

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING OPERATIONS

17 AUGUST 2010

HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE – JUNE TO JULY 2010

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates the Board about significant health and safety and fire safety developments within the Housing Services division over the previous two months.
- 1.2 This report covers 11 June 2010 to 28 July 2010.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Housing Management Services Committee note the contents of this report.

3 REPORT

3.1 Incident reports and outcomes

- 3.1.1 This report covers the incidents allocated to Housing Services between 11 June and 28 July 2010 inclusive. Incidents are 'allocated' to a service area either because the person making the report works in that service area, or they are reported by a member of the public and the cause of the incident falls within the service area's management remit.
- 3.1.2 There were 9 injuries allocated to Housing Services in this period. Six were injuries to employees, and three were injuries reported by tenants / members of the public.
- 3.1.3 Most of the injuries were minor, and in total resulted in 10 lost days for staff. There were no identifiable trends, with incidents ranging from twisting an ankle while walking down stairs, to a road traffic accident to a couple of manual handling injuries and a trip at floor level. Two of the injuries were reportable under RIDDOR because the employees were off work for over 3 days.
- 3.1.4 The three injuries to tenants were: a fall on the same level (no trip hazard was identified); a bang on the head (injured party was running along corridor, fell over and banged head on fire hose valve); and a bang on the head (injured party had moved sofa in flat at Highwood House and banged head on shelf). No public liability claims have been received or are expected arising from these incidents.

- 3.1.5 There were two reported “near miss” incidents, both items thrown from height. The first was at Digby Court, where a resident had thrown five tins of paint, a swivel chair and a vacuum cleaner from his window. This caused significant damage to vehicles at ground level, and an injunction has been served and possession is being sought. The second 'incident' relates to Southchurch Court, although this was in fact more than thirty separate incidents that were all reported at the same time. Although most of the reports were about small items of rubbish, including pork chops and a bag of rice, there was also a case of a microwave being thrown out of a window. Covert CCTV cameras will be sited at Southchurch Court so that action can be taken against people throwing items from windows.
- 3.1.6 There were 9 separate violent incidents reported by Housing Service employees in this period. All were cases of verbal abuse, although four were with threats. Verbal abuse cases are followed up by a warning letter from the housing office if the perpetrator's identity is known.
- 3.1.7 Housing Services Committee had asked for an update on an incident that was reported in the previous report - this was a dog bite that had resulted in an employer's liability claim. In fact this was not a dog bite as reported - the injured party had been delivering mailshots and had put her hand through a letterbox when a dog jumped up on the inside and slammed the letterbox closed on her fingers. We have contacted Royal Mail to see if they do anything to prevent this risk, and they have replied that they do not. The liability claim is ongoing.

3.2 Fire Safety

- 3.2.1 We have received formal confirmation that the enforcement notice at Highcross Court has been extended to 31st March 2011. This is on the understanding that NCH meet certain conditions, including that the building is empty by that date. Visits to individual tenants by decommissioning officers have commenced, and they were initially accompanied by our Fire Safety Officer to explain the fire safety procedures. Decommissioning officers are now delivering the fire safety message themselves.
- 3.2.2 The Fire & Rescue Service has agreed to carry out annual joint fire safety inspections of all high rise stock along with our Fire Safety Officer. These will be staggered with the existing annual health and safety inspection, so that there will be a formal visit by the H&S team to each high rise once every 6 months. Joint inspections with the Fire & Rescue Service will be carried out quarterly at Highcross Court until it has been decommissioned.
- 3.2.3 The fire action plans have been reviewed at Highurst and Clifford Courts and the Victoria Centre following installation of new alarm systems. These reviews were carried out by the H&S Team, Asset Management and the Fire and Rescue Service. Information about the fire action plan is being prepared for tenants and residents in these buildings, and individual fire safety visits to tenants and residents will be made on request. This process will be extended to each high rise on completion

of the planned fire safety improvement works.

- 3.2.4 The Fire and Rescue Service has completed routine inspections in five sheltered schemes, and have identified some minor improvement works including installation of smoke detectors and fire doors in some communal areas. These have been included in the existing high rise refurbishment programme. No further routine inspections of sheltered schemes by the Fire and Rescue Service are expected this year.

3.3 H&S Inspection Programme

- 3.3.1 The health and safety inspection is ongoing. This programme refers to joint inspections by senior managers, health and safety advisors and trade union representatives and does not include estate inspections or scheduled visits by housing patch managers.

- 3.3.2 All high rise inspections are complete for this year, but sheltered schemes have yet to commence. Sheltered schemes are inspected once every 2 years. we intend to visit all corridor schemes this year.

- 3.3.3 Workplace inspections and inspections of contractor and DLO work on site are ongoing.

3.4 Health and Safety Committee

- 3.4.1 The Housing Services Health and Safety Committee now meets every 6 weeks. Reviews of violence reporting and lone working procedures are being carried out through this group.

3.5 Health & Safety Training

- 3.5.1 Key health and safety training identified in Housing Services for 2009/10 is now complete or booked. Key training for this year is to be identified.
- 3.5.2 Existing 'e-learning' courses including those for using computers and fire safety are being reviewed and alternative suppliers identified. E-learning courses for stress management and lone working are also being reviewed as possible future training.

3.6 Other items

- 3.6.1 The resident who was injured in the lift accident at the Victoria Centre in May has returned home. We have received a public liability claim for his injuries, and this has been referred to our insurers. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) investigation is ongoing, and is currently examining the contractual arrangements between NCC, NCH and OTIS. The fitting of additional safety monitoring equipment to the lifts at Victoria Centre have been required by HSE, and work is ongoing to fit these along with additional refurbishments recommended by our independent consultant. This work should be completed by the end of August, and the programme has been approved by the HSE.
- 3.6.2 The police investigation into the explosion at Stockhill Lane continues.

However, our insurers have confirmed the outcome of their preliminary forensic investigation, and this was communicated to full Board on 29th July.

- 3.6.3 Revision 3 of the NCH Health & Safety Strategy 2008-12 has been prepared in draft form. Although the content of the strategy remains the same (this cannot be changed without full Board approval), the format is significantly changed in order to bring the strategy work plan into line with the corporate planning cycle (financial instead of calendar years) and to summarise progress so far. This revision will be examined by the Corporate H&S Committee for accuracy before being published.

4 OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 This report is for information only

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information only.

6 IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 Management of health & safety is essential to all of the Company's objectives as it will affect the health, safety and wellbeing of all the Company's stakeholders and customers.

7 VALUE FOR MONEY AND EFFICIENCY ISSUES

- 7.1 This report is for information only.

8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This report is for information only.

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

- 9.1 None.

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