

Report

Report Subject : Stock Transfer Formal Consultation Offer Document
Report to : The Cabinet
Date : Wednesday 12 July 2006
Author : Derek Streek
Cabinet Member for Community & Housing: Councillor John Cole-Morgan

1. Purpose of report:

1.1 For Cabinet to agree the principle wording of the formal stock transfer offer document to be sent to tenants and leaseholders prior to the decision to ballot tenants about stock transfer.

2. Background:

2.1 In March 2005 Full Council resolved that 'the transfer of the council's housing stock to a newly formed locally based Housing Association be pursued and officers be charged with determining a programme which would provide review points to minimise the council's exposure to nugatory expenditure'.

2.2 Reviews took place in December 2005 and April 2006 at which on both occasions Cabinet agreed to progress with the project

2.3 The project has now reached the formal consultation stage the first part of which is the issue to all tenants and leaseholders of the offer document.

3. The Offer Document:

3.1 The Stock Transfer Project Board agreed that due to the number of people involved in commenting upon it the best way to view the offer document in the drafting stage was to break it down in a table format of the main headings.

3.2 A copy of the 2nd draft of the document in the table format is attached as **Appendix 1**.



Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



- 3.3 In compiling this draft the views of the stock transfer project board, and shadow board, have been taken into account and final approval will be required from the Community Housing Task Force, Government Office for the South West, Housing Corporation and Independent Tenant Advisers.
- 3.4 The final offer document will be in a brochure type format and will be subject to minor alterations to improve its ease to read by tenants.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the final sign off of the offer document is delegated to the Policy Director in consultation with the Stock Transfer Project Board.

4. Recommendations:

- 4.1 That Cabinet approves the principles of the 2nd draft of the offer document.
- 4.2 That delegated approval for the sign off of the final version of the document is given to the Policy Director in consultation with the Stock Transfer Project Board subject to no material change in the offer itself in which case it will be brought back to a special meeting of the Cabinet.

5. Implications:

- Legal** : the Council must comply with statutory requirements when consulting with its tenants on the detail of any proposed transfer
- Financial** : none in respect of this report
- Human Rights** :: none
- Environmental** : none
- Council's Core Values** : Maintaining the housing stock.
- Personnel** : None
- Community Safety** : None

**SALISBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL
HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER FORMAL CONSULTATION DOCUMENT TABLE**

SG	Sue Groom
DN	Dave Neudegg
DW	David Whelpton
NS	Nadine Stanley
ET	Emma Towler
DS	Derek Streek
JL	Julie Leng
JP	John Pearce
AR	Andrew Reynolds
PB	Peter Bravery
Trowers	

ITEM	A. THE PROPOSAL	WORDING	Who	NOTES
A1	Amount needed to spend over next 30 years	£181,362,352 excluding responsive, void, cyclical repairs, fees and VAT and as at 1 Jan. 2006 prices.	SG	Inclusive or exclusive of day to day repairs
A2	Amount needed to spend over first 6 years	£40,063,228 on same basis as A1	SG	Ditto
A3	Amount available to Council over first 6 years if retained	£19, 063, 000	SG	Ditto
A4	Amount available to Council over 30 years if retained	£88,922,000	SG	Ditto
A5	Amount of subsidy paid to the government in 2006/7	£6,126,018	JL	
A6	Statement on Prudential Borrowing	The government has extended the borrowing powers of councils. However, our financial position is such that we do not have the income available to meet the extra cost of interest and loan repayments for the money we would need to borrow in the medium to long term for improvement in the stock.	JL	
A7	Statement on what the Council would do with the capital receipt	The Council has agreed to receive a reduced capital receipt to allow for the full South Wiltshire Homes Standard to be implemented.	DN	

		<p>The largest proportion of the available capital receipt will be set aside for affordable housing projects. [50% of the capital receipt will be set aside for the provision of affordable housing estimated to be around £11m</p> <p>A further significant amount will be used on a mixture of schemes providing environmental and community improvements to the places where tenants, live, work or spend their leisure time</p>		
A8	<p>Timetable for consultation:</p> <p>Stage 1 starts Stage 1 ends Stage 2 starts Ballot starts Ballot/Stage 2 end Proposed transfer date</p>	<p>Late August 2006 Late September 2006 October 2006 October / November 2006 October / November 2006 June 2007</p>	DW	
A9	Would works be promised over 5 or 6 years?	6 years	SG	
A10	Why is it not specified what year things are done in?	SWH make the promises to tenants on improvements and major works over the first 6 years after transfer. They will not specify which years certain works are done because they will need to package and allocate works to contractors to get the best possible value for the works for tenants.	SG	
B. RENT AND OTHER CHARGES				
B1	When would the first rent increase under the new landlord take place?	At the time of transfer, each tenant would pay the same rent that year to SWH as they were paying to the Council. Your rents would continue to change annually in April of each year.	SG	
B2	Level of rent increases until target reached	At the time of transfer, each tenant would pay the same rent to South Wiltshire Homes as they were paying to the Council. As with the Council, the rent increases would be due in	JL	

