

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

THE BOARD
22 JANUARY 2009

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S 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

It is recommended that the Board:

- 2.1 note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 establish a Housing Management Operations Working Group (see 3.3)
- 2.3 mote the appointment of Vinshire Plumbing & Heating Ltd and Superior Plumbing Installations Ltd;
- 2.4 approve the contract for new and replacement heating systems in line with the published Decent Homes Programme;
- 2.5 note the appointment of Yorkshire Windows and Nationwide Windows; and
- 2.6 approve the contract to supply and install windows for the Nottingham Secure Scheme inline with the published Decent Homes Programme.

3. REPORT

3.1 2008 INSPECTION

- 3.1.1 It is anticipated that the result of our 2008 inspection will be published by result of the inspection and the full Audit Commission Report will be published by early February.
- 3.1.2 However, at this stage, I wish to report to Board some of the key themes and lessons for Nottingham City Homes from the inspection report.
- 3.1.3 The inspection demonstrated that a high degree of pride and commitment to the services of Nottingham City Homes exist now across all stakeholders. Staff at all levels across the company showed strong commitment to customer service and that they felt valued and listened to. Tenants and leaseholders were shown to have influence on the shape of our services and gave strong feedback on the change in culture in the organisation. Our partner agencies, including Nottingham City Council were extremely supportive and the inspectors recognised

the added value that brings to the services to our tenants and leaseholders, particularly in the area of Anti-Social Behaviour. We are also confident the inspectors recognised our clear investment plans for the Decent Homes programme and that our choice based lettings scheme, Homelink and implementation of NCC's allocation policy was seen as open, transparent and fair.

- 3.1.4 We anticipate that the key areas for improvement highlighted by the audit commission include the need to continue to improve customer satisfaction including opportunities for tenants to be involved. Also, whilst we have a strong focus on equality and diversity, progress is slower than we would wish in working towards the Equality Standard and in carrying out equality impact assessments. The need to complete our review of sheltered housing and modernise the service was identified. We are also need to ensure we have promoted and communicated on all health and safety issues.

3.2 **FORWARD PLANNING**

- 3.2.1 The Audit Commission inspection report will be considered in detail to ensure we implement the recommendations of the report and address all other weaknesses. The majority of these will be considered as part of our service improvement plans. However, following the discussion at the last Board on our draft 2009-10 Delivery Plan, I wish to propose a number of key priorities for Nottingham City Homes over the next three years, and these will form the basis of a 3 year business plan to be developed over the coming months.

- To achieve excellent services

- 3.2.2 This includes our need to streamline our empty property and lettings service.

- A major push on equality and diversity

- 3.2.3 This includes our need to carry out more detailed market research and analysis of customer needs, the full programme of equality impact assessments.

- Modernise the repairs service
- Delivery and maximise the potential from the Decent Homes programme
- Develop the customer service centre and reinforce local service delivery
- Develop needs led supported housing services
- Exploration of new business opportunities to secure the long term future of Nottingham City Homes

3.2.4 To support the organisation manage the change required to reach our ambition we propose to underpin these broader objectives with a focus on :

- Robust budget and financial management including review of SLAs
- Major investment in new technology, systems and processes
- Human Resources management
- A review of our performance management
- A review of the management agreement with Nottingham City Council

3.3. **HOUSING MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS WORKING GROUP**

3.3.1 In the run up to the Inspection a number of strategies and policies were either refreshed or developed to comply with the Audit Commission document request submission. Time constraints meant that these documents were not approved by Board and now need to be ratified by the Board. Due to the number of documents which need approval normal Board business could be stifled if they were brought to full Board for approval. It is therefore suggested that a Housing Management Operations Working group be established to progress these policies and to develop future policies and issues within the directorate. Copies of the minutes and policies will be circulated to all Board members to ensure they are kept informed and key issues will continue to be brought to Board for discussion.

