

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**THE BOARD
31 JULY 2008**

UPDATE REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a brief update on some of the key issues currently on going in the organisation.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that The Board note the contents of this report.

3 REPAIRS TENDER

The new contract started on schedule on Monday, 7th July 2008. The extensive mobilisation plan proved to be extremely effective and the repairs operation has continued largely uninterrupted. I wish to acknowledge and thank all the staff for their hard work and commitment that enabled the contract to start on time. Some of the key changes already implemented are:-

- Eastcroft and Basford depots have now been closed and all repairs activity operates from Harvey Road.
- An upgraded computer package has been successfully implemented (albeit there are still the expected teething problems) and a whole new Schedule of Works has been loaded onto the system; almost 20% of the items are new items replacing old day work arrangements.
- The first of the new vans will be delivered on the 24th July with a roll out over the next 3 months.
- The use of sub-contractors has been reduced substantially following a comprehensive review and re-procurement.
- The bonus system has been revised to cater for the new Schedule of Rates items within the contract. Although the overall wages bill is unaffected, there is concern that take-home pay for some individual operatives might be affected. We are working with the Trade Unions to resolve any outstanding matters.
- NCH is also acting as "Client" for the contract and the new structure to achieve an appropriate separation has been discussed with the City.

- The Joinery Mill has been rationalised following decisions on window replacement and the staff have been successfully retrained/redeployed and are now making a very positive contribution to the Decent Homes programme where they have plaudits for the work that they have done fitting windows in the Aspley area.

Overall implementation has to date gone better than might have been expected which enables us to focus on the next stage of service implementation.

4. FENCING

4.1 Arrangements are in place for all routine repairs to fencing to be completed within a target time of 15 days where there is a potential for danger to residents. The danger might arise from one of 3 types of incident:-

- Dangerous dog in adjacent garden
- Main road with heavy traffic flows
- Back alleyways which give rise to Anti social Behaviour

There is, however, an exception to the above, in Broxtowe, Aspley, Bells Lane and Bestwood where there are significant volumes of fencing in need of replacement and renewal rather than small response repair jobs. Over two thirds of the requests for fencing in the last financial year arose from these four areas alone.

In order to tackle the issue in a most cost effective way we have undertaken an intensive 10 week replacement programme. This programme is currently in week 4 and we expect therefore should be completed by the end of September.

5. RECRUITMENT

5.1 We are in the process of recruiting to 3 key posts:-

- The director of Organisational Development – interviews to take place on 4th August.
- Adverts are currently out for 2 key management posts within the repairs service.

The majority of the posts arising from the restructure have now been filled. However, many of these were filled internally and there are now a number of consequential vacancies within the structure which are in the process of being filled, many of these will be going to external advert.

6. INSPECTION PREPARATION

The Board have been fully apprised of progress at their Away Days on

24th and 25th July. The Board Inspection Group has been meeting regularly to support and direct progress. We are now in the final stage of pulling together documentation and outcomes from our KLOE review. We expect the first draft of the Self Assessment to be completed by the end of August in time for a Stakeholders Review at the beginning of September. The final draft will be brought to Board on the 18th September in time for submission to the Housing Inspectorate on the 22nd September

7. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

Discussions and negotiations have progressed successfully with the City on the 4 SLA's due to be terminated over the next few weeks. There will, as expected, be some staff who will be TUPE'd from the City in respect of the IT Client side activity. Arrangements are progressing with the City to achieve a smooth hand over and staff transferring will be integrated into new positions in our Corporate IT service.

Arrangements for the other 3 services; Fleet provision, Design and Property Services and Human Resources will not involve TUPE transfer. There will be a limited buy-back of some services and discussions are at an advance stage for all of these services.

8. SICKNESS ABSENCE

Following the Managing Sickness Absence training for all managers in May/June there has been a continued downward trend in sickness absence from 1.2 average number of working days lost per employee per month in December 2007 to .84 in June. If this downward trend continues the predicated year end figure will have significantly reduced from 15 days lost per average employee at the end of March of 07 to around 11 days and exceeding the company target of 12.5 days.

In addition to the management training at the beginning of June we implemented a pilot scheme by outsourcing the reporting of sickness absence for the Housing Area Offices to a company called Diagnostic Health Solutions (DHS). This affected around 200 employees.

When comparing June's sickness absence in the pilot scheme to the same group of employees the previous month there was an 18% reduction in sickness absence for that month. Although it is early days, the outsourcing of the reporting of sickness is having a further impact on the downward trend.

Supported Housing will be added to this pilot in the coming weeks, resulting in over 300 employees in the pilot scheme with DHS.

By the end of August a second pilot will be undertaken by Active Health involving a further 300 employees.

9. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER PARTICIPATION COMPACT

Nottingham City Homes Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Compact, the formal agreement made between Nottingham City Homes, Nottingham City Council and the Council's tenants and leaseholders sets out opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to have meaningful involvement as respected partners in influencing, developing and improving services in their local areas and across Nottingham. The Compact was launched in June 2007.

An annual independent review of the Compact is now required. Tim Morton Associates have been appointed.

The Compact will be measured against the TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Survey) standard and the government guidance issued in 2005. A final report is to be provided in early August 2008.

10. BOLTON AT HOME PEER MENTORING SCHEME

Nottingham City Homes are participating in the Peer Mentoring Scheme with Bolton at Home who have been awarded Beacon Status for tenant involvement and have been funded by the Government to provide NCH with 15 days peer mentoring.

NCH will be learning from Bolton at Home's experience in the delivery of tenant participation which has led them to becoming a three star organisation. A Service Level Agreement has been signed and is in progress. Completion is by 31 December 2008.

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DATE: 25th July 2008