



**NOTES**  
**OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY GROUP**  
**TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2016**

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

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Mrs J A Smith (Chairman), L B Cooper (substitute for Councillor R Hetherington), J Donoghue, J E Greenwood, R A Inglis (substitute for Councillor E J Lungley), G R Mallender, A Phillips, E A Plant, J G A Wheeler

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

C Perry	Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service
N Raffell	Housing Services Manager (Notts), Metropolitan Housing Trust
L Reynolds	Head of Repairs & Commercial, Metropolitan Housing Trust
B Watson	Head of Housing, Metropolitan Housing Trust

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
D Dwyer	Strategic Housing Manager
V Nightingale	Constitutional Services Officer
C Taylor	Community Development Manager

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Councillors R Hetherington, E J Lungley

**7. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Cooper declared an interest in item 5 – Service Level Agreement with Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service.

**8. Notes of the Previous Meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 July 2016 were accepted as a true record.

**9. Review of Metropolitan Housing Partnership**

The Strategic Housing Manager presented a report outlining the Council's partnership with Metropolitan Housing Trust. She stated that the partnership assisted the Council in achieving some of its corporate priorities including the development of affordable housing, the Cotgrave town centre regeneration project, work on the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme, tackling anti-social behaviour and participation in community projects and initiatives. She reminded Members that as a local authority Rushcliffe had a capital grant to support Registered Providers to provide homes. She stated that officers were in negotiations with Metropolitan Housing on exploring the potential of a

second phase of garage site developments, which would probably commence during 2017.

Ms Watson gave a presentation highlighting the company's work during 2015/16. She stated that they had 3,792 homes in the Rushcliffe areas and that 57 new homes had been completed in 2015/16, 43 were proposed for 2016/17 and there was another 176 in the pipeline on two strategic sites in the Borough. In response to a question regarding the development of garage sites Ms Watson advised that a review of all garage sites had been undertaken and that not all sites were suitable to be built on. She said that the review was necessary as it was recognised that the majority of the garages were coming to the end of their life. She confirmed that a number of options were being considered including upgrading the existing garages, conversion into parking spaces or redevelopment. With regards to affordable homes it was recognised that the organisation worked mainly with the larger developers, however it did not preclude smaller companies from bidding. Members were concerned that smaller developers did not know how to contact Metropolitan. Ms Watson stated that the Land Manager was based in London but regular liaison with the Strategic Housing Team was on-going. It was agreed that the Strategic Housing Manager would clarify the approach Metropolitan takes for working with small developers to encourage greater participation on local sites. The Strategic Housing Manager advised that due to procurement regulations, completion from larger house builders and economies of scale, scheme viability would be an important determining factor. The Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods stated that there were other providers such as Waterloo Housing which also helped to deliver affordable housing in the borough and the Strategic Housing team could act as a conduit for any general development enquiries. The Strategic Housing Manager explained how Section 106 agreements worked and how developers had to evidence that a site was no longer viable. She stated that in some cases the type and tenure of the affordable properties could be changed to address viability issues.

With regard to turnover of properties Ms Watson stated that there had been an increase during the year however this was replicated nationally. Members were informed that they had introduced an outgoing tenant's visit to clarify any tenancy related issues and this was also helping to market the property quicker and address any repair issues. Ms Watson stated that all new tenants were now offered a five year fixed tenancy. Following a question she stated that there was a low number of evictions for rent arrears and that the person had to be in breach of a court order before this action was taken. She explained that there were a lot of measures in place to avoid having to evict anyone which was seen as a last resort. Members were informed that officers worked very hard to offer support and there was always a review to see what the underlying circumstances were and if the organisation could do more. It was noted that the company consulted Social Services where vulnerable people or children were affected; and with the Council's Revenue & Benefit section to investigate all angles.

In respect of anti-social behaviour Ms Watson was pleased to say that the number of cases had reduced compared to the previous year. It was noted that nearly 50% of the cases related to noise issues. Members were informed that 77% of cases had been resolved and that a compromise had been

reached on the others, as it was noted that sometimes people's expectations and lifestyles were different.

Members had raised concerns regarding the repairs service. Ms Watson stated that there had been issues with a previous contractor and the organisation had decided to have an in-house service, called Networks. During the transition period another contractor, Kiers, had been engaged on a temporary basis. The launch of Networks had been delayed until February 2016 and that the organisation was now seeing improvements in service delivery and this was expected to continue. In answer to a question Ms Watson stated that repairs were carried out on an appointments basis and that 90% were completed on time. It was noted that some repairs missed the timeframe by a small period of time and to ensure a more accurate reflection of performance the organisation had changed its approach to closing the works order which now required the repair to be completely finished rather than a new order being raised for parts on order. She also said that they were introducing a system where properties were photographed when void to enable officers to identify the correct parts for items such as emersion heaters, etc. It was recognised that there had been difficulties for Networks with specialist sub-contractors for repairs to lifts, etc. Members recognised that 13,300 repairs had been completed but queried the total number of repairs that had been logged to better understand the percentage of repairs completed. Officers agreed to supply this data. Ms Watson stated that the spend on repairs had increased from £1 million to £1.3 million. Ms Reynolds stated that there had only been 164 complaints regarding repairs and therefore 99% of the repairs had been adequately carried out.

Members noted that there had been 27 enquiries by Councillors and stated that by the time the person had contacted them they were often frustrated. Members queried the time taken to reply to their calls and whether this could be expedited. Ms Watson stated that the standard was to resolve the query within ten days, however she encouraged her staff to make personal contact by telephone and keep people informed and not wait until the tenth day. She said that there was a review being undertaken currently and she would ensure Members' concerns were fed into the process. She stated that this was a two way communication.

In respect of the ageing stock Ms Watson explained that a stock condition survey was carried out and that currently 80% had been completed; it was anticipated that 100% would be achieved by the end of March 2017. This survey fed into the planned maintenance programme of repairs for items such as roofs. She also explained that they had invested in a new IT system that would identify where regular repeat repairs were occurring in order for officers to investigate and include additional items into the planned programme. It was hoped that the organisation would be able to be proactive with the maintenance of properties.

Members queried if the organisation carried out customer satisfaction surveys in respect of repairs. Ms Watson said that this had been carried out in the past but that the information had not been used. She said that they were trialling a new approach and that this would be a useful tool to ascertain the effectiveness of the contractors.

In respect of improvements to the properties Ms Reynolds informed Members that £429,000 had been spent on improvements and that this would continue into 2016/17. Priority areas were to improve communal areas, improve the condition of the stock especially where this would reduce fuel poverty. Following a question regarding renewable energy Ms Reynolds explained that the organisation had been investing in new technology but this had stopped while the organisation evaluated the effect on properties and whether it was being effective and saving tenants' money.

Ms Watson informed the Group of their services for older people, including having 13 dedicated Housing Managers. She was pleased to say that due to the low ratio of staff to tenants the Managers were well known by their tenants and that the Managers were aware of what was happening in their area. She stated that the METTS service helped to support people to maintain their tenancies. She highlighted the Connect service which had provided support for 294 residents and was supported by Nottinghamshire County Council. She also said that they were considering how they could roll out their Handyperson service to the wider community without adversely affecting the service. The Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods explained that the County Council ran a Handyperson service and it was agreed that discussions should be held on how the two schemes could work together.

Members were pleased to note the many community projects/activities that were run by Metropolitan Housing, especially the Super Kitchen initiative. Officers agreed to supply Members with further details.

The Group were informed of the organisation's work to improve the employment opportunities for its residents. Ms Watson highlighted the excellent work that had been undertaken with Streetwise. Members were pleased to note that in the last six months 21 people had been supported into employment which equated to £68,000. Ms Watson agreed to supply Members with more details on the drop in surgery that was to be held in West Bridgford.

Finally, Ms Watson outlined the future proposals including the completion of the Scotland Bank project, redevelopment of the garage sites and the roll out of the Handyperson service.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from Metropolitan Housing for their informative presentation and for answering Members' questions.

AGREED that Members had considered and made comments on the presentation made by Metropolitan and endorsed the work of the partnership.

#### 10. **Service Level Agreement with Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service**

The Community Development Manager presented a report regarding the Service Level Agreement with Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service. He reminded Members that previously there had been a joint agreement with Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire and Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service, however due to the budget reductions a retendering process took place and both organisations decided to submit separate bids.. He stated that the financial value of the Agreement for 2015/16 was £30,000.

Ms Perry gave a presentation which highlighted the work of the volunteers which was very diverse and delivered a variety of services, a number of which are outside of the scope of the Service Level Agreement. She stated that the funding had been reduced by 25%, however they had exceeded most of their targets. She gave examples of the many groups that were helped and supported by the Service including EKTA which was a lunch club that had been supporting Asian ladies to socialise, gain companionship and to eradicate isolation. Members were informed that this had been very beneficial over a number of years however it was recognised that something different was needed and the Service was supporting the committee to manage the change and close the lunch club.

Members were informed that the Service had been involved in the development of the Rushcliffe Advice Network and had helped to secure the initial £500,000 funding to support the project for five years.

In respect of health and wellbeing Ms Perry explained that they supported a variety of groups including the Ramblers, toddler groups, move and mingle, health forums, etc. She highlighted the Rushcliffe Games which had been set up in conjunction with Parkwood Leisure to assist young people with learning difficulties access to games and sport. The Service worked closely with the Clinical Commissioning Group and she was pleased to say that they had been identified as the preferred partner of the Nottingham North and East Clinical Commissioning Group to work with patients suffering from Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Members were informed that the Service had been asked to run the Gedling Voluntary Transport Scheme as well as the Rushcliffe Scheme. It was noted that there were over 80 drivers and over 450 users of the schemes. This was seen as a vital service by the community.

Ms Perry stated that to help keep the sector informed the Service produced ten newsletters per year which received very good feedback. For further advice they had produced downloadable guides and ran courses on topics such as writing a constitution, how to write a good funding application.

The Group was informed of the Rushcliffe Befriends service and the fact that they had successfully gained funding from the Big Lottery Fund for a second time. The service had helped approximately 1,100 people to maintain their independence.

Turning specifically to the Service Level Agreement commissioned by Rushcliffe Borough Council Ms Perry stated that through the Volunteers Centre 1,153 people and 53 organisations had been helped and 61 new volunteering opportunities developed; 21 groups had received assistance to gain £43,500 in funding and it was recognised that each volunteer created £16,032 worth of wellbeing. Following a question Members were informed that there was not a large turnover of volunteers. It was felt that when volunteers were given a one to one interview they had a more tailored experience and were signposted in the right direction. With regards to some services it was acknowledged that people had to undertake a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check which for volunteers was free.

The Group felt that the Rushcliffe Community & Voluntary Service ran an impressive service that was very beneficial to the community. Members acknowledged that volunteers worked a large number of hours and often did not include any work they did at home.

The Chairman thanked Ms Perry for her excellent presentation and endorsed the comments of the Group that this was a dedicated organisation with a hard working management committee.

AGREED that Members had commented on the performance of the Rushcliffe Community and Voluntary Service in delivering the Service Level Agreement for April 2015 to March 2016.

#### 11. **Work Programme**

The Group agreed their work programme for the forthcoming year. It was noted that there would be three external visitors at the next meeting. Members agreed to consider which partner should be invited to represent the South Nottinghamshire Safety Partnership.

AGREED that the Partnership Delivery Group agrees the proposed work programme for 2016/17.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

### **Action Sheet PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY GROUP - TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2016**

<b>Minute Number</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>
9. Review of Metropolitan Housing Partnership	Officers from Metropolitan Housing Trust to: a) Provide the number of repairs that had been logged. b) Supply further details of the Superkitchen initiative c) Provide details of the West Bridgford employment drop in surgery.	Representatives from Metropolitan Housing Trust