

## NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY &  
PARTNERSHIPS

3 DECEMBER 2009

### NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES' PARTNERSHIPS: A POSITION STATEMENT

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a position statement on NCH's partnerships. It outlines the different types of partnership ranging from joint working arrangements, to constructor partners and Service Level Agreements. Links with the wider agenda such as Nottingham City Council's Thirteen Challenges and the One Nottingham Strategic Themes are also explored.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Business Development Committee note the report.

#### 3 REPORT

##### 3.1 BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 Working with others in partnership to deliver both individual and jointly agreed outcomes is a core requirement in delivering effective services.

- 3.1.2 Developing and maintaining partnerships is essential to the way we work. We cannot perform excellently by working alone. Working with other organisations can help us to achieve our goals and objectives more effectively. Partnership working helps us to deliver services more efficiently and they can positively impact on our customers.

##### 3.2 TYPES OF PARTNERSHIPS

The Company's Ten Year Strategy 'A Strategy for Excellence' recognises the importance of working in partnership and identifies three levels at which they operate:

- Formal or contractual partnerships: particularly that with Nottingham City Council and those involved with delivering the Decent Homes programme. Three constructor partners, Keepmoat, Wates and Bullock, have been appointed through the Modern Living Procurement process for the installation of kitchens, bathrooms and rewires. Other constructor partners include SPI and Vinshires (heating) and Nationwide, who with the DLO are installing windows.

There are currently 45 apprentices that have been employed through the one-in-a-million initiative.

- Strategic partnerships: the Company is represented at a strategic level on the boards of One Nottingham and the Crime and Drugs Partnership.

We have been successful recently in securing over £30,000 through the Knowledge Transfer Partnership, a sum which we will match to fund a project to assess the wider impact on health and wellbeing of the Decent Homes programme.

The role of NCH and potential impact it may have on health and wellbeing is being further explored through sub-groups of the Housing Strategic Partnership.

- Partnerships at a local, operational level: Housing Managers and Housing Patch Managers attend police led local tasking meetings and Vulnerable Persons Panels as well as being part of the Neighbourhood Action Teams.

Hot-spots of crime and anti-social behaviour have been identified and problem solving actions agreed among the partner agencies that have contributed to the reduction in crime in the city.

### 3.3 THE PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

3.3.1 A Partnership Directory has been set up and continues to be developed. A list of partners is available on the Company's intranet site. It currently includes over thirty partnerships.

3.3.2 The Directory aims to help employees involved in partnerships to get the most out of working with others and to maximise their own contribution.

3.3.3 As well as listing our partnerships the directory gives advice and guidance on partnership working. It provides several key principles for successful partnerships and lists some barriers to success.

### 3.4 THE STRUCTURE OF THE PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

Each partnership entry includes a brief summary of the aims of the partnership, our lead contact details, the other agencies and how frequently the partnership meets. (Appendix 1: example of a partnership entry.)

#### Strategic links

Entries are placed within the directory according to which of the Company's five strategic objectives the partnership is most closely linked.

Strategic links are also made to the aims and objectives of our key strategic partners - Nottingham City Council's thirteen Challenges and One Nottingham's themes and the key indicators within the LAA. (Appendix 2: Partnership Directory, strategic links)

### 3.5 PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION EXERCISE

An exercise to evaluate our partnerships has recently commenced. To begin with only NCH employees are being asked about their perceptions of the partnerships in which they are involved. It is our intention to seek the perceptions of our partner agencies once we have a depth and range of NCH responses and are satisfied with the evaluation methodology.

A Partnership Assessment Tool has been adopted that has been designed for use by public sector partnerships. Participants are asked to respond to a number of questions based on six principles of partnership:

Principle 1: Recognise and accept the need for partnership.

Principle 2: Develop clarity and realism of purpose

Principle 3: Ensure commitment and ownership

Principle 4: Develop and maintain trust

Principle 5: Create clear and robust partnership arrangements

Principle 6: Monitor measure and learn

Up to now each employee has been interviewed face to face. Responses to the questions for each of the principles are being recorded in a data base along with any additional comments.

It is very early days. Interviews have been carried out with employees based in the Business Improvement Team, Allocations and Tenancy and Estate Management with eight responses completed and input onto the database.

A trend that is already beginning to emerge is that Principle 6 Monitor, Measure and Learn is scoring the lowest overall. In particular, interviewees have disagreed most often with the statement that, "There are clear arrangements effectively to monitor and review how the partnership itself is working." Appendix 3 Partnership Assessment Tool, Principle One.

3.6 The evaluation exercise is also being used as an opportunity to identify and fill gaps in the partnership directory. This exercise is due for completion by the end of March 2010.

## 4 **OTHER OPTIONS**

4.1 Not applicable.

## **5 FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 NCH will not be recognised as a learning or outward-looking organisation if it fails to build or participate in effective partnerships. Poor partnership practices can lead to missed opportunities for improving services. They can also alienate individuals, agencies and stakeholders. They can have a negative impact on the reputation of the company.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 NCH cannot achieve its objectives in isolation. Most partnerships have developed from the recognition of shared objectives and being able to achieve more by working together than alone.

## **7 VALUE FOR MONEY AND EFFICIENCY ISSUES**

- 7.1 Partnerships need to be clear about their “added value” and how this is assessed. Their aims and objectives should be regularly reviewed to ensure fit for purpose and relevance.

## **8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Many of our partnerships are tackling themes relating to equality and diversity. Particular examples of this include our work with partners to address anti social behaviour, domestic violence and vulnerable people. Furthermore, our partnership arrangements involve a cross section of customers and stakeholders.

## **9 BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

- 9.1 A strategy for excellence. The vision of Nottingham City Homes 2008 - 2018

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