

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the **Public Meeting** held on **18 JANUARY 2010** at 14 Hounds Gate 5:00 pm to 7:50 pm

Present

Committee Members:

Dave Bennett Bull
Suhail Hashmi
Paul Rowe (Chair)

Also in Attendance

Trevor Burton	Head of Service – Commercial Delivery
Steve Hale	Assistant Director – Asset Management
Lorraine Hayes	Governance Officer (Minute Taker)
Mark Johnson	Director of Property Services

09/16 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

09/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apology for absence was received from Margaret Pugsley and Hassan Ahmed.

09/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None declared.

09/19 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2009

The Committee adopted the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

09/20 MATTERS ARISING

Minute ref 09/10

The Head of Commercial Delivery (HCD) informed the Committee that he would provide an update to the Committee on the acquisition of hand helds technology under agenda item eight.

The Director of Property Services (DPS) apologised to the Committee for the timeliness of the two weekly updates. The Chair commented that he had not received any updates. The DPS would ensure that updates are circulated to all of the Committee.

09/21 GREAT BRITISH REFURBISHMENT

The Assistant Director Asset Management (ADAM) gave a presentation to the Committee on the requirement for the Company to ensure that by 2016 in line with the Social Housing Charter all properties would need to achieve a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions.

The Company would have a corporate responsibility regarding sustainability of the housing stock and fuel poverty. It is anticipated that 10% of family income was currently expended on fuel costs, this is a major issue for our tenants. The challenges faced by Nottingham City Homes are that 85% of the properties managed are already built. Major refurbishment of our properties would be required in order to meet the emission targets set, 11,500 properties do not have cavity walls and would require some form of external wall insulation and the remaining housing stock may require internal insulation.

The Committee was informed of a number of initiatives that could assist in the financing of potential works that may be required. The Company are currently in discussion with a number of utility companies that have been tasked with funding the Community Energy Savings Project (CESP) in areas of social deprivation. Nottingham City Homes would like to be instrumental in raising the profile of CESP, The Chief Executive as requested further information from the ADAM on this matter in order to facilitate discussions at a joint meeting of the Communities and Local Government and Select Committee in February 2010.

The Committee was informed that the Company are currently piloting a number of initiatives that could reduce fuel expenditure of our customers, The ADAM undertook to update the Committee on the outcome of the pilot schemes once the data had been fully collated and evaluated.

RESOLUTIONS:

The Property Services Committee:

- 1. noted the report; and**
- 2. agreed to include within the forward plan an action plan on achieving the reduction in Carbon Dioxide emissions.**

09/22 DECENT HOMES UPDATE

The (ADAM) informed the Committee that he had changed the format of the report and gave an update on the current position of the Decent Homes - Secure Warm Modern (SWM) programme. The ADAM reported that the financial position of the programme was on target.

NCH had received confirmation from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) that we are to receive funding allocation of thirty two million pounds (£32m) for 2010/11 trading year

Frank Haslam Milan (FHM) had commenced work on the new contract framework and Bullocks are due to commence works in September 2010.

The Committee was informed that a tenant procurement group had been established prior to the E-Procurement and through their joint working efficiency savings of seven million pounds (£7m) had been achieved

The Committee recommended that the successes achieved via the One in a Million Scheme should be celebrated and publicised more widely than it had been to date

The ADAM confirmed that the constructor partners had taken on 53 trainees to date and that all of trainees were from within the City boundary. The Committee requested the ADAM explore the possibility of establishing in conjunction with the constructor partners some form of recognition for the apprentices by the way of an annual award of a cup or similar

The Committee noted the report

09/23 FINANCIAL REPORT

The DPS gave an oral update on the Property Services financial position and confirmed that a full financial report would be presented to the Board

The Committee was informed that overall, Property Services forecast an overspend of approximately nine hundred thousand pounds (£900k) however it was envisaged that this figure would be reduced once an evaluation of the capital elements of works completed to date had taken place.

The DPS advised that the Better Practice Review would be used as the vehicle to drive the changes necessary to bring the position to balance in future years. The Chair commented that it appeared that efficiencies had not yet caught up with budget provisions.

