

# Public Document Pack



The following reports are Information Items for the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

- 1 Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring - Period 7.
- 2 Economy and Environment 2023/2024 Budget Monitoring Report (Period 7).
- 3 Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023.



## **HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INFORMATION ITEM - 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024**

**SUBJECT: HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING – PERIOD 7**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

- 1.1 To inform Members of the projected position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the 2023/24 financial year, based on the income and expenditure movements of the first 7 months of the year. The HRA capital programme which is predominantly funded by the HRA is also included within this report.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Members will be aware of the distinction between the HRA, which is funded by rental income received from council tenants, and General Fund Housing activities, which fall under the General Fund and are funded via Council Tax and the Revenue Support Grant (RSG). Although there is a clear separation of these funds, the majority of council tenants rent is funded from housing benefits which are derived from the taxpayers' purse and therefore value for money must always be sought.
- 2.2 The HRA budget for 2023/24 is £55.500m with its main components consisting of £21.600m of salaries, £8.1m of capital financing charges, £4.300m of building maintenance & response repairs (net of salaries), £2.800m of internal service recharges, and £13.300m of revenue contributions to fund the PAMS (Post Asset Management Strategy) programme. There is also a budget of £8.900m for the PAMS programme which is recharged fully to the Capital Programme and predominantly covers the maintenance of the WHQS programme, voids, and remodelling works. The spend on the HRA is self-financed mainly by the rental income we collect from our Council Tenants, of which about 77% is funded by Housing Benefits. The main projected variances on the HRA are explained below.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To ensure that Members are informed of the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account.

### **5. THE REPORT**

## 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The HRA has a projected underspend of £0.337m for the end of 2023/24 financial year, which represents about 0.6% of the total HRA budget. This is based on the income and expenditure patterns for the first 7 months of the year together with knowledge of the service from the respective managers. The surplus is split between general revenue underspends and capital related underspends. The main variances are summarised below, and full financial details are provided in Appendix 1.

## 5.2 Salaries and Mileage (£0.932m under spend)

5.2.1 Salaries and associated costs within the HRA are currently expected to underspend by some £0.932m which represents about 4.36% of the salary budget. There are offsetting over and under spends in this area given the volume of staff which includes sickness cover, requests for reduced hours and timing for filling vacant posts. An estimated pay award has been built into the budget and projected for the year, but the actual pay award was announced early November so will be reflected in the period 9 budget monitoring report.

## 5.3 Non-Pay Related (£0.450m under spend)

5.3.1 This includes an underspend of £0.383m associated with office related costs.

5.3.2 £0.067m underspend is attributable to budgets that are service specific such as Tenant Participation, Older Persons Housing utilities and decoration allowances. Some costs however have increased such as Council Tax charges and security on void properties which are currently being offset.

## 5.4 Building Maintenance and Response Repairs (£0.763m overspend)

5.4.1 This area is currently projecting an overspend of some £0.763m. There is a small underspend of £0.043m projected against revenue projects budget which includes Sheltered Projects and Contingency. Expenditure on the Housing Response Operations (HRO) budget is anticipating a £0.567m overspend overall which includes any salaries and non-pay savings identified in 5.2 & 5.3 above. There is currently an increased spend on sub-contractors due to increased material costs as a result of continued high inflation and contracts have had to be uplifted accordingly. Statutory works are projecting an overspend of £0.038m, with additional costs for Landlord Lighting and Fire Safety Works.

5.4.2 A budget of £8.900m has been allocated for the In-House team who support the capital programme with a further £2.000m allocation towards non-priority large scale repairs. The work involved includes the maintenance of the WHQS programme through the PAMS programme, sheltered remodelling and void works. There is a nil cost to the HRA because the cost is fully recharged to the capital programme. However, there is a predicted underspend of £1.800m due to the re-distribution of workforce to complete void properties and reduce HRO repairs backlog.

## 5.5 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (£0.150m overspend)

5.5.1 The increase on the CFR charge is attributed to an increase in interest rates on our current debt.

5.5.2 Borrowing levels forecasted in the 2023/24 Business Plan have not changed at this stage, and no borrowing is anticipated for this financial year.

5.5.3 The borrowing cap of £100m was agreed by Full Council on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, to

accommodate anticipated borrowing in 2024/25 and 2025/26 to fund commitments for increasing housing supply. However, an updated Business Plan that is due to be submitted to Welsh Government in March 2024, which will reflect the agreed 2024/25 rent increase and a reprofiled new build programme could impact on the borrowing requirement and will be updated within the Business Plan report that is presented to members annually.

## **5.6 Income (£0.132m under recovery)**

5.6.1 Variations represent less than 0.24% of the total income budget.

## **5.7 Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO)**

5.7.1 The HRA allows for some £13.300m of revenue contributions towards the HRA Capital programme.

5.7.2 The HRA RCCO allocation will fund the capital spend this year in addition to the £7.300m Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) from Welsh Government. The MRA allowance will need to be utilised first as this funding does not carry over into financial years. Some expenditure will also be eligible to be claimed under various WG grants such as the Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP), Social Housing Grant (SHG) and the Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP).

5.7.3 Total capital spend to period 7 is some £11.400m which is a combination of PAMS including voids and the New Build Programme. Projected spend for the year is £31.00m. There has been some reprofiling of the New Build programme which is inherent of a development programme of this size, meaning spend is relatively low in this area and some contracts are now likely to progress into next financial year. However, costs have increased on existing PAMS contracts, as well as an increased specification of works on void properties, so it is estimated that the RCCO will be fully utilised this year.

## **5.8 HRA Working Balances**

5.8.1 Working balances at the start of 2023/24 financial year were £22.500m. The majority of this is derived from underspends in previous years and is anticipated to be used to contribute towards the capital programme this year. Any funding not utilised will be carried forward into future years to reduce borrowing.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 The projected outturn position is based on actual income and expenditure details for the first seven months in the 2023/24 financial year.

