

## NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

### PERFORMANCE AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

12 AUGUST 2008

### REPORT OF THE MANAGER FOR TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

#### TENANT PARTICIPATION PROGRESS UPDATE

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform the Committee about the progress of tenant and leaseholder participation.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the Committee to note the report and make any recommendations about the involvement opportunities discussed in the progress report
- 2.2 To recommend that the Chair of the Performance and Regulatory Committee and the Chief Executive approves the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between NCH and Bolton At Home

#### 3 Tenant and Leaseholder current participation activity

##### 3.1 The New Team

The Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team has now been restructured and the team consists of three Tenant and Resident Officers (TROs) and four Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Officers (TLIOs) who have specialist areas: Respect, Equality and Diversity, Young People and Older People.

The TLIOs will also support the Area Housing Managers in developing the nine Area Panels. The Housing Patch Managers will be taking on the responsibility for working with the existing Recognised Tenants and Residents Associations. The TROs will focus on initiatives that will increase and encourage more tenants and leaseholders to get involved across the menu of involvement as well as establishing new Tenants and Residents Associations

##### 3.2 Independent Review of the Tenant and Leaseholder Compact

Nottingham City Homes Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Compact, the formal agreement made between Nottingham City homes, Nottingham City Council and the Council's tenants and leaseholders which sets out how tenants and leaseholders can contribute to the development of Nottingham City Homes up to 2010 was launched in June 2007.

An annual independent review is now required. Tim Morton Associates have been appointed to carry out the review and over the next few weeks will be holding focus groups with tenants and leaseholders who are not currently involved with NCH, workshops for tenants and

leaseholders who are actively involved and employees as well as talking to Ward Members, Council Officers and Board Members from Nottingham City Homes. These events will provide opportunities to explore in more detail what's working and where improvements can be made as well as checking if our customers know how they can get involved.

A final report is to be provided in early August 2008.

### 3.3 **Peer Mentoring – Bolton At Home**

Bolton At Home has been awarded Beacon Status for tenant involvement and as such has funding for a peer support project. NCH has secured 15 days peer mentoring. This will help NCH identify key objectives for delivering tenant participation and share and learn from good practice. There will be opportunities for group shadowing for staff and tenants and visits to Bolton at Home to learn from Bolton's experience as a three star organisation. We have now established the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Bolton at Home and the programme is set to commence. The Chair is asked to approve the SLA with Bolton at Home. Progress reports will be submitted to the Committee to monitor progress

### 3.4 **Tenant Services Inspectors**

During June and July the Tenant Services Inspectors Team has been undertaking quarterly estate assessments; all 39 estate visits were completed by Wednesday 16 July. The estates have all been graded on a scale of 0-3 stars with the vision to have all estates at a two star or more standard before the Audit Commission inspection in November 2008.

The Team has also been undertaking telephone mystery shopping calls and visits to the Housing Offices as part of the Office of the Month scheme.

South Derbyshire District Council recently visited Nottingham City Homes to find out more about the Tenant Services Inspectors Team with a view to establishing their own team.

### 3.5 **Marketing and Communications**

The Marketing and Communications plan has been developed and this sets out how tenant and resident involvement will be linked into all the communications that are publicised by NCH to it's customers and to employees. The Marketing team are working closely with the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team looking at a variety of ways in which tenants and leaseholders are encouraged to participate. There will be a "Getting Involved Week" taking place across the Company during September to raise the profile of how customers can help to shape, comment on and influence the housing service at a level and in a way to suit each individual customer. There are also many community events taking place over the coming months which include the "Your Choice, Your Voice" and "Parklife" events. NCH will be having stalls to promote NCH and it's services as well as engaging with customers and promoting the benefits of getting involved.

The Getting Involved Leaflet has now been distributed and copies of the leaflet are available in Area Offices, Community Centres, libraries, given

to new tenants at sign up, stakeholders and partners. This leaflet will be useful for staff to use as a reference when discussing with tenants and leaseholders the different ways to get involved. There are also posters advertising "Getting Involved" and these have also been distributed with the leaflets.

### 3.6 **Chairs and Vice Chairs**

The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Area Panels and Forums now hold regular joint meetings to discuss tenant involvement progress, identify good practice to share and promote positive "You said, we did" achievements and the impact tenants and leaseholders have had on the housing service being provided by NCH.

The Chairs of all of the Tenants and Residents Associations have been contacted to establish if they would like to hold meetings for all of the Chairs in the North, Central and South of the city. The response has shown that perhaps rather than organise the meetings, to initially have an event inviting all to attend and meet the new Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team. The purpose of these meetings is to increase communication at the grass roots and encourage wider involvement in Area Panels and other participation opportunities.

