

MINUTE EXTRACT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – URGENT DECISION MEETING
17 FEBRUARY 2006

Urgent Key Decision

05/05 Derby Homes Service Access Review Proposed Closure of Local Housing Offices

The Leader considered a report from the Director of Resources on the Derby Homes Service Access Review Proposed Closure of Local Housing Offices. This report was considered by Council Cabinet at their meeting on 17 January 2006. Council Cabinet had agreed to delegate the decision to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Inclusion to enable the recommendations from the Community Regeneration Commission to be taken into consideration. Due to urgency the decision could not wait to be taken at the next Housing and Social inclusion Cabinet Member meeting. The Leader also considered the report of the Community Regeneration Commission.

Options Considered

1. To close all ten offices where cash offices were closing because of their falling efficiency levels. These were the current nine part-time offices plus Stockbrook Street. This would mean the closure of Chellaston, Spondon, Littleover, Chaddesden Park, Osmaston, Austin, Cowsley, Old Sinfen, Stockbrook Street and Brook Street.
2. Derby Homes had been asked, as at recommendation 2.3 of the report to carry out further consultations and to bring back further recommendations on how to rationalise and improve front line services by the summer of 2006.

Decision

1. To note the comments and recommendations of the Community Regeneration Commission.
2. To ask the Director of Resources to investigate the requests made by the Community Regeneration Commission.
3. To approve the new arrangements proposed for four full-time offices, three part-time offices and a further five offices offering more limited opening for the time being, as outlined at 1.14 in the Director of Resource's report.
4. To approve the closure of the three part-time offices, as soon as practicable, at Littleover, Chellaston and Spondon.

5. To ask Derby Homes to carry out further consultations, with the aim of resolving the situation by summer 2006, on the closure of three of the limited opening offices referred to in 2.1 of the report at Cowsley, Chaddesden Park and Osmaston. This would allow time for:
 - further examination of their potential as part of the Council's neighbourhood access strategy
 - monitoring the continuation of improved performance standards for the Enquiry Centre
 - evaluating the success of surgeries.

Reasons

1. The Best Value Service Access Review concluded that there was no longer a justification for sustaining 15 local offices.
2. Derby Homes' management fee is reducing because of Right to Buy – RTB – sales, and this reduction in revenue is projected to continue which means that Derby Homes needs to make savings.