

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY & PARTNERSHIPS

3 DECEMBER 2009

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES 2010-2013 BUSINESS PLAN

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises members of the Business Development Committee of progress against the development of the company Business Plan covering the period 2010-2013.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Business Development Committee considers the key elements of the Business Plan as outlined in this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report to Board on 24th September 2009 advised that Nottingham City Homes is working jointly with Nottingham City Council to develop a three year Business Plan. The Plan will set out how the company meets its ambition of delivering 3* excellent housing services whilst reducing its costs and supporting the Council deliver some of its wider housing objectives.

- 3.2 The report set out the key consultation dates involved in developing the Business Plan and outlined the involvement of employees, tenants, partners and the Board in this process. Consultation with Area Panels;

and

Tenant Forums has been taking place during October and November and will run until December 2009.

- 3.3 The development of the Business Plan is set against the backdrop of the current economic climate and business priorities will be agreed within this context.
- 3.4 It should be noted that at the time of writing, we still await the Government's subsidy announcement for 2010-2011.

4 BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS

- 4.1 The Business Plan will set out our plans for the next 3 years and the steps to deliver our vision. The Business Plan will be reviewed annually, so the plan adapts to change and reflects our operating

environment.

- 4.2 The Business Plan is being developed within the context of a wider commitment from Nottingham City Council to develop a strategic partnership. This is reflected in the development of our ten year Management Agreement which Nottingham City Council which is mindful of the HRA Finance Review. This is outlined in a report elsewhere on the agenda.
- 4.3 The three year Business Plan will sit within a strategic planning process as highlighted in appendix 1. By its very nature it will be a high level statement, which sets out the strategic framework for taking the company forward. A one year action plan will set out further detail on the actions that will be taken in the financial year 2010/2011 to work towards Business Plan priorities. This will be refreshed on an annual basis, to set out detailed plans for the forthcoming year.
- 4.4 Key inputs to the Business Planning process include:
- ALMO re-inspection report
 - Self assessment outcomes
 - STATUS survey results
 - Employee survey results
 - Tenant, employee and stakeholder consultation
 - Business objectives
 - Financial resources
 - External environment including the expectations of the TSA
- 4.5 Our annual self assessment exercise against the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry was held on 12th October 2009. The event was attended by nearly 100 people, including tenants and leaseholders, employees and Board members, partners and representatives from Derby Homes who acted as critical friends.
- 4.6 Feedback from the event has been very positive with the vast majority of those attending indicating how effective it was. We will be using the information from the evaluation forms to inform next year's event.
- 4.7 As a result of the exercise we have identified additional priorities from customers which will now be incorporated into our annual Service Improvement Plans and the Business Plan.
- 4.8 The self assessment event revealed confidence that in many areas services are of a good standard and that there are real opportunities for improvements in areas such as value for money, tenant involvement and access and communications. The assessment was very positive about strides being made within Equality and Diversity.
- 4.9 Consultation with Area Panels and Tenant Forums to date has involved them in setting priorities for the next three years. Priorities identified include:
- Further improvements to the way we deal with repairs and maintenance.

- Reducing re-let times whilst improving quality and taking action against those who damage properties to recover costs. Introduce incentives to downsize property
- Making communities a safer place to live and protecting the vulnerable. As part of this we should improve the local environment.
- Increasing tenant awareness about their responsibilities as tenants and consideration of widening tenants repair responsibilities.
- Reducing the involvement of consultants and contractors.
- Need to increase involvement of younger people and those living in dispersed communities who may find it more difficult to get involved.
- Minimising the level of decent homes work being refused
- Marketing and selling services to others and looking at new business opportunities. Also considering charges for services currently provided at no cost.
- Realising efficiencies across all services, and targeting tenants for direct debit payment.

4.10 Consultation will continue to take place throughout November and December to seek further views on the Business Plan.