		<p>April of each year. The first rent increase by South Wiltshire Homes would be in April 2008.</p> <p>The Government has introduced a new policy for rents. This is to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rents for social housing should remain affordable and well below rents set by private landlords;• Rents for social housing should be fairer and less confusing for tenants;• There should be a closer link between the rents tenants pay and the quality, size and location of their homes; and• There should be no difference between the rent set by councils and Registered Social Landlords, like South Wiltshire Homes, for the same or similar homes. <p>The Government has developed a formula for working out the rent levels (called a target rent) for each type of property which reflects its location, value, number of bedrooms and the local average earnings compared with the national average earnings. The Government's rent restructuring policy requires councils and Registered Social Landlords, like South Wiltshire Homes, to bring actual rents to the same level as target rents by 2012.</p> <p>The Government also says that until target rents are reached, annual rent increases in any year would be limited to the rate of</p>		
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		<p>inflation plus 0.5% plus £2 per week.</p> <p>The effect of the Government's rent restructuring policy is that, until target rents are reached for your home, your rent increases would be calculated in the same way whether you were a tenant of the Council or South Wiltshire Homes.</p> <p>After target rents have been reached, South Wiltshire Homes's business plan is based on limiting annual rent increases to no more than inflation plus 0.5%, which follows current Government policy. It would be South Wiltshire Homes's policy to keep all rents at affordable levels, and the Housing Corporation, a Government appointed body set up to regulate and supervise all Registered Social Landlords, has powers to ensure that it does.</p>		
B3	Level of rent increases after target reached	September RPI plus 0.5% unless Government policy changes.	JL	
B4	Whether the Council and the RSL would follow the same path to reach target	Yes	JL	
B5	Items that would be charged for separately by the new RSL and whether this is the same as the Council	<p>At present, tenants in sheltered accommodation pay the cost of communal lighting and heating as service charges and tenants in some sheltered schemes pay water meter charges. The Council is currently reviewing communal charges. The outcome of this review would apply whether or not the transfer takes place. These charges can only recover the cost of providing the service and there can be no profit made by the landlord.</p> <p>There would be no hidden service charges and no hidden increases. South Wiltshire Homes would not introduce new services</p>	DS/JL	

		charges for existing tenants unless tenants ask for a new service in the future, which carries a separate charge.	
B6	Maximum annual rate of increase for these charges (i.e. are they covered by the inflation + 0.5% increase	The RSL intends to operate in the spirit of the Government's rent restructuring policy, which limits increases in service charges to inflation plus 0.5%. However, the over riding factor influencing service charges will be cost of provision. The prime principle will be that service charges equal the cost of provision.	JL
B7	Statement on what would happen if new services were to be introduced	SWH would not introduce new service charges in the future without consulting the tenants who would be affected. Any charges agreed with tenants would be limited to the actual cost of the service.	DS / SG
B8	What rents would new tenants pay?	The same as the outgoing tenant.	JL
B9	Is there a contents insurance scheme now and would there be one with the new RSL?	The Council operates a tenant's contents insurance scheme in a partnership agreement with AON insurance brokers. The contract will transfer to South Wiltshire Homes.	DS
B10	Does the Council collect water rates – if so, what would happen with the new RSL?	The Council collects water rates on some properties at the moment and this function will transfer to South Wiltshire Homes.	DS / JL
B11	What methods could tenants use to pay their rent with the new RSL?	South Wiltshire Homes plans to continue with all current methods available for paying your rent. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • payment by post (i.e. cheques only) • payment at Post Offices • Standing Order • payment by phone • payment by debit or credit card 	DS

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct debit • internet payments • <p>South Wiltshire Homes would like the Council provide you with a quarterly rent statement.</p>		
B12	How frequently would tenants get rent statements?	Rent statements will be sent quarterly	DS	
B13	How would transfer affect HB?	The transfer would not affect tenants' entitlement to claim HB. Apart from being re-labelled 'rent allowances' rather than 'rent rebates', tenants will not notice any difference.	DS	
B14	What about service charges and HB?	Where service charges are eligible for HB now, they would continue to be under an RSL. Moving to an RSL has no effect on tenants in relation to HB.	JL	
B15	Where could tenants go for advice on HB?	Housing Benefit will continue to be administered by the Council and detailed advice should be sought from the Council. However Neighbourhood Managers working for South Wiltshire Homes will be able to provide assistance, as those working for the council currently do	DS	
B16	Statement from RSL on handling rent arrears	South Wiltshire Homes would adopt the same firm but fair approach as that taken by the Council. The emphasis will be on early action by staff to prevent arrears accumulating, while taking account of the individual circumstances of each tenant. Court action will be taken where necessary to obtain possession orders where this is essential, but staff will encourage claims for Housing Benefit, and refer people for specialist benefit and debt advice when appropriate. Evictions will continue to be	JP	

