

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**THE BOARD
15 MAY 2008**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides summary of key performance outcomes for 2007-08 and progress on a number of issues including inspection preparations.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that

- 2.1 The Board note the contents of this report.

3 REPORT

3.1 Performance

- 3.1.1 The 2007-08 performance report outcomes for 1st April 2007 – 31st March 2008 have been reported at Performance and Regulatory and the report is enclosed for information. I wish, however, to highlight to Board the key achievements and areas that now require our focus.

- 3.1.2 As Board are fully aware, we re-organised the key services as part of our foundation plan into specialist functions and the impact of these changes can be seen by all our primary performance indicators having a positive trend when comparing the first six months followed by the second six months of the year.

The key highlights are:

- The reduction in number of lettable properties that are empty from 638 to 425, representing a 33% reduction.
- Reduction in the number of voids empty for more that six months from 173 to 82, which is a 53% reduction
- Performance on voids that have become empty since 1st July (when our specialist central Voids Team was created) is on target with an average relet time of 39.7 days (well within target of 45 days)
- The number of our lettable voids for 07-08 reduced by 31% from 619 to 425 which equates to in the region of £500 000.
- Long term voids reduced significantly by 21% throughout the year by 54% from 179 to 82. (2005-06 which started the year with 851 lettable voids.)

- Average time to register an application has reduced from 20 days in September to 4 days in March.
- Some increase in collection of rent and arrears from 95% September to 96.23% in March (Rent collection performance was subject to separate report to Performance and Regulatory committee.)
- The percentage of complaints responded to with 10 days has been 99% and 98% in February and March respectively
- The percentage of complaints responded to within 10 days has been 99% for February and March
- The percentage of member enquiries responded to within 5 working days was 97% and 100% in February and March respectively.
- 62% (24 out of 39 estates) are deemed to be two star standard or above compared to 36% (14 estates) in June 2007
- The percentage of all responsive repairs completed on target is 98.0% and 98.7% for February and March which is within top quartile (97%)
- The percentage of routine repairs completed on target has been 97.3% and 98.3% for February and March 08 respectively which is top quartile (over 97%)
- Percentage of responsive repairs for which an appointment was made and kept is 97.4% for February and March (which is top quartile 97%)
- Percentage of properties which have a valid annual gas servicing certificate or that have been made safe has been 100% in February and March (with cumulative average of 99.98%)

3.1.3 It is recognised that there are areas which are a priority, as set out in our 2008/09 delivery plan and these include improving our rent collection performance (and was subject of a specific report to Performance and Regulatory committee), continued focus on access and customer care performance areas and tenancy and estate management.

Also, as I reported in my report in March 08, we also continue to work on absence management and there are early signs of positive improvement, for example by a decrease in the monthly average from 1.53 days February to 1.14 days in March.

3.2 **Inspection Planning**

3.2.1 Following discussions at the Board Away Day, the first meeting the Board's Inspection Working Group is to be held 10 – 11am 13th May which will consider the overview Inspection Preparations Project Plan in more detail and also specific plans around the preparations for the Board.

3.2.2 The plans for preparations includes:

- Self assessment process
- Document collation
- Board involvement and preparations
- Employee involvement and communications
- Tenant and Leaseholder involvement and communications
- Nottingham City Council involvement and briefings
- Other Partners involvement and briefings

3.2.3 Ann Bennett, Lead Inspector for East Midlands will now be attending the Company Managers meeting on 21st May. This date will also be the launch of the self-assessment process which includes a series of stakeholder events based on each Key Line of Enquiry. Board members will be invited to attend as many of these as they wish. These events will also be supported by experienced managers from external ALMOs acting as our “peer review”.

3.2.4 We are holding Employee events on 19th May which will then followed up with a series of road shows where the senior management team will be visiting teams in their workplace. Employees from the teams will also be invited to the KLOE workshop days.

Similarly, tenants and leaseholders will be invited to KLOE workshop days, a significant component of the communications and marketing work will be geared at communicating to tenants and leaseholders, and promoting the opportunities for involvement.

3.2.5 Also a number meeting and presentation have taken place with Nottingham City Council, to ensure we are working in partnership to achieve the 2 stars. There will also be a similar programme of activity to engage and involve key partners and stakeholders.

3.3 **Tenant Participation Update**

3.3.1 Recruitment is currently underway to the new restructured Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team. The Board Member Champion has been involved in the recruitment process. Bolton at Homes is a Beacon Authority for tenant participation and will be providing mentoring and support to the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team. An initial officer meeting has been set up to scope the extent of their support. This will be widened out to involve others as a programme for their work is established. Joint working is taking place with the Marketing Team to look at ways in which the profile of tenant involvement can be raised. A Chair of the Forums meetings has been established to meet with officers, to share good practice; develop working relationships; provide networking opportunities; and to consider the tenants role in the Company's preparations for inspection. The first meeting of this Group

was very positive and welcomed by tenants. A forward plan for Area Panels is being developed in consultation with the Chairs of the Panels.

3.4 Active Learning for Residents

3.4.1 Active Learning for Residents (ALfR) is a project which during 2007/08 was piloted by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). The aim of the project is to recognise the work that tenants and residents are already doing in their role as community leaders and enable them to obtain a recognised vocational qualification. The project has three recognised levels, commencing at level 2 up to level 4, each level corresponds to the same NVQ level, so level 2 will lead to a level 2 NVQ qualification. The project has many benefits, from raising confidence in our community representatives, recognition for the hard work many representatives undertake without any financial reward, but also assists to promote the Governments worklessness agenda by providing qualifications which will assist people who may not have any other formal qualifications to find employment. The project does not rely on the production of written work but relies on other sources of evidence to support the learning process. The project also allows for employees to become trained as 'recognisers' to support learners in the programme. This provides a development opportunity for the Company's staff. Board Members may wish to get involved as well. Level 4 is an 'award in governance' aimed at those who are or who are seeking to become Board Members. The Director of Housing has experience of supporting Board Members in her previous organisation through this process. An initial budget of between £7,500 to £10,000 (dependent upon take up) will support this project in year one (2008/09), year two and three will be cheaper as initial registration costs covers a three year period. This cost will be met from existing budgets.

3.5 Health & Safety

3.5.1 Ex Employee v Nottingham City Council - Incident Date August 2004
On the 1st May 2008 Nottingham County Court found in favour of Nottingham City Homes (zero liability) in a case involving an ex-employee who had claimed damages against the Company for injuries caused by a leaking hedge trimmer. The Company is awaiting for a full Court summary regarding the case outcomes.

3.6 Financial Outturn 2007/08

3.6.1 The Company's financial position for 2007/08 shows a deficit for the year of £268k against an original budgeted surplus of £51k. However, this includes one-off costs relating to the staff restructure, for which an additional £500k was made available from the Housing Revenue Account. The overall position reflects some overspends in Property Services relating to the tender and delays in implementing the restructure. There were under-spends within the rest of the business, most significantly relating to delays in recruitment affecting

Organisational Development and Marketing and Communications budgets.

- 3.6.2 The overall capital outturn position was £400k below the approved budget, although this does conceal voids capitalisation of £470k above the budget. Savings of almost £300k were achieved across three major schemes and the rest of the variance relates to slippage into 2008/09.

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