3.3.2 It is recommended that a Housing Management Operations Working Group be established, and that Board identifies members for this group. The Director of Housing Operations will be the officer lead for the group.

3.4 **AUDIT COMMISSION'S REPORT INTO THE ALLOCATION AND LETTING SERVICE**

3.4.1 The Audit Commission's report to Nottingham City Council into the allocation of properties to housing tenants and related issues was published on 15th January 2009. The report covers the period from 2003 to late 2005, in the latter days of the direct control of council housing by the Council and in the early days of NCH.

3.4.2 An immediate briefing for Board members was convened and NCH will be recommending accepting the findings and recommendations of the report as they pertain to NCH unreservedly. We released a joint press release stating this with Nottingham City Council. We are also now seeking legal advice on NCH and on our options to Board.

3.4.3 NCH issued a joint press release with Nottingham City Council in response to the report's publication. A copy is attached Appendix B. We have also sought to proactively communicate to our staff. This will be considered in more detail at item 11 of the Agenda.

3.5 APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS

3.5.1 New and Replacement Heating

3.5.1.1 These works were the subject of a Contract Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union dispatched on 12th May 2008 (reference number 2008/S 92-125163) Installation of Heating. The form of contract is to be the PPC2000 ACA Project Partnering Contract. The term of the Contract will commence on 1st January 2009 and run until 30th June 2011. The overall programme of works for heating on the Decent Homes programme is likely to be in excess of £30m.

3.5.1.2 From the 29 contractors that submitted a Pre Qualification Questionnaire. There were 6 contractors who qualified to go forward to the tendering stage of the process. The successful contractors shortlisted were:

- 3.5.1.3
- G Purchase Construction & T&S Heating
 - PH Jones Ltd
 - Rok Group
 - Superior Plumbing Installations Ltd
 - Vinshire Plumbing & Heating Ltd
 - Wheldon Contracts & Services Ltd

3.5.1.4 Tenders were evaluated by a price/quality split of 50%Quality - 50% Price.

3.5.1.5 An evaluation process was carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in the Invitation to Tender dated July 2008. 6 contractors were invited to tender and they all returned a final bid for the contract. Members of staff from NCH, NCC and Savills have been involved in the evaluation process as well as representation from the customers Procurement Group. The final combined Price and Quality scores identified that Vinshire Plumbing & Heating Ltd and Superior Plumbing Installations Ltd were the best placed to deliver the heating contract for NCH's Nottingham Secure Programme.

3.5.2 Windows Report

3.5.2.1 These works were the subject of a Contract Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union dispatched on 28th February 2008 (reference number 2008/S 41-056844) Installation of Plastic Windows and Composite doors. The overall programme of works for windows and doors on the Decent Homes programme is likely to be in excess of £30m.

3.5.2.2 From the 28 contractors that submitted a Pre Qualification Questionnaire. There were 6 contractors who qualified to go forward to the tendering stage of the process. The Pre Qualification Questionnaires were assessed and the following successful contractors were invited to bid:

- 3.5.2.3
- Sovereign
 - Yorkshire Windows Company
 - Norfolk Frames
 - Anglian Windows
 - Nationwide Windows
 - Radway Windows

3.5.2.4 Tenders were evaluated by a price/quality split - Price 60% - Quality 40%. Members of staff from NCH, NCC and Savills were involved in the evaluation process as well as tenant representatives. The final combined Price and Quality scores identified that Yorkshire Windows and Nationwide Windows were the best placed to deliver the Window and Door contract for NCH's Nottingham Secure Programme.

3.5 WELCOME TO THE NEW DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Finally, I wish to welcome George Pashley, our new Director of Organisational Development to NCH. George joined us on 1 December 2008 from Kensington and Chelsea.

CONTACT OFFICER: Chris Langstaff
Chief Executive
Tel: 0115 9157351
E-mail: chris.langstaff@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

DATE: 13 January 2009