

## ITLA Briefing Note – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016

### **Communications**

**Newsletters** - There have been two 'stock transfer' newsletters issued to all 17500 council homes since March 2016.

**Doorknocking** - Tpas staff are currently knocking on doors of council tenants and leaseholders to a) raise awareness of the Council proposal b) answer any questions or queries arising from the proposal c) complete a residents' opinion survey. To date Tpas staff have knocked on approximately 5,000 homes

**Attendance at key resident engagement events** – Tpas staff regularly attend Tenants and Residents General Meetings, Borough Forums, Sheltered Housing Forums, Leaseholder Forums and Housing Representatives Forums, alongside social events and Resident roadshows arranged by council housing management contractor Pinnacle.

**Freephone service** – Tpas offers a confidential freephone enquiry line. The freephone has been used by over 350 residents since January 2016.

**Residents email enquiry line** – Over 20 residents have contacted Tpas over our email service

In total Tpas has made personal contact with almost 6,000 residents amounting to 34% of the social housing residents.

**Staff briefings** - Tpas attend staff briefings each month to update Council staff on progress

### **Proposed new Landlord**

The proposed new Landlord is proposed to be a new not for profit Community Gateway Housing Association. The constitution has the following principles:-

It would be a charity and a "Community Benefit Society"

It would have a Board of 11 with 6 residents and 5 independents

There would be a Representative Assembly of 21 tenants and 7 leaseholders which would be elected by and be representative of the Resident Membership Body

Any tenant or resident leaseholder could obtain Resident Membership status. Membership allows resident members to go to formal AGM's, approve the accounts, elect or deselect a board member and stand for board. It has been agreed that where a resident is also an employee of the organisation or an employee of a major contractor of the Association that staff can be allowed membership. However, the staff cannot sit on the board.

The Council would need to approve certain rule changes in the future which fundamentally change the constitution

### **Shadow Board**

In order to create the organisation the proposed new landlord would need to appoint a Shadow Board.

In order to select a Shadow Board, residents had to apply for the position and be measured against key criteria including knowledge and behavior and business skills. Tpas advised the Selection Panel in the recruitment process

A Selection Panel was agreed which was made up of majority residents, a tenant board member from a Community Gateway and a local CEO of London based Housing Association.

This process was signed off by the Council and Housing Representatives Forum where it had previously been presented and agreed.

An invitation letter had been issued, by the Lead Member for Housing, Cllr. Lisa Holman, to all residents inviting residents to apply for the Shadow Board and that enquiries were being received. Closing dates for receipt of Shadow Board member applications was the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

39 packs were sent out and 9 applications were received. Of these 6 residents were shortlisted and 5 attended the interview. Three residents have been appointed (2 tenants and 1 leaseholder) to the Shadow Board. Further work will be done to recruit further 3 board members.

An advert for the independent board members was published in Inside Housing, the Financial Times and the Guardian newspapers. Over 40 packs were requested and the Selection Panel, supported by the 3 resident shadow board members, appointed 5 independent board members.

The Shadow Board has yet to meet.

### **Meetings with Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG)**

Two meetings with DCLG have been held regarding permission to transfer including agreeing the financial debt position. The Council will need to agree with the Government how to deal with the £208m debt the Council Housing Department currently has.

### **Ballot**

The Council will ballot all secure council tenants and leaseholders to clarify residents views of the transfer proposal once the consultation has concluded. The ballot will be administered independently, and managed confidentially, across the Borough, by postal vote over a period of several weeks. We will post more about this later in the project.

### **Timetable**

The project timetable has now been pushed back and an independent postal ballot is now scheduled to take place in the period March to June 2017 subject to Government approval.

