

# Public Document Pack

Penallta House,  
Tredomen Park,  
Ystrad Mynach,  
Hengoed CF82 7PG

Ty Penallta,  
Parc Tredomen,  
Ystrad Mynach,  
Hengoed CF82 7PG



[www.caerphilly.gov.uk](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk)  
[www.caerffili.gov.uk](http://www.caerffili.gov.uk)

Am unrhyw ymholiad yn ymwneud â'r agenda hwn cysylltwch â Rebecca Barrett  
(Rhif Ffôn: 01443 864245 Ebst: barrerm@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher, 26 Medi 2018**

Annwyl Syr/Fadam,

Bydd cyfarfod **Pwyllgor Craffu Polisi ac Adnoddau** yn cael ei gynnal yn **Ystafell Sirhywi, Tŷ Penallta, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** ar **Dydd Mawrth, 2ail Hydref, 2018** am **5.30 pm** i ystyried materion a gynhwysir yn yr agenda canlynol. Gall cynghorwyr a'r cyhoedd sy'n dymuno siarad am unrhyw eitem wneud hynny drwy wneud cais i'r Cadeirydd. Mae croeso i chi hefyd ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod. Mae'r ddau gais hyn yn gofyn am gyfnod rhybudd o 3 diwrnod gwaith, a bydd cyfieithu ar y pryd yn cael ei ddarparu os gofynnir amdano.

Mae pob cyfarfod Pwyllgor yn agored i'r Wasg a'r Cyhoedd. Gofynnir i arsylwyr a chyfranogwyr ymddwyn gyda pharch ac ystyriaeth at eraill. Sylwer y bydd methu â gwneud hynny yn golygu y gofynnir i chi adael y cyfarfodydd ac efallai y cewch eich hebrwng o'r safle.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christina Harrhy'.

**Christina Harrhy**  
PRIF WEITHREDWR DROS DRO

## A G E N D A

Tudalennau

- 1 I dderbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.
- 2 Datganiadau o Ddiddordeb.

Atgoffi'r Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion o'u cyfrifoldeb personol i ddatgan unrhyw fuddiannau personol a/neu niweidiol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw eitem o fusnes ar yr agenda hwn yn unol â Deddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000, Cyfansoddiad y Cyngor a'r Cod Ymddygiad ar gyfer Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion.

A greener place Man gwyrddach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat



I gymeradwyo a llofnodi'r cofnodion canlynol:-

- |   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| 3 | Pwyllgor Craffu Polisi ac Adnoddau a gynhaliwyd ar 6ed Medi 2018.                   | 1 - 10  |
| 4 | Ystyried unrhyw fater a gyfeiriwyd at y Pwyllgor hwn yn unol â'r drefn galw i mewn. |         |
| 5 | I dderbyn adroddiad llafar gan yr Aelod(au) Cabinet.                                |         |
| 6 | Rhaglen Waith y Dyfodol Pwyllgor Craffu Polisi ac Adnoddau.                         | 11 - 24 |
| 7 | I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau* Cabinet canlynol:-                            |         |
|   | 1. Strategaeth Rheoli Asedau Cartrefi Caerffili - 12fed Medi 2018;                  |         |
|   | 2. Ailfodelu ac Ail-ddosbarthu Llety Pobl Hŷn - 12fed Medi 2018;                    |         |
|   | 3. Opsiynau ar gyfer Cynyddu'r Cyflenwad o Stoc Tai Cyngor - 12fed Medi 2018;       |         |
|   | 4. Blaenraglen Waith y Cabinet - 19eg Medi 2018;                                    |         |
|   | 5. Strategaeth Cerbydau Trydan a Chynllun Gweithredu.- 19eg Medi 2018.              |         |

*\*Os oes aelod o'r Pwyllgor Craffu yn dymuno i unrhyw un o'r adroddiadau Cabinet uchod i gael eu dwyn ymlaen ar gyfer adolygiad yn y cyfarfod, cysylltwch â Rebecca Barrett, 01443 864245, erbyn 10.00 a.m. ar ddydd Llun, 1af Hydref 2018.*

I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau Craffu canlynol:-

- |    |   |          |
|----|---|----------|
| 8  | Adroddiad Perfformiad Diwedd Blwyddyn ar gyfer Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol 2017/18.                                    | 25 - 48  |
| 9  | Amcan Lles 5: Buddsoddi mewn Cartrefi Cyngor i Drawsnewid Bywydau a Chymunedau - Adroddiad Diwedd Blwyddyn (2017/18). | 49 - 68  |
| 10 | Adroddiad Perfformiad Diwedd Blwyddyn ar gyfer Cartrefi Caerffili.  | 69 - 90  |
| 11 | Adroddiad Perfformiad ar gyfer Cyflenwi Grant Cyfleusterau i'r Anabl.   | 91 - 108 |

#### **Cylchrediad:**

Cynghorwyr M.A. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, K. Dawson, K. Etheridge, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, L. Harding, G. Kirby (Is Gadeirydd), C.P. Mann, Mrs D. Price, J. Pritchard (Cadeirydd), J. Ridgewell, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Taylor a L.G. Whittle

A Swyddogion Priodol

#### **SUT FYDDWN YN DEFNYDDIO EICH GWYBODAETH**

Bydd yr unigolion hynny sy'n mynychu cyfarfodydd pwyllgor i siarad/roi tystiolaeth yn cael eu henwi yng nghofnodion y cyfarfod hynny, weithiau bydd hyn yn cynnwys eu man gweithio neu fusnes a'r barnau a fynegir. Bydd cofnodion o'r cyfarfod gan gynnwys manylion y siaradwyr ar gael i'r cyhoedd ar wefan y Cyngor ar [www.caerffili.gov.uk](http://www.caerffili.gov.uk). ac eithrio am drafodaethau sy'n ymwneud ag eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig.

Mae gennych nifer o hawliau mewn perthynas â'r wybodaeth, gan gynnwys yr hawl i gael mynediad at wybodaeth sydd gennym amdanoch a'r hawl i gwyno os ydych yn anhapus gyda'r modd y mae eich gwybodaeth yn cael ei brosesu.

Am wybodaeth bellach ar sut rydym yn prosesu eich gwybodaeth a'ch hawliau, ewch i'r Hysbysiad Preifatrwydd Cyfarfodydd Pwyllgor Llawn ar ein gwefan <http://www.caerffili.gov.uk/Pwyllgor/Preifatrwydd> neu cysylltwch â Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol drwy e-bostio [griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk](mailto:griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk) neu ffoniwch 01443 863028.



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON THURSDAY, 6TH SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 5.30 P.M.**

---

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Pritchard – Chair

Councillors:

M. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, K. Etheridge, L. Harding, C.P. Mann, J. Ridgewell, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Taylor, L.G. Whittle

Cabinet Members:

Mrs B. Jones (Finance, Performance and Governance), Mrs L. Phipps (Homes and Places)

Together with:

S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), F. Wilkins (Housing Services Manager), P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), T. Evans (Policy Officer), C. Forbes-Thompson (Interim Head of Democratic Services), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Dawson, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, G. Kirby (Vice-Chair), Mrs D. Price and R. Saralis, together with Cabinet Member C. Gordon (Corporate Services).

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs B. Jones (Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Governance) sought clarification on whether she was required to declare an interest in the Housing reports (Agenda Items 8-10) as a Council tenant. It was confirmed that as Councillor Jones was in attendance as a Cabinet Member and not as a member of the Committee, and in that the Committee is not a decision making body, she would not be required to declare an interest in this regard.

### **3. MINUTES – 29TH MAY 2018**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 29th May 2018 (minute nos. 1 - 9) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE**

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

#### **5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBERS**

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the reports from Councillor Mrs L. Phipps and Mrs B. Jones, which provided an update on their respective portfolios, and had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. Questions and comments were invited on the contents of the reports.

Councillor L. Phipps (Cabinet Member for Homes and Places) outlined developments across Property Services, including a successful 10 year lease for the Ty Dyffryn building, a contract for the construction of a 3G sports pitch at Blackwood Comprehensive School, and the forthcoming completion of a new teaching block at Newbridge School. Members were advised of continuing progress across the WHQS scheme, with 77% of internal works and 53% of external works compliant, resulting in overall compliance of 41%. Wales Audit Office are currently undertaking a review with the Authority to follow up on their previous report. The Scrutiny Committee also noted the shortlisting of Caerphilly Homes by the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) for two national awards, comprising one for the Rowan Place transformation project and the other in the field of Construction and Building Services for the delivery of the WHQS programme.

The Committee congratulated Caerphilly Homes staff on achieving the APSE nomination. A Member queried progress on the new sports pitch being developed at the Centre of Sporting Excellence in Ystrad Mynach. It was confirmed that the query would be passed to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services who would respond accordingly. In response to a Member's query, Officers confirmed that the current WHQS completion rates are on course to meet the projected targets.

Councillor Mrs B. Jones (Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Governance) updated Members on Corporate Finance and explained that statistics for 2017/18 are now available from the WG 'StatsWales' website, which puts the Authority in 6th place for Council tax collection rates across Wales, and is a pleasing result. The Cabinet Member also provided an update in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan and budget setting process for 2019/20. Draft budget proposals for 2019/20 will be presented to Cabinet in the Autumn and will be followed by a period of consultation in line with previous years. Members were reminded of the challenges ahead and of the difficult decisions that will need to be made. It was also noted that a further £3.5m in savings will need to be made due to a change in financial projections and assumptions, and the total savings requirement now stands at £13.5m for 2019/20.

Members sought confirmation on the response rate and response types to a Workforce Planning letter recently sent to all Council staff seeking expressions of interest for reduction of hours, flexible/early retirement and voluntary severance. The Cabinet Member confirmed that a significant number of staff had responded, with the responses currently being analysed, and that she would liaise with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and relevant Officers to provide this information to Members.

The Cabinet Members were thanked for their reports.

## **6. POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Cath Forbes-Thompson (Interim Head of Democratic Services) presented the report, which outlined details of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the period September 2018 to April 2019. Members were asked to consider the FWP alongside the Cabinet Work Programme as appended to the report and to suggest any changes to its content.

It was noted that there had been no report requests since the publication of the agenda papers. However, Members were referred to the five reports listed for 13th November 2018 and Officers explained that given the maximum of four discussion items per agenda, they would contact Members following the meeting to determine which report could be deferred to a later date or alternatively distributed as an information item.

The Scrutiny Committee were also advised that Officers are progressing arrangements for a workshop to be held with Members and housebuilders to discuss the delivery of the Council's affordable housing targets.

Following discussion on its contents, it was unanimously agreed that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Council's website.

## **7. CABINET REPORTS**

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports. It was agreed that the three Housing reports would be taken in reverse order to that listed on the agenda in order to align with the order in which they were presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group.

## **8. CAERPHILLY HOMES ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

With the aid of a slideshow presentation, Shaun Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) presented the report, which had been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 4th September 2018. The report and presentation outlined the proposed Asset Management Strategy for the Caerphilly Homes housing stock, following the anticipated achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, and sought Members' views on its contents, prior to consideration of the Strategy by Cabinet.

Members were provided with details of the proposed Strategy which sets out how the Welsh Housing Quality Standard will continue to be maintained post 2020, and will ensure that the Council's housing portfolio continues to provide affordable, quality homes that meet customer's needs now and for the future. The Strategy will apply to the asset management of all existing and future council housing which is supported by the Housing Revenue Account.

It was explained that the Strategy encompasses a number of key issues and considerations, which will work together in an integrated way to deliver the proposed Strategy, including a Delivery Plan, a Procurement Plan, Standard/Quality, a 5 year Asset Maintenance Programme, Reactive and Void Repairs, Statutory Landlord Maintenance, and a Housing (HRA) Business Plan. Further information on these areas was set out in the report

By way of the accompanying presentation, Officers provided an overview of the functions comprising the proposed Asset Management Delivery Plan (which sets out the overarching plan for delivery, is based on a 5 year programme and ensures a fully integrated approach to the delivery of Council homes moving forward). The Plan takes into account the requirement for cyclical/statutory maintenance across Council homes, the process for reactive and void repairs, accessible housing provision, asset maintenance proposals moving forward, energy improvements, and options for increasing Council house supply. Members noted that it is proposed to commence the next external works programme in 2020/21 which will be based on a five-year cycle. It is intended to commence the internal works programme in 2025/26, which will be determined by the Asset Management Database, life expectancy estimates and surveys. It was explained that the extent of work will be based on the condition and not the age of the components (such as kitchen fittings).

During the course of the ensuing debate, a Member made reference to Section 9.2 of the report, which cited a potential investment in the housing stock of over £220m, and sought clarification on whether this amount is a definitive figure. Officers explained that this figure was set at the commencement of the WHQS programme in 2012 and that if costs are likely to exceed this amount, then a further report will be brought forward for Member's consideration.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be referred to Cabinet for approval. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) the 5 year Asset Management Strategy as set out in the report be established;
- (ii) the proposed delivery plan as indicated in Item 6 of the report be agreed;
- (iii) the assumptions included in the Business Plan that outlines the affordability envelope (as set out in Appendix 1 and paragraph 12.2 of the report) be agreed, whilst noting that these may be subject to change which may result in further reports being submitted;
- (iv) it be noted that separate detailed reports will be submitted in relation to the remodelling of sheltered housing schemes and new Council housing.

## **9. PROPOSALS FOR INCREASING COUNCIL HOUSING SUPPLY**

With the aid of a slideshow presentation, Shaun Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) and Fiona Wilkins (Housing Services Manager) presented the report, which had been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 4th September 2018, and which sought the views of the Scrutiny Committee ahead of its presentation to Cabinet.

The report advised Members of proposals for increasing the supply of Council Housing and outlined principles of development mechanisms and options for delivery. Members were requested to consider the information in the report and provide views on the options to enable Officers to further develop proposals resulting in a more detailed report to be brought forward for building new Council homes on specific sites. The report also included proposals on other options which could be considered for increasing Council housing supply.

Members were advised that the Council's housing stock has been significantly depleted over the years as a result of the Right to Buy process and currently there are approximately 4,300

active applicants on the Common Housing Register seeking a transfer or the allocation of a home. A breakdown of these applicants by housing category was included in the report, which clearly highlights a need for an increase in general accommodation, particularly smaller units of accommodation for single persons. Additionally, work is nearing completion on the Local Housing Market Assessment, and the data gathered suggests that an additional 282 units of affordable housing are required per annum to meet demand and that there is a particular demand for single person accommodation.

The report therefore set out a number of options for increasing Council housing supply, including the use of the Housing Revenue Account to purchase General Fund or private land at market value or provide a leasing option, the redevelopment of existing Housing Revenue Account sites, purchase via Section 106 agreements, or the acquisition of existing properties (either via private properties or through former Council properties). There is also potential to explore several funding options in order to increase Council housing supply, including the use of the Housing Revenue Account, Affordable Housing Grant, Innovative Housing Grant, the Health and Housing programme, or borrowing supported by the Housing Revenue Account. It was noted that these funding options were detailed in both the Business Plan appended to this report and the preceding report (on the Caerphilly Homes Asset Management Strategy) which would be outlined to Members later in the meeting

The Scrutiny Committee discussed the contents of the report and in response to a Member's query, Officers outlined how Affordable Housing Grant funding could be utilised to increase Council housing supply, explaining that this may be used predominantly for building costs and is dependent on the overall purchase costs. Discussion took place on potential apprenticeship opportunities that could be created and Officers explained that this would be dependent on the number of projects arising from the proposals and the type of work required.

A Member sought further specifics on the locations of the potential development sites for delivery of new homes (as referenced in Section 4 of the report) in order to ascertain whether these proposals could be contentious or non-contentious. It was confirmed that potential sites include Heol Aneurin and Heol Graigwen in Penyrheol, a former club in Trecenydd, Snowden Close in Risca, and an area of land in Blackwood. Officers emphasised that these sites however would require further detailed site investigations to determine their suitability for development and this may determine that not all the proposals will be viable. In response to discussion on how new developments could be project managed, it was explained that there were a number of options. Option 1 of the Development Options for the Affordable Housing Grant examines the use of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in this regard which could address the need for specialist resources and build options whilst looking to use smaller local companies to deliver the scheme.

A query was received regarding the Affordable Housing Grant (AHG), in relation to the WG funding of 58%, and the Member asked about set criteria and whether this funding could be provided in partnership with an RSL. Officers confirmed that this grant was specifically allocated to local authorities to assist them with increasing housing supply. However, it would be possible that some sites could be developed jointly with RSLs using different funding streams.

During the course of the debate, a Member queried the use of the term "units" to describe residents' homes and it was explained that this is a technical planning term which encompasses all dwelling types.

Discussion took place on the potential to deliver Council homes through Section 106 agreements and a Member queried whether developers could be compelled to meet the 40% affordable housing target in order to increase this housing provision. Officers explained that the factors associated with each development are examined on a case by case basis and outlined the Council's efforts to achieve and, at times, exceed the target proportion of

affordable housing wherever possible. However, there have been occasions where developers have been able to clearly demonstrate viability issues on a site specific basis, which has resulted in the percentage of affordable housing being set at a lower level in these cases.

Reference was made to the use of empty commercial premises to deliver Council homes and it was confirmed that the proposals will explore the purchase of these buildings in order to bring them back into beneficial use. Clarification was also provided on the current level of HRA borrowing and it was explained that there has been no borrowing to date for the delivery of the WHQS programme; however, it was likely that borrowing would be required from later this year. There is headroom within the HRA borrowing cap to support a number of the proposals, in addition to the other sources of funding that were identified within the report.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be referred to Cabinet for approval. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) the principle of building new Council homes and access to the AHG in full or part be agreed;
- (ii) the HRA sites to progress with detailed viability studies and the principle of identifying and pursuing suitable General Fund or open market sites for the development of affordable housing, be agreed;
- (iii) the transfer and purchase of new homes through Section 106 Agreements where there is an identified housing need and associated business case, be agreed;
- (iv) the selective acquisition of existing properties to support housing need and subject to value for money being demonstrated, as set out in item 4.7 and 4.8 of the report, with individual acquisitions being progressed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Places, be agreed;
- (v) a review of resources to support the preferred approach be agreed;
- (vi) the delivery options outlined be considered regarding the Officers' preferred Options 2 and 5 with the aim of the Council accessing AHG and delivering new council homes within the stated timeframes (i.e. 2019/20);
- (vii) the submission of future reports for approval providing more detail on any viable development sites for new Council home provision, be agreed.

## **10. REMODELLING AND RECLASSIFICATION OF OLDER PERSONS ACCOMMODATION**

With the aid of a slideshow presentation, Shaun Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) and Fiona Wilkins (Housing Services Manager) presented the report, which had been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 4th September 2018, and which sought the views of the Scrutiny Committee on a number of preferred options for remodelling and reclassification of older persons accommodation ahead of its presentation to Cabinet.

Officers gave an overview of current sheltered housing schemes across the county borough, and reminded Members of the review of sheltered housing in 2013, which identified 6 sheltered housing schemes in the Eastern Valleys area as unfit for purpose due to the small



size of the units and accessibility issues. In 2015, Cabinet approved the completion of preliminary studies to consider the feasibility of remodelling these schemes to meet future needs and demands, committing to consider implementation of viable options post 2020.

Members were advised that since these studies were commissioned, further issues have arisen and investigations have identified the need for a wider review of certain older person services. Officers explained that there is a surplus of older persons accommodation across the county borough, together with a lack of single persons accommodation, increased waiting lists for Council housing and a need to tackle homelessness within the county borough. Therefore, in addition to the proposed options arising from the feasibility studies, the report also proposed the re-classification or decommissioning of several other schemes within the county borough in order to increase uptake of these properties, and proposed the granting of delegated powers to Officers to reclassify such accommodation in the future (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Places).

Further information on each of the schemes under consideration was also tabled to Members at the meeting, which outlined the number of units per scheme, the facilities available, and the level of current demand. The rationale for each proposal and the potential impacts for tenants was set out in the report, and contained the following Officers preferred options:-

- **Britannia Court (Risca)** - undertake WHQS improvement works and decommission the external flat blocks from the sheltered housing scheme;
- **Ty Melin (Croespenmaen)** and **Ynyswen (Pontllanfraith)** - proceed with partially compliant WHQS remodelling;
- **Castle Court (Pontywaun), St Mary's Court (Risca) and Waunfawr House (Crosskeys)** - undertake a programmed closure for these schemes for a replacement new build alternative as a replacement for these schemes and investigate options for the disposal or redevelopment of the sites;
- **Hafod y Bryn (Risca)** – reclassify from sheltered housing to designated general needs and older persons housing;
- **Tredegar Court (Crosskeys)** – remove the extra care classification to return it to a sheltered housing scheme;
- **Nantddu, Waunfach Street flats, Claude Road (Denscombe) and Grange Close (Trecenydd)** – fully decommission these partially decommissioned schemes;
- **Central Avenue (Pantside), Railway Terrace (Abercarn), Chatham Place (Markham) and Pencoed Avenue (Cefn Fforest)** – reclassify these older persons housing stock to general needs use;

The details of the consultation carried out to date with local ward councillors and tenants on the proposals were set out in the report and noted by the Committee. Officers explained that responses have been minimal but positive to date and that residents have generally welcomed the proposals as an opportunity to evaluate the types of services they are currently paying for and whether or not they are needed in their scheme. Further tenant consultation will take place across a number of the schemes should the recommendations be supported.

The Committee discussed the proposals at length and acknowledged the disparity between the demand for single person accommodation and the number of voids across sheltered housing schemes and the need to take action in this regard. During the course of the debate, clarification was sought on the shape and length of the proposed programme closure

and replacement new build for three of the schemes. Officers explained that this would be subject to planning approval and building regulations and so they would be unable to give an indication of the timeline at present.

Concerns were raised regarding the proposals to change some schemes to general use and whether this could result in mixed tenancies and different age groups living together. Officers confirmed that they were not seeking to change the age profile for the majority of the stock but that in cases where there is potential to do so, existing residents will be supported if they have concerns about these changes.

A Member queried whether there had been any change to the situation regarding the 6 schemes identified as unfit for purpose since the approval of the feasibility studies in 2015. Officers confirmed that these were set out in the report but that the main changes related to Britannia Close, involving the cost of the work and the limitations due to the type of design. This scheme was therefore recommended for WHQS works only rather than full remodelling work. Officers also referred to the recommendations where three other schemes were proposed for demolition, providing approval was received to replace them with a new purpose built scheme on an alternative site.

Reference was made to the potential re-apportionment of service charges at sites where it is proposed to reduce the number of accommodation units, and a Member raised concerns over the potential increase in the level of service charges payable by these tenants. Officers outlined the current high level of voids across these schemes and explained that reducing the number of units will create larger homes and a better standard of living for its tenants which should increase demand despite the associated increase in service charges.

