

FUNDING AN INDEPENDENT MEDIATION SERVICE IN DERBY

Report of the Director of Derby Homes

SUMMARY OF REPORT

1. Derby Mediation Services Limited was recently dissolved, however, CETA St James has agreed to continue providing an independent mediation service in Derby. CETA St James has requested a grant of £10,000 to contribute to the running costs of this project, called 'Mediation Derby'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Derby Homes allocate a grant of £10,000 for 2002/3 to CETA St James to provide an independent mediation service.

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Derby Mediation Services Limited provided a valuable independent mediation service for tenants in Council housing from 1993 to 2001.
- 3.2 Between June 1993 and March 2001 it received 550 referrals concerning Council tenants. The majority of these referrals were made by Derby Homes' staff in local housing offices.
- 3.3 CETA St James aims to provide an independent mediation service for the people of Derby, to raise awareness of mediation issues so as to encourage understanding, tolerance and respect among neighbours, communities and the people of the City.
- 3.4 The Housing Service funded Derby Mediation Services Ltd each year since 1993. Funding has also been received from Derby City Council and other sources such as the original Safer Cities budget and by charging other local authorities and housing associations for casework.
- 3.5 CETA St James is seeking funding of £10,000 to contribute to the costs of employing a co-ordinator, providing resources to train volunteers, volunteer expenses, administration costs and a contribution to office rental charges.
- 3.6 The recent Best Value Review of Front Line Housing Services and Estate Sustainability identified a need to make more use of the Mediation Service. The Improvement Action Plan Number 9 states that an effective

independent service needs to be reintroduced and providing financial support to CETA St James is essential to achieve this.

- 3.7 A funding agreement will be drawn up with CETA St James to clearly specify the responsibilities, targets and outcomes expected from the Mediation Derby project.

CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

4. None.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. Provision exists in the Grants to Voluntary Groups budget to provide funding of £10,000 for the financial year 2002/3.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There is a growing expectation from Courts that in appropriate cases mediation or some other form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) will have been attempted before legal proceedings are commenced.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7. None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8. None.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9. None.

Contact Officer:

Richard Smail, Community Initiatives Manager, Telephone 01332 711041,
Email richard.smail@derby.gov.uk