

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

THE BOARD
27 JANUARY 2010

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE REPORT

1 SUMMARY

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

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board note the report.

3 NEW BUILD COUNCIL HOUSING ALLOCATION

- 3.1 Nottingham City Council submitted a bid created jointly with NCH for the second round of funding to build new council homes. Having secured funds for eight homes in Clifton in the first round, it is positive to be able to report that the second round bid has again been successful.

- 3.2 It was announced by the Minister on the 11 January 2010 that we will be building fifteen units at Camrose Close, Beechdale, on the site of a demolished sheltered housing scheme, consisting of three x three bed bungalows, eleven x three bed houses, and one x five bed house to accommodate a large family with disabled members. We will also be building eight units at Lillington Road, Bulwell on the site of a derelict depot, consisting of seven x three bed houses and one x four bed house to accommodate a large family with disabled members.

- 3.3 Completion is scheduled for 31st March 2011. This was the second largest allocation in the East Midlands (after Leicester, who did not receive any round one funding), and is 13% of the total funds allocated to the region.

4 GOVERNMENT ASSESSMENT OF DECENT HOMES

- 4.1 In December 2009 the Minister for Housing announced a full assessment of the Decent Homes programme and invited submissions from social landlords. The government argues that the programme is a massive national refurbishment programme of unprecedented scale. Over £33 billion has been invested already to make sure council and housing association tenants live in homes with decent facilities.

- 4.2 NCH's Secure Warm Modern decent homes programme has a great story to tell, with an innovative approach to delivery, high satisfaction rates, important levels of tenant involvement and delivery processes that are driving down costs to get even greater value for money. NCH will submit details of our successes to the assessment by the deadline of 29

January.

- 4.3 I have also been invited together with the director of Housing from the City of Manchester to support the CLG Permanent Secretary in providing evidence to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee which is reviewing the National Decent Homes programme.

5 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SECURE WARM MODERN 2010-2012

- 5.1 We have joined forces with Nottingham Trent University to look at the impact of our decent homes programme in the city. The collaboration will be carried out as a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP); the first public sector KTP for the university. KTPs are sponsored by the government and research councils and encourage businesses to use the knowledge, technology and skills available within the UK's knowledge base. This £127,000, two-year project will concentrate its research on the Secure Warm Programme and the effect this work has on the local community. We hope to recruit a Housing Investment Impact Analyst next month who will be based within our Strategy and Partnerships directorate.

6 TENANT RESOURCE CENTRE

- 6.1 The Lord Mayor of Nottingham opened our new Tenant and Leaseholder Resource Centre this month. The resource centre has been set up in partnership with a steering group of tenants to provide a free facility for individuals and groups of tenants in relation to community activities. There are a range of services available to tenants at the centre including computers and printers, stationery, resource materials and a meeting room to help tenants and leaseholders plan and work on community activities

7 MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

- 7.1 We are working with NCC to develop a new 10 year management agreement which supports our role as a strategic partner in the city. The agreement will enable the company to focus on the bigger long term picture, including fulfilling on of our strategic objectives, to be a key partner in the transformation of Nottingham's neighbourhoods

8 HOUSING MINISTER VISIT

- 8.1 Councillor Chapman, Councillor Liversidge, Chris Langstaff and Julie Crook all visited John Healy MP the Housing Minister at the House of Commons on Wednesday 13 January. A number of key issues for Nottingham were discussed the main topic of conversation was the Reform of Council Housing Finance. The Minister confirmed that further consultation would be issued in February this year and that the Department were looking for a number of local Authorities who would express an interest in coming out of the current housing subsidy system.

9 TENANT SERVICES AUTHORITY

We have entered into the statutory phase of consultation with the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) on the proposed new standards for social housing. Consultation is open until 5th February and we will be submitting a response as we have done for the earlier stages of consultation.

Tenants and Board members have been invited to actively engage in the process through an event held on 25 January 2010, at the Ice Arena.

We used this event to gain customer views on the proposed standards, but also to start the dialogue with our customers on what local standards could mean here in Nottingham. We are required to produce a report for tenants (and to be shared with the TSA) before 1st October 2010 that sets out:

- How we meet or plan to meet each of the national standards
- Improvement plans to deal with any gaps
- How performance will be measured/monitored
- Plans for developing local standards

10 COMPANY REVIEWS

10.1 Property Services

- 10.1.1
- Better practice review - new handheld technology is scheduled to be introduced on 23 March. Plans for training and communicating new working methods are currently being put in place. It is hoped to introduce a new payment system at the same time. Options are currently being evaluated. This is subject of a separate report.
 - Asset Management – the resignation of the M&E Service Manager has allowed us to consider consolidating the client roles and separate the Gas and Electrical client functions. Other currently deferred posts within Asset Management will be filled, internally if possible, during 2010 as the Decent Homes programme expands. In addition a fixed term Major Project's manager will be recruited through 2010 to deliver the National Housebuilding projects. Other fee based projects such as the CESP programme may also lead to recruitment in this area.
 - The reduction in voids workload and the changes to recent legislation in Asset Management means that the surveying functions of the service will need to be re-ordered throughout 2010/11. The aspiration for the changes will be to enable a more focussed and self certifying quality control element to the DLO and to reduce duplication.

10.2 Modernisation of Tenancy and Estate Management

- 10.2.1 Following November's Board meeting, section 105 consultation has commenced with tenants on the cessation of cash collection and the revenue collection service. The closing date for response to the consultation is 19 February 2010. At the same time following the informal consultation which has already taken place with staff who are affected by the proposal, formal consultation is being undertaken with the production of a consultation document. The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to Board on 25 March 2010
- 10.2.2 The Working Group of the Housing Services Committee has met to progress the review of the Supported Housing Service and consultation events with tenants and staff are planned in the near future. A report on the proposals will be brought to a future meeting of the Board
- 10.2.3 Work to refresh the accommodation strategy and the development of the blueprint for the Customer Service Centre has commenced. Structures and working practices are currently being reviewed within the Housing Services directorate to ensure that the required efficiencies can be delivered whilst at the same time improving performance and customer satisfaction. The Housing Services Committee Working Group are progressing the modernisation of the Tenancy and Estate Management service and will report back to both the Housing Services Committee and the Board as the proposals are progressed

10.3 Corporate Services

10.3.1 *Finance, ICT and Governance*

- Finance – proposals for review will be drawn up once NCC's restructuring plans are known;
- ICT – several major IT projects are currently in the pipeline so there will be no review of this service for two years;
- Governance – a review of the structure will commence shortly.

10.3.2 *Organisational Development*

- HR – a review has just been completed;
- Employee Development – a review has commenced;
- Health and Safety – several major health and safety projects are currently being undertaken so no review is due to be carried out for a couple of years.

10.3.3 *Strategy and Partnerships*

Plans for a review of this service are currently being drawn up. They will be determined by

- Appointment to the Head of Equalities and Diversity position;
- Integration of the Tenant Participation Team into the Directorate;

- Development of an Internal Communication Strategy.

CONTACT OFFICER: Chris Langstaff
Chief Executive
14 Hounds Gate
Nottingham
NG1 7BA
Tel: 0115 9157351
E-mail: chris.langstaff@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

DATE: 27 January 2010