Members were reminded that the Authority recently reviewed its service charges and were advised that Officers will continue to work with tenants wherever possible to achieve a fair balance. In response to a query on the payment of service charges in cases of hardship, it was noted that Cabinet previously agreed a cap on the highest charges and charges and there is currently a transition period before these are implemented in full. Overall, the proposals will give the opportunity for Officers to review services with sheltered housing tenants to ensure they are only paying for services that they receive or require. It was also confirmed that approximately 65% of sheltered housing tenants are in receipt of housing benefit. Discussion took place regarding service charges in the case of void properties and Officers confirmed that these costs are met by the Housing Revenue Account.

In closing, Officers gave an overview of the Housing Business Plan up to 2025 as appended to the Proposals for Increasing Council Housing Supply report and the Caerphilly Homes Asset Management Strategy, and which feeds into the proposals across the three Housing reports presented to the Committee. Officers explained that these proposals take into consideration the Business Plan to ensure that they remain financially viable. It was noted that the Plan up to 2025 has been populated using current rates, plus inflation for each year and based on the proposed asset management delivery plan. This includes anticipated expenditure per annum on statutory maintenance, reactive repairs, asset maintenance programme, remodelling sheltered schemes, works of adaptation and energy improvement works, and balances the available expenditure against the available financing.

It was noted that the borrowing capacity over this 5 year period is £180m (with some £34m flexibility before the borrowing cap is breached). However, borrowing capacity is dependent on the assumptions in the Business Plan and the level of borrowing required to meet WHQS. The Plan makes a number of financial assumptions regarding inflation, rental income, costs, debt and planned maintenance (post WHQS). Deviations from any of these assumptions will impact on the affordability of the Business Plan resulting in a change to the borrowing requirements which in turn will affect the borrowing capacity.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the Officers preferred

option as set out in Sections 10.1.1 to 10.1.6 of the report be supported, together with report recommendations 10.2 to 10.6, and that these be referred to Cabinet for approval. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:-

- (i) **Option B** be agreed for Britannia Court – retain and incorporate into the current WHQS programme of work, and decommission the external flat blocks from the scheme if feasible following further investigatory work and consultation with existing tenants – estimated cost as above plus the provision of dispersed alarms (8 units at approx. £40 each) for the blocks of flats, totalling £900,320;
- (ii) **Option A** be agreed for Ty Melin – proceed with the partially WHQS compliant remodelling to provide 23 units at the cost of £1,720,000;
- (iii) **Option A** be agreed for Ynyswen - proceed with the partially WHQS compliant remodelling to provide 13 units at the cost of £820,000;
- (iv) **Option F** be agreed for Castle Court - a programmed closure for the scheme for a replacement new build alternative as a replacement for 3 schemes and investigation of options for disposal or redevelopment of site – estimated new build cost £4,513,375;
- (v) **Option D** be agreed for St Marys Court – a programmed closure for the scheme for a replacement new build alternative as a replacement for 3 schemes and investigation of options for disposal or redevelopment of site – estimated new build cost £4,513,375.
- (vi) **Option D** be agreed for Waunfawr House – a programmed closure for the scheme for a replacement new build alternative and investigation of options for disposal or redevelopment of site – estimated new build cost £4,513,375.
- (vii) Hafod Y Bryn Sheltered Housing Scheme be reclassified from sheltered housing to designated general needs and older persons housing, subject to consultation and technical feasibility, and the communal facilities be converted into a ground floor 3 bed flat;
- (viii) the extra care classification for Tredegar Court be removed to return it to a sheltered housing scheme;
- (ix) the 4 partly decommissioned schemes as set out in the report be fully decommissioned – estimated cost of providing dispersed alarm to 133 units is £5,320 if required by the tenants;
- (x) the older persons housing stock at the specific locations mentioned within the report be reclassified to general needs use;
- (xi) Officers be granted delegated powers to re-classify older persons' accommodation to general needs using the principles identified in the report, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Places.

## 11. ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Paul Cooke (Senior Policy Officer) and Tracy Evans (Policy Officer) presented the report, which outlined the Council's draft Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan and sought the

views and recommendations of Members on its contents prior to presentation to Cabinet.

Members were advised that Caerphilly County Borough Council's first Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan (appended to the report) presents an innovative and strategic approach for electric vehicles across the county borough. It sets out the proposed approach to supporting the installation of electric vehicle infrastructure to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits and opportunities that electric vehicles provide, and for electric vehicles to be a fundamental part of the Council's own fleet.

Officers outlined the growing market in electric vehicles, arising from the UK Government's announcement to ban new diesel and petrol vehicles from sale in the UK from 2040 and the increasing number of car manufacturers investing in the new technology. Advances in battery technology in particular have allowed electric vehicles to have ranges in excess of 180 miles on a full battery charge, and the number of new electric and hybrid vehicle registrations in Wales rose by 35% in 2017, with 82 electric vehicle registrations in the Caerphilly county borough. However there are currently no publicly available electric vehicle charge points in the Caerphilly county borough and only 439 charge points across Wales.

It was explained that due to the aforementioned developments, a strategy to support the implementation of electric vehicles and electric vehicle charge points is required to progress this important work. This will put into place the infrastructure to support staff and residents to invest in electric vehicles and encourage visitors who drive electric vehicles to visit the county borough. The strategy also includes the promotion and installation of infrastructure to support electric bikes (E-bikes), electric mopeds and other electric vehicles that contribute to the overall aims of the strategy. Members were also referred to the aims and key objectives of the CCBC Electric Vehicle strategy as set out in the report.

During the course of the debate, Members commented on the logistics of introducing home charging points for those vehicles using on-street parking. It was explained that the technology allows for flexible options such as lamppost charging and the Strategy will explore central charging points such as car parks, doctors' surgeries and leisure centres. Discussion also took place regarding the use of hybrid vehicles post 2040 and it was explained that the legislation should allow for the continued use of the vehicle via its electric components.

Following consideration of the report, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee were supportive of the proposals outlined in the draft Strategy and felt that it was important for Caerphilly County Borough Council to lead by example. It was therefore moved and seconded that the following recommendation be referred to Cabinet for approval. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the draft Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan as appended to the report be approved, in order to encourage further take-up of electric vehicle usage.

The meeting closed at 7.22 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2018, they were signed by the Chair.

---

CHAIR



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND OCTOBER 2018**

**SUBJECT: POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD  
WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE  
SERVICES**

---

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

1.1 To report the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholders.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation. The Forward Work Programmes contribute to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016 by ensuring there is an effective scrutiny function and that council policies are scrutinised against the following goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

### **4. THE REPORT**

4.1 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on 6th September 2018. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period October 2018 to April 2019.

4.2 The forward work programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members and has been prioritised into three priority areas, priority 1, 2 or 3. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

4.3 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1. The Cabinet Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2.

## **5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

5.1 This report contributes to the well-being goals as set out in links to strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in that by ensuring the scrutiny function is effective when reviewing services and policies and ensure it considers the wellbeing goals.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

## **8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

12.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Rebecca Barrett, Committee Services Officer

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services  
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer  
Catherine Forbes-Thompson, Interim Head of Democratic Services

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

Appendix 2 Cabinet Work Programme.

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme  
**APPENDIX 1**

<b>Policy &amp; Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme April 2018 to April 2019</b>			
<b>Meeting Date: 2nd October 2018</b>			
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Year End Performance for Corporate Services 2017/18  (P2)	Performance of Corporate Services for 2017/18	Highlighting the exceptions and looking forward to 2018/19. The future challenges, setting out key objectives/priorities for the next twelve months, and identifying areas for improvement.	Richard Edmunds – Director of Education and Corporate Services
Wellbeing Objective WO5 – Investment in Council Homes  (P1)	To provide an update of progress against the Councils highest priorities for 2017/18.	To provide a year end update against the 2017/18 Well-being Objective action plan using PI data regarding completion of internal and external works programmes and adds information on peoples satisfaction with the internal works. The update should identify any emerging slippage or additional progress against the action plan	Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Year End Performance Housing Services  (P1)	Performance Monitoring	An update on performance of the Housing Service during 2017/18, to set out the key service objectives for 2018/19 and highlight any potential challenges that may affect delivery of these objectives.	Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer Dave Street – Corporate Director Social Services
Disabled Facilities Grant – Performance  (P2)	Information report to provide Members with an update regarding Performance Monitoring of Disabled Facilities Grant and the information regarding the implementation of ENABLE.	An update on performance of Disabled Facilities Grants during 2017/18 and highlight any potential challenges that may affect delivery of the Performance Indicator. Identify any areas of improvement linked to the implementation of ENABLE.	Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer/Claire Davies – Principal Housing Officer

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme  
**APPENDIX 1**

<b>Meeting Date: 13th November 2018</b>			
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Flexible Working – Agile Working; Inclement Weather			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Recruitment and Selection/ Probation			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Apprenticeships			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Organisational Development Strategy			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Homelessness Strategy			Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer

Need to agree 4 items



Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme  
**APPENDIX 1**

<b>Meeting Date: 15th January 2019</b>			
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Treasury Management Annual Strategy, Prudential Indicators and MRP Policy 2019/20			Nadeem Akhtar
Housing Revenue Account Charges 2019/20	To seek members approval of the 2019/20 proposed increases for council house rent and other Housing charges.	The annual rent increase must be in accordance with the rent policy issued by Welsh Government, but must also ensure adequate resource to meet and maintain the WHQS Programme as well as providing an efficient housing service.	Lesley Allen
6 Month Update Wellbeing Objectives			Ros Roberts
Council Tax Premiums	Member Request	Options around charging residents more council Tax with second and empty homes	Nicole Scammell – Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme  
**APPENDIX 1**

<b>Meeting Date: 26th February 2019</b>			
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Legal Services – Resources	Member request	Request from Committee.	Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Local Housing Strategy			Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Rationalisation of Assets/ Community Hubs			Mark Williams – Head of Property

<b>Meeting Date: 9th April 2019</b>			
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>

<b>Meeting Date: to be confirmed</b>			
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
WAO – WHQS Outcome Report			Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Shared Resource Service (SRS) (Special Meeting)  (P1)	To present the proposal in respect of the Authority joining the SRS.	The SRS is a joint committee that presently included Gwent Police, Torfaen CBC, Newport CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC and Monmouth CBC. This collaboration provides IT Services to its Members.	Matthew Lewis SRS
Poverty Strategy			Rob Hartshorn – Head of Public Protection
Business Improvement Portfolio			
Presentation from Local House Builders RE Affordable Homes and Community Benefits  (Member Request – Special Meeting)			

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme (Scrutiny)

### APPENDIX 2

19TH SEPTEMBER 2018	Key Issues	Service Area
Hackney Carriage Fare Increase/Amendment.	To advise Cabinet of the Consultation Response.	Public Protection
To Adopt The WG High Street Rate Relief Scheme 2018/19 – Grant Funding.	This report recommends that Cabinet adopts the WG High Street Rate Relief Scheme for 2018/19 in order to obtain the WG grant funding which will reduce the amount of business rates payable by those ratepayers eligible for this rate relief.	Finance
Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan Report.	To present to cabinet the Authority's Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan to seek their views and approval.	Public Protection
VAT Exemption on the Supply of Sporting Services.	The report will provide Cabinet with details of a VAT exemption on sporting services and will seek approval to implement the exemption with effect from the 1st October 2018.	Finance
3RD OCTOBER 2018	Key Issues	Service Area
Council's Annual Report for 2017/18.	To present to Cabinet the Authority's Annual Self-Assessment for 2017/18 to seek the views and approval prior to publication by 30th October 2018.	Policy
Strategy for the disposal of selected Land with Residential Development potential.	The report seeks Cabinet approval for the strategy for the disposal of five key medium to large parcels of land all of which are suitable for residential re-development.	Property Services
Strategic Equality Plan – Annual Monitoring and Improvement Report 2017-2018.	To update Members on the progress made during the financial year 2017/18 against targets in the Council's current Strategic Equality Plan and seek Cabinet approval for submission of the annual monitoring and improvement reports to the relevant commissions before the deadline dates.	Policy
Fields in Trust - Centenary Fields programme.	To seek the views of Cabinet on the formal dedication of the War Memorial Garden at Cwmfelinfach as part of the Fields in Trust, Centenary Fields programme.	Regeneration
Air Quality Options Appraisal.	To update members on the feasibility process for Hafod-yr-ynys and to discuss the potential options going forward for consideration and seek Cabinet approval to submit the required WelTAG Stage 2 report (containing those options) to Welsh Government.	Public Protection
17TH OCTOBER 2018	Key Issues	Service Area
Domiciliary Care Report.	To agree to the commencement of a formal procurement exercise for the provision of independent sector domiciliary care. The report will also provide feedback from the discussion at Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2018.	Social Services

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme (Scrutiny)

### APPENDIX 2

Children's Centre.	To consider the building of a new Children's centre in the County Borough and to highlight the issues of joint funding between CCBC and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.	Social Services
Recovery of Fly Tipping Clean Up Costs.	To consider a proposal that the Council takes steps to recover the costs of fly tipping against perpetrators of fly tipping incidents on Council land.	Public Protection
Public Services Board.		Policy
Capital Works.	To request cabinet approval for access to reserves to fund essential works in residential and respite properties to enable facilities budget to be used for planned maintenance and decoration in the same buildings.	Social Services

<b>CABINET AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE – 17TH OCTOBER 2018</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>

<b>31ST OCTOBER 2018</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
Parking Permits		Communities
Annual Improvements Report 2017/18.	The Annual Improvement Report (AIR) is a summary of the review work carried out by Wales Audit Office (WAO) during 2017/18. Individual reports will have been prepared throughout the year on specific matters but the AIR provides a collective summary. The AIR also includes the WAO's judgement on whether it believes that the Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement.	Performance

<b>14TH NOVEMBER 2018</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
Draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-29.	To seek Cabinet's endorsement of the Draft Sport and Leisure Strategy.	Public Protection
Draft Budget Proposals for 2019/20.	This report will seek Cabinet endorsement of draft budget proposals for the 2019/20 financial year based on the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement. This will then allow for a period of consultation prior to consideration of final 2019/20 budget proposals by Cabinet and Council in February 2019.	Finance
Highways Maintenance Plan		Regeneration

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme (Scrutiny)

### APPENDIX 2

28TH NOVEMBER 2018	Key Issues	Service Area
Whole Authority Mid-Year Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2018/19.	The report will provide details of projected Whole-Authority revenue expenditure for the 2018/19 financial year along with details of any significant issues arising. The report will also update Cabinet on progress in delivering the approved savings for 2018/19.	Finance
Town Centre Events Programme.	To seek Cabinet approval for revision of the Council's current Town Centre Management model.	Planning
Future Lighting and Energy Saving Proposals.	To consider options available to achieve street lighting energy savings that could contribute to the Medium Term Financial Plan and mitigate energy cost increases.	Communities
Local Toilet Strategy.		Regeneration
21st Century Schools - Match Funding Proposals	To seek Cabinet approval to proposals to identify the Authority's match funding for the next stage of the 21st Century schools programme.	Finance

22ND DECEMBER 2018	Key Issues	Service Area
Council Tax Base 2019/20.	The report provides details of the Council Tax base for 2019/20 for tax setting purposes and the collection percentage to be applied.	Finance
Grants 18/19 Overview – Regeneration.	This Report provides an evaluation of the current Regeneration Department's grant schemes and seeks Cabinet approval to combine the grants into a single " <b>Caerphilly Enterprise Fund</b> " with a refocus towards offering improved support to start-up businesses, stimulating economic growth, filling identified supply chain voids and supporting job creation.	Regeneration

16TH JANUARY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
Ystrad Mynach Masterplan.	To agree the Draft Ystrad Mynach Masterplan as a basis for a six week public consultation exercise to gauge stakeholders views on the draft proposals for the area.	Regeneration

CABINET AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE – 16TH JANUARY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2017/20.		Communities

30TH JANUARY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
-------------------	------------	--------------

## Cabinet Forward Work Programme (Scrutiny)

### APPENDIX 2

Corporate Risk Register.	To provide an update of the Corporate Risk Register in accordance with the Council's Risk Management Strategy. The updated Corporate Risk Register (CRR) is presented to Audit Committee so there is opportunity for the Committee to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements are in place for the council's risk management processes to be regularly and robustly monitored and scrutinised.	Policy
Update on Reserves.	To present details of the usable reserves held by the Authority and to outline proposals for the use of reserves in some areas.	Finance
Housing Revenue Account Charges 2019/20.	To present details of proposed increases in rent charges for the 2019/20 financial year.	Finance
<b>13TH FEBRUARY 2019</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
Budget Proposals 2019/20 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2019/2024.	This report will seek Cabinet endorsement of final budget proposals for the 2019/20 financial year prior to them being presented to Council on the 21st February 2019.	Finance
<b>27TH FEBRUARY 2019</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
<b>13TH MARCH 2019</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
<b>27TH MARCH 2019</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
<b>10TH APRIL 2019</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Service Area</b>



Cabinet Forward Work Programme (Scrutiny)

APPENDIX 2

CABINET AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE – 10TH APRIL 2019	Key Issues	Service Area

24TH APRIL 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
-----------------	------------	--------------

--	--	--

15TH MAY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
---------------	------------	--------------

--	--	--

29TH MAY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
---------------	------------	--------------

--	--	--

12TH JUNE 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
----------------	------------	--------------

--	--	--

26TH JUNE 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
----------------	------------	--------------

--	--	--

10TH JULY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area
----------------	------------	--------------

--	--	--

--	--	--

--	--	--

--	--	--

Cabinet Forward Work Programme (Scrutiny)

APPENDIX 2

CABINET AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE – 10TH JULY 2018	Key Issues	Service Area

24TH JULY 2019	Key Issues	Service Area



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND OCTOBER 2018**

**SUBJECT: YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CORPORATE SERVICES  
2017/18**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE  
SERVICES**

---

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

- 1.1 To provide Members with a performance update for Corporate Services. This involves taking a look back over the last twelve months of our performance highlighting the exceptions and then looking forward i.e. future challenges, setting out our key objectives/priorities for the next twelve months and identifying areas for improvement.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 During 2017/18 there was evidence of excellent performance, but also areas of poorer performance. Members are reminded that it is important for officers to take an honest approach to this process to ensure areas that require improvement are identified and supported.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 Corporate Services provide direct and indirect support to all of the Corporate Priorities and Well-Being Objectives.
- 3.2 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a number of legal duties on public bodies in Wales to meet the legally binding 'common purpose' for 7 National Well-Being goals. This report links into each goal as follows (this has been based on an incremental approach/view):-
- A sustainable Wales – delivering services in accordance with available resource. Reducing assets to a sustainable level. Maximising income collection to support service provision. Ensuring the most appropriate use of our third party spend to address sustainable alternative goods and material whilst developing and enhancing local supply chains.
  - A prosperous Wales – prompt processing of Council Tax and Housing Benefits, ability of residents to access key services and support either digitally or face-to-face via customer contacts. Effective use of third party spend to foster engagement of local supply chains which will facilitate regeneration opportunities in and around the borough. Effective use of appropriate Community benefits will support jobs and community engagement.
  - A Healthier Wales – no direct links to Corporate Services, although support is provided to those front line services that deliver this goal. Ensure where appropriate all contracts reflect requirements which contribute to the Healthy Wales agenda.

- A more equal Wales – ensuring all groups including vulnerable and hard to reach have access to the Authority. Procurement, Customer Services and IT play a key role.
- A Wales of cohesive communities –Corporate Services facilitates the delivery of this goal via front line services.
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language – compliance with Welsh language standards.
- A globally responsible Wales – rationalisation of assets should reduce carbon footprint. Developing sustainable supply chains who are globally and socially responsible will assist with the overarching principles.

## 4. THE REPORT

4.1 A summary is provided for each service area of Corporate Services below.

### 4.2 Corporate Finance

#### 4.2.1 Overview

The services provided by Corporate Finance are essentially twofold. The Council Tax/Business Rates, Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction and Income Sections provide front-line services to the public. In addition to this, a range of support services are provided to every Directorate of the Council and these include Accountancy, Treasury Management, Payments, Insurance & Risk Management and Internal Audit.

Corporate Finance has 167 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, split 81 FTE frontline and 86 FTE support services. Some staff are based in the larger Council Directorates enabling the delivery of some financial services to be devolved.

#### 4.2.2 What Went Well?

- The various teams within Corporate Finance continued to perform well during the 2017/18 financial year and all statutory targets were met. This has been achieved against a backdrop of continuing downsizing in many teams to address budget cuts.
- The various Corporate and seconded Accountancy Teams have played a pivotal role in supporting Heads of Service to identify and develop savings proposals to support the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This working relationship has been crucial in recent years due to the need to respond to unprecedented cuts in funding.
- Effective financial planning and robust budget monitoring arrangements have helped the Authority to manage its financial affairs. We have continued the trend of delivering balanced budgets and identifying some savings in advance of need. However, this is becoming far more challenging as the programme of austerity continues.
- The following table provides a summary of the key performance measures for Corporate Finance: -

Description	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Percentage of total Council Tax due for the financial year received by the Authority.	96.8%	97%	97.1%	97.1%	97.2%	96.9%
Percentage of total non-domestic rate (NNDR) due for the financial year received by CCBC.	97.2%	97.7%	97.9%	97.9%	98.0%	97.7%

Average time taken in days to process housing benefit change events and new claims (lower is better).	14	12.54	12	10.46	12	7.64
The number of housing benefit interventions completed per annum as a percentage of total caseload (higher is better).	20%	21.97%	20%	13.75%	20%	34.69%
Percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 days (higher is better).	95%	94.01%	95%	94.88%	95%	94.31%
Average number of calendar days to make payment of undisputed Invoices to SME's (lower is better).	13	13.93	13	12.97	13	12.55
Sundry debtors collected within 3 months as a % of amounts due.	96%	97.7%	96%	99%	96%	99.5%

- e) 2017/18 was a difficult year for the Council Tax & NNDR Teams mainly due to unprecedented staff turnover. Nevertheless, 96.9% of the Council Tax due in the year was collected in full and a Council Tax surplus of £1.61m was generated, which exceeded the £1.4m target. The Council Tax Team also proactively pursues Council Tax arrears and over a typical 3-year period the collection rate rises to 99.5%, which means that the vast majority of residents do pay in full.
- f) In spite of the staff turnover issues, Council Tax and NNDR in-year collection reduced only slightly by 0.2% on the previous year.
- g) During 2017/18 the NNDR Team successfully implemented the High Street Rate Relief Scheme resulting in 323 ratepayers receiving a total of £178k relief. This was the first year of such a scheme.
- h) The average time taken to process housing benefit change events and new claims was 7.64 days in 2017/18, which is an improvement on the 10.46 days reported for 2016/17. The number of housing benefit interventions completed per annum as a percentage of total caseload also shows a significant improvement at 34.69% (13.75% in 2016/17). Interventions target high risk claims where there may be a change in circumstances that could result in overpayments or underpayments being made.
- i) The percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 days during 2017/18 was 94.31%, which is marginally lower than the 94.88% achieved in 2016/17. During 2017/18 the average number of calendar days to make payment of undisputed invoices to SME's showed further improvement at 12.55 days (12.97 days in 2016/17 and 13.93 days in 2015/16).
- j) Sundry debtors collected within 3 months as a percentage of amounts due stood at 99.5% for 2017/18, which is an improvement on 99.0% for 2016/17 and 97.7% in 2015/16. The Sundry Debtors Team has also increased the number of Direct Debits collected each month, which is by far the most economical and efficient method to collect payments. £7.4 million is currently being collected each month, compared to £6.5 million in 2015/16.

