



**NOTES**  
**OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY GROUP**  
**TUESDAY 19 JANUARY 2016**

Held at 7 pm in The Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Mrs J A Smith (Chairman), J Donoghue, J E Greenwood,  
E J Lungley, G R Mallender, A Phillips, E A Plant, M W Suthers,  
J G A Wheeler

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr N Adie Waterloo Housing Group  
Mr J Plant Waterloo Housing Group

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

D Dwyer Strategic Housing Manager  
K Marriott Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations  
V Nightingale Constitutional Services Officer  
A Poole Constitutional Services Team Leader

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

There were no apologies for absence

**14. Declarations of Interest**

There were none declared.

**15. Notes of the Previous Meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 29 September 2015 were accepted as a true record.

Councillor Wheeler asked for further information regarding the progress of the Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service and Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire. The Executive Manager Transformation and Operations explained that she had passed on the Group's concerns to the Executive Manager – Communities; she stated that he was working with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder and that negotiations were taking place at the current time on the agreement. Members would be provided with an update in the near future.

With regards to the actions for Metropolitan Housing Trust the Strategic Housing Manager stated that in respect of 'right to buy' and 'right to acquire' there had been eight sales in 2013/14, thirteen in 2014/15 and three in 2015/16 to date.

In respect of surface water flooding in 2012 Members were informed of the company's present plans and processes. It was explained that any calls were received by the company's national call centre which was open 24 hours seven days a week and that operational staff who would respond to an

incident were on call. The company had an emergency plan in place and this gave guidance on how to escalate a call depending on the nature of the incident. It was noted that the company would be working with the statutory bodies including local authorities. After an incident the management team would consider a 'lessons learned' document to consider whether the response given was appropriate. A dummy scenario was carried annually to test the processes. With specific reference to flooding the company stated that it would always work with the Environment Agency and with the local authority regarding sandbag provision and if necessary temporary accommodation.

Councillor Suthers stated that the problem in 2012 had been the time it had taken for Metropolitan Housing Trust to accept responsibility for the surface water drainage as this had not been realised at the time the stock had been transferred.

## **16. Review of Waterloo Housing Partnership**

The Strategic Housing Manager presented a report which highlighted the partnership work undertaken by the Council and Waterloo Housing Group. She stated that this was mainly in respect of rural affordable housing and the Choice Based Lettings scheme. She explained that De Montfort Housing, which was a member of the Group, made best use of the Choice Based Lettings scheme to relet their properties. However, the Council worked closely with Midland Rural Housing on the delivery of affordable housing on rural exception sites. She informed the Group that to date the programme had been very successful and seven sites had been completed with 53 homes delivered.

The Group was informed that over the last year a new rural exception site programme had been developed and needs surveys undertaken. It was noted that the Partnership was now considering villages with lower populations and it was considering joining two parishes together to allow a site to be developed. Unfortunately it was expected that due to the difficulty in obtaining suitable sites the delivery of affordable housing would be lower in the next few years.

As part of the scheme Members were informed that funding had been levered in from the Homes and Communities Agency and that £760,000 capital grant had been allocated by the Borough Council.

Mr Adie and Mr Plant gave a presentation outlining the work of the Partnership. Mr Adie stated that the company was entering a period of uncertainty as although the Government's emphasis was on building homes these would be for people to own and not rent. He informed the Group of the Government's consultation regarding starter homes and that it was hoped that the final outcome would be better than expected. The Group discussed the Government's proposals and were concerned that the waiting list would not decrease as it was recognised that they could not afford to buy a starter home. It was also recognised that shared ownership houses only fulfilled a need in areas where property prices were high.

Members were informed that the company worked heavily with the Homes and Communities Agency and had received notification that for the final 50% of the

2015/18 programme grant funding would only now be allocated for shared ownership and or starter home properties. The company had also been informed that the 2019/21 programme would grant funding for home ownership, starter homes and shared ownership schemes and not rented accommodation, although it was hoped that when the prospectus was released in the new financial year that there might be some allocation for rural sites.

As part of the 2015/18 Homes and Communities Agency programme Waterloo Housing had been allocated £52,000,000 for developments across the Midlands which equated to 2,750 new homes with 170 indicative units in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Following the notification the company had been informed that these indicative units must be completed by March 2018 to qualify for the allocated funding.

