



## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP (WHQS) - 21ST FEBRUARY 2013

**SUBJECT:        PROGRESS REPORT – SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW**

**REPORT BY:    DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **1.        PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1        This report provides an update to Members of the Task Group on the progress made following submission of the previous report on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 in respect of the sheltered housing review.

### **2.        SUMMARY**

2.1        On 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012, the stock transfer ballot resulted in a majority vote from the tenants in favour of their homes remaining with the Council.

2.2        As part of the offer within its Stock Transfer proposals, the Council promised to undertake a review of the sheltered housing service with the aim of developing improved services for sheltered housing tenants and other older tenants, following full consultation within twelve months of the ballot, i.e. 17<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

2.3        External consultants have been working alongside Officers to ensure that there is an independent focus to the review process.

### **3.        LINKS TO STRATEGY**

3.1        This report identifies the need to promote the good health and wellbeing of older people living in the county borough by helping people to live as actively and independently as possible.

3.2        The review of the sheltered housing service should contribute to the aims of the following strategic documents:

- The Local Housing Strategy 'People, Property and Places' aims to provide good quality, well managed houses in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations.
- Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Corporate Improvement Plan
- Community Plan
- Older Persons Strategy
- Strategic Equality Plan – Objectives 3, 4, and 5

3.3        In addition, there are a number of other relevant strategies and published papers that will influence the direction of this review. These include the following:

- Welsh Housing Strategy ‘ Improving Lives and Communities – Homes in Wales’ (April 2010) – This strategy includes the following requirements:
  - Improve the quality and standard of all existing houses and rented accommodation, including energy efficiency;
  - Giving tenants a clear voice in decisions which affect them;
  - Ensuring services reflect the needs of those who use them not the needs of organisations who deliver them.
- Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) Guidance (Wales) – July 2012
- Supporting People Caerphilly – Planning for the Future (2013 – 2015)
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Older People’s Housing: Choice, Quality of Life and Under - Occupation

## 4. THE REPORT

### 4.1 Progress Update

- 4.1.1 The review process has been completed within the timescale stated within the Council’s Offer and Addendum documents, however Council officers will continue to work with tenant representatives on the Older Persons Project Group to consider the findings of the review. Full details, together with proposals will subsequently be reported to the next meeting of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

### 4.2 Consultation Process

- 4.2.1 A core element of the sheltered housing review involved seeking views and information from all tenants living in the County Borough Council’s Sheltered Housing Schemes via a postal survey. An essential objective of this work was to inform the research evidence base by establishing how tenants feel about: their current housing circumstances, the services delivered to them and, what additional areas of service delivery could interest them in the future.

- 4.2.2 As stated in the previous report, consultation meetings were held in every sheltered housing scheme between 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and 15<sup>th</sup> November 2012. This was followed up by individual questionnaires to sheltered housing tenants as well as questionnaires to other tenants in non sheltered designated older persons housing, to older persons occupying general needs housing, Housing Waiting List applicants, stakeholders and the Sheltered Housing Wardens.

- 4.2.3 This task has now been completed and full details following analysis of the data will be provided in the final report.

### 4.3 Questionnaires

- 4.3.1 The questionnaires were sent out in November 2012 and were returned to the consultants for analysis between December 2012 and up to 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The number of responses received is shown in the table below:

Category	Surveys sent out	Surveys received
Sheltered housing tenants	1,270	541
General Needs Tenants (50+)	963	333
Designated older people (OAP)	1,951	503
Waiting list	555	94
<i>Not stating whether tenant or waiting list</i>	-	27
Stakeholders	10	3
Wardens	31	12

- 4.3.2 The independent consultant has advised that in their experience with similar surveys, this represents a high response rate for the sheltered housing tenants, general needs tenants and tenants in designated older persons housing and is therefore a robust basis for analysis of the information provided. Questionnaires to stakeholders included GAVO (Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations). GAVO agreed to distribute the questionnaire to all their voluntary sector organisations so the total number of questionnaires distributed to stakeholders would have been higher than the number shown on the table in para 4.3.1. However, the level of responses from this category is lower than expected, as is the response from sheltered housing wardens.
- 4.3.3 The consultants have completed their analysis of the questionnaires and will be providing a report on their findings to the Older Persons Project Group at their next meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

#### **4.4 Sheltered Housing Needs Mapping to Profile Dependency Levels**

- 4.4.1 As part of the review process, it is essential to map with clarity across the stock the extent to which tenants' need and receive support and other services and also their characteristics in terms of, for example, age, gender, ethnicity, health conditions and mobility. This exercise will ensure that we gain an accurate picture of the support services delivered in each individual scheme. This is vital in determining the shape of a service delivery model that is cost effective, acceptable to Supporting People for future funding, and focuses on ensuring that support is provided where most needed.
- 4.4.2 Without this consolidated 'dependency' snapshot as a reference point, planning and configuring a future service would be uncertain. The independent consultant has advised that the needs mapping exercise will make a valuable, cost-effective contribution to the review process. Furthermore, the outcomes will represent a resource that the Council can update on a regular basis to ensure continuous monitoring of dependency levels in our schemes.
- 4.4.3 The needs mapping exercise has now been completed and the consultants are currently analysing the results to inform the financial modelling and requirement for support throughout all sheltered housing schemes. Further details will be provided in the final report to be submitted to Members in April 2013.

#### **4.5 Stock Appraisal**

- 4.5.1 The Council's Property Services has undertaken an options appraisal of the sheltered housing stock. The appraisal undertaken has concentrated on those schemes identified as failing to meet required standards. These include two storey buildings without lifts, bedsitter flats and those where access to the scheme is unsuitable or where there is insufficient storage or facilities for mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs.
- 4.5.2 This task has been completed and a report on the findings and options for the future of these schemes will be included in the final report in April 2013.

#### **4.6 Sheltered Housing – Service/Utility Charges**

- 4.6.1 The Council has committed to including a review of the current arrangements for the collection of service utilities charges. It is important to ensure that the arrangements are equitable for all older persons and a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be included in the final report. Recommendations on future options will be provided for Members to consider.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications identified in this progress report that are not currently being addressed for the final report due in April 2013.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The resources identified for the review process, including the independent consultants fees are within the budget set.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 This progress report has no direct personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The Older Persons Project Group has been fully consulted and engaged in the sheltered housing review and at the last meeting of this group, tenants were advised that the tasks to be undertaken during the review had now been fully completed within the timescale set for the review process. They were further informed that the outcome of these tasks would now be incorporated into the final report for submission to the Task Group in April 2013 and that they would be fully consulted on the contents.
- 8.2 The Older Persons Project Group were also advised that the Consultant would be attending their meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013 to provide a presentation on their findings following the consultation process and the receipt of responses to the questionnaires.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 To note that that the tasks included in the sheltered housing review have been completed within the timescale promised by the Council.
- 9.2 That a final report with options for the future delivery of the sheltered housing service be submitted for consideration to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group at their meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To inform the Caerphilly Homes Task Group of progress made to date on the sheltered housing review.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

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

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