- k) From the 2020/21 financial year the statutory deadline for the production of the Council's Draft Accounts will be reduced by one month from the 30<sup>th</sup> June to the 31<sup>st</sup> May. Furthermore, the statutory deadline for the completion of the external audit of the Draft Accounts and subsequent Council approval will be reduced by two months from the 30<sup>th</sup> September to the 31<sup>st</sup> July. These changes will be phased in from the 2018/19 financial year and they present significant challenges in terms of maintaining the quality and accuracy of the financial accounts. The Council's Corporate Accountancy Team is being proactive in dealing with this change and has been working closely with the External Auditor (Grant Thornton) to achieve the revised statutory deadlines. It is pleasing to report that the Financial Statements for both 2016/17 and 2017/18 were approved by Council by the end of July, well in advance of the implementation of the revised statutory deadline in 2020/21.

#### **4.2.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well**

- a) The ongoing austerity programme will require further significant savings to be delivered. In addition to savings of £88.9m already delivered across the Council since 2008/09, it is currently anticipated that further savings of circa £34m will be required for the four-year period 2019/20 to 2022/23.
- b) There will be significant demands on finance staff arising from the need to support Heads of Service and Service Managers to identify and cost potential savings. The delivery of approved savings will also need to be closely monitored and due to the financial position becoming ever more challenging, the need for accurate and reliable budget monitoring information will be greater than ever. In addition to these demands we will still need to ensure that core financial functions are delivered and that statutory deadlines are met.
- c) At its meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018, the Audit Committee was presented with the External Auditor's 'Audit of Financial Statements Report' for 2017/18. Whilst this report confirmed that it was the Auditor General's intention to issue an unqualified audit report on the Financial Statements, the report did contain a number of recommendations in respect of the Council's Internal Audit Service, including the following: -
- Providing further details in the Annual Audit Plan in relation to the specific risks associated with audits to be undertaken.
  - Providing more detail in the annual Internal Audit Outturn Report and the Mid-Year Progress Report in relation to specific audits undertaken, ratings and the number of recommendations made.
  - Providing further details to the Audit Committee in relation to findings that are 'not satisfactory' or 'in need of improvement'.
  - Recommendations in relation to the overall internal audit opinion in the Annual Governance Statement and the inclusion of an overall conclusion.
- d) Senior management have responded to the External Auditor's recommendations and an action plan has been produced to ensure that the recommended improvements will be put in place.
- e) Further reductions in the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) grant for Housing Benefits administration coupled with uncertainties in relation to New Burdens Funding continue to make it difficult to plan financially for this service area. The introduction of Universal Credit Full Service in September 2018 will potentially increase workload and impact on our current processes and procedures.

### **4.3 People Services**

#### **4.3.1 Overview**

PA support to Corporate Management Team has now recently joined the portfolio of People Services. The teams are managed by the Head of People Services and together as a service, remain committed to support the Council with difficult change agenda ahead.

Staff are allocated as follows:

Communications	17.41 FTE
CMT support	3.39 FTE
Health and Safety	23.40 FTE
Human Resources	55.52 FTE
<b>Total</b>	<b>99.72 FTE</b>

#### 4.3.2 What Went Well?

- a) Each of the teams continued to perform well during 2017/18. Directorates have been provided with the same levels of service, despite the loss of staff in each team to meet the required budget cuts of the MTFP.
- b) Each of the teams has continued to support Heads of Service to manage various risks within their service areas, whether that relates to people, buildings, or reputation.
- c) All Schools buy the Health and Safety, Human Resources and payroll SLA's. Last year all Schools were offered the opportunity to purchase an SLA for the Communications team and most chose to do so.
- d) The Council continues to lead the way in Wales with its successful use of social media and other digital channels to engage and communicate with residents and other key stakeholders. The Communications team has continued to play a strategic role in leading the Authority's public consultation and engagement agenda on major pieces of work.
- e) The Communications Unit continues to work hard to promote and protect the reputation of the council. The team has adopted a much more proactive approach to its communication activity over the past 12 months – especially around 'setting the record straight' and addressing common misconceptions about the council and the services we provide.
- f) The team has also worked at a strategic level alongside Cabinet and CMT to help shape the vision and values of the organisation and has facilitated a series of staff roadshows, as well as a major employee survey, to capture feedback and ideas from employees at all levels across the Authority.
- g) Payroll processed 101,682 payments through the payroll in 2017 / 18 in comparison with 101,520 in 2016 / 17 and 104,888 in 2015 / 16. The reduction in numbers is to be expected following the reduction in number of employees in these 3 years. Payroll continue to submit accurate information to the various regulators on time.
- h) HR have continued to support Heads of Service to successfully manage changes to service delivery and staffing requirements to meet their own MTFP targets, resulting in 10 compulsory redundancies as detailed below for 2017 / 18. A comparison to the previous 2 financial years is included for information. The projected future austerity provides an inevitability that it is going to become far more challenging to maintain low numbers of redundancies in future years.

<b>Number of compulsory redundancies</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
Service related	4 (includes 2 in schools)	28 (includes 19 in schools)	9 (includes 7 in schools)
End of fixed term contract	6 (includes 4 in schools)	9 (includes 5 in schools)	27 (includes 13 in schools)

- i) HR continue to manage the Council's redeployment pool successfully. The Council has been advertising more posts on a fixed term basis for a number of years due to the review of service provision by each Head of Service. Consequently, the number of permanent redeployment opportunities that HR have supported are lower due to there being less permanent posts advertised. See details below:

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Number of staff permanently redeployed	10	10	11

- j) HR also continually support staff to be redeployed in to fixed term posts. The table below details the number of employees in the redeployment pool as at 31 March 2107 and the previous 2 years for comparison:

	As at 31 March 2018	As at 31 March 2017	As at 31 March 2016
Number of employees in the redeployment pool	110	130	81

Performance information is as follows for 2017/18: -

### Communications

Over 600 proactive media releases were generated by the team in 2017/18, which led to 2,266 separate articles in the local press and media. This clearly demonstrates that each positive article issued by the council is used multiple times by various media outlets. The team continues to closely monitor the performance of its media releases by applying a scoring system to provide improved analysis of coverage.

The Council's Facebook page currently has over 14,000 followers and the Council's Twitter account has over 13,000 followers. These channels have become a crucial way for the authority to engage and communicate with a wide network of people from all sections of the community. It is also increasingly becoming the preferred channel for residents to contact the council – especially in terms of making service requests and reporting issues, so the team is working closely with colleagues on Customer Services to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach. It is also pleasing to note that Caerphilly continues to have the highest Facebook following of all local authorities in Wales thanks to the proactive way we engage residents using social media.

Over 47,000 users have subscribed to GovDelivery, which is an email marketing platform allowing the council to send news, information and advice direct to subscribers. This is a relatively new communication channel for the authority and we are still looking to fully maximise its benefits, but performance is exceeding initial estimates and this continues to grow.

### Health and Safety

The table below provides a sample of information relating to some of the activity of the team and a comparison with the previous 2 financial years: -

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number of Health and Safety training courses attended by employees	2,614	3,934	2,493
Number of fire risk assessments of Council premises	135	141	52*
Number of asbestos surveys of Council premises	37	36	30
Number of asbestos removal projects	21	29	61



\*The number of fire risk assessments have reduced because they are now taking longer to produce.

## Human Resources

The table below provides some of the activity that the team has supported to assist Heads of Service to manage their services and a comparison with the previous 2 financial years:-

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
New starters to the Council	648	831	832
Number of job applications received	6,910	7,803	5,997
Leavers	979	925	942
Early retirement by mutual consent	25 (includes 13 in schools)	23 (includes 18 in schools)	13 (includes 10 in schools)
Voluntary severance	54	10	19
Flexible retirement	7	3	6
Voluntary redundancy	2 (both in schools)	6 (all in schools)	11 (all in schools)

### 4.3.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

- a) Budget pressures affecting the whole service, which will have to continue to down size and the impact this may have on service delivery and support for the wider organisation.
- b) Reputational risks associated with key challenges facing the authority over the next 12 months – e.g. significant MTFP savings requirements and the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy consultation.
- c) Supporting the reduction of sickness levels across the Authority.
- d) Changes to legislation that may impact on the business of each team

## 4.4 Property Services

### 4.4.1 Overview

Property Services provides day to day and strategic management, maintenance, project design and project management services in relation to the Authority's buildings portfolio which comprises some 800 buildings over 400 sites – the 4th largest public building portfolio in Wales. The team comprises 67 full time equivalent staff and is sub-divided into Estates, Energy, Facilities, Maintenance and Projects (Building Consultancy) functions. The team manages building operational and maintenance budgets totalling £4.3m and delivers capital projects with a project cost of up to £23m.

### 4.4.2 What went well?

- a) Islwyn High School was completed and occupied from July 2017. The building was designed in house by the Property Services Projects team. The design delivers excellent quality via a very efficient orthogonal layout and the result is recognised as one of the most cost efficient secondary schools delivered in Wales in recent years.

The recently completed £23m Islwyn High School – Designed by Property Services



- b) The new Idris Davis lower school was completed in December 2017. This £7m project was designed and project managed in house and delivered on time and within budget.
- c) A tenant for the vacant Ty Dyffryn building was secured on a ten year lease. The tenant is a start-up company with good job creation potential. The revenue benefit of this is a rental income of £400,000 per annum after year two together with a standing cost saving of £106,000 per annum.
- d) The Bedwelty School site and the vacant Abertysswg and Pontlottyn schools were marketed and sold for £721,000, £121,000 and £221,000 respectively. The latter subject to contract.
- e) The demolition of Pontllanfraith House was completed in 2018 and the demolition of Oakdale Comprehensive School is all but complete. A strategy for the sale of these two sites plus prime residential land at Ty Darren, Bedwelty Fields and Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School has been proposed and will be considered by Cabinet in October 2018.
- f) The 2018 Property Review Report was approved by Cabinet and published.
- g) Significant progress has been made in relation to the safety of our built assets. Property Services chairs Statutory Maintenance Group (SMG) meetings and the group has a zero tolerance approach to statutory testing and the associated remedial tasks. The decision to progress remedial works has been taken away from building managers and, in most cases, is now vested with Property Services and this has led to significant improvement. The overarching target for the SMG is 100% testing compliance with no outstanding remedial tasks. This remains work in progress but improvement is particularly marked in relation to outstanding electrical tasks which totalled 1,315 in September 2017 but only one task is outstanding in August 2018.
- h) Property Services staff have worked closely with education colleagues to define and develop the proposed £72m 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme and have commenced scoping works on four of the projects.

- i) The Energy team trialled LED light fittings, which are both light and movement sensitive, in the one wing of Ty Penallta. The trial was an overwhelming success and it is now proposed that these new fittings are rolled out throughout the building utilising the invest to save Local Authority Energy Fund. The new fittings will use less than a quarter of the energy consumed by the current fitting and the projected energy saving for the completed scheme is 188,000 kWh per annum which equates to a saving of around £23,000 per annum at the current buy rate.
- j) Reducing sickness absence has been a key objective and rigorous management, including dealing with issues at an early stage, has led to significant improvement. The sickness absence for the preceding 12 months stood at 6.7% in June 2017. The same measure was 2.9% in June 2018.

### **Benchmarking**

The Projects team charges 11.25% of Project Cost for a full service from inception to completion irrespective of project cost. Comparative private sector providers would charge at least 12.15% for larger schemes but their fee percentage would increase for lower value projects. Additionally the build costs of the capital projects delivered by Projects are compared to those delivered by other authorities. The build cost of the schools delivered in house is amongst the most economic in Wales and Islwyn High School is seen as an exemplar for cost effective design.

FM salary costs have been compared with those in similar public services such as the Local Health Board (LHB) and were found to be very competitive. Similarly Asset Management has compared its salary base with the District Valuer's office and found it to be competitive.

#### **4.4.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well**

- a) Property Services continues to contribute to the wider MTFP savings targets and several vacant posts will not be filled. The Property Services budget includes over £4m of building management and maintenance costs and vacating some of these buildings, particularly those leased in, presents an excellent opportunity to offer up further savings. Service Area Asset Management Plans (SAAMPs) will help inform decisions around these buildings and an Asset Management Co-ordinator has been appointed on a two year fixed contract to work with service areas to help progress these SAAMPs.
- b) The proposed £78m 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme involves multiple new build and refurbishment projects. Resource profiling has highlighted that the workload will exceed the capacity of the current team from Q1/2020 onwards. Helping ensure the Authority can deliver the Band B programme of work will be a key priority for Property Services and workforce planning has commenced.
- c) The capital receipts from the sale of surplus land and buildings are required to assist in the funding of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme and other capital projects and there is also a requirement to release land for residential development. Property Services will lead the disposals.
- d) Whilst statutory testing compliance has improved significantly during 2018/19 the challenge now is to close out the remaining residual issues. Property Services will lead on this but the support of numerous service areas and officers is crucial if the target is to be achieved.
- e) We are now aware that some of our tenants are not adequately maintaining the buildings they lease from us and in many cases current statutory testing certification is not in place. Whilst this is, and will remain, the tenants responsibility Property Services will continue to proactively seek proof of building related certification with the objective of ensuring all our leased out buildings have current certification. A Management Surveyor has been appointed and will join Property Services in Autumn 2018 and will be responsible for all Authority leased out buildings.

## 4.5 Procurement Services

### 4.5.1 Overview

The award winning function has 12 FTE and 1 fixed term employee, who provide a full range of services related to Strategic Procurement, eProcurement systems (including support) and Supplier Relationship Management. The Council recognises the value of using Procurement to support its wider Cultural, Social, Economic and Environmental objectives, in ways that offer real long-term benefits to the community it serves and the people of Wales, whilst balancing the issues of value for money and affordability.

The latest Welsh Government Fitness Check described the function as “mature, moving towards advanced”. This places the Council as one of the top 5 performing Procurement functions within Local Government in Wales. We are currently awaiting a new Fitness Check process to be agreed by Welsh Government.

### 4.5.2 What Went Well?

- a) The function continues to actively support local businesses and SMEs and the statistics, comparators and KPIs continue to demonstrate good success in supporting the local economy through the work undertaken by the team whilst meeting the challenges of the MTFP as demonstrated below:

<b>Title</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>
% of Contracts tendered electronically across the Council	58	<b>95</b>
% of ‘Local Suppliers’ Awarded Contracts (former ‘WPC’ definition) <i>Source Decision and Information Page</i>	90	<b>94</b>
e-Invoicing – Number of Suppliers Participating	31	<b>34</b>
e-Invoicing – Value of Transactions	£1,516,811	<b>£5,546,367</b>
Amount of annual Corporate Spend (incl. Schools) with Procurement Cards	£1,079,102	<b>£1,258,984</b>

- b) The Council has the agreed definition of local as “suppliers within the region of the old Welsh Purchasing Consortium area” (the Old WPC area consists of Caerphilly, Bridgend, RCT, Merthyr, Monmouth, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Vale of Glamorgan, Swansea, Cardiff, Neath Port Talbot, and Newport). However consideration will be given to align the definition to the ‘Cardiff Capital Region (City Deal)’. Using our ‘Spend Analysis Tool’ the Council can breakdown and compare expenditure across different criteria as demonstrated in the following Tables:

<b>Title</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>	<b>% of Total Spend (£196m)</b>
spend with Caerphilly based Suppliers	£46m	<b>£50m</b>	<b>26%</b>
spend with definition of local ‘WPC’ Suppliers	£105m	<b>£116m</b>	<b>59%</b>
spend with ‘City Deal’ based Suppliers	£98m	<b>£112m</b>	<b>57%</b>
spend with Suppliers across Wales	£107m	<b>£120m</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Total Spend (source Spikes Cavell)</b>	£188m	<b>£196m</b>	<b>n/a</b>

- c) The function continues to support the Council's WHQS programme with 70 Contracts Awarded as at the end 2017/18 with an est. value of £32.6 million. A particular success is the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the provision of General Builders:
- 80 Contractors on the DPS, 72 Contractors are defined as local (WPC);
  - Out of 72 Contractors 24 are Caerphilly based;
  - 28 Contracts with an est. pre tender estimate value of £25.7 million awarded to Welsh Contractors and 5 awarded to Caerphilly based Contractors.
- d) The above-mentioned DPS demonstrates that the Council continues to take advantage of the new flexibilities of the UK Public Contract Regulations 2015 and have implemented and are considering future DPS for Transport Services, particular Waste Streams, Reactive & Planned Maintenance and Grounds Maintenance Services in 2018/19. In essence this is a Passport to Trade initiative which endeavours to reduce duplication for suppliers together with a standardised and streamlined approach to the procurement process.
- e) Officers from within function continue to be Procurement leads on collaborative arrangements across a variety of commodities such as:
- Provision of a Regional Advocacy Service, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Monmouth and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), est. value **£2.2million**;
  - County Surveyor Society for Wales ('CSSW') which includes all 22 Councils and Welsh Government for the provision of highway asset management planning, est. value **£1.1million**; &
  - Laundry and Dry Cleaning with Merthyr and RCT, est. value **£56K**.
- f) Community Benefits are considered on all appropriate Contracts as an example the construction of Islwyn West High School delivered Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T) a total of 1374 weeks of employment delivered, which can be broken down as follows:
- Long term unemployed – 402 weeks
  - Apprentices – 725 weeks
  - Work experience – 79 weeks
  - Trainees – 168 weeks
- Supply Chain – 100% procurement by SME's
- 5% of new SME's taken on as part of project
  - 84% of procurement from Welsh SME's
  - 92% workforce from Wales
- Education Initiatives – 570 student interactions
- Community Initiatives – 429 donated hours on Community Legacy Projects.
- g) In November 2017 the Council 'signed up' to Welsh Government's Code of Practice ('CoP'), Ethical Employment in Supply Chains and have an action plan to meet the requirements of the 'CoP'. Procurement Officers are CIPS Ethical Procurement and Supply certified and this is monitored as part of quarterly 121s and annual PDRs.
- h) Officers have been instrumental and play an active role in supporting the work with the National Procurement Service, WLGA and Regional Heads of Procurement Forums together with a number of other public sector Procurement agencies across Wales.
- i) Continue to implement e-tendering across the Council in preparation of future legislative requirement of full electronic procurement by October 2018. The implementation of e-Tendering also supports other initiatives such as, but not limited to the reduction in the use of paper, ease of access for all suppliers and a clear auditable approach to Procurement. This is now business as usual for Engineers and Building Consultancy.

- j) Continued use of the Council's Contracts Management Module (CMM) across the Council.
- k) Continued development of the Directorate Plans and Forward Work Programmes.
- l) Bespoke Procurement training/ seminars arranged for Officers across the Council who have a responsibility for undertaking the Procurement discipline.

#### **4.5.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well**

- a) Unable to recruit to 2 fixed term positions covering the WHQS programme. The service will now look to engage with Local Universities and support work placement programme for procurement and Supply chain students.
- b) Continued efforts to expand the use of electronic invoicing across the supply base in anticipation of forthcoming regulation mandating this within the Public Sector. The uncertainty of the future approach and strategy by Welsh Government (NPS) is impacting progress.
- c) Contract visibility is proving a challenge therefore Officers will embark on a training programme to ensuring Officers across the Council input Contracts within the CMM in line with policies and procedures.
- d) To ensure we able to monitor contractor commitment to Social clauses we aim to adopt an appropriate recording and monitoring system that ensures where social benefits are being included in Contracts they are being delivered e.g. TOMS methodology (or equivalent).
- e) Council approach to reviewing long term Contracts, challenging terms and conditions where appropriate with a view of reducing the cost of the provision and understanding the risk associated.
- f) To provide more flexibility to service areas we will continue with the Implementation of 'Quick Quotes' for all Band A processes.
- g) As we take forward the recently agreed Programme for Procurement the Council will need to tackle critical areas such as sustainability, reduction of plastics within the supply chain and ensure all contracts deliver on our commitment to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This will have tensions with the need to reduce costs.

## **4.6 Corporate Customer Services**

### **4.6.1 Overview**

The Customer Services Team currently consists of 36.7 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) following significant reductions in recent years (53 FTEs in 2016/17). The Corporate Customer Services Unit sits within the Customer & Digital Services Division. The service is responsible for the Customer Service Strategy, the collection of £26.8 million of the Councils income, the Blue Badge Service and the operational delivery of a large part of the Councils customer contact through the Contact Centre, six (6) Customer Service Centres, Newbridge Payment Office. The Ty Penallta Reception Service is the first point of contact for visitors to the Councils civic building and manages the room booking process.

#### **In Person Services**

The six Customer Service Centres offer 'in-person' services in main towns across the County Borough. Four (4) Centres and one cash payment facility are Co-located with Libraries and there are two standalone centres:

Co-located Centres:

- Caerphilly Library and Customer Service Centre
- Blackwood Library and Customer Service Centre
- Hanbury Chapel, Library and Customer Service Centre
- Risca Palace, Library and Customer Service Centre
- Newbridge Payment Office, Newbridge Library.

Standalone Centres:

- Ty Penallta
- Pontlottyn Customer Service Centre

Reception Services:

- Ty Penallta

#### 4.6.2 What Went Well?

##### Performance 2014/15 - 2017/18

	Year / Footfall	Revenue Collected	Trend
In Person Payments	14/15 229,400 15/16 213,700 16/17 207,100 17/18 159,000	14/15 £26,900,000 15/16 £25,300,000 16/17 £24,500,000 17/18 £20,000,000	<p>Overall reduction in footfall from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 31%. Overall reduction in revenue collected from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 26%.</p> <p>The trend can be attributed to a reduction in opening hours across in person sites and the proactive promotion of alternative methods of payment.</p> <p>Methods of payments profile as a percentage of the total revenue taken across in person services for 2017/18 is: Cash = 43% Cheques In Person = 16% Cheque Postal = 13% Card = 28%</p>
In Person Walk In Advice	15/16 60,400 16/17 46,900 17/18 39,000		<p>Overall reduction in footfall from 2015/16 to 2017/18 is 35%.</p> <p><i>Data not available from source for 2014/15.</i></p> <p>This trend can be attributed to reduced opening hours and the implementation of an appointment based service model. This is a positive result of using resources more efficiently to provide services whilst maintaining good standards of customer satisfaction.</p>
In Person Appointment Advice	17/18 3,500		<p>The appointment delivery model was being developed throughout 2017/18 therefore data is for a part year only. The part year data is 9% of the total footfall for walk in advice which provides opportunities in more efficient use of resources.</p>



Ty Penallta Reception	14/15 47,200 15/16 41,500 16/17 49,600 17/18 56,000		Overall increase in footfall from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 19%. The reception footfall has increased as a result of services moving into Ty Penallta to support asset rationalisation and the promotion of the meeting room facilities.
Blue Badge's Issued	16/17 5,600 17/18 5,300		Overall reduction in badges issued from 2016/17 to 2017/18 is 5%.  <i>Data not available from source for 2014/15 &amp; 2015/16.</i>  The reduction is evident since the implementation of an assessment toolkit across discretionary awarded badges. This is a positive outcome to ensure that the benefit of the scheme can be realised by those in most need.