In respect of the continual rural programme Mr Adie explained that they had built properties in the major villages and were now considering sites in Whatton, Flintham, Gotham and Langar and Barnstone. He stated that negotiations were taking place in Gotham and that for both Whatton and Flintham they were awaiting the outcome of private planning applications. Following a question Members were informed that potentially there could be 12 units in Gotham, 6 in Whatton and 9 in Langar and Barnstone, although these were dependent on parish council support and the identification of suitable sites. Councillor Suthers stated that the views of the parish council, private developers and the Planning Inspectorate was that Aslockton and Whatton should be considered as one area and therefore the allocation made at Aslockton was considered sufficient and therefore no site was required in Whatton. With regards to Flintham it was acknowledged that there was a planning application being put forward for 95 houses, Mr Adie stated that if this was approved it was normal practice for developers to approach housing associations to identify a price for the required number of affordable units. Mr Adie stated that the company would work with any developers and had taken on projects as small as one unit, however the location was a key factor in their decision making process. He stated that the company would work with the parishes especially if a parish/neighbourhood plan had identified a need for housing, although it was recognised that the Borough Council did lead on these types of discussions. It was recognised that in other areas councils had conducted needs analysis surveys without the consent of the parish councils and that these schemes were often very difficult to deliver.

In respect of Section 106 funding Members were informed that £130 million had been allocated for 2016/17 and that 450 units were programmed over the next three years. It was noted that on some occasions a commuted sum was accepted rather than a developer providing properties, however officers stated that this was only agreed if the developer could show that every option had been considered and that these were unsuitable. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that in other boroughs a commuted sum had been accepted if the Registered Providers did not have capacity. She stated that capacity had been acknowledged as an identified risk by the Borough Council and that officers needed to consider other models as well.

Mr Plant informed the Group of the company's performance to date. He stated that 50% of vacant properties were advertised through the Council's Choice

Based Lettings scheme. He said that during 2015 there had been a 3% turnover of properties which equated to 12. If a property was not let through this method it was then advertised on a midland wide site. He informed Members that there was a low level of refusals in the Rushcliffe area and that the turnover rate compared favourably with the rest of the Group, which had an average of 8-9%.

With regards to stock improvements and repairs Mr Plant stated that £160,000 had been set aside for energy efficiency works which would improve the properties and add value for money for the tenants. In respect of sheltered housing schemes the company had improved Epperstone Court's communal lounge and would be upgrading the laundry facilities and the fire alarm system so that it integrated with the new warden call system.

Following Members' previous concerns Mr Plant explained that there had only been 4 cases of anti-social behaviour opened during the past year and that none of these had resulted in legal action.

In respect of the Welfare Reform Act Members were informed that the company had set up a working group to assist tenants with the introduction of Universal Credit. There was a dedicated budget to assist people to downsize if the cost of moving was seen as the only barrier. In Rushcliffe it was noted that 19 tenants were affected by the spare room subsidy. The company had developed several digital inclusion initiatives including a digital café in Leicestershire. Another initiative had been a digital bus which had been used at various roadshows, and had included a representative from Barclays Bank which had helped tenants that did not have a bank account. The Strategic Housing Manager informed the Group that the Council also worked with Credit Unions.

Members requested that the Group be informed of the impact of the changes proposed in respect of affordable housing and especially how it would affect residents. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that the Community Development Group had scrutinised the Housing Delivery Plan and its action plan, which included the supply of new and affordable housing. The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations stated that the possibility of a joint meeting could be discussed at the next Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen's meeting.

It was AGREED that Members had considered and made comments on the presentation made by Waterloo Housing and endorsed the work of the partnership.

The Chairman thanked Mr Adie and Mr Plant for the informative presentation and for answering Members' questions.

## **17. The Bridgford Hall Project**

The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations gave a presentation which informed Members of the work undertaken as part of the Bridgford Hall Project. She stated that it was a grade II listed building which had been leased by the County Council from the early 1980's until 2012. However, following a relocation exercise the majority of the building had been empty with just the

Registry Office on the ground floor. It was agreed by Cabinet that a tenant should be secured for the first and second floors to become an apart-hotel for non-residential guests to ensure that there was an income stream for the Council. During negotiations it had been considered whether it was possible to provide a wedding/conference facility however this was not pursued as a larger dining facility would have had to have been created and it was not felt that this was feasible. During this time the Heritage Lottery Fund had introduced a new fund, the Heritage Enterprise Grant which would enable people to bring back to life buildings that could demonstrate that they were valuable to the community. In 2015 the Council had been informed that it had been successful in its bid for Lottery funding. It was now envisaged that the building work would begin in Spring 2016 and be completed in Spring 2017 as tenancies had been agreed with the future end users, Nottinghamshire County Council and Birchover Serviced Apartments, starting in April 2017. With regards to the project the Council's aim was to restore the building and protect its heritage for the community.