		used as a means of last resort. The same approach based on neighbourhoods will be used by South Wiltshire Homes with the Neighbourhood Managers responsible for a geographical area, so they get to know the tenants they are responsible for, and so that tenants can deal with someone they are familiar with.		
B17	Is rent charged over 48 or 52 weeks?	✓Rent and all associated charges for the year are charged over 50 weeks, with a “rent free” week in December and April.	DS	
	C. SERVICES			
C1	Statement on staffing – what would happen to existing staff?	Following transfer, employees from the housing management and repairs and maintenance sections of the Council, together with related support service employees, would transfer to the newly formed Registered Social Landlord. So you would continue to deal with people you know. There would be a limited number of housing employees who would not become employees of South Wiltshire Homes. Housing staff that deal with the Housing Register, homelessness, housing advice, private sector housing and strategic housing work would stay with the Council.	DS	
C2	Repairs targets for Council and new RSL	Repairs targets for South Wiltshire Homes will be the same as the Council's	DS	
C3	Ideas for improving the service	South Wiltshire Homes would be committed to maintaining and improving the existing housing management services and would continue with the improvement plans put in place by the council. Most importantly, South Wiltshire Homes would continue to provide locally based services within Salisbury, ensuring that you have access to	DS	

		<p>advice and assistance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rents; • tenancy management and tenancy conditions including anti-social behaviour; • day to day repairs and improvements to your home; • sheltered housing and community and lifeline alarm services. <p>South Wiltshire Homes would constantly try to improve its services. It would seek your views on the quality of the service it provides. South Wiltshire Homes's plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introducing a new Housing Maintenance Handyperson service to undertake small jobs at cost; • providing a 24-hour freephone repairs reporting helpline, for tenants to report repairs at any time. Housing officers would also respond to queries during office opening hours; • providing a gardening and decorating service at the cost of provision for the elderly; • working closely with you to develop the sort of housing service tenants want; • involving you in decisions on improvement programmes that affect 		
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		<p>you;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing training in customer care to all • Carrying out a review of the sheltered housing service, naming the officers responsible for service delivery in each neighbourhood and area; • complying with equal opportunities legislation and best practice; • providing tenants with information about the housing service on a regular basis e.g. by way of a quarterly newsletter; • carrying out 'customer feedback surveys' for tenants leaving homes or transferring to another property owned by South Wiltshire Homes; • having available a comprehensive set of leaflets describing all aspects of South Wiltshire Holmes's services; • looking at introducing new, more convenient, ways for tenants to pay their rent; • continuing to offer tenants' contents insurance scheme; • producing a new tenant handbook in different easy to read formats including tape format; • working with the council to establish a community fund to pay for new 		
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		<p>community services including commitments already made by the council such as a Community Centre for Bemerton Heath.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would look at introducing extra services for all tenants. For example, South Wiltshire Homes would:</p> <p>Consult tenants on the possibility of establishing a Tenants Incentive or Rewards Scheme</p> <p>This means that South Wiltshire Homes would investigate setting up an enhanced service or other incentives for the benefit of those tenants who keep up to date with their rent payments and maintain other tenancy conditions.</p> <p>Maintain the environment.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes recognises that investing in the buildings where tenants live is not enough on its own. Both South Wiltshire Homes and tenants would want homes to be in an environment that they can all be proud of. To achieve this South Wiltshire Homes plans to:</p> <p>Establish localised Environmental Improvement funds</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would introduce a localised budget of £500,000 over the first 10</p>		
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		<p>years after transfer for a Community Chest. Local tenants and tenant groups would decide on and prioritise local schemes to improve the environment. This work would be carried out with support from South Wiltshire Homes. This budget is part of the overall budget for environmental enhancements of £3.9M over the first 10 years after transfer.</p> <p>Providing environmental improvements including off road parking schemes</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would have a specific budget forenvironmental works which would include the installation of off road parking schemes. South Wiltshire Homes plans to spend £3.9M over the first 10 years following transfer..</p>		
C4	What would happen to existing contractors and their contracts?	Existing contractors and their contracts will be taken on by South Wiltshire Homes until the expiry of the contract	DS	
C5	Statement from the RSL on dealing with ASB and NN	South Wiltshire Home would adopt the same approach to anti-social behaviour as the Council. In cases of complaints of neighbour nuisance, the Neighbourhood Manager will explain the policy and contact the person complaining and the alleged source of the nuisance within 5 working days, maintaining confidentiality. South Wiltshire Homes would continue to use court action where necessary, with the ultimate threat of eviction in the most serious cases. The approach will continue to try and be firm but fair, with mediation or other strategies considered where appropriate. With regards to anti-	JP	

		social behaviour affecting a wider area, there will be an emphasis on working closely with other agencies to ensure a co-ordinated and thorough response to problems, with interventions other than legal action attempted whenever possible, but robust and early action taken in court where this is essential, using the full range of legal tools available. The approach taken will be one of prevention, intervention and enforcement, the aim being to ensure that by promoting social inclusion, the root causes of anti-social behaviour are tackled at source, but stopping problems at an early stage where occur.		
C6	Caretaking and grounds maintenance issues	South Wiltshire Homes will continue to provide the existing Caretaking services as currently provided by the Council along with the grounds maintenance service at the sheltered housing schemes	DS	
C7	Statement on play areas and open spaces	These will remain with the council	DS	
C8	Statement on local offices	South Wiltshire Homes would aim to provide locally based services through continuation of the area offices at Bemerton Heath and the Friary, and will look in to providing rural based housing surgeries. These services will be developed in consultation with tenants.	DS	
C9	RSL's role in the community (working with PCT, training, employment etc)	<p>South Wiltshire Homes</p> <p>Our vision</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes will serve the community by providing affordable, good</p>	DS	

		<p>quality homes together with accessible and supportive services.</p> <p>Our values</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes believes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing homes for current and future generations in housing need, in communities across the district ▪ Putting tenants at the heart of the decision-making process ▪ Promoting diversity and equality of opportunity for all ▪ Taking care to meet the needs of all groups within the community ▪ Basing investment decisions on what is needed, not on geographic location ▪ Always looking to improve the range and quality of services provided ▪ Supporting communities and improving the quality of the environment in which people live ▪ Valuing its staff as one of its most important assets <p>Making our vision and values a reality</p> <p>We will:</p>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet all of the promises made to tenants including those on affordable rents, protected rights, improved works and services ▪ Develop accessible and sensitive housing services that reflect tenants' needs ▪ Employ staff who currently provide the service for the council to achieve continuity and ensure that tenants will deal with familiar faces ▪ Provide effective and efficient repairs and maintenance services ▪ Work in partnership with other agencies to tackle anti social behaviour and neighbour nuisance so that tenants can live in peace and security ▪ Run our financial affairs prudently to ensure value for money ▪ Be a first rate employer who values its staff and invests in their training and development to ensure that all have the opportunity to fulfil their potential ▪ Work in partnership with Salisbury District Council to assist in the delivery of its strategic aims, including helping to meet the needs of homeless people; increasing the 		
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		<p>range and number of affordable homes; and, linking to the wider community strategies.</p> <p>Measuring our performance</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a range of work with our tenants, including satisfaction surveys, to measure our performance and identify areas for improvements ▪ Work closely with our regulators to identify areas of strengths that can be built on and action plans for areas that need improving ▪ Liaise with the council to help them monitor our delivery of the promises made to tenants. ▪ . 		
	D. SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE			
D1	<p>List of core services provided now and whether they would continue:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">HSOs Communal lounges Laundries Alarm system TV licences</p>	Housing Support Officers and the services currently provided by the council at sheltered housing schemes will continue to be provided by South Wiltshire Homes	DS	
D2	What improvements would be planned for the schemes?	Provision has been made in the planned maintenance programme of South Wiltshire Homes to modernise the communal areas of sheltered housing schemes in consultation	DS	

		with residents.		
D3	Would any works involve converting bedsits with shared facilities to self-contained flats? If so, what part would consultation play?	There is an allowance in the overall investment programme for upgrading low demand sheltered housing schemes. This spending would be considered in consultation with residents and during the overall review of sheltered housing due to start 18months after transfer and which would finish within 6 months.	DS	
D4	What would happen in relation to Supporting People?	<p>You may be receiving support services either because you live in specialist supported housing (such as a sheltered scheme) or through someone visiting you in your home (floating support). Support services may include general counselling and support in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the security of your home • Maintaining the safety of your home • Maintaining your home in an appropriate condition • Contact with others to ensure your welfare • Other support services (excluding personal care) <p>If you currently receive support services, and the transfer goes ahead, the services you receive would not be affected by the transfer.</p> <p>If you pay something towards the cost of support services, this would not change until the service charge is next reviewed, the</p>	DS / AR	

		<p>same as it would be with the Council.</p> <p>If you do not currently receive these services and require them in the future you would still be able to access the service as you can now. The Government requires that support services are reviewed on a regular basis and this is a requirement whether or not transfer goes ahead.</p>		
	E. INVOLVING TENANTS IN RUNNING THE SERVICE			
E1	<p>How could tenants and leaseholders get involved?</p> <p>TP structure</p> <p>Becoming a Board Member</p> <p>Becoming a Member of the RSL</p>	<p>Involving tenants in running the service</p> <p>Tenants will have a say in how their homes are run through the Tenants Panel and the Sheltered Housing Forum as well as their places on the Board.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would build on the relationship the Council has developed with its tenants over many years and would be committed to involving its tenants in the organisation as fully as possible in ways that suit tenants</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes believes tenant involvement is an essential part of delivering a high quality service. The benefits of getting involved would be promoted to tenants and other customers. It would take steps to ensure that there would be a range of ways for tenants to participate. A tenant participation policy would be developed, to</p>	DS / NS	