Contact Centre Service

The Contact Centre handles telephone, e-mail and web contact for the following services:

Highways	Job Applications
Waste Management	Housing Benefit Applications
Environmental Health	Registrars
Licensing	Blue Badge Applications
Payment card requests	Telephone Payments
General Information	Switchboard

	Year / Number of Calls	Revenue Collected	Trend
Payments	14/15 39,800 15/16 45,400 16/17 48,600 17/18 50,000	14/15 £4,628,000 15/16 £5,200,000 16/17 £6,100,000 17/18 £6,800,000	Overall increase in calls from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 26%.  Overall increase in revenue collected from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 47%. This trend can be attributed to a reduction in opening hours across in person sites and the proactive promotion of alternative methods of payment.
Service Requests / Information	15/16 100,700 16/17 92,700 17/18 102,000	N/A	Overall increase from 2015/16 to 2017/18 is 1%.  <i>Data not available from source for 2014/15.</i>  Processes have been reviewed to maximise opportunities to work smarter through using digital access to better manage demand. 34 online automated forms have been implemented to date since the project started in 2017.
Emails	14/15 38,100 15/16 34,300 16/17 46,800 17/18 42,000		Overall increase from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 10%.  The overall increase is due to customers choosing digital methods of access. The decrease in demand since 2016/17 reflects the development of transactional web forms.
Switchboard	14/15 256,300 15/16 225,300 16/17 232,400 17/18 229,000		Overall decrease from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is 11%.  The overall decrease could support better publication of direct dial numbers and customers choosing digital methods of access.

### **In Person Services Survey Summary**

The survey concluded positive results on service delivery. 69% of customers felt reassured that their request had been dealt with. Of the customers surveyed 98% advised that the enquiry was resolved at the time of contact. 2% advised that their service was not resolved as they required further action from another service area.

### **Internal Customer Service Survey Summary**

90% of those surveyed rating the service as good or very good.

### Medium Term Financial Plan & Digital

Resource management to meet customer demand continues to evolve year on year with a backdrop of MTFP challenges, through promotion of digital services and smarter ways of working:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Savings</b>	The majority of savings to date have been achieved through vacancy management and reducing the grade of service offered in terms of wait times.
2018/19	80,000	
2017/18	38,000	
2016/17	288,000	
2015/16	109,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>515,000</b>	

Channel Shift work has started in the period with some positive outcomes. This needs to remain a focus going forward in considerations of smarter ways of working to meet the future MFTP challenges.

<b>Digital Promotion</b>	<b>2017/18 Transactions delivered in the new method</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Development of 34 Automated Online Service Requests	25%	There is no trend to date as these elements were implemented throughout 2017/18. During 18/19 the Service aims to provide and promote Digital solution to Service requests.
Development of Appointments Based Delivery Model for Blue Badges	75%	
Alternative Methods of Payments for Postal Payments	3%	

### **Celebrations of Success**

The section has engaged with internal partners to maximise income generation and funding opportunities. This has delivered income of £2400 since August 2017, through working with the Passenger Transport team in jointly delivering the Concessionary Travel Scheme application process.

The Corporate Customer Service Services Standards were launched in December 2017, although well received there is still work to be done on ensuring a consistent approach across the Council. Going forward we will work with colleagues in HR to ensure that the Standards are a fundamental part of the recruitment, induction and performance management processes.

The section continues to work towards its compliance to the Welsh Language standards and have worked in Partnership with the Policy team to start to find solutions to the challenges the standards present.

Blue Badge Process enhancements continue to be developed ensuring the process is efficient and meets the needs of the user against a back drop of continued central government changes.

The contact centre team were able to quickly set up call handling support for electoral services when the snap general election was called in April 2017 at a time when Electoral Services were already stretched dealing with local government elections. This allowed electoral services staff to focus on critical activities to deliver 2 elections in short succession

#### 4.6.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement

- a) Sickness absence within the Service remains above the Directorate average despite rigorous application of the managing sickness absence policy
- b) Delivery of call answering services and waiting times have increased due to the lack of resource as a result of high sickness levels.
- c) Delivery of self service has been hindered by the slow development of Welsh Forms. This is an area for priority during autumn of 2018.
- d) Errors within the team on operational activities have risen, these are subject to review and automation during 18/19.
- e) Implementation of Digital Services in a way that support our communities and brings added value to the Customer.
- f) Rationalization of the Services IT systems to ensure value for money and consistent performance across all access channels
- g) Development and implementation of Hub based service provision which provides wider service opportunities to include other public sector organisation such as Health.

### 4.7 Legal & Democratic Services

#### 4.7.1 Overview

The service area can be split into three distinct service areas. Electoral Services who are responsible for running and managing all elections and referenda in the county borough, in addition they are also responsible for ensuring that residents are registered to vote. Democratic Services have the responsibility for all duties associated with supporting the Council's democratic process including the scrutiny function. They provide advice and support to senior officers and all elected members. Legal Services provide a comprehensive legal service to all service areas of the Council. The Legal Service is split into three teams, one providing corporate and governance advice (including corporate complaints); a welfare and litigation team and a team dealing with planning, land and highways matters. The area is led by the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.

#### 4.7.2 What Went Well?

##### Legal Services

There were a number of staff absences during the year due to a combination of illness and unfilled vacancies. However staff coped well to fill gaps to ensure a comprehensive legal service was delivered.

The table below contains a small sample of the P.I.'s for legal services: -

Period	Title	Target	Actual
17/18 (Quarter 1-4)	Summons issued within 15 working days	93%	99%
17/18 (quarters 1-4)	Written acknowledgement of instructions within 5 working days	96%	89%

17/18 (Quarter 1-4)	Agreements and Statutory Notices drafted within 10 working days of receipt of full instructions	91%	95%
17/18 (Quarter 1-4)	Notification of completion of matter, in writing, to client department within 5 working days	93%	95%

### Electoral Services

Over 2017/18 electoral services dealt with 23,201 rolling registration changes (elector registrations, deletions and amendments) and canvassed just under 80,000 properties and achieved a response rate of 86%. In May 2017 the service managed the local government elections (County borough and Community/Town council) and had just under 8 weeks to organise a 'snap' parliamentary election that Theresa May announced on the 18<sup>th</sup> April and held on the 8<sup>th</sup> June.

In March 2018 the service moved from its' office in Bargoed to Gilfach House.

### Democratic Services

The table includes a small sample of the P.I.'s for the service area: -

Period	Title	Target	Actual
17/18 (quarters 1-4)	%of Members that scored training events as good or very good	80%	93%
17/18 (quarters 1-4)	% of committee reports published on time	100%	100%
17/18 (annual)	Members Annual reports published by 31 <sup>st</sup> July	100%	100%

The majority of the Member training carried out in 2017/18 was for the Induction period following the Local Government Elections, therefore in terms of training that is monitored for this indicator there was only one training course provided during this period.

In order to measure the success of Induction and Marketplace Event additional questions were included the Members survey carried out in August 2017. 42 (57%) were completed and returned by Councillors; of the 23 newly elected Councillors 15 (65%) returned responses. The results showed that 96% of Members felt that the Market Place Event was either useful or very useful. 63% felt that the Induction Programme was set at about the right level, 33% felt it to be intensive but agreed that all of its aspects were relevant.

During 2017/18, despite challenging resource issues due to staff vacancies and sickness all committee papers were published on time, with no impact on the number of planned meetings during the year.

During 2017/18 the team successfully published 100% of Members Annual Reports by the 31<sup>st</sup> July deadline.

In relation to the Democratic Team, it is worth noting that this small team of officers services 39 different Council Committees and arranged 210 meetings. In addition officers implemented the new Cabinet Member Statement Protocol, again overall positive feedback received.

#### 4.7.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well

##### Legal Services - Welfare

The area of childcare continued to be a significant area of demand for Legal Services. The number of active cases continued to rise dramatically. Over the last four years legal

proceedings have increased significantly from 37 cases being issued in 2014, 51 in 2015, 63 in 2016, and 90 in 2017. The reasons for the increase in applications are varied and complex although the number of care applications issued in England and Wales is rising year on year.

As a result of this increase in workload within Legal Services (and Social Services) current systems are struggling to maintain performance in this critical area. There are currently 2 vacant posts for childcare solicitors and a new solution will need to be found to fill these posts as the costs of engaging private practise firms to cope with the volume of cases is unsustainable.

### **Electoral Services – The Future**

In October this year the service will be carrying out a review of the polling stations in the county borough and in 2019 will be working with the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales to review the council’s principal area boundaries and electoral arrangements. Further ahead there could be major changes to how elections to local authorities and the National Assembly are conducted. This may include lowering the voting age to 16 and widening the franchise to include all nationalities being given the right to vote.

### **Democratic Services**

The staff resources issue has had an impact upon certain aspects of the work of the team, and was managed by some staff taking on additional work and additional support provided from the Business Manager in Legal Services. However this has meant that a significant commitment has been required from staff during this period which has ensured that committee meetings haven’t been affected however the impact of the challenges have been identified in relation to Member Development and Training with delays to the training programme for 2018/20 and the Member Development Strategy.

## **4.8 IT & Central Services**

### **4.8.1 Overview**

IT and Central Services provides a complex range of services underpinning the Authority’s and its schools’ information and communications technology (ICT) requirements plus other essential services including the management of information governance matters (incorporating advice and guidance regarding the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts), corporate records centres, mail and courier services and the central typing function.

The Division currently has 90.01 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff based over three sites (Penallta, Tredomen and Enterprise Houses). Staff are allocated as follows:- 68.86 FTE in IT and 12.33 FTE in Central Services. An additional 8.82 FTE staff are funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dedicated to providing IT and performance management services to Housing Services and the WHQS Programme and are based over two sites (Penallta House and Cherry Tree House).

### **4.8.2 What Went Well?**

In the main key Performance indicators show good performance with outturn on system availability slightly below 16/17 outturn however above target.

	Outturn 17/18	Target 17/18	Outturn 2016/17
Major System Availability* <sup>1</sup>	99.93%	99.70%	99.96%
Call Resolution (IT Helpdesk)	92.90%	92.00%	92.88%
Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests answered within 40 calendar days* <sup>2</sup>	72.00%	70.00%	68.00%
FOI/EIR Act requests responded to within 20 working days* <sup>3</sup>	83.00%	85.00%	82.00%

Members should note:-

\*<sup>1</sup> – Figures based upon “office hours” availability of the 21 most significant systems used across the Council. Current performance equates to a total of 151 hours unplanned downtime affecting those systems in 2017/18.

\*<sup>2</sup> – Figure quoted is for 2017 calendar year. This represents an improvement on last year and is 2% above the corporate target. For next year we need to consider revising the target in light of recent changes to data protection law (including changes from 25 May 2018 bringing compliance period down to one calendar month) and Information Commissioner Expectations.

\*<sup>3</sup> – Figure quoted is for 2017 calendar year. We did not meet our corporate target of 85% but this can be attributed to the significant increase in the number of requests received during the first and last quarters of 2017, putting considerable pressure on both the Corporate Information Governance Unit and Service Areas. Had these requests been spread more evenly across the year, we may have been able to achieve our target. Compliance with FOI requests within statutory timescales has previously been an action in the Annual Governance Statement, and as the Information Commissioner has revised her expectation of compliance to 90%, we will need to revisit our corporate target.

In addition to the above the following went well during 2017/18:-

- IT / Cyber Security - Significant level of external assessment / accreditation which place the authority in a very good position with no external security breaches in 2017/18
- Significant MTFP savings achieved over recent years
- Schools’ service provision maintained.
- During 2017/18 we launched the new Web presence
- Corporate & Member Information Governance continues to be highly regarded locally, regionally and nationally and recent work on GDPR held up as best practice in some areas.
- During 2017/18 the Council continued with the implementation of the Paper chase record tracking software. Which has brought about a streamlined process for record managements?

#### **4.8.3 Future Challenges/Areas that need improvement as they did not go well**

MTFP savings will continue to be a challenge for the service area. The management team will look at new technologies to support the strategic aim of the Council and support the MTFP.

With the recent appointment of the Head of Customer and Digital services the department will undergo a full review which will address areas of collaboration with public sector partners such as SRS and develop a fit for purpose staff structure. This will address areas of demand and resource management, contract rationalisation, training and development of staff, communication and adoption of the appropriate new technologies.

During 2017/18 and continuing to date, The GDPR team are experiencing an increase support request for advice and guidance on personal data. Going forward we are looking to address by educating all staff via e learning tools and other individual support.

In 18/19 the service will be looking at electronic opportunities to modernise the mailroom and all internal correspondence.

The service will address the FOI / SAR increased target response rates in line with ICO expectation of 90% for FOI’s.

**4.9 Sickness Absence in 2017/18 for Corporate Services**

The following table shows sickness levels for 2017/18:-

Service Area	% Sick ST 16 17	% Sick LT 16 17	Overall Abs % 16 17	% Sick ST 17 18	% Sick LT 17 18	Overall Abs % 17 18
Corporate Finance	1.81	4.36	6.17	1.28	3.13	4.41
Human Resources	1.05	2.73	3.78	1.08	1.91	2.99
Information & Citizen Engagement	1.64	4.47	6.12	1.56	2.93	4.48
Legal & Governance	1.07	0.92	1.98	1.26	4.03	5.29
Procurement Services	2.6	5.94	8.53	2.58	3.11	5.69
Property Services	1.69	5.45	7.13	0.52	3.23	3.74
Director & Staff	0.96	0	0.96	0	46.15	46.15
	1.62	4.07	5.69	1.37	3.00	4.37

**4.10 Corporate Complaints – Corporate Services**

Total No. of Complaints	2016/17	2017/18
	19	20

**5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

- 5.1 The services provided by the Directorate of Corporate Services are an essential element in supporting the Council to plan and deliver its services and to help ensure that the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 are met.

**6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as the report is for information.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

**9. CONSULTATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no consultations responses that have not been included in this report.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 The Committee is asked to consider the content of the report and where appropriate question and challenge the performance presented.



## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 Performance Management Scrutiny affords members the opportunity to challenge, inform and shape the future performance of services.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

- 12.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

Author: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education & Corporate Services  
Consultees: Cllr B. Jones, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance & Governance  
Cllr C Gordon, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services  
Cllr L Phipps, Cabinet Member for Homes & Places  
Ros Roberts, Performance Manager, Corporate Services  
Steve Harris, Interim Head of Business Improvement Services  
Nicole Scammell, Head of Corporate Finance  
Mark Williams, Interim Head of Property  
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer  
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer & Digital Services  
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services

This page is intentionally left blank



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND OCTOBER 2018**

**SUBJECT: WELLBEING OBJECTIVE 5 – INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND COMMUNITIES – END OF YEAR REPORT (2017/18)**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

---

- 1.1 The attached report, which was presented to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 20th September 2018, sought the views of Members on performance made throughout 2017/18 against Wellbeing Objective 5 and whether achievement against the Wellbeing Objective be deemed as "partially successful". It was noted that following consideration by the Task Group, the report would be presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee as an item for discussion.
- 1.2 Officers highlighted the achievements made towards meeting the Objective through the Council's investment in the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme, most notably the creation of jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities, the progress made towards the realisation of 'whole home compliance', energy efficiency improvements, physical environmental improvements and the increased provision of accommodation adapted to meet tenants with specific housing needs.
- 1.3 Members were advised that the Council has proactively monitored tenant satisfaction levels since the start of the WHQS programme with data showing that tenants are generally happy with internal works (86%) and to a lesser extent for external works (70%). It was noted that the WHQS programme remains challenging, however the Council is well placed to deliver the WHQS programme in full by the 2020 deadline, with the substantial investment made helping to transform lives and communities and therefore the report recommends that achievement against the Wellbeing Objective be deemed "partially successful".
- 1.4 Discussion took place regarding low tenant satisfaction levels in relation to external works. Members expressed concerns that the level of external works carried out had been inconsistent across the county borough with some properties receiving full external improvements, partial or none at all. Questions were raised as to whether the level of detail provided by the tenant surveys was indicative of these concerns and the exact nature of tenant dissatisfaction with external works. Officers agreed that satisfaction levels were lower than anticipated and that further analysis of the data produced by the tenant surveys needed to be carried out and issues with external works identified and considered. In relation to external works a Member questioned the rate of improvements to gardens and paths. Officers clarified that these were secondary external works and many of our properties were unable to meet the standard for gardens due to the topography of the borough. Officers also advised that paths may be repaired if economically viable to do so, rather than being completely renewed.
- 1.5 Further discussion took place regarding improvements that could be made to the tenant survey process. It was suggested that not all tenants were receiving the surveys. Officers

clarified that surveys were issued only to those tenants that had works carried out and consideration is being given to conducting telephone surveys as a means of increasing feedback with contact being made in a more timely and accurate manner.

- 1.6 Officers responded to a point of clarification in regards to the use of agency staff to fill newly created jobs within WHQS and not short-term contracts. It was explained that although agency staff was used, financially the difference between the use of agency staff compared to short-term contracts was minimal and this provides more flexibility as demand on resources is likely to change as the programme proceeds
- 1.7 Following consideration of the report, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group unanimously recommended to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee that achievement against Wellbeing Objective 5 - Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities - End of Year Report (2017/18) be judged as “partially successful” for 2017/18.
- 1.8 The Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the report and the above recommendation.

Author: K. Houghton, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4267

Appendices:

Appendix Report to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 20th September 2018 – Agenda Item 4



## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 20TH SEPTEMBER 2018

**SUBJECT: WELLBEING OBJECTIVE 5 : INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND COMMUNITIES - END OF YEAR REPORT (2017/18)**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING**

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) with an update on performance made throughout 2017/18 against Wellbeing Objective, 5 prior to the report being presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The purpose of the objective is to utilise the substantial investment made by the Council in its tenants' homes, as part of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme, to help transform homes, lives and communities.
- 2.2 This report summaries progress made against the objective during 2017/18. For the reasons outlined in this report, achievement against the Wellbeing Objective has been deemed as **partially successful**.
- 2.3 Further detail on progress made during 2017/18 is provided in Appendix 1.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 ***The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*** contains 7 well-being goals. When making decisions the act requires public bodies in Wales, including local authorities, to take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in the future.
- 3.2 ***Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales (Welsh Government, 2010)*** which sets out the national context on meeting housing need, homelessness, and housing-related support services.
- 3.3 ***The Caerphilly We Want (CCBC, 2018-2023) - Well-Being Plan: Positive Places - Enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable.***
- 3.4 ***Corporate Plan (CCBC, 2018-2023): Well-being Objective 3: "Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being."***
- 3.5 ***Anti-Poverty Strategy (CCBC)***, which sets out a range of priorities to tackle poverty in the borough.

#### 4. THE REPORT

4.1 Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that all social housing is brought up to the WHQS. The Council is required to ensure that the housing stock meets the WHQS by the end of December 2020.

4.2 The WHQS guidance document requires all social landlords to ensure that it's properties are:-

- in a good state of repair
- adequately heated and insulated
- safe and secure
- contain up to date kitchens and bathrooms
- well managed
- located in attractive and safe environments
- suit the specific needs of the household.

Whilst each of the above items could contribute directly towards improving the health, safety and wellbeing of the household, there are other aspects of the programme that also contribute towards this objective

4.3 Council made a conscious decision to ensure that the money invested in bringing all tenants' homes up to the WHQS would be used to support development of small and medium enterprises and create training and employment opportunities to help people back into work. Since the start of the WHQS programme the Council has invested over £150m and is projecting to invest over £220m by the end of the programme. This investment has resulted in the creation of 43 permanent jobs, 58 apprentices and 44 work placement opportunities, as well as supporting and providing expansion opportunities to local businesses.

4.4 The Council has adopted a 'phased block of works' approach to the delivery of the WHQS programme. This has entailed internal and external works being undertaken separately, which has meant that 'whole home compliance' was not anticipated to be significant until the latter part of the programme but is now beginning to be realised. Although some slippage has been experienced with the external works element, the achievement of the standard is on target to be delivered by the 2020 deadline.

4.5 The works undertaken to deliver this objective have helped to improve lives and communities by improving standards and conditions of our housing stock, which in itself will improve the safety, health and wellbeing of our tenants. At the end of March 2018, 73% of properties were compliant in relation to internal work and 46% for external work. Overall compliance was 35%. These figures changed from those reported previously following the completion of a validation exercise.

4.6 A range of energy efficiency improvements have been carried out as part of the WHQS programme including upgraded loft insulation, energy efficient heating and the installation of double glazed windows. The majority of non-traditional houses have also benefitted from external wall insulation. This work contributes to health and wellbeing improvements and towards addressing fuel poverty.

4.7 Part 6 of the WHQS requires all homes to be located in attractive and safe environments and the Council plans to invest circa £10.6m on a range of environmental improvements. This aspect of the programme is being approached in two distinct phases: phase 1- identifying minor repair and improvement works and phase 2 - carrying out an extensive community engagement exercise to identify further improvements. Works typically include improvements to communal steps, paths, fencing, walls, lighting, parking, but also can provide play areas/equipment, as well as supporting local community projects, and assisting to address problems relating to anti-social behaviour.

- 4.8 Part 7 of the WHQS requires that the accommodation provided should, as far as possible, suit the needs of the household, e.g. specific disabilities. To fulfil this requirement the Council has delivered a range of adaptations to tenants' homes, where a need has been assessed, to help promote independent living. This has included the installation of handrails, access ramps, disabled kitchens, walk in showers and 25 automatic door installations at our sheltered housing schemes. The Council has also worked with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) regarding provisions to assist those tenants with a visual impairment. At the end of March 2018 1,713 adaptations had been provided through the WHQS programme in addition to approximately 4,916 adaptations provided to tenants by the Adaptations Team within Private Sector Housing.
- 4.9 The Council has proactively monitored tenant satisfaction levels since the start of the WHQS programme. Our data shows that tenants are generally happy with internal works (86%) and to a lesser extent for external works (70%).
- 4.10 The delivery of the WHQS programme remains challenging but is clearly making a significant contribution towards the successful achievement of this Wellbeing Objective. The programme continues to be financially viable, with the possibility of some additional borrowing being required towards the end of the programme. New arrangements introduced during 2017/18 means that the Council is well placed to deliver the WHQS programme in full by the 2020 deadline, with the substantial investment made helping to transform lives and communities.
- 4.11 In 2017, the Wales Audit Office completed a review of the Council's WHQS programme and made a series of recommendations, which have been addressed by the Council and contributed towards the programme delivery.