5 THE PLAN

5.1 Key elements of the Plan include:

5.2 (i) Setting out the operating environment and context for NCH. This will include the national, local and company context, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) and the regulatory regime, details of our core business (stock managed, services provided), governance arrangements, and our customer profile.

5.3 The TSA has published its proposals for a new regulatory framework for social housing in England. The proposals form part of a statutory consultation which runs until 5 February 2010, with the final framework to be introduced on 1 April 2010.

5.4 The original standards proposed in June's TSA discussion paper have now been consolidated into six national standards focusing on tenant involvement and empowerment, home, tenancy, neighbourhood and community, value for money and governance and viability.

5.5 Equality and diversity, and tenants with additional support needs have emerged as cross-cutting themes which should be reflected across all standards.

- 5.6 Emphasis on the development and implementation of local standards in which the involvement and empowerment of tenants is seen as a key component. There is a new focus on delivering outcomes that matter locally with tenants and Boards as key partners rather than focusing on processes or outputs.
- 5.7 The TSA does not propose to introduce any codes of practice to accompany the standards at this time: the primary focus of providers is to be on their tenants, not on overly prescriptive regulatory arrangements.
- 5.8 By the 1st October 2010, all providers with more than 1,000 properties must publish an Annual Standards Report which sets out their plans for meeting the new standards.
- 5.9 (ii) Our Ten Year Strategy 2008-2018 set out our ambition and strategic objectives. The Business Plan 2010-2013 will detail what we aim to achieve by 2013 in each of the five objectives listed below:
- To deliver excellent customer focused services
 - To engage customers in influencing the shape and quality of housing services that we provide
 - To be a key partner in the delivery of safe and sustainable neighbourhoods
 - To be a key partner in the transformation of Nottingham's neighbourhoods
 - To be an excellent organisation
- 5.10 (iii) Our achievements over the last twelve months including key facts and figures.
- 5.11 (iv) A summary of the Asset Management Strategy and our Financial Plan which will illustrate how NCH will meet its Business Plan priorities.
- 5.12 (v) Value for Money and Efficiency; our approach to Vfm and how we will make efficiency savings.
- 5.13 During the life of the Plan we aim to:
- Modernise the repairs service
 - Deliver and maximise the potential from the Decent Homes Programme. Completing an impact assessment of the Decent Homes programme working jointly with Nottingham Trent University
 - Develop a customer contact centre and reinforce local service delivery
 - Develop a needs led Supported Housing service
 - Deliver a major push on equality and diversity. Being an employer of choice with the value of equality and diversity at our

heart

- Deliver improved efficiencies in the voids, lettings and allocations service.

- Explore new business opportunities including managing the new build process. Being innovative and creative in service delivery, recognised through external accreditation for the full range of our services

- Deliver a company wide culture change programme 'Rising to the Challenge' which will incorporate performance, leadership employee development initiatives and a campaign to eliminate waste throughout the organisation

- Contribute to the strategic challenges facing the city including worklessness, environmental sustainability and supporting some of the city's most vulnerable residents

6 OTHER OPTIONS

6.1 Not applicable.

7 FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct implications associated with the contents of this report. Risk and financial planning will be included in the development of the Business Plan.

9 IMPLICATIONS FOR NCH OBJECTIVES

9.1 The Business Plan will set out Nottingham City Homes' objectives for 2010-2013 as well as longer term goals and stretching targets towards 2014.

10 VALUE FOR MONEY & EFFICIENCY ISSUES

10.1 There are no direct implications associated with the contents of this report. The Business Plan will set out the company's approach to value for money and how we aim to be an excellent, efficient organisation.

11 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Business Plan will set out how we will ensure the company's major push on equality is consolidated. Service improvements identified in the Business Plan will deliver our commitment to provide excellent services to all tenants and to be an employer of choice.

11.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the draft plan.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

12.1 None

CONTACT OFFICER: Janet Glass
Head of Business Improvement and Development
14 Hounds Gate
Nottingham
NG1 7BA
Tel: 0115 91 57313
E-mail: janet.glass@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

DATE: 26 November 2009