

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

HOUSING MANAGEMENT
SERVICES COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2010

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF
TENANCY & ESTATE MANAGEMENT

UPDATE ON THE USE BY NOTTINGHAM POLICE OF NCH MANAGED PROPERTIES AS CAPTURE HOUSES

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Housing Management Services Committee of the use of NCH managed properties as capture houses and report the outcomes of such use.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Housing Management Services Committee note and comment upon the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 'Capture Houses' are a covert tactic used by Nottingham Police to combat burglary problems, particularly in hot spot burglary areas or in response to specific intelligence.
- 3.2 A previously unoccupied property is staged to appear to be occupied and furnished with desirable items. Covert surveillance equipment is installed to obtain evidence of forced entry and burglary. The evidence is then used to 'capture' the offender and secure criminal conviction.
- 3.3 Nottingham City Homes (NCH) recognises the impact that burglary can have on individuals and communities. High levels of burglary can affect an individual's sense of security in their home and safety in their area, and can affect the sustainability of tenancies and the allocation of properties.

NCH has recently agreed Protocol arrangements with Nottingham Police 'C' Division for the temporary provision of properties for the use as capture houses and covert surveillance. The Protocol provides the operating procedure for a capture house operation and incorporates:

- Analysis of burglary data or predictive trend
- Process for identification of appropriate property
- Single point of contact within each organisation
- Research and risk assessment
- Maximisation of forensic evidence

- Media strategy

4.0 REPORT

4.1 NCH has made 7 properties available to Nottinghamshire Police since September 2009 for capture house/covert surveillance use. The first two capture house operations have now concluded and Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 details the outcomes of these two operations. Due to confidentiality, the addresses of these properties have not been detailed in this report

5 OTHER OPTIONS

None

6 FINANCIAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The direct cost to NCH of these two Capture House Operations has been £1302.36 in rental loss and £102.09 in associated NCH employee time.

7 IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES

7.1 The effective reduction of burglary offences contributes to the Company's objective to "be a key partner in the delivery of safe and sustainable neighbourhoods".

8 VALUE FOR MONEY & EFFICIENCY ISSUES

8.1 The cost of furnishing, equipping and operating Capture Houses is met by Nottinghamshire Police. The direct cost to NCH of these two Capture House Operations has been £1302.36 in rental loss. Associated NCH employee time is estimated at £102.09. This has contributed to a reduction in burglary offences in the two areas by 62.5% and 34.7% respectively.

8.2 Direct and indirect savings are difficult to quantify. This reduction in burglary offences in these areas will have benefited NCH customers and may contribute to an improved perception and satisfaction with the area in which they live. A reduction in burglary offences will provide efficiency savings for the Police in terms of resources allocated to tackle high levels of burglary offences, reduction of necessary preventative measures etc. Successful use of capture houses does provide value for money to NCH, Nottingham Police and most importantly, to the communities that we serve.

8.3 Further long term analysis will be required to determine other indirect cost/benefit outcomes including potential reduction in burglary related repair costs, housing transfer costs and tenancy sustainability rates.

9 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct implications associated with the content of this report.

10 BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

10.1 None

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