

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER: DRAFT GUIDANCE

Purpose

1. The Committee is asked to consider the content of the attached draft guidance (see Annex) for local authorities which may be considering the transfer of their tenanted housing stock to a new landlord body.

Summary

2. The guidance is aimed primarily at local authorities but will also be useful to other stakeholders such as tenants' groups and funders. The guidelines set out current Assembly policies and disseminate best practice on the key issues in the transfer process.

Recommendation

3. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this paper, offer any initial comments and provide a detailed response as part of the consultation process.

Timing

4. The draft guidance recently went out to consultation. The consultation is due to close on 27 October. It would be helpful if the Committee could make its views known to coincide with this date.

Background

5. Last September the Assembly published the report of the working party on Securing Additional Investment in Local Authority Housing through Private Finance. At the time, separate draft Housing Transfer Guidelines were issued. The working party recommended that those guidelines be adopted by the Assembly. The guidelines gave detailed advice on tenant issues but were incomplete in other areas such as the financial consequences of transfer.

6. The revised draft provides far more comprehensive advice on the transfer process. It is

planned to issue an annual invitation to authorities to apply for provisional approval for transfer. Criteria for provisional approval are set out in the draft guidelines. It is also planned to develop, for separate publication after consultation, a 'Tenants Stock Transfer Charter'.

Compliance

7. This guidance will be issued under s.40 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 exercised in conjunction with its functions under the Housing Act 1985. The power to issue the guidance has been delegated to the Assembly Secretary. There are no issues of propriety or regularity.

8. There are no additional financial implications for the Assembly as a consequence of issuing the guidance.

Contact

Howard James – Housing Performance and Finance Division