		<p>follow national good practice guidelines on tenant participation and to adopt and develop the Council's existing Tenant Participation Agreement (also know as the Tenants' Compact).</p> <p>Its policy would be to involve local people in taking relevant decisions at a local level, wherever appropriate, for example, when decisions are being taken about how to improve the environment of an estate.</p> <p>How tenants could get involved in South Wiltshire Homes</p> <p>Tenants would be able to get involved at a level that suits them best. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ A friendly efficient service that reflects tenants' requirements and responds to their needs ❑ Ensure tenants can share in decisions, for example, through tenant representative structures. ❑ Join or create a local tenants' and resident group ❑ Join or create a group that concentrates on specific interests, such as for young people, the elderly or leaseholders. ❑ Publish good quality information about services and proposals. ❑ Completing customer satisfaction 		
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		<p>surveys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Applying to become a board member of South Wiltshire Homes. ❑ Work closely with black and minority ethnic communities. ❑ Include a budget in its business plan for tenant participation. ❑ Develop a new and improved tenant participation agreement. <p>Neighbourhood Managers will carry out quarterly estate inspections with tenant representatives. These will be arranged in advance and confirmed in writing. Any inspections carried out will be reported back to the Tenant Panel including issues raised and any action to be taken with timescales. Any queries which are non-housing raised on these inspections are to be dealt with by housing staff who will provide contact names for the tenant representatives</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Providing information</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would be active in publicising its activities and the way in which you could get involved. It would work to develop ways of measuring and monitoring resident's satisfaction with services, for example, through questionnaires and surveys, the results of which would be publicised. In addition, South Wiltshire Homes would provide</p>		
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		<p>information about tenant involvement and local tenant groups at the start of each tenancy and produce a new-updated tenants' handbook setting out the service available. This would give you additional information about your tenancy and the policies South Wiltshire Homes has signed up to.</p> <p>There would be a wide range of ways in which you could become involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a member of the management board of South Wiltshire Homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Participating in your local tenants' group to become involved in your local housing service and community issues ❑ Joining a tenants' panel, sheltered housing forum, leaseholder panel or a working group, which might be formed to deal with one-off issues such as developing a new service. ❑ Being available to be consulted by South Wiltshire Homes on policy and service issues through focus groups, telephone surveys and questionnaires. <p>Monitoring the quality of service</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would carry out</p>		
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		<p>regular customer satisfaction surveys to make sure that the service is meeting your needs. It would take account of the results of these surveys to improve and develop the service and it would publish findings to ensure you know what levels of service are being provided.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would actively encourage tenants' groups and the tenants' panel to become involved in monitoring its performance through joint estate inspections with tenants and the regular provision of performance statistics. It would also produce other information for example, newsletters and an annual report to all tenants and leaseholders.</p>		
E2	What would happen to the Tenants Compact?	<p>The Tenants Compact</p> <p>The Tenant Participation Compact is an agreement that was negotiated between the tenants and the Council about how tenants will be consulted and have a say.</p> <p>It sets down agreed support for tenant participation, the levels of service which tenants can expect and what can be done if these standards are not met.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would use the compact as a base and would be committed to building upon and reviewing the standards to develop a new compact for South Wiltshire Homes and reviewing what resources are required.</p>	DS / NS	

E3	Statement on role for tenants in selecting and monitoring contractors	Tenants would be involved in developing SWH procurement strategy and subsequently in the selecting and monitoring of contractors.	DS	
E4	Statement as to how the RSL would support TP	<p>How South Wiltshire Homes would support tenant participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ South Wiltshire Homes would be a tenant-focused organisation committed to genuinely involving you (through its written constitution) in the running of the housing service. ❑ Tenant involvement would be recognised as a central function to all services. ❑ South Wiltshire Homes would enhance tenant involvement in all aspects of the service. ❑ Tenants could get involved in the management of their homes at a level that suits them best. 	DS / NS	
E5	RSL view on TMOs	<p>Tenant Management</p> <p>After transfer you would no longer have a Right to Manage set down by legislation. South Wiltshire Homes is however committed to working with tenants to achieve your greater involvement in the management of your homes and would in the future consider and give appropriate support to applications made to establish tenant management organisations where there is clear support</p>	DS	

		from tenants, and appropriate conditions are satisfied. In addition to this consideration, South Wiltshire Homes would support the development of any tenant management organisation proposal that had already secured the support of the Council prior to any transfer.		
	F. RIGHTS			
	<i>Most of this section is a matter of fact. Below are issues of local choice or circumstance</i>			
F1	Statement confirming non use of additional grounds for eviction available under assured tenancy	South Wiltshire Homes will not invoke the additional grounds for eviction available under assured tenancies to existing tenants	DS	
F2	Number of Council tenants who have exercised Rent to Mortgage	None	DS	
F3	Level of maximum RTB discount	£30,000 – available to those who are already tenants/under the preserved Right to Buy	JL	
F4	Level of Right to Acquire grant	£13,500 - available to new and existing tenants but would not be eligible for both the RTB and RTA grant.	JL	
F5	Calculation as to whether anyone would be caught by the cost floor differentials	Due to the high value of property in Salisbury District the cost floors no longer have an impact.	JL	
	G. THE NEW LANDLORD			
G1	The legal status of the new landlord	Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status.	DS	
G2	The number of tenants, council nominees, independents on Board	5 tenants (one of whom could be a leaseholder), 5 council nominees, and 5 independents.	DS	
G3	The aims and objectives of the RSL	Work in progress – report to SB to follow	SG	Set and agreed by Shadow Board
G4	How different categories of Board Member were chosen	Tenant board members were selected by the	DS	