The Committee noted the report

09/24 BETTER PRACTICE REVIEW UPDATE

The HCD gave an oral update on the Better Practice Review and explained that the review contained three strands:

- (i) Mobile Working
- (ii) New Payment System
- (iii) Accommodation

The Committee was informed that the Company was seeking to change the way that the workforce received their daily orders, as this had become cumbersome over a long period of time.

The Committee was advised that tenders for the hand held equipment were currently being evaluated by the Head of ICT.

It was envisaged that there would be some slippage in terms of timescales reported previously surrounding the trials that were to commence in January 2010 and the training during February 2010. The “go live” date for March 23rd 2010 however, still remained the same. Consultation with the Trade Unions (TU) was ongoing. Communications with the workforce was also ongoing.

The Committee were advised that the handhelds would be purchased outright and that upgrades of software would be readily available.

The HCD explained that the Company needed flexibility to deploy its workforce to areas of the business that required additional support and there were currently a number of outdated procedures that sought to prohibit this ambition. External consultants had evaluated the excessive non productive time issue and details had been provided to the Company for consideration.

The Committee was advised that the DPS would present a report to Board on revised pay models and that as a result changes may affect the terms and conditions of the workforce. Discussions are scheduled to take place with the Trade Unions.

The HCD advised that for now a significant part of the Property Services Department would remain at Harvey Road for the foreseeable future.

The Committee noted the report

09/25 RISK REGISTER – IDENTIFICATION OF ASSET RELATED RISKS

The DPS informed the Committee that a Risk Register was a way to inform the Committee on likely asset related risks that may impact upon the Company and gave the Committee the opportunity to debate and challenge the robustness of the risk management process.

The Committee gave consideration to how the Risk Register would be monitored. The Committee agreed to review high rise, fire risk assessments, fire alarm systems, legionella and Asbestos at the next meeting. The DPS agreed the circulation to the Committee in bullet format what the Company was doing in order to mitigate each risk.

Dave Bennett-Bull sought clarification on an article in the Nottingham Evening Post. The ADAM confirmed that the property in question was not externally clad in asbestos. He further informed the Committee that the Company had a duty to inform tenants, contractors and employees of properties that had internal asbestos.

The Company has an asbestos team which communicates specific & generic advice on asbestos related matters The Committee was informed that all properties had had a necessary type 2 asbestos survey.

Dave Bennett-Bull queried why 53 Brindley Road Bilborough had not been occupied since July 2009. The ADAM confirmed the property had been allocated. The DPS was aware of two other properties in close proximity and would seek clarification on the current status of the properties

RESOLUTIONS:

The Property Services Committee:

- 1 noted the report; and**
- 2 agreed to include within the forward plan asset related risks.**

09/26 HEALTH & SAFETY

09/26.1 Fire Enforcement Notice

The DPS informed the Committee that a fire enforcement notice served on Highcross Court had been; in agreement with the Fire service; extended by five months to enable Nottingham City Homes to complete external works. The fire

risk task group would continue to meet on a weekly basis and was attended on a fortnightly basis by Nottinghamshire Fire Service. Outcomes would be reported back to the Executive Management Team and the Committee appraised accordingly

09/26.2 Secure Warm Modern

The Committee was informed that contractors had drilled into a concealed gas pipe at a property on Lathkill Close Bulwell thus resulting in the evacuation of local residents. Transco attended and within four hours residents had moved back into their homes. The Company have subsequently identified all residents in similar types of property and correspondence had been forwarded to the affected properties.

09/26.3 Work at Height

The Committee was informed that the Health and Safety team and project workers are currently reviewing work at height following a recent fall from height fatality in Hull. Employees would be equipped with safety harnesses and ladders would be modified with fixing systems to ensure ladders are secure. The Chair sought assurance that relevant employees are adequately equipped and trained when undertaking work at height. The ADAM confirmed that employees had received appropriate training and access to equipment to undertake work at height safely

The Committee noted the report.

09/27 FORWARD PLAN REVIEW

The Committee was satisfied with the content and had the right balance of items on the agenda. Suhail Hashmi proposed the creation of a blog page that would facilitate the continuity of information. This was supported by the Committee

09/28 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The DPS asked for an item to be included on the agenda but due to the nature of the business requested that it be considered in the absence of the public and press.

The Chair agreed that the item be considered upon conclusion of the public meeting.

09/29 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 22 March 2010 at 14 Hounds Gate.

The meeting closed at 7:50pm.

Signed Date