## **5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

- 5.1 The summary of performance outlined in Section 4 and the detailed information provided in Appendix 1 demonstrates the positive contribution made by the Council, through the delivery of the WHQS programme, towards 6 of the 7 wellbeing goals:
- A prosperous Wales
  - A resilient Wales
  - A healthier Wales
  - A more equal Wales
  - A Wales of cohesive communities
  - A globally responsible Wales

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 An equality impact assessment is not required as the report is for information purposes only.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications to this report, although, there may have been in respect of the individual actions undertaken to achieve the key priorities outlined in section 4.

## **8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications to this report, although, there may have been in respect of the individual actions undertaken to achieve the key priorities outlined in section 4.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 The result of all consultations has been incorporated into this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 CHTG are asked to provide their views on the recommendations set out below, prior to the report being presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

10.2 Members are asked to consider the content of this report and, where appropriate, question and challenge the performance presented.

10.3 Members are asked to determine if they agree that achievement against the Wellbeing Objective is deemed as “partially successful”.

## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 Performance management scrutiny affords members the opportunity to challenge, inform and shape the future performance of the housing service.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

12.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

Author: Mark Jennings, Housing Strategy Officer  
(Tel: 01443 811380. Email: [jennim1@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:jennim1@caerphilly.gov.uk))

Consultees: Cllr Lisa Phipps, Cabinet Member for Homes & Places  
Dave Street, Director of Social Services & Housing  
Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer  
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer  
Paul Smythe, Housing Technical Manager  
Fiona Wilkins, Public Sector Housing Manager  
Claire Davies, Interim Private Sector Housing Manager  
Sue Cousins, Principal Housing Officer  
Lesley Allen, Principal Accountant (Caerphilly Homes)  
Rhys Lewis, Systems & Performance Manager  
Ros Roberts, Performance Manager  
Ian Raymond, Performance Management Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1: End of Year Report - Wellbeing Objective 5: Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities (2017/18)



## Wellbeing Objective 5 - Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities

### End of Year Report 2017/18

#### In summary:

- Caerphilly Homes continues making good progress with its investment programme to deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) across all its homes by the end of December 2020, having invested £152m since the start of the programme.
  - The capital investment in homes has been used to support local businesses and create training and employment opportunities in the borough to help people back into work.
  - Due to the complexity of home improvement works required, the programme is being delivered in a 'phased block of works' approach, (internal and external works being undertaken separately) which does not target 'whole home units' in one go, and so, did not deliver 'whole home compliance' in the early programme years. As this method of works progresses and overlaps (area by area), there will be an incremental (noticeable) increase in 'whole home unit compliance' as we approach the latter years of the programme.
- The delivery of the internal works element of the WHQS programme has progressed well despite the loss of one of our main contractors and is on target for completion by the 2020 deadline.
- The delivery of external works element of the WHQS programme has experienced slippage over the previous 3 years due to a number of challenges; however, significant improvements have been made during 2017/18 including the introduction of a DPS (Dynamic Purchasing System). Based on current performance, again this is on target for completion by the 2020 deadline.
  - In order to meet Part 6, the Council commenced the WHQS environmental programme in 2016 and intends to invest circa. £10.6m in the ensuring that its homes are located in attractive and safe environments. Phase 1, which involved identifying minor repair and improvement works across the borough that have been completed. An extensive community engagement programme is currently underway to identify improvements that will be delivered as part of Phase 2 with many projects agreed and progressing.
  - Part 7 of the WHQS requires the Council to ensure that 'as far as possible, improvements are undertaken to suit the specific requirements of the household'. In order to ensure compliance and meet the aspiration to transform lives and communities the Council has delivered a portfolio of adaptations as part of its improvement works thereby ensuring that people are able to remain independent in their homes for

longer. In some cases, this has involved simply the installation of handrails and in others it has involved the installation of ramps, disabled kitchens, walk in showers and RNIB provisions to assist those with a visual impairment. We have also completed 25 automatic door installations at our sheltered housing schemes.

- Tenant satisfaction for internal works continues to be good.
- Tenant satisfaction with external works has been below what is expected, however, this is currently under review.
- The programme continues to be financially viable, with some borrowing likely to be required towards the end of the programme.
- In 2017, the Wales Audit Office completed a programme review and submitted a series of recommendations to the Council, which have been addressed to improve programme delivery.
- The programme remains challenging, but improved progress throughout 2017/18 (with some new arrangements introduced to ensure momentum) has put the Council in a good position to deliver the WHQS programme in full by 2020.

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, Council housing stock totalled 10,801 homes.

The WHQS investment programme has improved living conditions by making properties weathertight, improved heating, improved safety within the home through changes to layout, new energy efficient heating, electrical rewiring, improved accessibility, energy efficiency through additional insulation measures, external improvements, all contributing to improved health and wellbeing.

During the period covered by this report it has been assessed that achievement against the Well-being Objective is deemed to be **partially successful**.

## Action Plan for 2017/18

<b>Service Area:</b>		<b>Caerphilly Homes</b>			<b>Long term priority.</b>
<b>A – Priority objective:</b>		<b>1. WO 5 - Investment in council homes to transform lives and communities.</b>			
<b>B</b>	<b>Key Actions / Tasks</b>	<b>Owner &amp; Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional resource required?</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress update (March 2018)</b>
Page 57 1.	Delivery of the 2017/18 capital investment programme in respect of internal and external repairs and improvements.	WHQS senior management March 2018	A capital programme of £53.5m for 2017/18 was set.  Additional resource in relation to sheltered schemes was approved and recruitments made as and when required during the year.	Targets set for 2017/18 outputs are met.	Commitments were made to deliver 75% of internal properties and 40% of external properties being compliant to WHQS. Whilst it was originally determined that these commitments had been exceeded by the 31/03/18, since that time a new validation process has determined that we had fallen just short of the internal target, with only 73% of properties being compliant but exceeded the external target with 46% being made. Overall WHQS compliance 35%. No borrowing was required this year with expenditure being £42m which is lower than the budget but exceeds all previous annual expenditure and demonstrates the increase in momentum during 2017/18. The business plan therefore remains financially viable and the target for completion of the WHQS programme in full by 2020 continues to be achievable.

	<p>Enforcement of standards set out in the Charter for Trust by both the in house work force and contractors.</p>	<p>Project managers</p>	<p>Due to increase in workload COW and TLO resource was reviewed.</p>	<p>In house work force and contractors undertaking good quality work in an efficient and courteous manner. Satisfactory response to customer satisfaction survey.</p>	<p>This programme is driven and delivered in context with/by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WHQS Programme Criteria</li> <li>- WHQS Compliance Policy</li> <li>- WHQS Strategy/Action Plan</li> <li>- Tenant Communication Strategy</li> <li>- Focus on Delivery Charter</li> <li>- Charter for Trust Standards</li> <li>- Contract terms and conditions</li> </ul> <p>The contents of which ‘sets the conditions for aspiration’ and ‘standards’ of eventual works completions.</p> <p>Contractors and workforce regularly made aware of requirements and results are monitored through surveys, completions of work sign-off and tenant satisfaction.</p> <p>The Charter ensures that works completed to tenant’s homes will be undertaken with respect and to give confidence. Some issues have been experienced with external contractors and their sub contractors in particular, as communication of the Charter for Trust through the whole supply chain appears to be inconsistent. Issues however have been reinforced when identified and emphasis raised at all pre-contract meetings.</p>
--	---	-------------------------	---	---	--

<p>3.</p> <p>Page 59</p>	<p>Delivery of a customer focussed programme with high levels of satisfaction.</p>	<p>Project managers</p>	<p>Due to increase in workload COW and TLO resource has been reviewed.</p>	<p>Satisfactory response to customer satisfaction survey, low number of complaints, which are mainly resolved quickly to satisfaction of complainant.</p>	<p>All works are delivered post survey and tenant notification. For internal elements agreed appointment/works are then discussed with the tenant and timetabled accordingly. Tenants are offered an element of choice on various products and letters confirming the scope of works and their choices are also sent to tenants, who are also provided with a period of time to reconsider. Notification letters sent to tenants in advance of external works provide a brief overview of the likely scope of works. Following feedback from tenants these letters are in the process of being reviewed.</p> <p>Compliments and complaints are regularly monitored, acted upon and recorded appropriately.</p> <p>An external works survey questionnaire has been fully implemented in a similar way to the existing internal survey.</p> <p>See customer satisfaction levels reported below.</p>
--------------------------	--	-------------------------	--	---	---

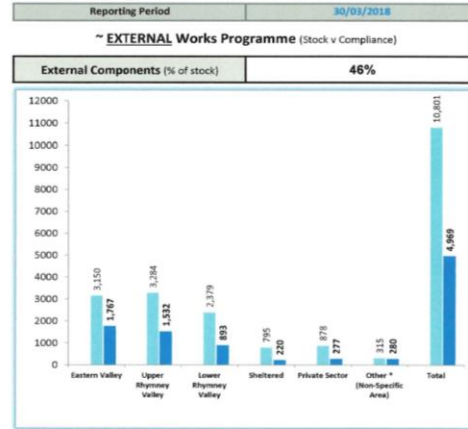
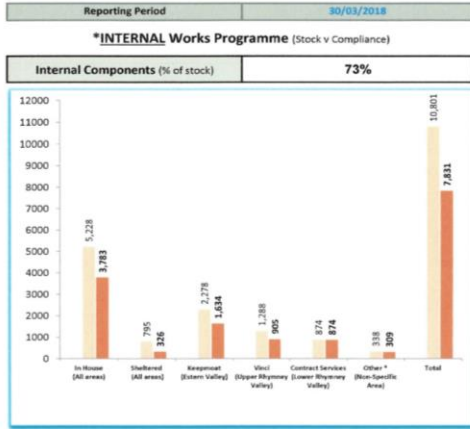
<p>4.</p> <p>Page 60</p>	<p>To meet the requirements of Part 7 of WHQS by undertaking adaptations where these are identified.</p>	<p>Project managers advised by OT officers</p>	<p>A temporary increase in OT resource was introduced for 2017/18 to address additional OT assessments identified.</p> <p>The team is currently operating with only one surveyor with other surveyors being utilised as and when required.</p>	<p>Improved quality of life for tenants.</p>	<p>Prior to the recommendation of adaptation improvement works, an individual OT assessment is undertaken in order to identify the specific needs of the household. This applies to both the internal and external works programme.</p> <p>Where feasible, any approved, adaptations are built into the WHQS programme. In addition, further adaptations are provided through our private housing team following referrals from Social Services or as a result of direct referrals via the OT to CCBC Social Services.</p> <p>1,713 adaptations completed to date (within programme period); with approximately 4,916 adaptations provided to tenants by the Adaptations Team within Private Sector Housing.</p>
--------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

5. Page 61	<p>Implement the environmental improvements to meet part 6 of the standard of attractive and safe communities.</p>	<p>Strategic Coordination Manager and environmental officers.</p>	<p>Resources in place. Additional consultancy support being provided for detailed scheme designs and feasibility.</p>	<p>The local environment within which tenants live is improved aesthetically and provides a safer community in which to live.</p>	<p>Campaign Publication Aug/Sept 2017:</p> <p>Communities throughout the borough are being asked to give ideas to improve their local area through a series of 'Shape Your Place' consultation events.</p> <p>The WHQS Environmental Programme is being supported by a £10.6m budget for council estates throughout the borough. Environmental officers, our partners, contractors and citizens are currently actively engaging to consider improvement opportunities and a series of events and online surveys online surveys created in order to seek views regarding environmental improvements.</p> <p>A series of clean-ups, new signage, improved amenities, communal bin storage facilities and additional parking spaces have already been completed in some communities.</p> <p>The WHQS Project Board have approved a number of major schemes which, will be integrated into existing programmes of work during 2018/19 for delivery. Engagement events are ongoing to identify projects throughout the county borough, which will be implemented between now and 2020. Major schemes have been approved in Nelson, Phillipstown, Penyrheol and Ty Sign.</p>
------------	--	---	---	---	--

6.	Identification and pursuit of external funding opportunities to support energy efficiency measures.	Project Manager and Strategic Coordination Manager	Re-allocation of workloads and joint working between the WHQS and Private Sector Housing teams.	Additional grant income awarded to undertake energy efficiency improvements to the housing stock which will assist with fuel poverty.	<p>Additional VVP funding was secured to increase the energy efficiency of private homes within Lansbury Park, resulting in a total VVP WG investment of £680,000 by March 2018. £1.4m has also been committed via the ARBED programme to deliver energy efficiency works.</p> <p>ARBED related works in Lansbury Park are being delivered by contractors – E.On and SERS.</p>
----	---	--	---	---	--



**WHQS - STRATEGIC SCORECARD - LEVELS OF COMPLIANCE**  
(Standards Met - by Number of Properties)



**Financial Programme**

	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19 Projected	19/20 Projected	2020 Projected
<b>Budget</b> (E ,000's)	19,100	48,320	77,990	107,660	136,880	166,100	195,820	220,000	
<b>Actual Spend</b>	19,057	33,707	49,051	77,683	109,061	152,165	207,968	254,938	
<b>Balance</b>	A3	14,613	28,939	29,977	27,819	13,935	(12,648)	(54,938)	

The above finance table details accumulative budget allocations and spend profiles to date, which are subject to annual review and re-profiling.

The charts above, have been based on properties surveyed, improvement works undertaken, post-works inspections and portfolio updates, focusing on the following WHQS key components:

**Internal Works:** There are 4 main elements - Kitchens, Bathrooms, Heating & Electrics.

**External Works:** There are 10 main elements - Boundary walls, Doors, Drainage works, Fences/Railings/Gates, Curtilage works, Paths/Drives, Roofs, Stores/Sheds/Out buildings, Windows & Property skin

Other specialist works/improvements are also undertaken in conjunction with the WHQS Programme, such as Adaptations to meet the specific needs of the tenants

**Notes.**

Work schedules are delivered in a 'phased' (blocks of work) approach across each of the reported and distributed work areas and types of work (Int/Ext). The bar chart 'Targets' are Total Stock Values and the 'Results' are accumulative, as at the time of the Period Reporting Dates. Delivered works are reported by surveyors/contractors upon 'property compliance' (not upon compliance of individual components of work). The results reported above include 'Acceptable Fails'. The charts on this page excludes any works undertaken to leasehold properties.

Tenant Satisfaction - shows a '% value' and a 'colour status' based on survey results attained and then compared to the following range;

Red = <= 50% (Needs urgent intervention)  
 Amber = > 50.1% < 79.9% (Needs close monitoring and some intervention)  
 Green = >= 80% (Acceptable)

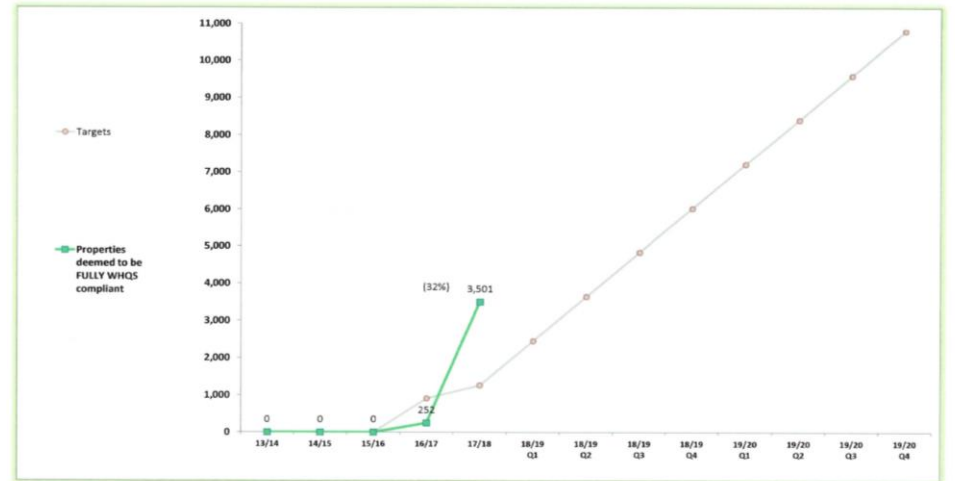
**Internal Properties**


Acceptable fails on internal elements can be broken down as follows. These are based on surveyed properties as a percentage of total stock.

- Number of properties with one element as an acceptable fail - 9% - 931 properties
- Number of properties with two elements as an acceptable fail - 4% - 410 properties
- Number of properties with three elements as an acceptable fail - 3% - 278 properties

*There are only 3 of the 4 elements (Kitchen, bathroom and heating) that can be included as an acceptable fail. Electrics will never form an acceptable fail due to our statutory duty to comply with health and safety regulations.*

**WHQS - Properties fully compliant (total stock)**



	<b>How quickly we do internal home improvements</b>	<b>How quickly we carry out external home improvements</b>
	<p>The chart above shows the timetabling and delivery or compliance for <b>internal</b> property works, which has progressed generally well against the Authority's planned profile for improvements.</p> <p>Core components being: Kitchens, Bathrooms, Boilers and Central Heating, Electrical Systems (wiring), Mains - Smoke Detectors.</p> <p>This has been reflected in the level of customer satisfaction rates noted below.</p>	<p>The chart above shows the timetabling and delivery of <b>external</b> works which has achieved slow progress in previous years when compared to our planned profile but a stepped change is evident for 2017/18.</p> <p>Core components being: Roofs, Walls, Windows, External Doors, Insulation, Paths/Fences)</p> <p>This programme has experienced slippage, due to delays in putting satisfactory procurement arrangements in place, lack of contractor resources and inclement weather.</p>
	<b>The tenant satisfaction levels of work done</b>	
	<b>Internal Works – 86%</b>	<b>External Works – 70% (small sample)</b>
Very Satisfied	59%	42%
Satisfied	27%	28%
Neither	6%	6%
Dissatisfied	3%	12%
Very Dissatisfied	5%	12%
<b>Overall Satisfaction (Very Satisfied + Satisfied)</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>70%</b>

## **Homes 'specifically adapted' as part of WHQS works to meet specific needs of household.**

A key element of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard is the requirement (Part 7) to deliver adaptations where appropriate in order to ensure that Council homes meet the individual needs of the occupants. As a consequence where a tenant advises that they have a diagnosed medical condition or experiencing difficulties with sight or mobility an OT (Occupational therapy) assessment will be undertaken by a qualified occupational therapist. The assessment will, if appropriate, include recommendations to the project managers on what adaptations should be undertaken in order to meet the needs of individuals within the household and ensure compliance with Part 7. Since the start of the programme in July 2013, 1,713 properties have received internal adaptations. These can range from handrails and relatively minor works to full kitchens especially adapted for wheelchair users, walk in showers, ramps and RNIB Visually Better kitchens and bathrooms for tenants with a visual impairment. We have also carried out 25 automatic door installations at our sheltered housing schemes. These improvements which are made as an integral part of the programme are helping tenants remain independently in their homes for longer and are thereby reducing the demand for social care. It is also resulting in a decrease in the number of adaptations requested via the Private Housing Service and Social Services.

## **Community Benefits**

In addition, the delivery of the WHQS programme and its ambition to transform lives and communities has led to the integration of community benefit targets into the supply partner and internal works contracts. To date, a total of 43 permanent, fulltime opportunities have been created as a result of the Council's WHQS investment in homes (this excludes 34 that were created by Contract Services (who are no longer operating) in the initial stage of the programme). 58 apprenticeships together with 44 work placement opportunities have been created by the Council and its supply partner / internal works contractors. There is room for improvement and more targets are anticipated to be delivered between now and 2020 as a result of the closer alignment between the programme targets and the WG funded Communities 4 Work, Communities 4 Work Plus and Legacy programmes delivered in house. A greater alignment will ensure that those who are furthest removed from the labour market are provided with the support and mentoring required to take advantage of any opportunities created as a consequence of the investment in tenants homes being made by the Council.

**This objective shows commitment/contribution to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 by:**

<b>Goal:</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Prosperous</b>	Due to the scale of this programme, it will be a substantial boost to the local economy including the creation of jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities. The money spent improving homes, should be a catalyst to wider regeneration, improving lives and communities.
<b>Resilient</b>	By addressing the physical environment infrastructure (homes and communities) to improve their conditions and ensure they are fit-for-purpose, enabling opportunities to change, allows for due regard to the wider aspects of being able to cope now and adapt to change in the future.
<b>Healthier</b>	The main intention of this objective, other than improving homes, is to prevent further deterioration in the housing stock, which can adversely affect the health and wellbeing of the tenants.
<b>More equal</b>	The long-term affordability of housing, effects of low incomes, fuel poverty and improving the quality of housing in the social sectors, are some of the main challenges existing in borough. Through delivery of this objective, the investments to local homes and communities (raising standards and quality) should help address poverty, health, and wellbeing in-equalities (living conditions, options, affordability, health and access to services).
<b>Cohesive Communities</b>	This objective also contributes to the Welsh Government's own current objectives: 7. Connect communities through sustainable and resilient infrastructure and 9. Improve access to secure, safe, efficient and affordable homes.
<b>Globally Responsible</b>	Part of this programme has been to give due regard for the logistics and supplies of materials and contractors when arranging programmes of work, minimising the likely effects caused by production, transportation, actual developments/home improvements and disposal of waste – minimising the impact on our environment and climate.
<b>Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language</b>	Not applicable

<b>Working:</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Long-term</b>	Through continued investment and improvements to both the internal and external environments of our social housing stock and specialised adaptations in accordance with the needs of some of our tenants, the achievements delivered, particularly through the WHQS programme, provides long-term improvements to the property, community and to the tenants' health and well-being.
<b>Prevention</b>	The works undertaken to deliver this objective, has helped to improve lives and communities and also helped tackle local unemployment through employee and contractor arrangements. Work completions within this objective, has also further improved the look and feel of the environment and helps prevent anti-social behaviour.

	Improving standards and quality of the housing stock now, also aids future programmed maintenance and potentially reduce reactive maintenance schedules.
<b>Involvement</b>	Through an established governance and performance framework, tenants and local residents are consulted on the proposed property improvements and environmental works along with various initiatives, and are periodically informed of progress as part of the WHQS programme and objective delivery.
<b>Collaboration</b>	The programme delivery focused on internal collaboration, wider partnership arrangements with suppliers and contractors, joint working with the community and various other interested parties/groups. The delivery of community benefits and tenant engagement by all involved with the WHQS programme is a key focus for the success and delivery of this objective.
<b>Integration</b>	The programme looks to integrate property and environmental improvements that will benefit and transform lives and communities throughout the county borough. It further brings together a variety of stakeholders to deliver long term sustainable benefits for lives and communities.

