

# NFA Welcomes Government Action to Safeguard Tenant Involvement

## Press release

**Date: 7 December 2011**

The National Federation of ALMOs has welcomed new strengthened guidelines issued by the government this week that reminds councils of their responsibilities to consult tenants when reviewing the future of their council housing.

The new guidance has been issued following recent high-profile cases where ALMOs (arm's length management organisations), have been reviewed by their parent councils.

The guidance has been issued to all councils with ALMOs and provides a series of best practice recommendations to follow during a review of housing management. Although it is non-statutory, the government will expect all councils to comply with the guidance.

Sue Roberts, NFA Chair, said:

“This is a real victory for tenant empowerment and will go a long way to giving tenants a meaningful say in how their estates are managed in the future. The NFA has worked closely with the government to create these guidelines following concerns that some councils were not conducting a fair and impartial review process.

“We hope that the strengthened guidance will remind councils of their responsibilities to place tenants at the heart of the process and to ensure that reviews are fair, open and transparent.”

The revised guidelines state that information provided to tenants must be accurate and impartial and that all tenants should have a say in the final decision either

through a ballot or other comprehensive consultation process, and the process should be overseen by an external organisation to ensure that it is fair and valid.

The guidance also states that the consultation exercises undertaken by councils considering the future of their ALMOs should be at least as comprehensive as that undertaken to set up the ALMO. Where this involved a tenant ballot, the guidance suggests that another ballot should take place to allow tenants the same opportunities to express their opinions.

The government decision to publish new guidance follows an earlier letter from Housing Minister Grant Shapps to the NFA Chair, which stated that 'it is imperative that tenants have adequate protection and their views about the provision of housing management services for their homes are fully considered.'

Of the 59 ALMOs in England, 20 have so far had their management agreements extended following a review.

ENDS

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### **Notes to Editors**

- Arm's length management organisations (ALMOs) have led a revolution in the management of council housing since they were first established in 2002. There are currently 59 ALMOs which manage over 854,000 council homes across 58 local authorities.