	Tenants Council nominees Independents	Tenant Panel; Council nominees were made by political parties. Independents were selected following application and interview by a working group of tenant and Council nominee shadow board members		
G5	How would they be chosen in future Tenants Council nominees Independents	Open elections ensure that all of South Wiltshire Homes' tenants and leaseholders can be involved in the selection of tenant / leaseholder Board members. Any tenant / leaseholder can stand for election, and could be supported by a proposer and a certain number of tenants / leaseholders (eg: 10) willing to nominate her or him. They would have to prepare an "election address" or give details of their experience and what they can offer all tenants as a Board member. Elections could take place in a number of ways depending on how you want board members to represent the tenants at large. All tenants could vote for 5 candidates or there could be elections on an area basis or on a peer basis – for example, everyone in sheltered housing votes for the sheltered housing candidate etc.	DS / ET	
G6	Do Board members get paid?	No. Although the Housing Corporation allows a reasonable payment none is currently proposed and Board members have been recruited to serve on a voluntary basis. However, Board members can claim back out of pocket expenses actually incurred carrying out South Wiltshire Homes' business.	Trowers	

G7	What the new RSL would do about complaints	<p style="text-align: center;">South Wiltshire Homes – Complaints Procedure</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes will aim to ensure that the number of complaints about its services is kept to a minimum by having excellent and efficient services carried out by well-trained staff, whose training has included customer care.</p> <p>Nevertheless complaints will inevitably arise, and when they do efforts will be made to try and remedy the situation quickly, to ensure that lessons are learnt, and where appropriate changes made to prevent further complaints in future.</p> <p>Where a complaint arises, the complainant will be encouraged to put it in writing so there is a clear record, however complaints can be made verbally, by phone or in person, or by email.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes will have a target of acknowledging the complaint within 5 days and providing a full written reply within 15 working days.</p> <p>If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response they may write to the Chief Executive of South Wiltshire Homes to request an independent review of the matter. The Chief Executive will arrange for a review by someone who was not involved in the original handling of the matter.</p> <p>If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response from the Chief Executive, they may</p>	JP	
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		<p>write to the Appeal Panel to request a review of their complaint.</p> <p>If the complainant is still unhappy with the outcome they will have the option of contacting the Independent Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman expects the stages described above to have been completed before he will consider the matter. South Wiltshire Homes would be expected to comply with any recommendation made by the Independent Housing Ombudsman after he had investigated a complaint.</p> <p>You will be able to contact your local Councillors or your MP in the same way as you can now.</p>		
G8	Role of Council in monitoring RSL (contract)	<p>Role of Council in monitoring RSL (contract)</p> <p>Before a transfer can take place South Wiltshire Homes would be required to enter into a formal and legally binding contract with the council. This agreement would allow the council to make sure that promises made to tenants in this document are kept. If there was any suggestion of South Wiltshire Homes failing to honour the promises the council could enforce them against South Wiltshire Homes.</p> <p>Tenants would be protected by arrangements set up by the council to monitor South Wiltshire Home's performance and delivery on the promises. As part of those arrangements, any proposed changes to the</p>	AR	

		<p>Tenancy Agreement or to the promises given, would need to be approved firstly by the council before the written consent of the tenants is sought.</p> <p>The day to day management of South Wiltshire Homes would be a matter for the Board and the council has no involvement in this.</p>		
G9	How homes would be allocated by the RSL	<p>How homes would be allocated by the RSL</p> <p>The council will continue to manage the housing waiting list of people waiting for accommodation for the Salisbury District area. There would be an agreement to allow the council to nominate people in housing need to South Wiltshire Homes where South Wiltshire Homes has properties available for letting. South Wiltshire Homes would seek nominations from the waiting list for vacant properties and would allocate in a similar way to the council taking into account the needs of waiting list, transfer and homeless applicants .</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would work closely with the council in ensuring that priority is given to people in housing need and allocating homes in a way that promotes choice, considers peoples' need and encourages the development of sustainable and balanced communities. It would also continue to make appropriate lettings in sheltered housing schemes.</p> <p>As with the council, South Wiltshire Homes</p>	DS / AR	

