



## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 25TH OCTOBER 2012

**SUBJECT: WHQS DELIVERY TEAM – ORGANISATION STRUCTURE**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider proposals for the structure of the WHQS Delivery Team.

### **2 LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 2.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 2.2 Relevant policy documents are the National Housing Strategy “Sustainable Homes” WAG; the Council’s Community Strategy; Corporate Improvement Plan; Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Plan; Regeneration Strategy; and Children and Young People’s Plan.

The Council’s Local Housing Strategy “People, Property, and Places” has the following aim:

“To provide good quality, well managed houses in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations.”

### **3. THE REPORT**

- 3.1 At the first meeting of the Housing Task Group/Cabinet Sub-Committee the investment plan and contract structure were agreed. In order to take forward the investment plan there will be a WHQS Delivery Team. It was indicated there would be a further report that would set out the structure for the WHQS Delivery Team.
- 3.2 The WHQS Programme Structure shows a split in management responsibilities between programme delivery and day-to-day service responsibilities. The Head of Programmes will manage the Delivery Team.
- 3.3 The WHQS Delivery Team brings together the existing planned maintenance team, the team managing heating and re-wiring works, statutory maintenance, and quantity surveying services, together with the DLO Manager and foremen on the contracts side of the DLO.
- 3.4 While the various staff involved are familiar with the WHQS, the current arrangements are fragmented and do not align with the way the programme will be implemented going forward. The contract structure has taken on board the views of tenants about the way they would like to see the works undertaken. Staff resources need to be re-organised around the investment plan and contract structure.
- 3.5 There are a number of considerations to take into account:

- The nature of the programme involving both internal and external works
- The scale of the investment
- The timescale
- The packaging of work to meet tenant requirements
- Concurrent contracts within the three housing areas
- Surveying, tenant liaison, and contract management.
- Supply chain arrangements
- Grading issues where relevant
- Deployment of management skills and expertise at both strategic and operation levels

- 3.6 The programme responsibilities need to be shared between the three managers whose teams are being brought together. The principle proposition is that each manager should take responsibility for programmes of work within one of the three housing areas, but each would have a special responsibility that crosses all three housing areas. The existing teams will be re-allocated to one of the area groups to ensure a balance of resources between the three teams commensurate with the programmes in those areas. This will achieve an integration of the existing staff resources necessary for the delivery of the investment plan.
- 3.7 Each of the three groups would have a Principal Contract Manager, a number of Surveyors, TLOs, a Q.S., Estimator, Electrical Clerk of Works, and a number of Foremen. This is largely based on re-allocating existing staff, although it does assume there will be an increase in the number of TLOs. The need for additional resources to maintain the programme momentum will be kept under review.
- 3.8 It is proposed that one manager would take the Upper Rhymney Valley together with responsibility for the Support Group, which is a resource for all the Delivery Team, ensure co-ordination across the Quantity Surveyors and Estimators, and oversee the interface with the supply partner. This manager will retain responsibility for overseeing statutory maintenance and inspection.
- 3.9 It is proposed that one manager should take the Lower Rhymney Valley. The DLO has both internal and external works programmes in this area and this manager would take responsibility for DLO supervision co-ordination, and general on site contract management.
- 3.10 It is proposed that one manager would take the Eastern Valleys together with responsibility for planning co-ordination and for developing closer working relations between the energy and heating teams.
- 3.11 The three managers will work flexibly to provide mutual support across all three area groups.
- 3.12 There are important links with the Corporate Procurement Team and the Keystone Asset Management System.
- 3.13 There are a number of other key posts that will deal with the wider issues of communications and engagement, community benefits, the transforming lives ambitions, the environmental programme, and the HRA assets review.
- 3.14 The focus of the Delivery Team is the promises made to tenants in the Offer Document/ Addendum. This requires an effective team approach and strong relationships with other parts of the Housing Division, other parts of the Council's organisation and with external partners.
- 3.15 The proposed organisation structure is shown in the Appendix attached to the report

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 An EqIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and for low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The proposals for the Delivery Team primarily relate to a re-organisation of existing staff resources. The majority of posts are currently funded from the HRA. The WHQS business plan has a built in fee provision which can be utilised to meet the costs of new posts in particular the two asset surveyors and the additional Tenant Liaison Officers (4 posts).
- 5.2 There will also be some one-off costs associated with a move to new accommodation (see below), together with the running costs. However the latter will be offset by savings on existing accommodation costs, which currently sit within the HRA.

#### **6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The successful delivery of the WHQS programme is entirely dependent on having the necessary staff resources properly aligned with the strategy for implementation. The concept of an integrated delivery team will only be effectively achieved if there is a physical integration that reflects the structure. To this end, suitable accommodation is required to facilitate this requirement. Subject to the acceptance of the recommendation the move to new accommodation should be undertaken as soon as practical.

#### **7. CONSULTATIONS**

- 7.1 Unison and GMB have raised a number of queries. Unison sought clarification on the following:

- Adequacy of staff resources, in particular the number of Surveyors allocated to the Lower Rhymney Valley housing area
- Need for training and support for the specialist areas of responsibility
- Grading issues, and the impact of the proposals on single status
- Financial implications and effect on current service delivery
- The EqIA screening
- Impact on the Authority's Asset Management Plan

GMB sought clarification on the following:

- Adequacy of staff resources, in particular the number of Surveyors allocated to the Lower Rhymney Valley housing area.
- Grading issues, and the impact of the proposals on single status
- Financial implications and the effect on current service delivery

A response has been provided to both Unison and GMB on the points raised.

- 7.2 The number of Surveyors allocated to the Lower Rhymney Valley is lower than the other two housing areas based on the lower level of investment required in this area. However, paragraph 3.7 indicates the need for additional resources to maintain the programme momentum will be kept under review. Furthermore, it is intended that there will be flexibility in the use of staff resources across the three housing areas.

- 7.3 The specialist areas of responsibility are considered to be within the competence of the three existing managers. The need for any training and support would be identified through the annual PDR process.
- 7.4 The primary duties of the majority of staff will not change but there may be circumstances where individual responsibilities are affected and the grading of specific posts may need to be reviewed. There are four new posts proposed in the structure and the grades for these posts will need to be determined if the organisation structure is approved. The proposed organisation structure does not undermine the single status agreement.
- 7.5 There are some additional financial implications that can be funded from the fee provision built into the WHQS Business Plan. There is no adverse effect on the funding for current service delivery.
- 7.6 There are accommodation issues that need to be addressed to facilitate the implementation of the WHQS Delivery Team structure. This will be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet."

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Task Group recommend to the Cabinet Sub-Committee:
- 8.2 The proposed structure for the WHQS Delivery Team be approved and the principle of physically integrating the team in suitable accommodation be supported.
- 8.3 The transition to the new structure be implemented as soon as possible.

## **9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 To ensure staff resources are integrated and effectively organised for the WHQS Programme.

## **10. STATUTORY POWER**

- 10.1 Local Government and Housing Acts. This is a Cabinet Sub Committee function.

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Appendices:  
Appendix 1 WHQS Delivery Team – Organisation Structure