

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

POLICY REVIEW OF HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER

Purpose

1. To set out detailed proposals for the remaining stages of the policy review of housing stock transfer.

Summary/ Recommendations

2. The Committee is invited to consider the outline timetable for the remainder of the review, including the specific issues flagged-up at paragraph 7.

Background

3. The Committee has agreed to undertake a policy review of housing stock transfer, and the review has been proceeding in line with the proposals set out in LGH-02-00 (p.5). Judy Wayne has been appointed as expert adviser and a written consultation exercise has been undertaken, with an analysis of the responses now under way.

4. This paper sets out detailed proposals for the remainder of the review, as set out on the attached timetable (see Annex). The main features are:

(i) Visits to stock transfer organisations

Visits to stock transfer organisations in England are being arranged for Monday 30 October and Friday 10 November. The plan is to cover Somer Community Housing Trust in Bath, South Somerset Homes in Yeovil and the Severn Vale Housing Association in Tewkesbury.

ii. Analysis of consultation responses

An analysis of the responses to the written consultation exercise will be put to the Committee on 1 November. It is proposed that an oral consultation session should be held later in November, and the Committee will need to decide which organisations to invite at the 1 November meeting.

iii. **Oral consultation session**

It is proposed to use the slot for additional Committee business on the afternoon of Thursday 23 November for an oral consultation session. This should allow the Committee to hear the views of around six to eight organisations.

The use of this timetable slot will require the approval of the Business Committee (There is now a requirement to put a request to the Business Committee if subject committees wish to meet on Thursday afternoons or at other times not shown in the timetable).

iv. **Consideration of emerging issues and the outline report structure**

In the light of the oral consultation session, a paper on emerging issues will be prepared for the 13 December meeting. Proposals on the structure of the report will also be put to this meeting.

v. **Consideration of key recommendations**

A paper setting out key recommendations will be prepared for the first meeting of the spring term, which will reflect the Committee's discussion on emerging issues.

vi. **Consideration of first draft report**

The first complete draft report will be put to the third meeting of the spring term, reflecting the Committee's views on key recommendations.

vii. **Report signed off**

The report will be redrafted to take account of the Committee's views on the first draft, and then signed off at the fifth meeting of the spring term.

5. These proposals imply the completion of the report rather later than the end of the year date set out in the timetable drawn up in May. However, they take account of a review undertaken

in Committee Secretariat over the summer on lessons learned in taking forward policy reviews. This has identified the need to plan on a realistic basis and to allow plenty of thinking and debating time, as well as sufficient time for report production. What is proposed here is stretching given Committee Secretariat's experience with other reviews, but is felt to be achievable given the focused nature of the review.

Issues for consideration

6. It is recognised that the future course of the review cannot be fully determined in advance, in that much will depend on the avenues which Members wish to explore in the light of the information which emerges during the review. However, for planning purposes, it would be helpful to have the Committee's views on the broad shape of the timetable at this stage. The main advantage is that this will enable Committee Secretariat to get relevant dates into Members' diaries well in advance.

7. Some specific issues on the timetable are:

- Whether any further visits should be planned at this stage?
- Whether one oral consultation session is likely to be sufficient? A further session would almost certainly require a new timetable slot, as there is only very limited scope to add items to the Wednesday morning meetings this term.
- Whether there should be an informal 'brainstorming' type session to discuss the emerging issues and possible recommendations? If so, this would need to be built into the timetable around Christmas.
- Whether the Committee would prefer to plan on the basis of seeing more than one complete draft before signing off the report?
- Whether the Committee would like to consider a further round of consultation with interested organisations on the basis of a draft report? This should help to sharpen the recommendations, although it would extend the length of the review by the consultation period.

8. It would also be helpful if the Committee could confirm that it is content to use the slot for additional Committee business on the afternoon of Thursday 23 November, so that a request can be put to the Business Committee.

Committee Secretariat October 2000

ANNEX

POLICY REVIEW OF HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER

OUTLINE TIMETABLE

Monday 30 October	Visit to stock transfer organisations
Wednesday 1 November	Consideration of consultation responses. Decide which organisations to invite for oral consultation
Friday 10 November	Visit to stock transfer organisations
Wednesday 15 November	Meeting with no policy review business
Thursday 23 November	Oral consultation session
Wednesday 29 November	Meeting with no policy review business

Wednesday 13 December	Consideration of emerging issues and outline report structure
First meeting, Spring term	Consideration of list of key recommendations
Second meeting, Spring term	Meeting with no policy review business
Third meeting, Spring term	Consideration of first draft report
Fourth meeting, Spring term	Meeting with no policy review business
Fifth meeting, Spring term	Committee signs off draft report
+ 1 week	Publication of electronic report
+ 3 weeks	Publication of printed report