As part of the Heritage Enterprise Grant grantees were required to demonstrate a high level of community involvement and to present detailed accounts of how the money had been used. With regard to the budget the Council had allocated £815,000, including a £150,000 contribution from Nottinghamshire County Council due to the dilapidation of the building during their occupancy, and the Heritage Enterprise Grant equated to £1,500,000. As part of the funding requirements the Council had prepared an activity statement which detailed the community's future usage and how it would be involved during the restoration. As part of the activity schools had been invited to undertake projects, the contractor would be providing work experience and apprenticeship opportunities and workshops and hard hat tours would be held. A theatre production, based on Lord Byron, was being developed to involve young people. Members felt that this production should be filmed as a celebration of the progress made and that it should be for use by schools and other groups that would not be able to attend. The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations agreed to discuss this possibility with the Community Development Manager. She also said that NottsTV had filmed a piece after the Council had successfully negotiated Round One of the Lottery Fund bidding process and that this might be an alternative method for filming. Members felt that it would be very useful if they could be included in the hard hat tours.

The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations explained how the present planning application had been developed with the various partners and how the different activities would be accommodated. She stated that the seven serviced apartments would be accessed from the rear of the building and that a lift would be incorporated into the building via an extension to the front. It was envisaged that the design and look of the fire escape staircase could be improved. It was noted that the building had undergone many changes during its existence including a glazed orangery in Edwardian times and a stable block extension. The project had highlighted the historic influence of the building with its gates giving access to the park and its close proximity to the library and modern youth centre.

The Group was informed that it had been critical that the build was completed by the Spring of 2017 to ensure that the registry office had assurance that it

could take bookings for the 2017 season. It was noted that the timescales were tight and it had only been possible because of the work already undertaken by the Council before it had approached the Heritage Lottery Fund. Also the Council had worked with the many partners to ensure that everyone was kept abreast of the project and its timescales. The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations was delighted to say that the Registrar was keen to relocate to the newly refurbished building as quickly as possible. With regard to the deadline Members queried what would happen if there was any slippage. The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations stated that the contractors had made several site visits before putting in a tender and that the ability to complete on time had been part of the evaluation process. Also a penalty clause would be included in the contract. She also stated that the preferred contractor had built in some flexibility into the build time and were experienced at delivering heritage rebuilds.

Councillor Mallender was pleased to note the progress of the project and the fact that The Hall would remain in the Borough Council's ownership. As part of the community involvement he stated that, via the auspices of Friends of Bridgford Park, scout groups and young offenders worked on the grounds surrounding The Hall. He welcomed the heritage activities that were being planned.

The Group thanked the Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations and her team for the challenging work undertaken to restore this iconic building in West Bridgford.

Following a question in respect of volunteer training Members were informed that 10 was a minimum number and that this would hopefully be exceeded. The Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations agreed to provide Members with further information on how volunteers could take up these opportunities.

In respect of parking for the Aparthotel Members were informed that 15 spaces had been allocated at the rear of the building and not in the Library car park. Parking would be charged at £20 per day which was comparable with City Centre parking and that this would be contained within the leasing arrangements.

It was AGREED that Members endorsed the project and recognised the engagement of the many partners involved.

## **18. Work Programme**

The Group considered its work programme. It was noted that the Police and the Fire and Rescue Service would be attending the next meeting; Members were asked to submit any question to Member Services by 1 March 2016. The Executive Manager Transformation and Operations explained that it was anticipated that they would inform Members about the provision of the fire station on London Road and of any implications this would have for residents of the Borough as well as further details of their community work in respect of prevention of fires and accidents. The Executive Manager Transformation and Operations explained that the other item for that agenda was the Local Resilience Forum which dealt with flooding and emergency issues which the

Police and Fire and Rescue services were heavily involved in; also the Emergency Planning Officer had been invited to attend.

With regards to the Group's meeting in July Councillor Wheeler enquired about the Group's suggestion to increase the funding for the Rushcliffe Business Partnership. The Executive Manager Transformation and Operations explained that the Partnership was working towards being self-funding and therefore did not require a large amount of money, however she would speak to the Executive Manager - Communities and report back to the Group.

The Group noted that at their last meeting the Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service and Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire had both recognised that they were facing challenging times. Members felt that their scrutiny in October could be very informative.

The Executive Manager Transformation and Operations informed the Group that she would be taking an item on Positive Futures to the next Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen's meeting to identify if the Partnership Delivery Group was the most appropriate group to scrutinise this initiative. The Group agreed that this should be an item for their work programme as they had previously considered it.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

## Action Sheet

### PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY GROUP - TUESDAY 19 JANUARY 2016

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
16. Review of Waterloo Housing Partnership	The scrutiny of the supply of new housing be raised at the next Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen's meeting and that a joint meeting be considered.	Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations and the Chairman
17. The Bridgford Hall Project	a) Officers to discuss the possibility of filming the theatre production. b) Members to be provided with further information regarding volunteering opportunities	Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations
19. Work Programme	Officers to report back on the funding of the Rushcliffe Business Partnership	Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations