



Housing Scrutiny Committee
16 January 2018

**Report from the Strategic Director
of Community Wellbeing**

Oversight of Registered Providers Operating in Brent

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	1
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Geeta Le Tissier, Housing Partnerships, geeta.letissier@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. Housing Scrutiny Committee seeks to have an oversight of service delivery in the borough as housing is increasingly delivered by a number of landlords, including the Council, Registered Providers (RP), private landlords and part-owned part –rent schemes such as Shared Ownership.
- 1.2. The Committee has requested that Registered Providers active in the borough report on the level and quality of services they deliver to local residents. It plans to take a detailed look at the largest Registered Providers operating in the borough over the next quarter, focusing on one landlord every month.
- 1.3. In view of the long standing role of Metropolitan Housing Trust (MHT) in Brent and the number of residents receiving services from MHT, the first meeting is dedicated to a scrutiny of its housing services and resident engagement.
- 1.4. A Housing Scrutiny Meeting dedicated to Fire Safety took place in November 2017 and although of importance, it is not the main focus of this review.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Committee welcomes the representatives from MHT, note and consider the contents of this report and any report and/or information to be presented by MHT representatives.
- 2.2 That the Scrutiny Committee asks MHT representatives questions they consider relevant, bearing in mind the information presented.
- 2.3. That the Scrutiny Committee consider making recommendations to both MHT and Council officers, on action(s) they consider necessary.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Metropolitan Housing Trust has a history of community development and its ethos is rooted in its beginnings when it focused on providing housing for the Caribbean community.
- 3.2 Metropolitan Housing Trust (MHT) owns 1648 homes in the borough. It acquired the freehold of Chalkhill Estate in a Trickle Transfer in the 1990s. A list of properties on the Chalkhill Estate is appended at Appendix 1. However, the full list of its stock in Brent has been requested from MHT and should be available for the Committee meeting on 16th January 2017.
- 3.3 Chalkhill Estate was regenerated through the stock transfer to MHT with part of the estate being redeveloped and some blocks refurbished. The estate is well managed on a day to day basis.
- 3.4. The Trust has seen a high degree of organizational change which is only just bedding down. Geeta Nanda was appointed Chief Executive and started with the Trust in October 2017 and is currently touring the country speaking to staff teams and stakeholders, sharing her vision. She comes with an impressive track record and the Council looks forward to working with the new leadership team and to forging a renewed and strong partnership. A new Director of Customer Services has also been appointed.
- 3.5. The Housing Scrutiny Panel sent a survey to key RPs active in Brent in order to obtain an overview of scale of activities, service delivery and current strategy. This is in the context of the strategic overview role held by Local Authorities.
- 3.6. Metropolitan Housing Trust owns and manages general needs dwellings for rent, supported housing schemes in the form of extra care homes. MHT was sent the survey requiring information about its stock data and condition, its resident strategy, its governance arrangements, its complaints procedures and its community development and a number of other indicators of performance. However, to date a response has not yet been received by the Council.

- 3.7. On the 1st July 1996 MHT and LBB entered into a Deed of Covenant (the Deed). Under the terms of the Deed MHT agreed (amongst other things) to make available to the former Bison Estate tenants the ability to purchase their new properties built on the Chalkhill Estate at a discount.
- 3.8. Terms agreed within the Deed should have ensured that the Tenants were able to acquire their properties at a discount, however the terms set out in the scheme were not sufficiently detailed enough to ensure that the sale of the properties to local residents could take place. LBB have tried to engage with MHT and agree appropriate terms however MHT have not responded positively to LBB's request to provide revised terms.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 Registered providers shall:

a. treat all tenants with fairness and respect

b. demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.

- 6.2 There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 7.1 Ward members were consulted and they expressed a desire to meet MHT at the January 2018 Housing Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.2 MHT has provided their recent annual report in support of their improved financial situation.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

- 8.1 None

Report sign off:

PHIL PORTER

Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing