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 This report is for information only, so an IIA is not required.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 As detailed throughout the report.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations

Author: Lesley Allen, Finance Manager (Housing)  
Email: allenl@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees:

Cllr Andrew Whitcombe	- Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Shane Williams	- Vice Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Cttee
Cllr Shayne Cook	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Dave Street	- Deputy Chief Executive
Nick Taylor-Williams	- Head of Housing
Stephen R Harris	- Head of financial Services and S151 Officer
Fiona Wilkins	- Housing Services Manager
Jane Roberts-Waite	- Head of Strategy and Development
Catherine Edwards	- Head of Asset Maintenance and Repairs
Michael Williams	- Planned Asset Maintenance Manager
Jason Fellows	- HRO Manager
Kerry Denman	- Housing Solutions Manager
Rhian Williams	- Group Accountant (Treasury and Capital)
Leanne Sykes	- Deputy Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 HRA Financial Plan 2023/24 period 7

## Appendix 1

Housing	Estimate 2023/24	Projected Outturn 2023/24	Variance 2023/24
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	£	£	£
<b><u>SUMMARY</u></b>			
GENERAL MANAGEMENT	1,810,093	1,733,059	77,034
CAPITAL FINANCING	8,077,566	8,227,706	(150,140)
CENTRAL RECHARGES	2,822,441	2,833,777	(11,336)
STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE	2,995,632	2,513,389	482,243
PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING	7,834,404	7,295,890	538,514
SUPPORTED HOUSING	-	-	-
BUILDING MAINTENANCE SERVICES	31,998,293	32,465,771	(467,477)
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>55,538,429</b>	<b>55,069,592</b>	<b>468,838</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>(55,538,429)</b>	<b>(55,406,109)</b>	<b>(132,320)</b>
<b>(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT CONTRIBUTION (TO)/FROM WORKING BALANCES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(336,517)</b>	<b>336,517</b>
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	£	£	£
<b><u>GENERAL MANAGEMENT</u></b>	<b>1,810,093</b>	<b>1,733,059</b>	<b>77,034</b>
<b><u>CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS</u></b>			
Interest Charge	5,418,353	5,568,493	(150,140)
Principal	2,624,213	2,624,213	-
Debt Management	35,000	35,000	-
Rescheduling Discount	-	-	-
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>8,077,566</b>	<b>8,227,706</b>	<b>(150,140)</b>
<b><u>CENTRAL RECHARGES</u></b>			
Central Recharges	2,302,038	2,309,119	(7,081)
Grounds Maintenance recharge to HRA	520,403	524,658	(4,255)
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>2,822,441</b>	<b>2,833,777</b>	<b>(11,336)</b>

<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE</u></b>			
Housing Strategy and Development	2,995,632	2,513,389	482,243
Transforming Lives and Communities	-	-	-
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>2,995,632</b>	<b>2,513,389</b>	<b>482,243</b>
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>PUBLIC SECTOR HOUSING</u></b>			
Landlord General	614,740	562,827	51,913
Sheltered Accommodation	2,064,352	1,805,391	258,961
Floating Support	34,673	35,652	(979)
Holly Road Community Support	5,063	3,425	1,638
Eastern Valley Area Housing Office	913,478	1,048,805	(135,327)
Upper Rhymney Area Housing Office	1,061,681	1,015,436	46,245
Lower Rhymney Valley Area Housing Office	-	-	-
Lansbury Park Neighbourhood Housing Office	433,854	389,220	44,634
Graig Y Rhacca Neighbourhood Housing Office	334,467	333,145	1,321
Housing Allocations Contribution	153,807	154,022	(215)
Tenants & Communities Involvement	396,698	380,826	15,872
Leaseholders Management	45,662	30,903	14,759
Tenancy Enforcement	375,743	364,561	11,181
Rents	1,382,021	1,149,311	232,710
Community Wardens	(51,834)	(54,406)	2,572
Renting Homes Act	70,000	76,772	(6,772)
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>7,834,404</b>	<b>7,295,890</b>	<b>538,514</b>

<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>RESPONSE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE</u></b>			
<b>Employee Expenses net of recharges</b>	<b>766,098</b>	<b>689,377</b>	<b>76,721</b>
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance on Housing Stock</b>			
Responsive Repairs	13,551,742	14,118,305	(566,563)
Revenue Contribution to Capital – WHQS Programme	13,335,447	13,335,447	-
Group/Planned Repairs (priorities 5 & 8)	-	-	-
Void Repairs (priority 6)	-	-	-
Depot Recharges	-	-	-
Revenue Projects	1,114,000	1,071,335	42,665
Planned Cyclical	3,062,838	3,099,979	(37,141)
Planned Programme	-	-	-
	<b>31,064,027</b>	<b>31,625,067</b>	<b>(561,039)</b>
<b>Transport Related</b>	<b>18,685</b>	<b>16,814</b>	<b>1,871</b>
<b>Supplies and Services</b>	<b>149,483</b>	<b>134,513</b>	<b>14,970</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>31,998,293</b>	<b>32,465,771</b>	<b>(467,477)</b>
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>



<b><u>INCOME</u></b>			
<b><u>Rents – Dwelling</u></b>			
Gross Rent – Dwellings	(51,160,935)	(51,313,288)	152,353
Gross Rent – Sheltered	(4,132,185)	(3,888,336)	(243,849)
Gross Rent – Hostel	-	-	-
Voids – General Needs Dwelling/Sheltered	1,496,433	1,531,340	(34,907)
Additional Income O/Side Rent Debit (WHQS)	-	-	-
Voids – Hostel	-	-	-
<b>Net Rent</b>	<b>(53,796,687)</b>	<b>(53,670,284)</b>	<b>(126,403)</b>
<b><u>Rents – Other</u></b>			
Garages	(376,859)	(372,857)	(4,002)
Garage Voids	107,050	107,655	(605)
Shop Rental	(45,204)	(45,204)	-
	<b>(315,013)</b>	<b>(310,406)</b>	<b>(4,607)</b>
<b><u>Service Charges</u></b>			
Sheltered – Service Charges	(1,205,711)	(1,229,193)	23,482
Sheltered – Heating & Lighting	(51,530)	(32,761)	(18,769)
Sheltered & Dispersed – Alarms	-	-	-
Catering Recharge – Sheltered Accommodation	-	-	-
Voids Schedule Water	-	-	-
Non Scheduled Water Rates	(26,488)	(20,465)	(6,023)
Welsh Water Commission	-	-	-
Leaseholder – Service Charges	-	-	-
	<b>(1,283,729)</b>	<b>(1,282,419)</b>	<b>(1,310)</b>
<b><u>Government Subsidies</u></b>			
Housing Subsidy	-	-	-
	-	-	-
<b><u>Interest Receivable</u></b>			
Mortgage Interest	-	-	-
Investment Income	(140,000)	(140,000)	-
	<b>(140,000)</b>	<b>(140,000)</b>	-
<b><u>Miscellaneous</u></b>			
Miscellaneous	-	-	-
Private Alarms	-	-	-
Ground Rent	(3,000)	(3,000)	-
	<b>(3,000)</b>	<b>(3,000)</b>	-
<b>INCOME TO HRA SUMMARY</b>	<b>(55,38,429)</b>	<b>(55,406,109)</b>	<b>(132,320)</b>



## HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - INFORMATION ITEM - 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024

**SUBJECT: ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT 2023/2024 BUDGET MONITORING  
REPORT (PERIOD 7)**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT**

---

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

- 1.1 To inform members of projected revenue expenditure for the Economy and Environment Directorate for the 2023/2024 financial year. Service Divisions include Regeneration and Planning Division, Infrastructure Services Division, Public Protection Division and Community and Leisure Services Division.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report summarises the most recent budget monitoring projections for 2023/2024 based on the latest available financial information.
- 2.2 The attached appendices outline more detailed budget monitoring figures for each of the Council Fund Services outlined in paragraph 1.1 above that fall within the remit of this Scrutiny.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee Members are requested to note the contents of this report and the detailed budget monitoring pages that follow in respect of the Infrastructure Services Division, Public Protection Division and Community and Leisure Services Division which all fall within the remit of this Scrutiny.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council Budget is based on the achievement of both expenditure and income targets. To ensure that these are met, and the Council's financial integrity is maintained Directors are required to review income and expenditure trends.

### **5. THE REPORT**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

- 5.1.1 The report outlines the revenue budget position for each of the service Divisions that form part of the Economy and Environment Directorate based on the most current financial information available. Projected outturn figures for the financial year are compared with the budget to show the anticipated under/overspends. More detailed budget monitoring figures are shown in

the appendices 1A to 1C.

- 5.1.2 The table 1 below summarises the present budget monitoring position, with an overall Directorate overspend of £1.877m, but exclusive of ring-fenced budgets is projecting an overspend of £1.435m. Appendices 1A to 1C provide more detail on the budget variation projections for each Service Division, that falls within the remit of this Scrutiny.

TABLE 1	Estimate 2023/24 £'m	Revised Estimate 2023/24 £'m	Anticipated Outturn 2023/24 £'m	Variance 2023-24 £'m
Regeneration and Planning Division	3.713	3.713	3.840	(0.127)
Infrastructure Division	25.200	25.200	25.879	(0.679)
Public Protection Division	10.409	10.409	10.203	0.206
Community and Leisure Services Division	28.259	28.259	29.539	(1.280)
Directorate General	0.195	0.195	0.192	0.003
<b>NET DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>67.776</b>	<b>67.776</b>	<b>69.653</b>	<b>(1.877)</b>
Home to School Transport - ring fenced over spend				0.899
Social Services Transport – ring fenced under spend				(0.457)
Cemeteries Task and Finish – ring fenced under spend				
<b>NET DIRECTORATE under spend (excluding ring fenced budgets)</b>				<b>(1.435)</b>

## 5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE DIVISION

- 5.2.1 Infrastructure is overall reporting an overspend of £0.679m. When adjusting for the budget variations in relation to Home to School Transport (£0.899m overspend) and Social Services Transport (£0.457m underspend) which will be ring fenced and appropriated back to the Service Directorates, the net overspend is £0.237m.
- 5.2.2 Highway Services is reporting a net overspend of £0.205m. The main reason for the overspends are additional Statutory Maintenance (£0.598m) along with a shortfall in income (£0.072m) partially offset by salary savings due to delays in filling vacant posts (£0.304m), reduced Street Lighting costs (£0.2m) Gully Cleansing (£0.050m) along with Land Reclamation Maintenance (£0.1m). At present winter maintenance costs are difficult to predict but it is assumed the full budget of £1.16 million will be spent.
- 5.2.3 EPG (Engineering Projects Group) is reporting an overspend of £0.074m. This is due in the main to reduced income levels (£0.5m) partially offset by savings on salaries (£0.435m).
- 5.2.4 Transportation Engineering overall is projecting a net underspend of £0.002m after adjusting for the agreed use of the reserves.
- 5.2.5 Passenger Transport is reporting a net breakeven position.
- 5.2.6 Home to School Transport is presently projecting an overspend of £0.899m due in the main to additional contractor costs.
- 5.2.7 Social Services Transport is projecting underspend of £0.457m including £0.198m on salaries, £0.286m for service operators. There is risk of operator failure leading to increased cost in future although this is partly an in-house operator function rather than private contractor.
- 5.2.8 At this stage Network Contracting Services (NCS) is anticipating an underspend of £0.031m due in the main to salary savings (£0.289m) and reduced tipping costs (£0.068m), offset by

additional contractor costs (£0.148m) and reduced income (£0.192m), the income will be monitored closely during the year.

5.2.9 Engineering General are projecting a small underspend of £0.008m, this is in the main due to reduced Postage, Printing and Computer costs.

### 5.3 PUBLIC PROTECTION

5.3.1 Public Protection is presently projecting an underspend of £0.206m on their overall revenue budget details below.

5.3.2 Environmental Health is currently projecting a net underspend of £0.113m. The main variances are: -

- Community Safety Wardens is forecasting an underspend of £0.068m due in the main to delays in filling vacant posts.
- Health Division is predicting a net underspend of £0.010m after taking into account the agreed use of reserves for the software upgrade.
- Community Safety Partnership is predicting a small underspend of £0.005m due to delays in filling a vacant post.
- Enforcement is forecasting an underspend of £0.028m mainly due to salary savings (£0.026m), reduced fees (£0.016m) along with some additional income (£0.010m) partially increased contract costs and (£0.026m).
- Pollution Control are predicting a net overspend of £0.059m due in the main to additional Fencing costs (£0.061m) and increased cost of equipment linked to testing (£0.061m) partially offset by savings due to vacant posts (£0.038m). At this stage it is unlikely this will be required to fund any shortfall in the purchase/compensation Capital grant received from WG to fund the acquisition and payment of compensation for the houses at Hafodyrynys, as this was practically completed in 2020/21. Hafodyrynys Compensation/Acquisition has been funded by a ring-fenced reserve of £268k (from prior to 2020/21 grant) and an RCCO in 2020/21 of £34k (from 2020/21 grant). There are also a number of other ongoing issues in respect of air quality, pollution, and contaminated land and these are being closely monitored as any increases in this area would impact on the overall financial position.
- Food Team is predicting an underspend of £0.064m due to staff costs (£0.079m) offset by reduced income levels (£0.018m).
- Emergency Planning is predicting a small overspend of £0.002m.

5.3.3 Trading Standards are projecting a net overspend of £0.050m, due in the main to increased kennelling costs (£0.086m) after an enforcement action partially offset by reduced salary costs (£0.038m).

5.3.4 Core and Democratic costs are projecting a small overspend of £0.001m.

5.3.5 Licensing are projecting an overspend of £0.004m due in the main to reduced income levels (£0.028m) partially offset by salary costs (£0.022m). The income levels are volatile and will be monitored during the course of the year.

5.3.6 Registrars are projecting a net £0.005m underspend mainly due a temporary increase in ceremony numbers and associated income. This is after the applied use of reserves for the new Wedding Ceremony Software.

5.3.7 CCTV services are projecting an underspend of £0.044m due in the main to reduced salary costs (£0.018m) along with reduced PSBA/Telecom line charges (£0.029m) partially offset with additional cost for contractor payments (£0.005m) and a slight reduction in income (£0.006m).

5.3.8 Catering Services are projecting a net underspend of £0.100m. The underspend is due in the main to reduced property costs (£0.039m), reduces computer costs (£0.049m), software maintenance (£0.021m) and Kitchen Equipment (£0.026m) partially offset by increased

transport costs including vehicle hire (£0.023m). Any income will be monitored during the year especially as WG committed to a phased role out of FSM for all Primary pupils.

## 5.4 COMMUNITY and LEISURE SERVICES

5.4.1 The Community and Leisure Division is presently projecting overall a net overspend of £1.280m, this overspend is noted below.

5.4.2 Waste Management (Managed by Head of Infrastructure) is overall presently reporting an underspend of £0.158m due in the main to: -

- Residual Waste is projecting an overspend of £0.015m due in the main to additional salary costs (£0.021m), additional costs of vehicle repairs (£0.115m), vehicle overhead costs (£0.016m) and Vehicle Hire (£0.165m). partially offset by reduced contractor payments (£0.329m) and reduced fuel costs (£0.046m)
- Organic recycling is projecting a £0.064m overspend due in the main vehicle maintenance costs (£0.067m), additional salary costs (£0.020m) additional Agency costs (£0.011m) partially offset by reduced fuel costs (£0.027m) along with vehicle overhead costs (£0.013m).
- CA sites are projecting a £0.028m overspend due in the main to the additional salary costs (£0.013m), additional cleaning (£0.010m), vehicle Repairs and Maintenance (£0.026m), additional agency costs (£0.040m) and additional contractor payments (£0.044m), partially offset by reduced Plant purchases (£0.030m), reduced Fuel costs (£0.050m) vehicle Hire (£0.007m) along with additional income for vehicle sales (£0.015m)
- Waste Transfer Station is projecting a £0.027m underspend due in the main reduces fuel costs (£0.009m), reduced staff costs (£0.009m).
- Dry Recycling is forecasting a £0.022m overspend due in the main to vehicle repairs (£0.117m), additional salary costs (£0.022m), vehicle overhead costs (£0.020m) and additional Agency costs (£0.40m) partially offset by a reduction in fuel costs (£0.084m) together with savings on contractor payments (£0.069m)
- Bulky Waste is projecting a £0.009m overspend due in the main to additional salary costs (£0.012m) along with additional contractor costs (£0.018m) partially offset by reduced fuel costs (£0.006m) reduced services costs (£0.010m) and some additional income (£0.004m).
- Commercial Waste is projecting a £0.030m overspend due in the main to additional bins (£0.005m) along with reduced income forecasts (£0.025m).
- Other Waste is projecting a £0.016m underspend due a Supplies and Services costs being lower than expected.
- Trehir is projecting a £0.028m underspend due to reduced maintenance costs and a reduction in sewage charges.
- Sustainable Waste Management Grant (SWMG) from WG is expected to breakeven.
- HQ staff predicted an underspend of £0.254m which is due in the main to vacant posts (£0.287m), partially offset by additional material costs (£0.022m), protective clothing (£0.011m), stationary costs (£0.020m) and reduced income (£5k).
- Public Conveniences is projecting an overspend of £1k, costs for these buildings are still being generated without any budget provision as this was previously removed as part of the MTFP savings.

5.4.3 Cleansing Services (Managed by Head of Infrastructure) is overall presently reporting a net underspend of £0.265m. This is due in the main to staff vacant posts (£0.289m), reduced contractor costs (£0.062m) and reduced Tipping Charges (£0.013m) partially offset by vehicle repairs (£0.018m), additional agency costs (£0.076m), along with reduced income (£0.018m).

5.4.4 A net overspend of £0.508m is projected for Parks and Countryside, Outdoor Facilities and Cemeteries.

- Cemeteries is reporting a £0.034m overspend, this is due in the main additional agency staff (£0.129m), Private contractor costs (£0.076m) and reduced income levels

(£0.135m) partially offset by some salary savings (£0.026m) Grounds Maintenance and Trees (£0.218m) War Memorial/Cenotaph Maintenance (£0.025m), tipping charges (£0.030m). The overspend in relation to cemeteries is ring fenced and will be funded from the ringfenced reserve.

- Allotments are projecting an underspend of £0.017m due in the main to reduced maintenance and contractor costs.
- Parks are projecting a net £0.648m overspend after taking into account the use of agreed reserves to fund “Ash-Die Back” and Cleaner Greener Schemes. This overspend is due in the main to reduced income levels (£0.308m), increased agency costs (£0.168m), Contractor payments (£0.263m), vehicle hire costs (£0.018m), vehicle repairs and maintenance (£0.018m), Planned plant servicing (£0.015m) and cleansing (£0.020m) partially offset by salary savings (£0.112m), Rights of Way (£0.039m) and Plant and Equipment (£0.033m).
- Playgrounds are reporting a slight overspend of £0.002m.
- Outdoor facilities are reporting £0.045m overspend in the main due to utility costs (£0.014m) additional cleaning costs (£0.010m) along with reduced income levels (£0.020m)
- Countryside is reporting an underspend of £0.0181m in the main due to salary savings (£0.477m) partially offset by additional agency costs (£0.130m) additional projects costs (£0.160m) and reduced income levels (£0.177m).
- HQ is projecting an overspend of 0.013m primarily due to property costs including energy costs (£0.008m), transport costs (£0.010m).

5.4.5 Leisure Centres and HQ are reporting overspend of £0.584m. The main reasons for this are the increased utility costs (£0.237m) in running the centres, increased staffing costs in the centres (£0.092m) along with reduced income levels on the Leisure Centres (£0.170m) and the new Athletics Hub (£0.065m)

5.4.6 Community Centres are at present projecting a breakeven position with any reductions in operating costs they hope to utilise to bring forward maintenance on these buildings.

5.4.7 Caerphilly Adventures is reporting an overspend of £0.042m. This is due in the main to income levels not being achieved (£0.090m) partially offset by savings in salaries (£0.049m).

5.4.8 Sports and Health Development is projecting a small overspend of £0.013m due in the main to a reduced fees due to staffing issues. This is after the agreed use of reserves for a Rugby Officer in Trinity Fields to be part funded by reserves.

5.4.9 Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management is currently projecting overspend of £0.555m. The Fleet Management and Vehicle Maintenance service has experienced difficulties over the last few years successfully recruiting and retaining qualified and experienced Vehicle Technicians. To ensure vehicles are repaired and maintained in accordance with the Councils Operator’s Licence, the service has had no alternative but to engage the services of third parties to assist in this regard. The hourly labour rate charges by these external providers are significantly more than that the council charges its managed service provider for this facility, consequently this has affected our levels of income and resulted in a significant projected overspend. The service is working through a number of potential solutions to reduce this predicted overspend by the end of this financial year.

5.4.10 Building Cleaning (Managed by Head of Infrastructure) is at present reporting a net breakeven position.

## 5.5 Medium Term Financial Plan Savings

5.5.1 The following table provides a summary of progress in delivering agreed 2023/24 savings for the Directorate of Economy and Environment: -

Section	Agreed MTFP Savings £'m	Progress against Savings £'m	Variance £'m
<b><u>Economy and Environment</u></b>			
Infrastructure	1.161	1.115	0.045
Public Protection	0.060	0.045	0.015
Community and Leisure	0.254	0.147	0.106
Regeneration and Planning	0.364	0.296	0.068
Director	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1.839</b>	<b>1.603</b>	<b>0.234</b>

5.5.2 Details of the projected unachieved savings for the services that fall within the remit of this scrutiny are detailed below: -

5.5.3 The variance of £0.045m in Infrastructure is due to: -

- £0.040m for the Rail Bus link not achieving a full years worth of savings due to implementation delays.
- £0.005m from various sections mileage reductions not being achieved.

5.5.4 The variance of £0.016m in Public Protection is due to: -

- £0.004m for the CCTV Camera, due to delays in the roll out.
- £0.012m from various sections mileage reductions not being achieved.

5.5.5 The variance of £0.106m in Community and Leisure is due to: -

- £0.005m for the closure of Ty Fry Farm.
- £0.004m from various sections mileage reductions not being achieved.
- £0.005m from increased income from MOT fees.
- £0.075m from increased fee income in Leisure Centres.
- £0.017m from the tapered withdrawal of Caretaker subsidy in Community Centres.

5.5.6 It is expected that the unachieved MTFP savings will be covered by other budget savings in most of the service areas.

## 5.6 Conclusion

5.6.1 Members are advised that Economy and Environment Directorate provides a very diverse range of front-line services to residents and businesses. The overall Directorate has a budget totalling £67,776m, with a projected net overspend of £1.435m (2.12% of total budget). The operational managers will endeavour to ensure that service net expenditure does not exceed the budget available.

## 6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 Assumptions linked to this report were detailed in the budget report to Council on 23rd February 2023.

6.2 The projected outturn position is based on actual income and expenditure details to the end of October 2023.

6.3 Forecasts have been made following discussions with Managers based on current information available.

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An IIA is not necessary for this Information Only Report.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 As detailed throughout the report.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER.**

11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

Author: D. Roberts – Interim Finance Manager (Corporate and Communities).  
[roberda@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:roberda@caerphilly.gov.uk) Tel: 01443 863342

Consultees Cllr A. Whitcombe, Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr S Williams Vice Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee  
Christina HARRY, Chief Executive  
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Corporate Services and Education  
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment  
Robert Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services  
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure  
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer  
Leanne Sykes, Deputy Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer  
Jane Southcombe, Education Financial Services Manager  
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy  
Paul Adams, Senior Assistant Accountant  
Mike Jones, Financial Services Manager Social Services  
Cllr N. George, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways  
Cllr C. Morgan, Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces  
Cllr P Leonard, Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection  
Cllr C Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities

Appendices:

Appendix 1A Budget Monitoring Report - Infrastructure Services Division  
Appendix 1B Budget Monitoring Report - Public Protection Division  
Appendix 1C Budget Monitoring Report - Community and Leisure Services



<i>Economy and Environment Directorate</i>	Page No	Estimate 2023/24	Revised Estimate 2023/24	Anticipated Outturn 2023/24	Variance 2023-24
<b><u>INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES DIVISION</u></b>					
<b>HIGHWAY SERVICES</b>		11,053,569	11,053,569	11,223,180	(169,611)
<b>ENGINEERING PROJECTS GROUP</b>		18,168	18,168	92,607	(74,439)
<b>TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING</b>		819,024	819,024	989,961	(170,937)
Agree use of Reserves - Car Park Repairs (Inc review Emporium Car Park)				(98,852)	98,852
Agree use of Reserves - Signal Maintenance				(40,000)	40,000
<b>PASSENGER TRANSPORT</b>		1,730,783	1,730,783	1,771,390	(40,607)
Agree use of Reserves - Blackwood Bus Station Maintenance & Repairs				(40,607)	40,607
<b>HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT</b>		9,639,854	9,639,854	10,539,254	(899,400)
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORT</b>		1,753,733	1,753,733	1,296,815	456,918
Agreed RCCO - Vehicle		44,756	44,756	44,756	0
<b>NETWORK CONTRACTING SERVICES</b>		119,325	119,325	87,931	31,394
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE - GENERAL</b>		21,276	21,276	12,899	8,377
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>25,200,488</b>	<b>25,200,488</b>	<b>25,879,334</b>	<b>(678,846)</b>

## Appendix 1B

<i>Economy and Environment Directorate</i>	Page No	Estimate 2023/24	Revised Estimate 2023/24	Anticipated Outturn 2023/24	Variance 2023-24
<b><u>PUBLIC PROTECTION DIVISION</u></b>					
<b>TRADING STANDARDS</b>		951,650	951,650	1,001,763	(50,113)
<b>CORPORATE AND DEMOCRATIC COSTS (CDC)</b>		78,673	78,673	79,328	(655)
<b>LICENSING</b>		208,160	208,160	211,982	(3,822)
<b>REGISTRARS</b>		91,306	91,306	86,778	4,528
<i>Agreed Use of Reserves - Wedding Ceremony Software</i>		0	0		0
<b>CCTV</b>		505,269	505,269	461,694	43,575
<b>COMMUNITY WARDENS</b>		411,093	411,093	343,513	67,580
<b>HEALTH DIVISIONAL BUDGET</b>		358,437	358,437	463,315	(104,878)
<i>Agreed Use of Reserves - Software Upgrade</i>		0	0	(115,000)	115,000
<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP</b>		117,480	117,480	112,688	4,792
<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>		869,398	869,398	841,158	28,240
<b>POLLUTION</b>		538,045	538,045	597,503	(59,458)
<b>FOOD TEAM</b>		808,779	808,779	745,187	63,592
<b>EMERGENCY PLANNING</b>		120,552	120,552	122,423	(1,871)
<b>Track and Trace</b>					
Expenditure		902,300	1,024,600	1,024,600	0
Grant Income		(902,300)	(1,024,600)	(1,024,600)	0
<b>CATERING</b>		5,350,126	5,350,126	6,143,845	(793,719)
<i>Agreed Use of Reserves - FSM Summer Holiday Voucher scheme</i>		0	0	(877,009)	877,009
<i>Agreed Use of Education Reserves - Schools Essential Grant</i>		0	0	(16,238)	16,238
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>10,408,968</b>	<b>10,408,968</b>	<b>10,202,930</b>	<b>206,038</b>

## Appendix 1C

<i>Economy and Environment Directorate</i>	<b>Page No</b>	<b>Estimate 2023/24</b>	<b>Revised Estimate 2023/24</b>	<b>Anticipated Outturn 2023/24</b>	<b>Variance 2023-24</b>
<b><u>COMMUNITY and LEISURE SERVICES</u></b>					
<b>WASTE MANAGEMENT</b>					
<i>Residual Waste</i>		3,687,296	3,687,296	3,702,670	(15,374)
<i>Organics recycling</i>		1,310,317	1,310,317	1,374,360	(64,043)
<i>Civic Amenity Sites</i>		3,361,468	3,361,468	3,389,284	(27,816)
<i>Waste Transfer Station</i>		173,779	173,779	146,626	27,153
<i>Dry Recycling</i>		3,971,030	3,971,030	3,992,792	(21,762)
<i>Bulky Waste</i>		89,794	89,794	99,638	(9,844)
<i>Commercial Waste</i>		(320,384)	(320,384)	(290,285)	(30,099)
<i>Other Waste</i>		24,306	24,306	8,650	15,656
<i>Treher</i>		135,000	135,000	106,299	28,701
<i>Sustainable Waste Management Grant</i>		(824,804)	(824,804)	(826,924)	2,120
<i>HQ Staff</i>		1,627,323	1,627,323	1,372,968	254,355
<i>Public Conveniences</i>		0	0	901	(901)
<b>CLEANSING</b>					
<i>Street Cleansing</i>		3,601,314	3,601,314	3,336,254	265,060
<b>GROUND MAINTENANCE AND PARKS</b>					
<i>Cemeteries</i>		(162,625)	(162,625)	(128,835)	(33,790)
<i>Cemeteries Earmark reserves</i>		0	0	(33,790)	33,790
<i>Allotments</i>		41,592	41,592	24,608	16,984
<i>Parks and Playing Fields</i>		2,177,746	2,177,746	2,964,972	(787,226)
<i>Agreed use of reserves for Ash Dieback</i>		0	0	(122,416)	122,416
<i>Agreed use of reserves for Cleaner Greener</i>		0	0	(17,235)	17,235
<i>Playgrounds</i>		316,978	316,978	319,282	(2,304)
<i>Outdoor facilities</i>		448,442	448,442	493,120	(44,678)
<i>Countryside</i>		1,130,065	1,130,065	948,183	181,882
<i>HQ Staffing</i>		1,143,650	1,143,650	1,156,834	(13,184)
<b>LEISURE SERVICES</b>					
<i>Leisure Centres</i>		4,283,458	4,283,458	4,867,143	(583,685)
<i>Sports and Health Development</i>		106,194	106,194	118,725	(12,531)
<i>Agreed funding from reserves - Rugby Officer Trinity Fields</i>		(27,489)	(27,489)	(27,489)	0
<i>Outdoor Education</i>		307,627	307,627	349,920	(42,293)
<i>Community Centres</i>		410,305	410,305	410,305	0
		<b>27,012,382</b>	<b>27,012,382</b>	<b>27,736,559</b>	<b>(724,177)</b>
<i>Building Cleaning</i>		1,388,939	1,388,939	1,389,187	(248)
<i>Vehicle Maintenance and Fleet Management</i>		(141,921)	(141,921)	413,304	(555,225)
<b>Total net expenditure Community and Leisure Services</b>		<b>28,259,400</b>	<b>28,259,400</b>	<b>29,539,050</b>	<b>(1,279,650)</b>



## **HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INFORMATION ITEM - 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024**

**SUBJECT:               TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2023**

**REPORT BY:           DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

### **1.       PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1       This report is to inform members of the outcomes of the tenant satisfaction survey undertaken during October and November 2023.

### **2.       SUMMARY**

- 2.1       Consultants were engaged to conduct and analyse a comprehensive tenant satisfaction survey on behalf of Caerphilly Homes. This is a perception survey and not one focusing necessarily on any transactional relationship Caerphilly Homes has with tenants. Welsh Government (WG) expect all stock retaining local authorities to refresh their tenant satisfaction data every two years and the last survey was undertaken in September and October 2021. Core elements of this data will be benchmarked against other community landlords and published by WG later this year. Housing Associations have carried out surveys based on the Housemark model for some time.
- 2.2       The overall satisfaction with services delivered by Caerphilly Homes is 76% compared to 77% in 2021. This is a slight decrease based on the 2021 survey but the survey in 2021 only had an 18% response rate and in 2023 this increased circa 29%. This is slightly below the peer average according to the consultants but still shows a high level of satisfaction across a far greater sample size of our tenants.
- 2.3       Other figures and comparisons are shown below in 5.15.

### **3.       RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1       To note the headline results of the survey (based on the 12 core questions) and the requirement to refresh the data every two years.
- 3.2       To note the Areas for Improvement focusing primarily on the poorer performing areas in the 12 core questions, with the aim of improving performance and tenant satisfaction overall. Areas for Improvement will also take account of the WG benchmarking exercise and Caerphilly's performance in relation to other landlords.

#### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To comply with Welsh Government guidance.
- 4.2 To improve contract holder (tenant) satisfaction with the delivery of services by Caerphilly Homes and to ensure that Caerphilly Homes meets its overriding vision of providing the highest standard of service to all customers.

#### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 An all household tenant satisfaction survey was previously undertaken in 2021. The 2023 survey was also sent to all households and was undertaken in October and November 2023.
- 5.2 Welsh Government gave notice in 2019 that it expected all stock retaining local authorities to have overall tenant satisfaction data available to be submitted to them by end of March 2022 and every two years thereafter. The data will be benchmarked against other social landlords operating within Wales and results will be published so that tenants are able to compare the performance of different landlords.
- 5.3 After a procurement process, ARP Research were engaged to undertake and analyse the survey on behalf of Caerphilly Homes. They have a proven track record in this field, conducting surveys for Welsh social housing landlords and also conducted the 2021 survey for Caerphilly Homes.
- 5.4 In order for the data to be benchmarked, the survey questions needed to follow a specific format and contained questions based on the Housemark standardised STAR survey, the recognised survey model approved by Welsh Government. There are 12 core questions required by Welsh Government with other questions determined by the landlord.

##### **The Survey**

- 5.5 The survey form was posted to all tenant households and included a web link and QR code to enable the survey to be completed online in addition to a postal return option. An incentive of a prize draw was offered for returned surveys. Reminders to complete the survey were sent by text message, email and this year, a postal reminder was also sent to encourage further returns. The survey was 'live' from 6 October 2023 to the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023. The survey was also promoted through the Council's website, social media pages, press release and by staff during their interactions with tenants.
- 5.6 3036 surveys were returned, with a response rate of 29%. The number of returns and response rate has increased significantly from 2021 when there were 1,847 returns with a response rate of 18%. (999 returns were needed to ensure the results were statistically valid)
- 5.7 Almost a quarter of the returned surveys were completed online, which is a big increase and a positive step in trying to digitally engage more efficiently and frequently with our tenants in the future.
- 5.8 The survey form contained the core questions required for benchmarking by WG, plus additional questions including on responsive repairs, appointment times and digital communication.

## The Results

- 5.9 The results were analysed by ARP Research, with appropriate weightings of certain categories to ensure a valid result. The full results also give details on differences by factors such as area and age profile. The error margin for the results is +/- 1.5%
- 5.10 The overall satisfaction with Caerphilly Homes service was 76%. This rate is down by 1% from the 2021 survey. This is within the error margin of the results and given the higher sample size, indicates a consistent level of service since the last survey.
- 5.11 Of the 24% that weren't satisfied; 11% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 8% fairly dissatisfied and 5% very dissatisfied. These results will be scrutinised in the key areas of improvement as detailed later in this paper.
- 5.12 The consultant has commented that overall satisfaction rates have decreased across Welsh landlords in the last two years so although statistically significant it does reflect an overall downward trend. The consultant also commented that overall it is a good set of survey results in the current climate.

## Key Driver Analysis

- 5.13 A 'key driver' analysis is a statistical test to check which other results in the survey are best at predicting overall satisfaction. In descending order of strength, the drivers most closely associated with **overall tenant satisfaction** were:
- Repairs and maintenance overall
  - Easy to deal with
  - Safety and security of the home
  - Quality of the Home
  - Listening to views and acting upon them
  - Taking a part in decision making
  - Grounds maintenance
- 5.14 The top 5 are consistent with results in 2021 with the top two remaining the same, and a change in the order of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Improving performance in the key driver areas should contribute to an improvement in the overall satisfaction level.
- 5.15 The table below shows the key percentage score against the different categories covered in the survey for 2021 and 2023 and the changes in the results. The benchmark data used is WG's 2023 data of social landlords in Wales, comprising 46 different organisations.

Category	Satisfaction Level	Satisfaction Level	Change	LA Median	Wales Median
	2021 Result	2023 Result			
Satisfaction overall	77%	<b>76%</b>	- 1 %	<b>76%</b>	81%
Quality of home	75%	<b>73%</b>	- 2. %	<b>76%</b>	81%
Safety & security of home	80%	<b>81%</b>	+ 1%	<b>82%</b>	85%
Repairs & maintenance overall	69%	<b>68%</b>	- 1%	<b>71%</b>	74%
Repair in last 12 months	N/A	<b>79%</b>	-	-	-
Neighbourhood as a place to live	77%	<b>77%</b>	No change	<b>82%</b>	83%
Value for money of rent	76%	<b>76%</b>	No change	<b>76%</b>	82%
Value for money of service charge	76%	<b>71%</b>	-5%	<b>68%</b>	68%
To what extent do you agree with the statement "I trust my social landlord"	73%	<b>73%</b>	No change	<b>73%</b>	77%
Listens to views and acts on them	54%	<b>58%</b>	+ 4.0%	<b>58%</b>	66%
Dealing with anti-social behaviour	54%	<b>51%</b>	- 3%	<b>56%</b>	61%
Taking part in decision making	50%	<b>52%</b>	+ 2%	<b>49%</b>	60%
Having a say in service management	52%	<b>55%</b>	+ 3%	<b>49%</b>	61%

- 5.16 81% of tenants were satisfied with the safety and security of their home, up 1% from the last survey and 73% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of their home, down 2%
- 5.17 For repairs and maintenance overall satisfaction was 68%, while satisfaction with the repairs service for those that had received a repair in the last 12 months (1,760 - 58% of respondents) increased to 79%, suggesting those that have had a repair in the last 12 months were more satisfied than respondents that have not had a recent repair.
- 5.18 Satisfaction for value for money of rent (76%) can also be impacted by satisfaction in other areas such as repairs and quality of the home, but it is not shown as a key driver of overall satisfaction. The fact that value for money for rent has remained the same is an achievement given the current cost of living crisis. The score for value for money for service charges was 71% down 5% from 2021, however, service charges only relate to sheltered housing and at the time of the previous survey, service charges had been reduced to reflect a reduction in services offered due to the Covid pandemic.

### **Key Areas to Focus On**

- 5.19 The results for the way that Caerphilly Homes deals with anti-social behaviour and for providing opportunities for taking part in decision making are the lowest in terms of satisfaction levels. These are down 3 % and up 2% from the last survey respectively.
- 5.20 The satisfaction rate with 'whether views were listened to and acted upon' was 58%. However, there were around a third who responded in the middle of the scale and were neither positive or negative for this question. Again, this question can also be impacted by the performance of different areas of the housing service.
- 5.21 The two areas that had the highest level of dissatisfaction were, dealing with repairs and maintenance and dealing with anti-social behaviour at 22% and 27% respectively. Anti-social behaviour is dealt with by a direct team and has many contributing factors which won't all necessarily be the responsibility of housing and deserve a multi-agency response in some cases.
- 5.22 Improving our repairs service is a constant strand of work through the Caerphilly Homes transformation agenda and key workstream in the corporate Mobilising Team Caerphilly work programme looking at customer journey and contact management exploring the scope for more efficiency and productivity. The results of satisfaction for those that have had a recent repair as stated earlier indicates this is starting to move in the right direction. Therefore, there is no specific work on repair and maintenance or ASB in the key areas of improvement in the action plan, as these are business as usual strands of work.
- 5.23 It should also be acknowledged that for Local Authority landlords many tenants find it difficult to separate the role of the landlord service, such as that provided by Caerphilly Homes, from the services provided by the wider Council organisation, and consequently their perceptions of the landlord service are inextricably linked to, and influenced by, their perceptions of the Council, and the services it provides. This is particularly true of services provided by both Caerphilly Homes and the Council, and can therefore influence views on more generic issues, such as their neighbourhood as a place to live, antisocial behaviour (as referenced), communication and engagement.



## **Moving Forward**

- 5.24 The results will also need to be communicated to tenants and the consultant will be helping with a summary of the results to feedback to tenants.
- 5.25 There were opportunities within the survey for tenants to include comments; therefore, there is a significant amount of raw data that can be reviewed which may provide an indication as to the reasons for some responses and also identify other issues and trends. The survey results overall give an opportunity to review the way Caerphilly Homes communicates and engages with tenants in all areas of its business.
- 5.26 An Action Plan has been drafted based on the results of the last two surveys. The overall areas for improvement are listed in Appendix 1. Once the draft and this year's survey results have been considered further, a more detailed operational plan will be developed to address areas where we need to try and improve service delivery and ultimately tenant satisfaction.

## **Conclusion**

- 5.27 The survey provides the data needed for submission to Welsh Government. It also now provides further information to measure against the baseline set by the 2021 survey.
- 5.28 The main output is identification of the areas for improvement listed in Appendix 1. This will focus on those key areas where the tenant satisfaction scores were considered low, and where they indicated more significant cultural improvement is required in the way tenants view their landlord.
- 5.29 Welsh Government plan to publish results of tenant satisfaction surveys undertaken by all social landlords in Wales in April 2024, at which time we will be in a position to update our results against benchmarks of both stock retaining local authorities and registered social landlords and this information will also be used to update the Action Plan going forward.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in this report.

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 This is not required as the report is for information only.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications at this stage but there could be resource/financial implications as the result of any Action Plan to improve future results.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications at this stage.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 All households had an opportunity to complete the questionnaire and a helpline was provided with the opportunity to complete by telephone.
- 10.2 All comments received from the consultees listed below have been noted and, where appropriate, incorporated within the report.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Not applicable

Author: Mandy Betts, Tenant and Community Involvement Manager  
(Tel: 01443 811432, Email: bettsm@caerphilly.gov.uk )

Consultees:

Cllr Andrew Whitcombe, Chair – Housing and Environment Scrutiny  
Cllr Shane Williams, Vice-Chair – Housing and Environment Scrutiny  
Councillor Shayne Cook, Cabinet Member for Housing  
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive  
Nick Taylor-Williams, Head of Housing  
Fiona Wilkins, Housing Services Manager  
Catherine Edwards, Head of Assets, Maintenance and Repairs  
Jane Roberts-Waite, Head of Development and Strategy  
Lesley Allen, Housing Principal Group Accountant  
Julie Reynolds, Landlord Services Manager  
Claire Davies, Private Sector Housing Manager  
Jason Fellows, Housing Repair Operations Manager  
Mike Williams, Planned Asset Maintenance Manager  
Gail Taylor, Assistant Tenant and Community Involvement Manager  
Kate Isaacs, Performance and Business Analyst

Background Papers: Tenant Satisfaction Survey Questionnaire – hyperlink:-

[Link to Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results](#)

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Areas For Improvement.

## Appendix 1 – Areas for Improvement

Key Drivers	Easy to deal with	Listen and act on views	Being Kept informed	Having a say in service delivery
Short term	Customer care/satisfaction as objective for all	Different ways to capture views	Improve trust - customer service training	More formal opportunities to tell us what they want
	Staff accessibility	Recording day to day feedback	Feedback/lessons learnt	Staff to feedback views of tenants via DPA reporting
	Repairs call handling procedures review	Culture/customer care	Increase digital and email comms	More TIE sessions
Medim Term	Internal comms improvements to stop silo working	Desktop checks to update CX system	Launch Customer Portal	Plan of activities
	Annual welfare calls	More transactional surveys throughout the year – impact surveys	Manage expectations, engage more frequently, use more social media	Use tenant engagement strategy for WHQS23
	Evolve team for more home and site visits and hub(s)	Policy and procedure review with customer care focus		Charter for Trust review
Long term	Review accessible comms for BSL user etc	Use learning and development strategy to train staff and update knowledge of evolved ways of customer service and customer care	Stand-alone Housing Webpages to be reviewed with CCBC website revamp	Annual customer service training plan