This page is intentionally left blank



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND OCTOBER 2018**

**SUBJECT:           YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CAERPHILLY HOMES**

**REPORT BY:       CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE  
SERVICES**

---

- 1.1 The attached report, which was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 20th September 2018 ahead of its presentation to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, sought the views of Members on the performance of the services provided by Caerphilly Homes during 2017/18. It set out the key service priorities for the period 2018 to 2023 and highlighted any potential challenges that may affect the successful delivery of these priorities.
- 1.2 Officers highlighted that the performance of Caerphilly Homes for 2017/18 was considered overall to be good and continues to build on performance from previous years. Priorities for the period 2018 to 2023 will aim to deliver further service improvements and will ensure that Caerphilly Homes is able to respond proactively to the needs and aspirations of those who use these services.
- 1.3 Officers drew Members' attention to the performance of each of the following sections – housing repair operation, private sector housing, public sector housing and WHQS. Attention was also drawn to the list of key priorities for 2018 to 2023, details of which were set up in section 4 of Appendix 1 of the report.
- 1.4 Members queried the length of the 25-day response time to non-emergency repairs. Officers clarified that the average response time was 8 days, however the 25 days response time given is set as such due to some priority 3 repairs such as glazing taking longer to complete as the double glazed unit needs to be measured at the property and then manufactured in addition to making an appointment with the tenant to install glass.
- 1.5 Members raised concerns regarding the improvement of other areas of a property not covered under the WHQS programme such as landings and hallways, and in particular whether the issue of damp in properties was being addressed. If issues were apparent during the WHQS work which could potentially impact on the planned scope of work, then this would be addressed at the time. Officers explained that in some cases when improvements were made, further issues were not apparent and that tenants experiencing issues could report these to the housing repair team as usual.
- 1.6 A Member also asked officers why Caerphilly Homes was not delivering on the promises made in the offer document and felt that the scope of work had been reduced. Officers advised that the offer document included examples of the type and scale of work that was intended to be undertaken if the housing stock was retained by CCBC and that based on the current position the scope of work has increased in some areas and may have reduced in others.

- 1.7 The Task Group praised Caerphilly Homes for the excellent performance of the Housing Repair Operations in particular during 2017/18 and reported that tenants were generally happy with the service they receive.
- 1.8 Following consideration of the report and in noting the details of the Year End Performance Report for Caerphilly Homes, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group unanimously recommended to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee that its contents be noted.
- 1.9 The Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the report and the above recommendation.

Author: K. Houghton, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4267

Appendices:

Appendix Report to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 20th September 2018 – Agenda Item 6





## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 20TH SEPTEMBER 2018

**SUBJECT: YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CAERPHILLY HOMES**

**REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an overview of the performance of the services provided by Caerphilly Homes during 2017/18, to set out the key service priorities for the period 2018 to 2023 and highlight any potential challenges that may affect the successful delivery of these priorities, prior to the report being presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides members with an overview of performance of the service provided by Caerphilly Homes during 2017/18.
- 2.2 The report also sets the priorities for the period 2018 to 2023 that will deliver further service improvements and identifies a number of potential challenges that may affect the successful delivery of these priorities.
- 2.3 The performance of Caerphilly Homes for 2017/18 is considered overall to be good and continues to build on performance from previous years. We have identified aspects of the service that require improvement and will work closely with stakeholders to introduce changes that will result in improved services and performance. Our priorities for the period 2018 to 2023 will aim to deliver further service improvements and will ensure that we are able to respond proactively to the needs and aspirations of those who use our services. We have identified a number of challenges that may affect our ability to implement these service improvements successfully. However, the service is currently regarded by the Housing Management Team to be well placed to respond to these challenges.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 ***The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*** contains 7 well-being goals. When making decisions the act requires public bodies in Wales, including local authorities, to take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in the future.
- 3.2 ***Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales (Welsh Government, 2010)***, which sets out the national context on meeting housing need, homelessness, and housing-related support services.
- 3.3 ***The Caerphilly We Want (CCBC, 2018-2023) - Well-Being Plan: Positive Places - Enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable.***

- 3.4 **Corporate Plan (CCBC, 2018-2023): Well-being Objective 3:** “Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people’s well-being.”
- 3.5 **Anti-Poverty Strategy (CCBC)**, which sets out a range of priorities to tackle poverty in the borough.

#### 4. THE REPORT

4.1 Caerphilly Homes delivers a range of services to people living in the private and social sectors, and to people who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. It consists of four main sections:

- i) Housing Repair Operations;
- ii) Private Sector Housing;
- iii) Public Sector Housing; and
- iv) Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

4.2 As part of the corporate service improvement process, Caerphilly Homes has undertaken a review of the performance of the service to identify and evaluate the performance of the service against pre-defined areas, aspects of the service that require improvement and any challenges facing the delivery of the service. The self-evaluation exercise informs the development of the service plan.

4.3 The following priorities were identified in the 2017/18 service plan:

- i) Investment in homes to transform lives and communities (Wellbeing Objective 5).
- ii) Undertake a number of initiatives to address low demand in council housing.
- iii) Complete the de-pooling of service charges from rents exercise in sheltered housing.
- iv) Carry out an options appraisal into the remodelling of a number of our sheltered housing schemes, including assessing the potential for redevelopment.
- v) Consider the potential impact of further welfare reforms, including local housing allowance, on existing and prospective council and housing association and private rented sector tenants and identify solutions to mitigate the impact.
- vi) Reviewing our ICT requirements including replacement of the Capita system, taking into consideration the collection, use and maintenance of data from the customer profiling exercise, and mobile working.
- vii) Implement a new management charge schedule for leaseholders.
- viii) Full operational implementation of the Rent Smart Wales scheme.
- ix) Development of key strategic housing documents to inform future service provision.
- x) Contribute towards addressing the issues, which related in Lansbury Park being identified as the most deprived area in Wales (WIMD 2014).

4.4 The performance of each section will be considered separately in turn in the following paragraphs:

##### **Housing Repair Operations**

4.5 The section provides a responsive repairs and maintenance service to the council housing stock of 10,801 properties, completing approximately 28,000 repairs per annum, in addition to supporting the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) section with both the internal and external capital investment programme. It consists of 175 members of staff (FTE), including multi-trade maintenance operatives, with an annual reactive maintenance turnover of £7.8m. There is a further budget of £4.1m for planned projects and cyclical maintenance, utilising external contractors, that support the in-house workforce with the service and repair of all heating and hot water systems, stair-lift and hoist lifting equipment, in addition to the statutory maintenance of 34 sheltered housing schemes.

4.6 Overall, the section continues to strive towards improving the way it delivers its services. Significant cost savings continue to be generated through improved productivity brought about by the extension of mobile working, the multi skilling of operatives, retaining more work in-house, reducing the necessity to travel, and a reduction in administration and overhead costs. Performance and customer satisfaction levels have remained high.

#### Performance in 2017/18

4.7 Examples of achievements made during 2017/18 include:

- In December 2017, the section was again finalists in the Best Performing Authority in the UK for Building Maintenance by the Association of Public Services Excellence (APSE) Performance Networks, having previously won the award in 2016.
- In addition to providing the repairs and maintenance services, the section also supported the WHQS programme by completing over 118 kitchens replacements, 112 bathroom replacements, 80 electrical rewires, 94 central heating upgrades, 323 IG door replacements, 39 fibreglass flat roofs. 121 void properties were also improved internally to meet the WHQS.
- Assumed responsibility for the management and monitoring of statutory maintenance services following transfer from the WHQS team and established new contractual arrangements for their delivery. These services include gas, stair lift and hoist servicing, along with Legionella testing and fire risk assessment works within sheltered housing and performance across all areas of our statutory maintenance have improved.

#### Key Performance Indicators:

Key Performance Indicators	Previous Year 2017/18		Progress / Comments
	Target	Actual	
The average end of tenancy voids costs.	£4,500	£5,422	2016/17 - £7,430.  The reduction is due to more properties having already been brought up to the WHQ standard as part of the main programme.
Number of WHQS works completed by HRO by category of works.	N/A	815 (121 voids)	2016/17 – 504 (144 Voids)  The reduction in WHQS works completed to void properties is as a result of the progress made on the main WHQS internal works programme where the majority of properties have been now been completed.
Number of backlog repairs pending at year-end.	N/A	1,319	Repairs are prioritised and allocated a completion target, depending on the nature of the repair, ranging from 1-66 days. This means there will always be a continual work in progress backlog of pending repairs within appointment diaries, which increases and decreases throughout the year.

Number of complaints received.	N/A	4 (23,114 repairs)	21 complaints in 2016/17 (from 27,605 repairs completed).
Number of repairs carried out to tenant's homes.	N/A	23,114	27,605 in 2016/17. A reduction in the number of repairs carried out is associated with the works completed on the WHQS programme.
% of repairs undertaken as appointments (Qtly accum - Year to date)	97%	100%	99.96% in 2016/17.
Average number of working days taken to complete a planned repair (08)	66	42	48 days in 2016/17.
Average number of working days taken to complete a routine repair (03/05)	25	8	10 days in 2016/17.
Average number of working days taken to complete an emergency repair (02)	1	0.11	0.11 days in 2016/17.
Percentage of emergency jobs completed on time (within 24 hours) (02)	100%	99.56%	99.43% in 2016/17.
Percentage of non emergency jobs not subject to call back/complaint (right first time) (03-05-08)	98%	97.68%	98.43% in 2016/17.
Percentage of planned repairs completed on time (08)	90%	90.37%	84.96% in 2016/17.
Percentage of routine repairs completed on time (03/05)	95%	98.21%	97.10% in 2016/17.

Tenant Survey: % of customers satisfied with the Repairs Services they receive	100%	100%	99.67% in 2016/17. 2017/18: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent - 71.79%</li> <li>• Good - 25.68%</li> <li>• Satisfactory - 2.53%</li> </ul>
Percentage of Materials Recycled	80%	87.90%	86.5% in 2016/17.
Total Fuel Used by the HRO fleet (Yrly)	£215,000	£161,671.49	£163,079.95 in 2016/17.
Number of vehicles per operational employee (Yrly)	0.63	0.65	0.60 vehicles in 2016/17.  0.02 above target due to operatives finishing employment and not being replaced. At present the vehicles are long-term hires, also we have 8 final year apprentices working on their own who are allocated a vehicle.
Percentage of voids completed on time	96.50%	97.26%	95.16% in 2016/17.
Refurbishment voids turnaround (average number of calendar days keys held by in-house workforce)	60	31.66	62.88 days in 2016/17.
Routine voids turnaround (average number of calendar days keys held by in-house workforce)	11.50	12.47	11.73 days in 2016/17.
Compliance in relation to gas servicing.	100%	99.22%	As the properties not serviced within 12 months were due to access issues, the introduction of forced entry has resulted in improved performance, with this expected to continue into 2018/19.

### Private Sector Housing

4.8 The section is responsible for the provision of major and minor works of adaptation for disabled persons living in the public and private sectors, improving the condition of homes in the private sector through individual grants, area renewal schemes and regulation. The section maintains the council's housing register and is responsible for the delivery of homelessness services. It is also assisting in the delivery of the WHQS programme, by project managing external works to leasehold blocks of flats throughout the borough and supporting the transformation of Lansbury Park in relation to the energy efficiency scheme to privately owned properties.

- 4.9 The section is also responsible for managing and monitoring the implementation of Rent Smart Wales scheme and aims to bring long-term empty homes back into beneficial use.
- 4.10 For reporting purposes, the common housing register, allocations and homelessness service is also included within this section.
- 4.11 The section consists of 65 members of staff (FTE) with a budget of £6.2m (£3.3m capital (for grants), £1.1m capital (for loans) and £1.8m (net) revenue).
- 4.12 Analysis of performance and customer satisfaction information tells us that, despite ongoing budget pressures, overall, the section continues to provide a wide range of good quality services.

### **Performance in 2017/18**

4.13 Examples of achievements in 2017/18 include:

- Increased access into the private rented sector for those people who are either homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Utilised an under-occupied residential block of flats in Rhymney to provide a supported housing options scheme for predominantly single people aged 16 plus.
- Worked in partnership with the local churches and a contracted support provider, over the winter months, to provide shelter and support in the borough to 19 rough sleepers.
- Completed a re-assessment of the requirement for the provision of emergency, supported accommodation in the borough for homeless people.
- Undertaken the necessary preparatory work in readiness for delivery of the Gwent Regional Homeless Strategy 2018-2022.
- Successfully managed and monitored the implementation of Rent Smart Wales
- Undertaken a range of activities to increase awareness of the Rent Smart Wales (RSW) service, including newspaper adverts, posters / flyers, merchandise etc.
- Signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Single Licensing Authority and all councils in Wales, in relation to service standards and roles associated with the Rent Smart Wales service.
- Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and public sector adaptations, and reviewed processes aimed at improving performance.
- Delivered energy efficiency initiatives to privately owned properties.
- Supported the energy efficiency initiative at Lansbury Park, resulting in the improvement of private properties.
- Achieved WHQS compliance on 342 properties, of which 64 were leasehold properties and 277 were council stock.

**Key Performance Indicators:**

Key Performance Indicators	Previous Year 2017/18		Progress / Comments
	Target	Actual	
Enquiry to approval times - Disabled Facilities Grants (days).	145	168	163 days in 2016/17.  Although, there has been a 5-day increase during 17/18, 43 additional mandatory DFG grants were processed, with the same staff resources. There has been a review of procedures and interventions have been put in place, resulting in a general trend of improvement. (Q1 - 183 days. Q2 - 179 days. Q3 - 159 days and Q4 - 150 days)
Enquiry to approval times - Home Repair Grants (days)	255	360	298 days in 2016/17.  The key officer relating to the processing of this type of grant was on long-term sickness absence resulting in the officer ending their employment with the Authority. Following this, the post remained vacant for a further 10 months, only being filled in February 2018, following repeated recruitment drives. We were unable to reallocate resources due to competing pressures, linked to DFGs, WHQS.
Enquiry to approval times Public Sector Adaptations (days)	63	107	131 days in 2016/17.  Although, there has been an increase in the number of days during 17/18, 43 additional mandatory DFGs were processed, with the same staff resources. There has been a review of procedures and interventions have been put in place, resulting in a general trend of improvement, compared with 2016/17. (Q1 - 116 days. Q2 - 94 days. Q3 - 110 days and Q4 - 111 days).
Percentage of persons receiving adaptations who stated they were satisfied with the appointed contractor	96%	99%	There is no figure for 2016/17. New PI.  This figure reflects the provision and activities of an effective in house Agency Service who oversee adaptation schemes on the clients' behalf.

Percentage of persons receiving adaptations who stated they were satisfied with the length of time it took to provide their adaptation (Qtly)	92%	93%	There is no figure for 2016/17. New PI.  This figure reflects, in part, the provision and activities of an effective in house Agency Service who oversee adaptation schemes on the clients' behalf. This level of satisfaction also reinforces the national opinion that the statutory performance indicator for waiting times for DFGs is extremely misleading and is no longer fit for purpose.
Percentage of persons receiving adaptations who stated they were satisfied with the service received overall (Qtly)	96%	98%	There is no figure for 2016/17. New PI.  This figure reflects, in part, the provision and activities of an effective in house Agency Service who oversee adaptation schemes on the clients' behalf.
Percentage of Home Repair Grant recipients who stated they were satisfied with the appointed contractor	96%	100%	There is no figure for 2016/17. New PI.  This figure reflects the provision and activities of an effective in house Agency Service who oversee repair schemes on the clients' behalf.
Percentage of Home Repair Grant recipients who stated they were satisfied with the length of time taken to complete work.	92%	100%	There is no figure for 2016/17. New PI.  This figure reflects the provision and activities of an effective in house Agency Service who oversee repair schemes on the clients' behalf.
The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (Annual) N.B in this PI 'average' reflects the inclusion of all schemes of adaptation in excess of £1,000 irrespective of the size of the schemes which will range from as little as £1500 for something like a stair lift installation to as much as £50,000 in respect of the more complex schemes involving lifting, hoisting and where necessary bedroom/ bathroom extensions.	280	292	282 days in 2016/17.  Although, there has been a 10-day increase during 17/18, 43 additional mandatory DFG grants were processed, with the same staff resources. There has been a review of procedures and interventions have been put in place, resulting in a general trend of improvement. (Q1 - 316 days. Q2 - 296 days. Q3 - 280 days and Q4 - 268 days)



The average number of days taken to deliver a LA tenant adaptation other than a DFG N.B in this PI 'average' reflects the inclusion of all schemes of adaptation in excess of £1,000 irrespective of the size of the schemes which will range from as little as £1500 for something like a stair lift installation to as much as £30,000 in respect of the more complex schemes involving lifting, hoisting and where necessary bedroom/ bathroom extensions.	175	184	221 in 2016/17.  Although, the target for 2017/18 has not been met, there has been a significant decrease of, on average, 37 days to deliver an adaptation scheme compared to 2016/17.
The number of applications on the Common Housing Register	N/a	4,264	Active applications only.
% of applicants suspended on the Common Housing Register.	10%	8.38%	8.42% of applicants in 2016/17.
The number of new affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all new housing units provided during the year	N/A	42%	2016/17 data - 75% (163 of 216 properties).  42% (51 out of 121 properties). The 2017/18 data was only submitted to Welsh Government in mid-July 2018 and its status is currently unverified and subject to change.
Houses in Multiple Occupation - Number of assessments carried out under the Housing Act 2004, by property type	N/A	43	70 in 2016/17. These properties are inspected against a risk-based programme. This figure is compliant with the CCBC Houses in Multiple Occupation Risk Assessment Inspection Programme.
Single Occupancy - Number of assessments carried out under the Housing Act 2004, by property type	N/A	433	468 in 2016/17. This figure is reflective of the high number of service requests undertaken as part of their duties by the 3 District Environmental Health Officers based within Private Sector Housing.
Percentage private sector dwellings returned to occupation that had been unoccupied for more than 6 months due to direct action from CCBC (Qtly accum)	4.30%	4.70%	6.40% in 2016/17 (65 properties). 4.70% for 17/18 related to 46 properties. In 17/18 demolition orders were served on 2 problematic long term empty properties. A substantial amount of officer's time was taken up with the matter, following receipt of an appeal. This work is not reflected in the PI, as neither property will be returned to occupation.

The average number of days that all homeless households spent in bed and breakfast accommodation.	30	14.47	17.32 days in 2016/17.
The number of people provided with financial assistance by the homelessness team to access accommodation in the private rented sector (excluding temporary accommodation).	N/A	201	231 people in 2016/17.
Cases who have had homelessness prevented (linked to a national PI Table 1.3 – Eligible, threatened with homelessness, prevention assistance provided (Section 66)).	N/A	432	In 2016/17 - 73.27% (447:610). In 2017/18 - 75.65% (432/571).
Cases who have had their risk of homelessness relieved by providing alternative accommodation (linked to a national PI Table 1.4 – Eligible, homeless, subject to duty to help to secure (Section 73)).	N/A	136	In 2016/17 - 46.2% (243:525). In 2017/18 - 33.17% (136/410).
The number of people determined as homeless as a percentage of the number of people threatened with homelessness who approach the Council for assistance (linked to a national PI Table 1.5c – Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need (Section 75)).	N/A	95	In 2016/17 - 81% (67:82). In 2017/18 - 70.89% (95/134).

### Public Sector Housing

- 4.14 The section is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the landlord services function to council tenants (10,801 council owned houses, managing 414 leaseholder properties and 929 garages) in accordance with all statutory requirements and council policies. It consists of 108 members of staff (FTE) with a budget of £6m p.a. and income collection of £51m p.a.
- 4.15 Performance information shows that we are currently sustaining high standards of service delivery. Although, we are unable to compare our performance against housing management services in other areas, due to the absence of national benchmarking data. Discussions are currently ongoing with Welsh Government to agree a standard across Wales that can be used for future benchmarking. This is likely to be in place by 2019/20. There are some areas of weakness that we are aware of, such as low demand for certain property types and areas, and are actively working to address. It is becoming increasingly more challenging in the current environment with significant legislative changes to maintain standards of performance against targets.

## Performance in 2017/18

4.16 Examples of achievements made in 2017/18 include:

- We have carried out a review to identify opportunities to re-designate council housing stock to meet changing demands.
- Completed an options appraisal into the remodelling of a number of our sheltered housing schemes, including assessing the potential for redevelopment.
- Considered the potential impact of further welfare reforms on existing and prospective council tenants and began to identify solutions to mitigate the impact.
- Fully implemented a new service charging regime for tenants in sheltered housing schemes, based on recovery of actual costs incurred.
- Introduced mobile working devices to a number of service areas, including Floating Support and Rents.
- Began implementation of a programme to bring our sheltered housing schemes up to the WHQS.

### Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators	Previous Year 2017/18		Progress / Comments
	Target	Actual	
The average number of calendar days taken to let lettable units of accommodation during the financial year for permanent accommodation (Annual)	69	84.52	<p>This PI reflects the total void time for a property in debit, from end of one tenancy to commencement of a new tenancy.</p> <p>64.26 days in 2016/17.</p> <p>HRO are refurbishing an increasing number of voids to WHQS necessitating longer void periods.</p> <p>Over the course of the year, a number of Hard To Lets (HTLs) were re-let and the average re-let time for these was 183.4 days, which adversely affects the overall result.</p> <p>The average re-let time for non-HTLs was 66.35 days, which is within the target.</p> <p>Additionally, we have recently introduced a pilot scheme to market a number of HTLs on Rightmove, through a pilot partnership agreement with a local estate agent. This has resulted in the successful allocation of a number of properties that had previously been void and available for let for an extended period.</p>

Percentage of Council Housing Stock that is Empty (Qtly - Yr to date)	1.80%	1.76%	<p>Stock = 10,801. Number of voids on 31/03/2018 = 190.</p> <p>This is in line with 1.8% of vacant social housing stock across Wales as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 (latest available data).</p> <p>2016/17 - stock = 10,821. Number of voids on 31/03/2017 = 203.</p>
The number of Council tenants who are affected by welfare reform and under-occupying that successfully downsized to alternative Council accommodation.	N/a	4	<p>16 in 2016/17.</p> <p>Most affected tenants have lived in these properties for many years, consider them their home, and are very reluctant to move. These tenants continue to be assisted by our Tenant Support Officers (TSOs).</p>
Percentage of tenants satisfied with visit by a Tenant Support Officer.	97%	97%	<p>99% in 2016/17.</p> <p>1,977 tenants were visited and over the year. 502 telephone surveys completed (25% surveyed).</p>
The total amount of rent arrears owed by former tenants in permanent accommodation which were written off as unrecoverable during the financial year as a percentage of the total rent collectable for the financial year (Qtly accum - Year to date)	0.50%	0.52%	<p>Value written off as unrecoverable - £277,736.93. Write off level only slightly higher than same period last year i.e. 0.52% compared with 0.51% (£267,833 in March 2017).</p> <p>We actively pursue recovery of debts from former tenants when able to locate them, including the use of debt collection agencies. If recoverable and non statute barred debts are written off we retain a record of the debt and are able to write them back into debit if we subsequently locate the former tenant or they reapply for housing.</p>
The total amount of rent lost due to lettable units of permanent accommodation being empty as a percentage of the total rent debit for the financial year (Qtly accum - Year to date)	1.90%	2.29%	<p>Void loss has increased on the same period the previous year, i.e. 2.29% compared with 1.93% previous year.</p>

<p>The total amount of rent arrears owed by current tenants in the following types of accommodation as a percentage of the total rent collectable for the financial year - Permanent Accommodation (Qtly accum - Year to date)</p>	<p>3.00%</p>	<p>2.29%</p>	<p>Void loss has increased to 2.29% (£1,198,742) compared with 1.93% previous year (£995,286).</p> <p>The increase in the average number of calendar days has a consequential impact on the void loss. The local lettings policy in Rowan Place, demolition proposals in River Road, consideration of remodelling proposals for some sheltered schemes and an increase in WHQS works for void properties, are all appropriate management interventions but each contributes to rent loss.</p>
<p>The total amount of rent arrears owed by current tenants as a percentage of the total rent collectable for the financial year - Permanent Accommodation (Qtly accum - Year to date)</p>	<p>3.00%</p>	<p>2.98%</p>	<p>£1,576,665.</p> <p>Welfare reform changes i.e. benefits cap and under occupation continue to impact on rent arrears. A slight increase on the same period last year, i.e. 2.73% (£1,436,000). However, the final week of the year included Good Friday, which resulted in reduced income for the final week of the year.</p>
<p>The number of council tenants referred for money and debt advice as a direct result of face to face support on the impact of welfare reforms</p>	<p>40</p>	<p>51</p>	<p>197 in 2016/17.</p> <p>This figure has reduced as a number of tenants now access CAB support as self-referrals or through their gateway service.</p>
<p>The number of council tenants affected by welfare reforms who were visited in their own homes and provided with advice and support to minimise the impact of the changes</p>	<p>2,000</p>	<p>1,977</p>	<p>2,183 in 2016/17.</p> <p>Slightly below the annual target due to maternity leave of an officer and training of replacement. We have increased the TSO staff level to 5 in April 2018 from 4 to try to assist the increasing number of tenants requiring support.</p>
<p>The value of financial savings generated for tenants as a direct result of face to face support on the affect of welfare reforms</p>	<p>£250,000</p>	<p>£903,508</p>	<p>£338,143 in 2016/17.</p> <p>We have well exceeded our target this year. The Welsh Water reduction scheme <i>Help U</i> has been promoted to our tenants through the TSO staff and through telephone marketing. Our Welfare benefits advisor has also been very successful in achieving additional welfare benefits for tenants.</p>

The number of people supported by tenancy support officers to access benefits they are entitled to [council housing only]	1,200	1,640	1,965 people in 2016/17. The welfare benefits adviser has been successful in assisting tenants. Within the rents section we have also been successful in the promotion of the Welsh Water <i>Help U</i> scheme.
Legal action resulting in a Court Order will be reasonable and proportionate to the number of ASB referrals	2%	1.88%	1.27% (8/628 referrals) in 2016/17. 13 cases out of 690 referrals for anti-social/nuisance behaviour with links to the housing management function resulted in a court order. The 13 cases included 1 Undertaking, 4 Injunctions, 1 Closure Order, 6 Suspended Possession Orders and 1 Outright Order for Possession.
Maximise the use of the VIP to support tenants at risk of losing their homes	8	13	The number of referrals to the Valleys Inclusion Project. 10 referrals in 2016/17.
Satisfaction with the way ASB complaints are handled by the Tenancy Enforcement Section (TES).	90%	94.40%	87.5% in 2016/17. A response rate of 22.2% (32/144) 54 survey cards returned out of 295 sent out. (2 dissatisfied, 1 very dissatisfied).
Number of applications to the County Court for a warrant of eviction.	N/a	104	In 16/17 it was 76. Primary reason was rent arrears (95 cases). A substantial amount of support is offered to tenants by Tenancy Support officers, Tenancy Enforcement Officers and Estate Management Officers prior to applications being made to the Court. In addition, in many cases independent support is also offered by outside agencies such as Gofal, Shelter and CAB.
Number of tenant households evicted from their properties.	N/a	21	In 16/17 it was 36 (16 were rent arrears). When an eviction date is received tenants have the right to apply to the County Court to have the eviction set aside and officers continue to try and work with the tenants to avoid progressing to eviction.

## Welsh Housing Quality Standard

4.17 The section consists of 65 members of staff (direct delivery) charged to the WHQS programme and 38 dedicated support staff funded by the HRA. The key areas of work are the delivery of a multi-million pound, annual capital programme. There are also WHQS related works managed through the revenue response budget and charged to the WHQS programme in relation to WHQS voids and heating installations (circa £2m). In addition, there is circa 174 in-house workforce assigned to the WHQS programme with a profile of £12m spend in 2017/18. The WHQS investment programme includes internal and WHQS works to our sheltered schemes in addition to the general stock works, environmental improvement and the provision of adaptations to meet tenants' specific needs, as well as community benefits which are all aimed at transforming homes, lives and communities.

### Performance in 2017/18

4.18 Examples of achievements made in 2017/18 include:

- Delivery of the 2017/18 capital investment programme, (£42m), in respect of internal and external repairs and improvements.
- Monitoring of standards set out in the Charter for Trust by both the in-house workforce and contractors.
- Delivery of a customer focussed programme with high levels of satisfaction recorded.
- Meet the requirements of Part 7 of WHQS by undertaking adaptations recommended by Occupational Therapist (OT) officers.
- Implementation of the Environmental Programme Engagement Plan in accordance with the timetable agreed with WHQS Project Board, including minor wall repairs, installation of fencing, benches and bollards along with general tidying up of areas and carpark maintenance and repair.
- Monitoring expenditure to retain a financially viable business plan.
- Review performance data and introduce a validation process to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the information provided.
- Review the no access procedure to maximise compliance and address health and safety issues.
- Address recommendations made following the Wales Audit Office (WAO) review.
- Maximise community benefits.

### Key Performance Indicators:

Key Performance Indicators	Previous Year 2017/18		Progress / Comments
	Target	Actual	
Number of homes brought to WHQS as recorded on annual return to Welsh Government. (The number of houses that have achieved WHQS standard in the year).	4,000	3,501 (32%)	252 homes in 2016/17. The figure provided excludes acceptable fails. Due to the way in which the programme is configured (internal and external works undertaken in different sequence), the compliance rate for whole property completion has increased as contracts in communities overlap (Appendix 1).

Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their external elements	4,754	4,969 (46%)	1,129 homes in 2016/17. This is higher than the figure originally reported to WG following a validation process (44%).
Number of homes compliant with WHQS in respect of their internal elements	8,347	7,831 (73%)	6,057 in 2016/17. This is lower than the figure originally reported to WG following a validation process (76%). The loss of one of the main contractors also impacted on performance.
Number of homes adapted as part of WHQS works to meet specific needs of household.	N/a	1,713	430 in 2016/17.  There are no targets set as it is only from the surveys that you can identify if there are specific tenant needs. If identified these works are implemented.
Tenant satisfaction levels for internal works.	80%	86%	85 in 2017/18.
Tenant satisfaction levels for external works.	80%	70%	No data for 2017/18 as surveying did not start until September 2017.
Charter for Trust Standards	90%	80%	85% in 2016/17.
Expenditure against budget finance.	£53m	£42m	Highest level of spend to date. See comments below.

The total expenditure on the WHQS capital programme for 2017/18 was £42.2m: £18m on internal works and £17.5m on external works, with the remainder of the spend covering fees, large-scale voids, adaptations and garages. £32.1m of this spend was funded from the HRA as a revenue contribution. A further £7.3m was funded from Welsh Government through the annual Major Repairs Allowance (MRA), and £2.7m of regeneration/environmental grants via the Arbed and Vibrant & Viable Places (VVP) programmes. There has been no borrowing undertaken for the WHQS programme to date.

The 2017/18 HRA business plan was approved by Welsh Government in May 2017 as part of the annual MRA application, which evidences that the WHQS programme remains financially viable. Borrowing to supplement existing funds will not be required until 2018/19. Expenditure at the end of March 2018 totalled £152m against an approved budget of £220m for the delivery of the full programme.

### **Key priorities for 2018 to 2023**

4.19 The key priorities for the service for the period 2018 to 2023, as contained in the Corporate Plan (2018-23), are as follows:

- i) All council housing is improved to meet the WHQS by the end of 2020.



- ii) Implement an asset management strategy to maintain the condition of the housing stock following WHQS attainment (December 2020).
- iii) Provide support to improve housing conditions in the owner-occupied sector.
- iv) Increase the provision of new, affordable, social housing that meet the ‘Lifetime Homes’ principles and identified needs, whilst supporting the governments’ innovative housing programme.
- v) Deliver adaptations to support the health and well-being of people in their homes and maximise the delivery and appropriate use of accessible homes.
- vi) Increase the supply of housing through a number of initiatives e.g. by supporting opportunities to bring long-term, empty homes back into use; purchasing properties, conversions.
- vii) Promote the development of a healthy and vibrant private rented sector as a viable housing option.
- viii) Prevent homelessness and tackle rough sleeping.
- ix) Prevent tenancies from failing by providing a range of housing related support (including those affected by financial hardship, mental health issues or physical disabilities); and
- x) Help reduce fuel poverty by making homes more energy efficient and providing people with advice on how best to heat their homes.
- xi) Undertake a review of all housing stock, including sheltered accommodation to ensure the best use of our assets is being made, that these remain affordable, are of good quality and meet the changing needs of our customers.

**Potential challenges to service delivery**

- 4.20 There are a number of challenges, varying in size and complexity, which may affect the successful outcome of the key priorities outlined in paragraph 4.19. Many of these challenges are external in origin and, therefore, the Council will have little or no control or influence over.
- 4.21 The main challenges include national economic, welfare and housing policy and legislative frameworks (Welsh and UK governments), demographic changes, staff capacity to prioritise existing tasks and take on new tasks, Medium Term Financial Plan consideration and in-house expertise to make best use of exploring new and emerging technologies.

**Monitoring arrangements**

- 4.22 The delivery of the key priorities outlined in 4.19 above, will be monitored through the following methods:

FREQUENCY	MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS
Weekly	Review financial & operational performance reports Consider weekly workloads.
Monthly	WHQS Project Board Performance data review meetings Service plan review meetings Financial and operational performance and strategy review meetings. Financial monitoring meetings (capital)
Bi-monthly	Financial monitoring meetings (revenue)

6 weekly	Caerphilly Homes Task Group (WHQS) Housing management team meeting
Quarterly	Aspireview updated and reviewed Performance management meetings Performance management unit review support meeting Performance management reports – Aspireview Progress reports to chief officer
6 monthly	Reports to Policy and Resources scrutiny committee and Cabinet Progress reports to head of service Performance management meeting
Annually	Performance development reviews for all staff Benchmarking (APSE) Aspireview updated and reviewed Year end report to head of service Year end report to P&R scrutiny committee

## 5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 Housing Services and our outlined priorities, contributes to a minimum of 6 out of the 7 well-being goals within the *Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015*, including:-

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

## 6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An equality impact assessment is not required as the report is for information purposes only.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications to this report, although, there may be in respect of the individual actions that will be undertaken to achieve the key priorities outlines in paragraph 4.19.

## 8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications to this report, although, there may be in respect of the individual actions that will be undertaken to achieve the key priorities outlines in paragraph 4.19.

## 9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 Responses from consultations have been incorporated into this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 Members are asked to consider the content of this report and, where appropriate, question and challenge the performance presented, prior to presentation to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 Performance management scrutiny affords members the opportunity to challenge, inform and shape the future performance of the housing service and the priorities presented within this report for the period 2018 to 2023.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

- 12.1 Local Government Measure 2009.

Author: Mark Jennings, Housing Strategy Officer  
(Tel: 01443 811380 / Email: [jennim1@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:jennim1@caerphilly.gov.uk) )

Consultees: Cllr Lisa Phipps, Cabinet Member for Homes & Places  
Dave Street, Director of Social Services & Housing  
Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer  
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer  
Paul Smythe, Housing Technical Manager  
Fiona Wilkins, Public Sector Housing Manager  
Claire Davies, Interim Private Sector Housing Manager  
Sue Cousins, Principal Housing Officer  
Lesley Allen, Principal Accountant (Housing), Corporate Services  
Rhys Lewis, Systems & Performance Manager  
Ros Roberts, Performance Manager, Corporate Services  
Ian Raymond, Performance Management Officer

### Appendices:

Appendix 1 – WHQS Quarter 4 Scorecard - Internal & External Property Compliance Chart

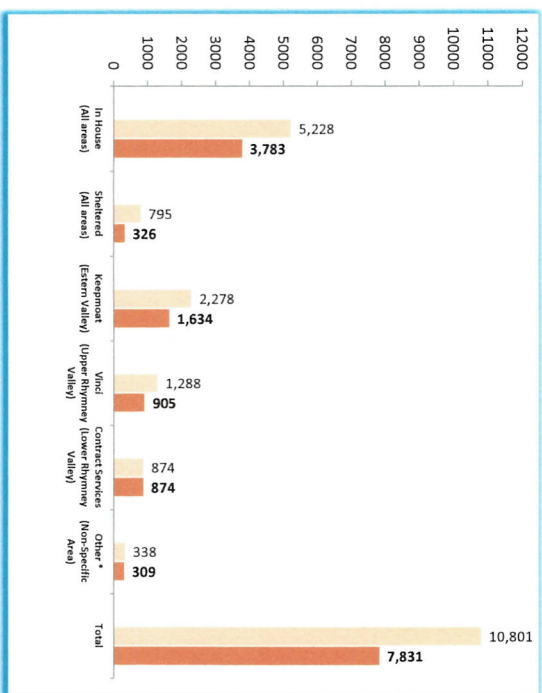
**WHQS - STRATEGIC SCORECARD - LEVELS OF COMPLIANCE**  
(Standards Met - by Number of Properties)

**APPENDIX 1**

Reporting Period: 30/03/2018

\* INTERNAL Works Programme (Stock v Compliance)

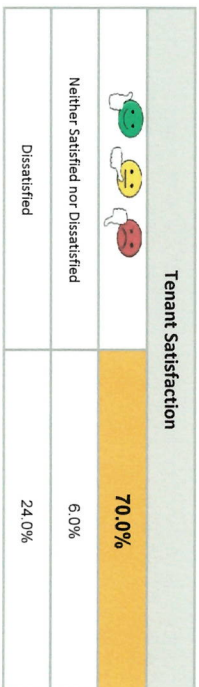
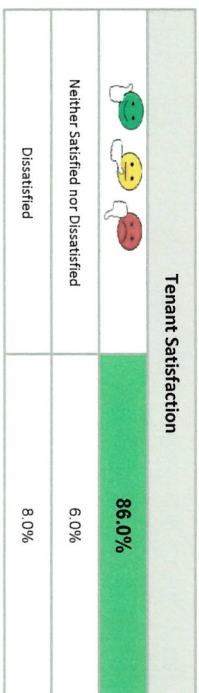
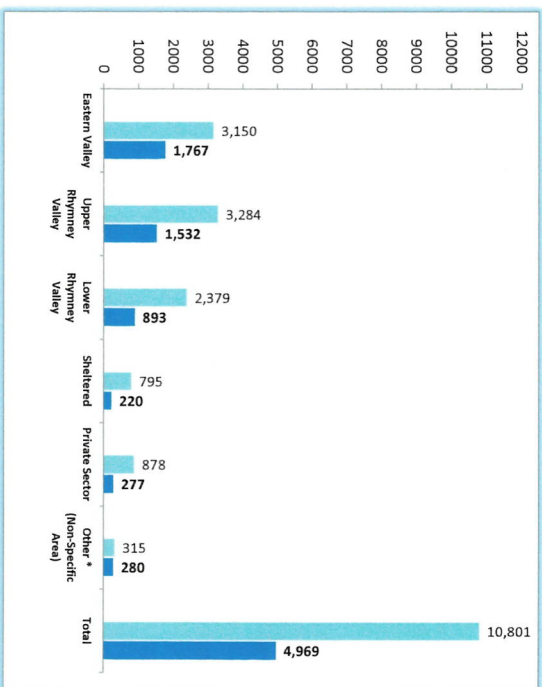
Internal Components (% of stock) **73%**



Reporting Period: 30/03/2018

~ EXTERNAL Works Programme (Stock v Compliance)

External Components (% of stock) **46%**



The charts above, have been based on properties surveyed, improvement works undertaken, post-works inspections and portfolio updates, focusing on the following WHQS key components:

**Internal Works:** There are 4 main elements - Kitchens, Bathrooms, Heating & Electrics.

**External Works:** There are 10 main elements - Boundary walls, Doors, Drainage works, Fences/Railings/Gates, Curtilage works, Paths/Drives, Roofs, Stores/Sheds/Out buildings, Windows & Property skin

Other specialist works/improvements are also undertaken in conjunction with the WHQS Programme, such as Adaptations to meet the specific needs of the tenants

**Notes:**

Work schedules are delivered in a 'phased' (blocks of work) approach across each of the reported and distributed work areas and types of work (Int/Ext). The bar chart 'Targets' are Total Stock Values and the 'Results' are accumulative, as at the time of the Period Reporting Dates. Delivered works are reported by surveyors/contractors upon 'property compliance' (not upon compliance of individual components of work). The results reported above include 'Acceptable Fails'. The charts on this page excludes any works undertaken to leasehold properties.

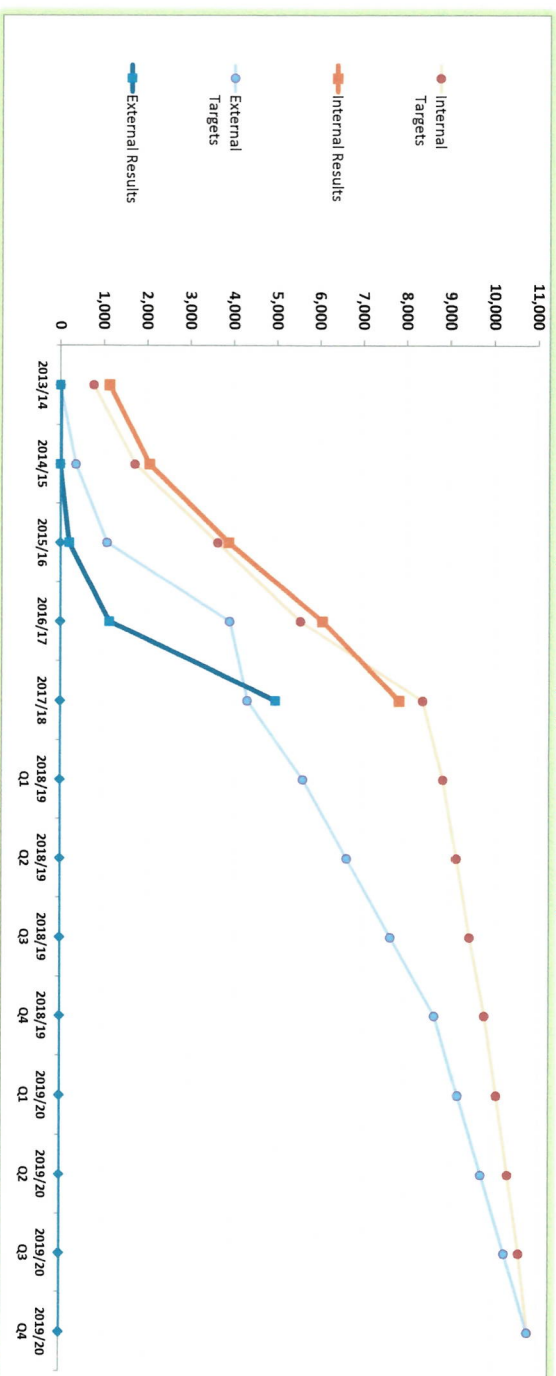
Tenant Satisfaction - shows a '% value' and a 'colour status' based on survey results attained and then compared to the following range:

Red = <= 50% (Needs urgent intervention)  
 Amber = > 50.1% < 79.9% (Needs close monitoring and some intervention)  
 Green = >= 80% (Acceptable)

**Internal Properties**

Acceptable fails on internal elements can be broken down as follows. These are based on surveyed properties as a percentage of total stock.  
 Number of properties with one element as an acceptable fail - 9% - 931 properties  
 Number of properties with two elements as an acceptable fail - 4% - 410 properties  
 Number of properties with three elements as an acceptable fail - 3% - 278 properties

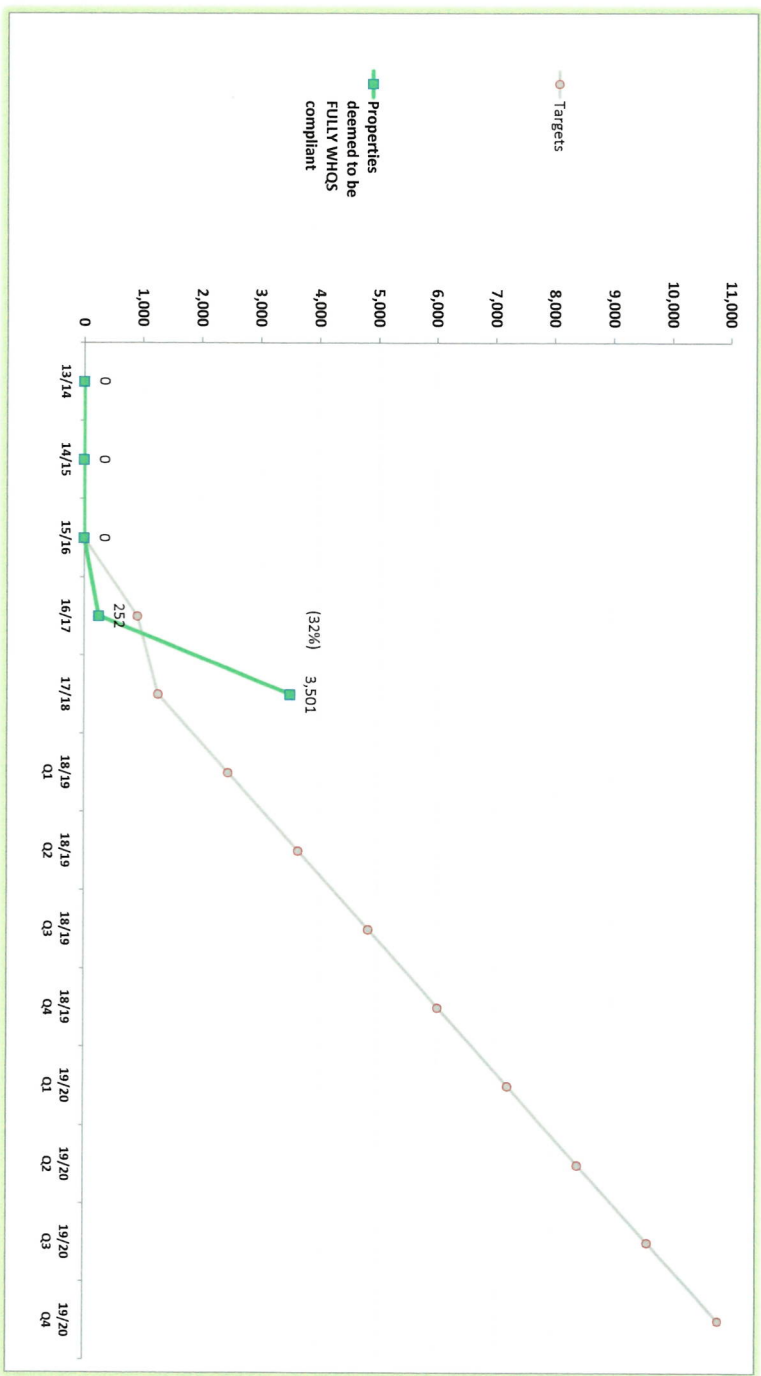
*There are only 3 of the 4 elements (Kitchen, bathroom and heating) that can be included as an acceptable fail. Electrics will never form an acceptable fail due to our statutory duty to comply with health and safety regulations.*



Financial Programme Budget (£,000's)	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19 Projected	19/20 Projected	2020 Projected
Actual Spend	19,057	33,707	49,051	77,683	109,061	152,165	207,968	254,938	
Balance	43	14,613	28,939	29,977	27,819	13,935	(12,648)	(34,938)	

The above finance table details accumulative budget allocations and spend profiles to date, which are subject to annual review and re-profiling.