		<p>would continue to operate their own housing register and would also operate a tenants' transfer policy. Applicants for housing would be able to apply direct to be on SWH housing register. The transfer policy would enable tenants who need to move to larger or smaller properties or to another type or location of property to be assessed and considered for a move.</p> <p>As with the council, South Wiltshire Homes would continue to operate a tenants' transfer policy. This would enable tenants who need to move to larger or smaller properties or to another type or location of property to be assessed and considered for a move.</p> <p>As with the council, tenants would continue to have access to mutual exchanges (home swaps), both in relation to South Wiltshire Homes' homes and with other local authorities and Registered Social Landlords. It would participate in the national HOMES mobility scheme and its replacement 'MoveUK' mobility and home exchange scheme.</p> <p>South Wiltshire Homes would also work in partnership with the council to introduce a choice based lettings scheme, in line with current Government policy. Under this scheme housing and transfer waiting list applicants would need to respond to adverts that list available properties. The council would be able to provide applicants with up-to-date information on the demand for different types of property, indications of likely waiting times, details of rents and</p>		
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		services and details of properties. This would give applicants the opportunity to make a much more informed choice when applying for properties.																																
	H. LEASEHOLDERS	A separate document will be produced for leaseholders.																																
	I. WORKS																																	
11	Split of works (by number of homes) by how many the Council would do and how many the RSL would do in first five years	NOTE: The following "mix" may change as a result of further work on the recently released financial model for 2006/07 which will have an impact on the valuation. <table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Council</td> <td>RSL</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kitchens</td> <td>470</td> <td>1,900</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bathrooms</td> <td>590</td> <td>2,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PVCu doors</td> <td>500</td> <td>2,929</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Door Entry Syst</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£235,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Upgrade Emerg. Lighting</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fire Alarms etc.</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£47,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Digital Aerials</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£60,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fences & Gates</td> <td>£0</td> <td>£1.5M</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Env. Imp</td> <td>£1M</td> <td>£3.9M</td> </tr> </table> Council roads only - RSL security measures, walls, upgrading garage sites etc. Of which Community Fund £0M £0.5M		Council	RSL	Kitchens	470	1,900	Bathrooms	590	2,300	PVCu doors	500	2,929	Door Entry Syst	£0	£235,000	Upgrade Emerg. Lighting			Fire Alarms etc.	£0	£47,000	Digital Aerials	£0	£60,000	Fences & Gates	£0	£1.5M	Env. Imp	£1M	£3.9M	SG / JL	
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11a	Definition of which homes would get works (ie all kitchens over 20 years etc)	All kitchens and bathrooms that need to be replaced within 6 years of the transfer with 1,900 kitchens and 2,300 bathrooms in the first 6 years after transfer. Priority has been given to those in the worst condition.	SG																															
12	What would be the respective budgets?	See above 11	SG / JL																															
13	How is the need for new bathrooms and kitchens defined?	The Decent Homes Standard requires kitchens to be no more than 20 years old and bathrooms no more than 30 years old. To meet this standard merely the units and sanitary ware need to be replaced	SG / DS																															

		SWH wants to provide more than the basic Decent Homes standard. The package of works each home receives would depend on its current condition but set out below are the standard of improvements SWH will provide as part of the South Wiltshire Standard		
14	Details on standard of bathrooms/kitchens by RSL	<p>KITCHENS</p> <p>Kitchens would be modernised and tenants would be given a choice of worktops and doors.</p> <p>1,900 new high quality kitchens would be fitted in the first 6 years following transfer.</p> <p>New kitchens would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible improved layout and larders demolished. • Choice of finishes to work tops and unit doors. • Kitchen designed to accommodate your appliances. • Choice of lever taps for disabled • New floor covering • More wall and base units installed than required by the Decent Homes Standard • Where applicable, extractor fan and additional electric sockets and light fitting. 	PB	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where required new ceilings with coving fitted. • Menu of optional extras • Choice of redecoration <p>BATHROOMS</p> <p>2,300 bathrooms would be fitted within 6 years allowing for:</p> <p>New bathrooms works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over bath electric showers or level access shower cubicles as appropriate (for Disabled only) • Replacement bath, wash hand basin and WC • Extractor fan and light fitting • Wall tiles • New floor covering • Where required new ceilings • Moulded bath panel • A choice of redecoration. 		
15	Special works to sheltered schemes	There is an allowance in the overall investment programme for converting bedsits and modernising the communal areas of sheltered schemes as well as renewal of the	DS	

		lifeline communication system. This would be done in consultation with residents and their relatives.		
16	What environmental improvements would be done compared to what the Council could afford?	Savills stock condition survey has allowed for a lump sum budget for environmental enhancements of £3.9M over the first 10 years after transfer. The Council would not be able to afford any improvements.	JL / PB / DS	
17	Statement on disabled adaptations	SWH will spend the same amount on disabled adaptations as the Council. This budget has been set aside for the whole 30 year business plan.	DS	
18	Provision for future major repairs and planned maintenance	SWH has planned to carry out all the necessary major repairs and planned maintenance found to be necessary by the recent stock condition survey.	SG	
19	Would the RSL charge extra for any improvements	No. There would be no need for extra rent for any of these improvements (over and above the annual rent increases explained in section B) because they would be incorporated into SWH business plan	SG / DS	
110	Would tenants be consulted about major works?	Yes. Dedicated staff will visit tenants in their own homes to discuss the type of works to be undertaken in their property and provide details of any choices they may have in relation to the work. Tenants will be kept fully informed of dates of prospective works and of progress whilst works are being undertaken.	DS	
113	Is it anticipated that anyone will have to move out of their home while work is done?	No. At the moment it is not anticipated that the planned works will require tenants to move out. However, if there are any special circumstances which would mean someone could not live in the property while the works are being done arrangements would be made for alternative accommodation.	DS	
111	Do tenants have to have the works done even if they have already done them themselves?	No. Provided that prior permission has been granted for the works and the works	DS	

		themselves have been undertaken to a standard acceptable to the council and inspected thereafter.		
112	Would the RSL provide new homes for rent?	SWH would anticipate being a provider of new homes for people in housing need.	DS	
114	Would tenants still be allowed to carry out their own improvements	Yes subject to prior approval and subsequent inspection	DS	
115	Will there be a community pot for other projects?	Yes, and this will include a commitment to honour any existing council promises such as to support the establishment of a Community Centre for Bemerton Heath.	DS	
	<i>j. IF STOCK IS RETAINED / IF THERE IS A NO VOTE</i>			
J1	<i>How would savings have to be made?</i>	<p>If stock transfer does not take place and nothing else changes we estimate that the council will have to make savings of £1m from it's current budget from April 2007. There are a number of potential areas where savings could be considered but there would be no final decision until there had been full consultation with tenants, councillors, staff, unions and other stakeholders ;-</p> <p>REDUCTION IN REPAIRS SERVICE</p> <p>Comparing our repairs service with that of another housing organisation operating locally it is evident that there are a number of repairs that we currently provide for tenants for free that they do not. These include, not replacing broken windows, not unblocking sinks, not repairing internal doors, not replacing tap washers.</p> <p>The effect of this will be to reduce our repairs</p>	DS	

		<p>standards.</p> <p>REDUCTION IN THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS</p> <p>The amount of work currently undertaken when we improve a kitchen and bathroom could be reduced to the basic decent home standard. As the stock deteriorates the amount of essential structural works will increase leaving less resources to improve kitchens and bathrooms and thus reducing the number completed each year.</p> <p>END CLEANING SERVICES AT BEMERTON HEATH & FRIARY</p> <p>(Please note an alternative would be to raise service charges to this amount to tenants at Bemerton Heath and the Friary).</p> <p>The cleaning contract covers the cleansing of communal staircases, litter picking on the estates and graffiti removal.</p> <p>CLOSE OFFICES AT BEMERTON HEATH & FRIARY</p> <p>Closing the estate offices at Bemerton Heath and the Friary including HRA support to the Community Centre at Bemerton Heath. This will reduce the level of service at the estates and would require additional General Fund resources to keep the Community</p>		
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		<p>Centre open. These offices provide local housing services to tenants and the community centre provides wider community services to Bemerton Heath'</p> <p>REDUCE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT STAFF</p> <p>Each Neighbourhood Manager currently manages just under 700 properties. If we increase the number managed to 900 we would save 2 members of staff. Neighbourhood Managers deal with rent arrears, estate management, neighbour disputes, anti social behaviour, and allocations.</p> <p>REDUCE REPAIR INSPECTIONS</p> <p>Repairs Inspectors could be reduced in line with the neighbourhood managers. Their role involves pre and post inspection and ordering and specifying responsive repairs. This could impact on the quality of repairs undertaken</p> <p>REDUCE CONTRACTS STAFF</p> <p>There are currently two budgeted vacancies within our contracts staff who work on</p>		
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		<p>the Planned Maintenance programme due to the uncertainty about the amount of future work to be undertaken.</p> <p>REDUCTION IN ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS</p> <p>We currently inspect our properties every 5 years and undertake the necessary remedial works in line with good practice. We could extend this to every 10 years without increasing the risk too much,</p> <p>INCREASE SERVICE CHARGES</p> <p>As part of the Stock Option Appraisal a Community and Housing Scrutiny and Working Group identified a potential £140,000 of service charges that are not currently being collected. This included the cleaning service at Bemerton Heath and the Friary which have already been included above. The works include additional charges for sewage treatment works and other services provided to estates that could be charged for. The net figure is £57,230.00.</p> <p>INCREASE SERVICE CHARGES TO SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION SERVICES</p> <p>At the moment rents subsidise sheltered</p>		
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		<p>accommodation. This could be recovered by increasing service charges to sheltered accommodation residents.</p> <p>_TRICKLE TRANSFER OF VOID PROPERTIES REQUIRING EXTENSIVE WORKS</p> <p>Other Councils in this position have considered transferring void properties which require works above a certain limit to existing housing associations who have more resources to improve the property and preserves the property in social housing as there will be no Right to Buy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		

The document will be checked and amended throughout to ensure that a balance between rural & urban nature of stock is reflected in the text.

NB The tenancy agreement is treated separately. *A separate document for leaseholders will be produced.*