvement/renewal of kitchens, bathrooms and damp proof courses in pre-war properties where this is identified on the void inspection. The majority of these works are likely to be in the Osmaston area. The benefit of this approach not only reduces the burden on the void properties budget but also assists in meeting improvement targets. It is envisaged that this initiative will commence from 7 October 2002.
- 3.4 In an attempt to reduce the numbers of void properties requiring repair an instruction has been given to all Local Office Managers to exercise caution when authorising transfer offers to low priority applicants. This does not apply to Homefinder areas.

- 3.5 A meeting will be arranged for early September to discuss the ongoing issues with Local Office Managers and Property Surveyors. This meeting concentrate on the perception that Derby Homes are facing increased pressures as a result of damage to properties and look towards a strategy to deal with this issue. The meeting will also serve to keep officers focussed on the overspend issue.

CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

- 4 The issue will be discussed with the Council's Monitoring Officer, and at the next City Housing Consultation Group.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. Any overspend of the void properties budget will have to be contained within the overall Housing Revenue Account (HRA), by the reduction of spend in other elements of the HRA.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. Legal implications would arise if Derby Homes failed to meet Health and Safety Legislation affecting the repair and maintenance of empty properties.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7. None at this stage. If the overspend continues to increase consideration may need to be given to increasing resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8. Standards of repair on void properties affects the likelihood of the property being relet within a reasonable time period. Empty properties on estates create a bad impression and become a target for vandalism and other anti-social activities.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9. None

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