

## **STAFF CONFERENCE 11 SEPTEMBER 2002**

Report of the Director of Derby Homes

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

1. This report gives details of the proposed one day conference for Board members and staff of Derby Homes.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. That the Board approves the proposed one day conference on 11 September 2002

### **MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 For several years the Housing Service has run annual conferences for staff. The aim has been to update staff on key issues, and to give staff the opportunity to question senior managers and Councillors on issues of importance to themselves.
- 3.2 In order to keep services open to the public the conferences have usually been run over 3 half day sessions. However in December 2001 a short single session conference was run from 3pm to 5pm on a Wednesday afternoon, when local offices are already shut for staff training.
- 3.3 The benefits of having all 340 staff together to hear one message, and to celebrate the achievement of 3 stars in the Best Value Review, has led me to review the previous practices. I recommend that this year's conference be for a whole day for all staff and Board members.
- 3.4 This year's conference will be the first since Derby Homes was formed, and the first since staff were transferred to Derby Homes. It will be an opportunity for
  - all Board members and staff to meet and discuss their roles and issues
  - staff to be updated on progress on Derby Homes
  - staff to be given information on the follow up Best value inspection starting on 23 September
  - a session by someone outside of Derby Homes
  - the organisation to celebrate the success so far and to look forward to further success.

- 3.5 The Assembly Rooms main hall and the Derwent Suite have been provisionally booked.
- 3.6 The proposed itinerary will allow for staff to choose to attend 3 out of 6 workshop choices, meet each other over a buffet lunch, and give adequate time for a question and answer session.
- 3.7 Having a whole day conference will mean that the only Derby Homes services provided that day will be emergency repairs and urgent other business. The 11 September is a Wednesday, when local office receptions are closed from 2.00 pm. The Director of Policy has agreed that the staff at the Housing Option Centre and the Care Link service will deal with any such telephone enquiries. Nominated Derby Homes staff will attend the conference, but be contactable by mobile phone and may need to leave the conference to resolve any serious issues, such as health and safety issues.
- 3.8 It is unfortunate that the proposed day conference will fall at a time when industrial action may still be disrupting the service provided. However the importance of the event and its timing, just before the follow up inspection, means that I think this further service disruption is reasonable. It must also be remembered that running three separate conferences on separate days is also disruptive to services and can be less effective.
- 3.9 The 11 September is the anniversary of the attacks in New York. It may be appropriate to mark this on the day.

## **CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council Monitoring Officer has been informed of this proposal. The City Housing Consultation Group has also been consulted. Information on the proposal will need to be displayed on office doors and reception areas, in leaflets and in the local newspaper.
- 4.2 The conference itinerary will be the subject of consultation with the staff and with trade unions. This will be done through the Staff Communication group who meet regularly to try to improve methods of communication in the organisation. In particular staff will be asked to decide suitable workshop subjects and how they wish the workshops and the question and answer sessions to be organised.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5. The cost of the conference is estimated at £4,000, which will be contained within the fee paid to Derby Homes.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6. Under the agreement with the Council, Derby Homes must notify the Monitoring Officer of any break in service provision and the reasons for this. This has been done.

## **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7. Staff working part time or shifts or job share who do not normally work 9 to 5 on Wednesdays will be asked to attend on a time off in lieu basis. Staff will be refunded the travel and parking costs involved.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

8. None.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9. None.

### **Contact Officer:**

Phil Davies, Director of Derby Homes, Telephone 01332 711010,  
Email [phil.davies@derby.gov.uk](mailto:phil.davies@derby.gov.uk)