### 3.7 **Tenant of the Year Award**

Doreen Gretton, a tenant from the Nobel Road Tenants and Residents Association in Clifton won the Tenant of the Year regional heat in this year's Connecting People Awards which celebrates tenant participation with awards for residents, landlords and contractors. These awards highlight the growth of tenant involvement. The national final for the Tenant of the Year award ceremony will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2008. Doreen will be attending the presentation dinner in Birmingham with the Chair of the NCH Board

### 3.8 **Right to Manage**

The Victoria Centre Tenants and Residents Association (VICTRA) have applied for the Right to Manage. The approved agency appointed by VICTRA, COMPAS@TPAS has completed the first key stage of the work to carry out an Options Study with VICTRA. The Options Study aims to increase awareness amongst residents about the Right To Manage process. It answers questions about the process, explores residents' priorities and determines the extent to which residents support VICTRA's aim to exercise their Right to Manage. This is done through a "test of opinion" of residents.

VICTRA has progressed to the second stage of the process which is the Right to Manage Notice. The notice has been served to NCC and NCH. Both NCC and NCH have responded to VICTRA with their acceptance of the notice. A Feasibility Study is now the next stage of the process.

### 3.9 **Training**

NCH are a member of the East Midlands Training Consortium and were the host for the first training session which was held at the Denewood Centre on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008. The training focused on: Involving the whole community, developing partnerships and sharing the load.

- 3.10 **Recognised Local Contacts**  
The protocol for Recognised Local Contacts has been approved by the Tenants and Leaseholders Congress and is being implemented by the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team. The Tenant and Resident Officers have targets to develop Recognised Local Contacts in areas where there isn't a Recognised Tenant and Resident Association.
- 3.11 **Partnership Working**  
Jenny Dickenson, a priority Neighbourhoods Co-ordinator from NCC is currently working with the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team for 2.5 days a week. This will ensure that NCH develops more effective partnership working and keeps pace with national policy, for instance, community development, cohesion and empowerment. The improved joint working relationship will also increase opportunities for cross organisational working with training on events such as the "Your Choice, Your Voice" and "Parklife" events. Jenny is working closely with the Marketing and Communications team at NCH to help shape and support the delivery of the Company's Communications Plan. There will also be better links with the work of NCC's Neighbourhood Action Teams. In addition, Jenny's established links with Councillors and Area Committees will help us map where community leaders and community groups are within neighbourhoods to avoid duplication and over resourcing in the future.
- 3.12 **National Tenant Voice**  
Thirteen tenants and leaseholders attended the "National Tenant Voice" event facilitated by TPAS on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 in Birmingham where following a presentation on the National Tenant Voice proposal, they took part in consultation sessions to discuss their views and support for the vision and values of the National Tenant Voice and whether it should be an independent organisation and a non departmental public body, rather than be part of an existing organisation, together with whether there should be a national council and management board as proposed
- 3.13 **TPAS Annual Conference**  
For the past 20 years the TPAS Annual Conference has been the premier event in tenant and resident involvement. This year, the conference highlights a number of key opportunities including the creation of OfTenant and the National Tenant Voice. Opportunities are also created at the event by the range of good practice, information and networking, enabling delegates to go back to their organisations with new bright ideas and enthusiasm for their communities.  
The Tenant and Leaseholder Congress felt that it would be appropriate to have 6 delegate places for tenants and leaseholders at the conference and in the interests of fairness that all members of the TLC be given the opportunity to nominate themselves or a member of their group for a place and a draw to take place to decide the delegates. This has taken place and six tenants and leaseholders will be attending the conference. The attendees will feedback to the Tenants and Leaseholders Congress following their attendance at the event.
- 3.14 **East Midlands Tenant Participation Forum**  
The East Midlands Tenant Participation Forum are holding their

Summer Showcase in Kettering this year and NCH are sending 13 tenants and leaseholders along with 3 Tenant and Resident Officers to attend the event. There are presentations on the Big Lottery Fund and Choice Based Lettings. The Forum have four events a year and these provide excellent networking opportunities for tenants, leaseholders and officers as well as identifying good practice in tenant participation initiatives regionally and nationally.

#### **4 FINANCIAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Tenant Participation is an integral part of the Company's business and it is important that tenants and leaseholders are provided with as many opportunities as possible in order that they can contribute efficiently and effectively to the decision making process. The costs are contained within the budget.

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

- 5.1 Tenant and leaseholder participation embraces the Company's Mission, Vision and Values, as well as the principles of the Tenant and Leaseholder Compact to provide the widest possible range of opportunities to enable as many existing and prospective tenants and leaseholders as possible to get involved at a level to suit themselves.

#### **6 VALUE FOR MONEY & EFFICIENCY ISSUES**

- 6.1 Partnership working with other social housing providers and membership of national Tenant Participation organisations helps to identify good practice which can be used to ensure that the delivery of tenant participation is of high quality and meets the requirements of the customer base of NCH so that they can influence and shape the housing services.

#### **7 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 All tenants and leaseholders are able to have a say in issues which affect their homes, the surrounding environment and their local community. NCH promote community cohesion by providing opportunities for people of different backgrounds to work together to improve services.

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

- 8.1 Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Compact

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