**WHQS - Properties fully compliant (total stock)**





## POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2ND OCTOBER 2018

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR DELIVERY OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING**

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with an update on performance, in relation to the delivery of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). The report also highlights the challenges that have affected the delivery of these adaptations during 2017/18.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides members with an overview of performance in relation to the delivery of mandatory DFGs during 2017/18.
- 2.2 The report also sets out details of changes that have been implemented in 2017/18 to deliver service improvements and identifies outstanding challenges and service priorities that will continue to affect the delivery of disabled facilities grants in the future.
- 2.3 The performance of the Private Sector Housing Adaptations Team in delivery of DFGs during 2017/18 has shown continuous improvement, although there are some aspects of the service which would benefit from further improvement. The main challenge moving forward relates to the continued ability to provide a high quality service that meets the needs and aspirations of our service users, while satisfying medium term financial plan priorities. This Team is well placed to respond to the challenge.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The provision of DFGs to disabled persons living in private sector properties is a mandatory function within the provisions of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. In addition the provision of DFGs supports:
- **Caerphilly County Borough Council, Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy, Key Priority 4** - ‘Providing Adaptations for Disabled Persons’. This policy is the strategic document upon which the Authority’s private sector housing activities are based.
  - **The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014**– provides the legal framework for improving the well being of people who need care and support, including carers.
  - **Improving Lives and Communities; Homes in Wales** (WG 2010) which sets out the national context on improving homes and communities.
  - **ENABLE - Support for Independent Living** (WG 2017).

- **The Corporate Plan 2018-2023 Well-being Objective 3** addresses the supply, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the County Borough and the provision of advice, assistance or support to help improve people's health and well-being.
- **The Strategy for Older People in Wales 2013-2023** ensures that older people in Wales have the resources they need to deal with the challenges and opportunities they face for the future.
- **Caerphilly Well-Being Plan (2018-2023): Positive Places - Enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable.**

3.2 The delivery of DFGs contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales.

#### 4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Private Sector Housing Adaptations Team currently consists of 1 Team Leader, 4 Technical Officers, 1 Clerk of Works, 1 Liaison Officer and 1.6 FTE Adaptation Assistants. In addition to these permanent staff members, the team is currently supported by a fixed term agency officer until March 2019. In 2017/18 they delivered 4 streams of adaptations in partnership with Social Services and Care & Repair, namely:

- 1200 Minor Works of Adaptations valued at £234,887
- 192 mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants, valued at £1,034,370
- 12 discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants, valued at £51,268
- 163 public sector adaptations valued at £689,799
- Management of 328 ENABLE funded adaptations valued at £230,000.

4.2 ENABLE funding was introduced by Welsh Government in 2016/17 and has resulted in significant additional capital spend utilising existing staff resources

4.3 The provision of DFGs is mandatory and in this respect the Authority will continue to ensure the availability of such grants is given the highest priority. Disabled Facilities Grants are means tested grants (with the exception of disabled children under the age of 18 years) which can help towards the cost of adapting a person's home to enable them to continue to live there as independently as possible. The grant is awarded when the Council considers that adaptations are necessary to meet the particular needs of the disabled person or their carer, as determined by an Occupational Therapist and that it is reasonable and practical to do so. Typical works include the provision of suitable bathing facilities such as level access showers and improving access around the home via widening of doors or installing stair lifts. The maximum grant payable is £36,000 inclusive of fees.

#### PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

4.4 The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facility Grant, from first enquiry to completion of works, is a performance indicator. It includes the time taken by Social Services to consider an applicant's needs and provide the Adaptations Team with a recommendation for adaptations, in addition to the time taken by the Adaptations Team to process the DFG application. Social Services prioritise assessments to ensure resources are targeted to those in the greatest need and at greatest risk. In 17/18 the average time taken by



Social Services from first contact to the Adaptations team receiving a Recommendation was 45 days. It should be noted that those in greatest need are prioritised accordingly by the Occupational Therapy (OT) service and will usually be assessed within 7 days from first contact however any future increase in waiting times for the OT service could have a negative impact on this figure. The associated DFG applications are then prioritised by the Adaptations Team.

- 4.5 In 2016/17 the average number of calendar days taken by this Authority to deliver a DFG was 282 with 149 completions. In 2017/18 the figure increased to 292 days. However in 2017/18 192 DFGs were completed with no additional staff resource. This equated to an increase in capital expenditure of £124,818. Across Wales it took an average of 213 calendar days to deliver 3,641 DFGs. 12 Local Authorities failed to meet this average number of calendar days.
- 4.6 In 2016/17 the Local Government Data Unit (LGDU) reported Caerphilly County Borough Council ranked 17<sup>th</sup> out of the 22 Local Authorities in relation to the time taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant. In 2017/18 the Council is ranked 21<sup>st</sup>. However it should be noted that CCBC delivered the 6<sup>th</sup> highest number of DFGs with limited staff resources (see paragraph 4.12). Due to concerns regarding how the performance indicator data is gathered nationally resulting in an inaccurate comparison of true delivery times between different Local Authorities, Welsh Government has withdrawn the performance indicator as a mandatory national performance indicator. Instead the performance indicator is a Public Accountability Measure (PAM).
- 4.7 The Wales Audit Office has recently undertaken a review of Housing Adaptations in Wales (February 2018). Their report makes 9 recommendations for improvement. Recommendation 9 relates to having the right performance indicators and regularly reporting against them to enable public bodies to manage operational performance and identify areas for improvement. The report states that the current range of performance indicator data is extremely limited and not sufficient to enable a full evaluation of performance. The report calls for Welsh Government and delivery organisations to set appropriate measures to judge both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the different systems for delivering adaptations and the impact on wellbeing and independence of those who receive adaptations.
- 4.8 Welsh Government is currently in the process of developing a new suite of performance indicators linked to the ENABLE system. These will consider delivery of all types of adaptations, not just DFGs. Information will also be provided as to how the data must be collated to ensure a uniform approach across Wales.
- 4.9 When reviewing performance in 2017/18, the picture is one of improvement. Following the introduction of improvements detailed in 4.16 below the average number of days to deliver a DFG has decreased each quarter, meeting the target in quarter 3 and exceeding the target in quarter 4. This improvement has continued into quarter 1 of 2018/19 (266 days). It is hoped that following consideration of the matters stated in 4.17 over 2018/19 continued improvements will be achieved.

2017/18 Quarter1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
315 days	296 days	280 days	268 days

- 4.10 Extensive adaptations to private sector properties are very difficult to achieve in short timescales as they include engaging the services of an architect to determine the design of the works and require planning permission. During 2017/18 the Team dealt with 17 large scale disabled facilities grants, with 15 of these grants costing between £10,000 and £20,000 as well as 2 grants for the maximum £36,000.

- 4.11 A national customer satisfaction questionnaire (attached appendix 1) is sent out to the disabled person following the delivery of every adaptation. The results of these surveys are provided to Welsh Government on a quarterly basis. The Council reports 3 key elements of customer satisfaction as a local performance indicator via Fynnon, the results of which are reported below for 2017/18 and demonstrate that grant recipients are satisfied with the overall service they received despite the extended period that may have been required to provide the adaptations.

Key Performance Indicators	2017/18 Target	2017/18 Actual
Percentage of persons receiving adaptations who stated they were satisfied with the length of time it took to provide the adaptation	92%	95%
Percentage of persons receiving adaptations who stated they were satisfied with the appointed contractor (e.g. quality of work, tidiness, timekeeping)	96%	97%
Percentage of persons receiving adaptations who stated they were satisfied with the service received overall	96%	98%

- 4.12 Over the past 3 years there have been significant staffing issues within the Private Sector Housing Service with 2 technical officers not replaced whilst on long term sickness absence prior to ending their employment. There were subsequently significant difficulties recruiting suitable replacements and the newly appointed officers required extensive training and support to be able to undertake their roles effectively. Additional resources were not, therefore, available to support the role of the Adaptations Team. The last all Wales benchmarking exercise undertaken in 2013/14 noted that Caerphilly County Borough has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest ratio of Disabled Facilities Grants to full time equivalent staff in Wales at a ratio of 44 to 1 even taking into account the enhanced service offered through the in house Agency that is not mirrored elsewhere. The average is 25 to 1. Unlike in many other local authorities these staff also process works of adaptation in public sector properties and manage Minor Works of Adaptation on behalf of Social Services.
- 4.13 The Authority recognises the significant contribution the in house Agency makes in supporting grant applicants, many of whom may be disadvantaged and unfamiliar with the demands of grant administration, works supervision and often the substantial financial management involved. The need to secure the installation of a quality adaptation is paramount. The comprehensive Agency Service provided offers professional, technical and administrative services to clients, so as to remove the responsibility and worry of arranging and supervising the works themselves. Whilst intensive support and intervention is required this service ensures that all disabled applicants can benefit from the financial assistance to which they are entitled.
- 4.14 The management and operational structure of the Private Sector Housing Service has been subject to ongoing review which has impacted on elements of service provision, as senior Technical Officers now undertake additional operational management responsibilities, thereby impacting on their capacity for operational case workload.



- 4.15 In an effort to improve service delivery one such officer has also been given responsibility for the processing of all complex adaptations such as requiring extensions or other works that need planning permission, with the aim of freeing up other officers time for processing more straight forward adaptation requests. This officer has also been working to develop a new procurement framework for delivery of both minor works (cross tenure) and major works of adaptations in council housing, together with production of a framework for service and maintenance of lifting equipment, including stair lifts, vertical lifts and hoists. Both frameworks are key to maintaining and improving future service delivery for tenants and clients.
- 4.16 During 2017/18 the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants has been reviewed from a procedural point of view within Private Sector Housing and the following items addressed to improve delivery times for adaptations.
- The Liaison officer arranges to visit the disabled applicant or their representative within 5 working days of receiving the 'Recommendation for Works of Adaptation' from Social Services.
  - 'Test of Financial Resources' assessments relating to Disabled Facilities Grants are prioritised over all other types of grant assistance.
  - A formal review of officer workloads has been undertaken with a review of district areas and introduction of target times.
  - Removal of postal tendering and implementation on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2018 of an e-tendering system on a pilot basis, in relation to stair lifts and hoists, using a new procurement system called 'Quick Quotes'.
  - Update of the Local Authority schedule of rates, to offer a fair price for the undertaking of the works, which should result in less tenders being withdrawn by successful contractors and consequently the need for a further tendering exercise to be required.
  - Implementation of an electronic system for the signing of contracts.
  - Implementation of a monitoring system relating to contractor start dates and a follow up process if issues arise.
  - The appointment of an additional Technical Officer on a fixed term contract to assist with the processing of public sector adaptations, which will free up officer time to address the outstanding backlog of Disabled Facilities Grants, has been extremely difficult, with repeated efforts to recruit. An Agency Officer was eventually recruited on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018, but the impact of the appointment cannot yet be fully assessed, as the performance indicator relates to completed DFGs within the financial year. However it is noted that the outstanding backlog of DFGs awaiting initial processing by a technical officer has been substantially reduced since this appointment.

#### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION DURING 2018/19**

- 4.17 Client or performance focused service:
- Overcoming difficulties experienced in the delivery of multiple adaptations within one DFG. Due to the specialist nature of certain works of adaptation, Recommendations from Social Services which require multiple adaptations often necessitate multiple contracts and specialist contractors. These may involve significantly different lead in times e.g. a straight stair lift and a large external ramp. Also, in many instances it is not practical to have two contracts running concurrently on site with sometimes complex programming required for the benefit of the disabled client. In addition, due to the evolving needs of vulnerable clients, recommendations are regularly received from Social Services for additional adaptations for clients whose initial Recommendations for adaptations are already being processed through the DFG route.

Many Local Authorities treat each subsequent Recommendation as a separate DFG, thereby minimising the time taken to complete each one (reflecting positively in the PI) however, this requires that applicants have to repeat the full application process each time a Recommendation is received. Officers in this Authority take an alternative approach, routinely adding these additional works to the pre-existing DFG application, thereby providing an enhanced service to the applicant but often substantially adding to the total delivery time for the Disabled Facilities Grant. Amending this process would improve performance figures but it is not the best process from the point of view of the disabled person and is therefore not supported by officers. The time period currently required to be reported for the PI relates only to the date when all of the recommended works are completed in full rather than each individual adaptation being reported separately.

- The Authority offers discretionary DFGs not routinely available elsewhere that enhance service provision to clients by providing works in a timely manner outside the scope of the mandatory DFG, but these are not included within the performance data. Due to the specialist nature of this work these grants are processed by those officers who process mandatory DFGs.
- The operation of an in house Agency service ensures that the Authority is able to provide a comprehensive service to support all applicants throughout the DFG process. It is evident that this intensive support helps to prevent vulnerable clients from dropping out of the DFG system, thereby missing out on the benefits that an adaptation would provide, and increasing dependence on social care. Such intensive support lengthens the average time taken for clients to receive a DFG, thereby impacting on overall performance but results in a positive outcome that may not otherwise have been achieved, particularly in relation to vulnerable clients and those without other means of support. It is considered that this element of the service has a significant positive impact on the levels of customer satisfaction obtained.
- The production and implementation of a procurement framework to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants is considered a potential opportunity to reduce lead in times for commencement of works on site. Whilst such an approach has been adopted in some local authorities there is some concern that such an arrangement may be contrary to tender requirements specified in relevant grant legislation so further investigation is required.
- Following the completion of the pilot period for 'Quick Quotes' detailed above in 4.16 consideration will be given to rolling out the use of the tendering system for other forms of adaptations.
- There have been difficulties maintaining a sufficient number of contractors able to undertake works of adaptation, in a timely manner. As the Authority provides an Agency Service it is required to ensure that all contractors that it utilises are approved and the Agency operates a comprehensive list of approved contractors. At present there are significant difficulties in obtaining timely start dates from successful contractors, due to competing pressures, linked in part to their workloads external to Private Sector Housing, which may include WHQS, Housing Repair Operations as well as private contracts. Additional contractors are being actively sought to apply for inclusion on the approved list, which has already resulted in 6 additional approved contractors being added to the list since April 2018.
- Implementation of an IT system for monitoring of builders' performance.

## 5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that:

**Long Term** – Improving the accessibility of the housing stock to meet long term needs of current and future residents. The provision of adaptations to meet the needs of residents and their carers enables them to remain safe in their own homes, and supports independence.

**Prevention** – Reduces the likelihood of enforced moves to alternative accommodation, hospital admissions, delayed transfers of care and enforced admission to residential care.

**Integration** – Successful adaptations can have a significant positive impact on the goals and objectives of Health and Social Care Services.

**Collaboration** – There is extensive collaboration with Health and Social Care Services in determining whether adaptations are necessary and appropriate, reasonable and practicable in order to ensure that a positive outcome is achieved.

**Involvement** – The views of the disabled applicant and, where appropriate, their carers are taken into consideration when options are being considered and decisions taken in respect of adaptations.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's full Equality Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no financial implications to the report.

## **8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no personnel implications to the report.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

9.1 The report reflects the views of the consultees.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 Members consider if the current level of performance is acceptable, whilst considering the recent improvements made and resources available.

10.2 Members offer views and suggestions as to how current performance can be improved, if deemed appropriate.

## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 To allow members the opportunity to review, question and comment upon the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants within Caerphilly County Borough.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

12.1 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.  
Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.

Author: Claire Davies, Interim Private Sector Housing Manager.  
(Tel: 01443      Email: [Daviec13@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:Daviec13@caerphilly.gov.uk) )

Consultees: Councillor Dave Poole, Leader of the Council  
Councillor Lisa Phipps, Cabinet Member for Homes and Places  
Christina Harrhy, Interim Chief Executive  
David Street, Corporate Director of Social Services and Housing  
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer  
Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer  
Fiona Wilkins, Public Sector Housing Manager  
Mark Jennings, Housing Strategy Officer  
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities and Welsh Language  
Carl Spearman, Principal Housing Officer  
Sean O'Brien, Team Manager, Occupational Therapy

Appendices:

Appendix 1    National customer satisfaction questionnaire (English and Welsh versions)

## Housing Adaptations

### Customer Survey and data collection form

Name and Address (optional)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. How did you first find out about the Housing Adaptation service?

*Please choose one option only*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational therapist  | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member/friend             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social worker           | <input type="checkbox"/> Local authority publicity        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/Discharge Team | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Association/landlord     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> G.P./doctor             | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Councillor                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary agency        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify :<br>_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Care & Repair           |   |

#### 2. How did you then first contact the service?

*Please choose one option only:*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Referred by social worker /<br>occupational therapist / housing officer | <input type="checkbox"/> Online form                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In person   | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/Discharge Team   | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing association/landlord    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:<br>_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Care & Repair   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email   |  |

**3. How easy or difficult was it to make this initial contact with us?**

*Please choose one option only*

- Very easy       Fairly easy       Fairly difficult       Very difficult       Not applicable

**Please tell us more about your response:**

---

---

---

---

---

**4. We would like to find out how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with different aspects of the Housing Adaptation service. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with...**

*Please tick one option in each row*

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable
A)...the support provided by officers (e.g. verbal advice, helpfulness, returning phone calls etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B)...the length of time it took to provide your adaptation(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C). ...the amount your views were taken into account during the process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D)...the appointed contractor (e.g. their quality of work, tidiness, timekeeping etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E) How would you rate the service received overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please tell us any additional information to help us understand your responses, and if you weren't very satisfied, please tell us why.**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---

**5. We would like to understand what impact the Housing Adaptation service has had on your life. Please state whether you agree or disagree with all the following statements as a result of the adaptation(s)...**

*Please tick **all** that apply, choosing one option in each row*

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
A) My quality of life has improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B) I was able to return home from hospital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C) I feel safer at home, including safer from risk of falling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D) I am able to do things I couldn't before, and feel more confident and independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E) It is easier for my family/Carer to help with my daily needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F) I no longer need to consider moving home or going into a care home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please tell us any additional information that can help us understand your responses:**





## Addasu Tai

### Ffurflen Holi Cwsmeriaid a chasglu data

Enw a Chyfeiriad (opsiynol)

Enw \_\_\_\_\_

Cyfeiriad \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Sut daethoch chi i wybod am y Gwasanaeth Addasu Tai?

*Dewiswch un opsiwn*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Therapydd galwedigaethol   | <input type="checkbox"/> Aelod o'r teulu / ffrind  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gweithiwr cymdeithasol     | <input type="checkbox"/> Awdurdod Lleol            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tîm yr Ysbyty/Tîm Rhyddhau | <input type="checkbox"/> Cymdeithas Dai / landlord |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meddyg Teulu/ Meddyg       | <input type="checkbox"/> Cynghorydd lleol          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mudiad gwirfoddol          | <input type="checkbox"/> Arall, manylwch :         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gofal a Thrwsio            | _____  |

#### 2. Sut gwnaethoch chi wedyn gysylltu â'r gwasanaeth?

*Dewiswch un opsiwn:*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atgyfeiriad gan weithiwr cymdeithasol / therapydd galwedigaethol / swyddog tai | <input type="checkbox"/> Ffurflen ar-lein          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yn bersonol  | <input type="checkbox"/> Llythyr                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tîm yr Ysbyty / Tîm Rhyddhau   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cymdeithas Dai / Landlord |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ffôn   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arall, manylwch:          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gofal a Thrwsio  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-bost   | _____  |

**3. Pa mor hawdd neu anodd oedd hi ichi gysylltu â ni y tro cyntaf hwnnw?**

*Dewiswch un opsiwn*

- Hawdd iawn     Eithaf hawdd     Eithaf anodd     Anodd iawn     Ddim yn gymwys

**Dywedwch fwy wrthym ni am eich ateb:**

---

---

---

---

---

**4. Hoffem wybod pa mor fodlon neu anfodlon oeddech chi â gwahanol agweddau ar y Gwasanaeth Addasu Tai. Pa mor fodlon neu anfodlon oeddech chi â:**

*Ticiwch un opsiwn ym mhob rhes*

	Bodlon iawn	Bodlon	Anfodlon	Anfodlon iawn	Ddim yn gymwys
A)...yr help gan swyddogion (e.e. cyngor llafar, parodrwydd i helpu, eich ffonio yn ôl.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B)...yr amser a gymerwyd i wneud y gwaith addasu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C)...faint o sylw a roddwyd i'ch barn yn ystod y broses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D)...y contractwr a gafodd ei benodi (e.e. ansawdd y gwaith, twtrwydd, cadw at amserau)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E) Beth yw'ch barn am y gwasanaeth cyfan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Rhowch ragor o wybodaeth allai'n helpu ni i ddeall eich atebion, ac os nad oeddech yn fodlon iawn, esboniwch pam.**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

**5. Hoffem ddeall yr effaith y mae'r gwasanaeth Addasu Tai wedi'i chael ar eich bywyd. Dywedwch a ydych yn cytuno neu'n anghytuno â'r datganiadau canlynol am ganlyniad y gwaith addasu ...**

*Ticiwch bob un sy'n gymwys, gan ddewis un o bob rhes*

	Cytuno'n gryf	Tueddu i gytuno	Tueddu i anghytuno	Anghytuno yn gryf	Ddim yn gymwys
A) Mae ansawdd fy mywyd wedi gwella	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B) Cefais ddod adre o'r ysbyty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C) Rwy'n teimlo'n fwy sâff yn fy nghartref, gan gynnwys yn sâff rhag cwmpo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D) Rwy'n gallu gwneud pethau nad oeddwn yn gallu'u gwneud o'r blaen, ac yn teimlo'n fwy hyderus ac annibynnol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E) Mae'n haws i 'nheulu/gofalwr fy helpu â fy anghenion pob dydd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F) Does dim angen imi feddwl mwyach am symud tŷ neu symud i gartref gofal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Rhowch ragor o wybodaeth allai'n helpu i ddeall eich atebion:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Rhowch unrhyw sylwadau ychwanegol nad ydych eisoes wedi'u rhoi ac a allai'n helpu i wella'r gwasanaeth Addasu Tai:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ticiwch y blwch hwn os hoffech inni gysylltu â chi i drafod eich gwaith addasu.