CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 5TH SEPTEMBER 2013

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HOUSING RESPONSE REPAIRS SERVICE UPDATE

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to provide an update on the performance of the Housing Response Repair Service, following a request made by Members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group meeting held on 16th May 2013.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 This report aims to provide information on the changes and performance achieved against each repair priority to the housing response service.

2.2 The report also provides information on how the response repairs service was operated pre July 2009 prior to going live with mobile working (Total Mobile) in order that members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group can assess the level of service that is now being provided to our customers following the introduction of new technology.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The contents of this report links to the following key strategic objectives:-

The National Housing Strategy 'Better Homes for People in Wales' 2001 has a number of key themes to eradicate poor housing across all tenures. The Welsh Housing Quality Standard was also introduced in 2002 to set standards aimed at ensuring that all households in Wales are given the opportunity to live in good quality homes.

The Councils Corporate Improvement Plan - To improve the provision of housing for our tenants.

3.2 The report also links to the Local Housing Strategy:-

To contribute to the maintenance and improvement of the natural and built environment' (*Objective 10)*

"To encourage the development and maintenance of high quality, well designed and efficient, sustainable homes and environments which can meet all needs".(CCBC Community Strategy 2009 – 2012 -: Living Environment – Objective 1)

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Following the introduction of the new IT system for repairs in July 2009, officers have since reviewed systems and processes which have resulted in a number of significant changes

being made to the repairs service in order to strive for continuous improvement and meet customer needs.

4.2 Before confirming the changes and improvements, listed below are some of the issues that were experienced delivering the repairs service prior to the implementation of the new IT system in July 2009.

➤ IT Repairs Management system (AS400) - This system provided very limited repair, job costing, and management information. The system would not support mobile working and is now obsolete within the Authority.

➤ Repair Appointments – at the time there was no formal repair appointment system in place. Generally, operatives could attend properties unannounced resulting in low job performance, high levels of no access calls being recorded and poor tenant satisfaction.

➤ Bonus systems - Operatives at the time were manually issued work on paper job tickets that were difficult to control and manage. Operatives could often chase the jobs with highest values in order to earn higher bonus levels. Job tickets with smaller type works and bonus value may be avoided or could be lost or mislaid by the operative.

➤ Pre-Inspected work - All response repair work, with the exception of emergencies, were pre-inspected. Operatives often disagreed with Surveyor inspection specifications and often completely re-wrote them increasing the size of the job. Tenants could also have to wait in twice for minor type repair works that could have been completed by the operative on the first visit.

➤ Post Inspected work - Only 10% of work was post inspected. With operatives knowing the low rate of post inspections, it gave them the opportunity to increase the amount of work claimed in order to create higher bonus levels. The low level of post inspection rates, together with operatives attempting to maximise bonus earnings resulted in concerns with the quality of work.

➤ All the above issues created a backlog of work and delays in providing both an efficient and effective repairs and customer dissatisfaction.

4.3 Listed below are the changes and improvements that have been made to the repairs services following the introduction of the new IT system in July 2009.

➤ IT system (Total Mobile) – This system was introduced to manage the repairs service by controlling repairs, staff, material costs and performance to improve front line delivery. Included in the new IT system is a dynamic workforce scheduling system (XMBrace DRS) to enable appointments to be offered to tenants electronically.

➤ In November 2010 - The bonus scheme was replaced by a salary scheme. Operatives no longer need to chase bonus, they receive all repairs electronically one job at a time. This has also resulted in improved quality and customer satisfaction. Previously there were over 600 Schedule of rate items which could be claimed by operatives. These rates have now been condensed into 300 repair items which are recorded under the following 4 repair categories.

Small Repair	-	includes all repairs up to 1 hour including travel time
Medium Repair	-	includes all repairs up to 2 hours including travel time
Large Repair	-	includes all repairs up to 4 hours including travel time
Extra Large Repair	-	includes all repairs up to 1 day to complete.

Operatives can now only claim one category of repair. This system ensures that no variations are added to jobs therefore productivity has increased.

> Repair Appointments - Tenants are now offered an appointment on all response repairs reported. The Centralised Repair Team who take all repair calls have recently transferred from Housing into the response repair team to work alongside the Planner Team who electronically issue the work to operatives.

> Pre- Inspected work - Response repairs are no longer pre-inspected. Operatives attend repairs without the need for pre-inspection. All operatives' vehicles have been fitted with state of the art racking systems in order that they can carry sufficient material stock which only needs to be replenished once a week. Previously operatives unproductively spent hours travelling too and from stores obtaining materials throughout the day.

> Post Inspections - With the reduction in pre-inspected work, Surveyors post-inspect over 40% of the repairs completed. To complement this, telephone customer satisfaction questionnaire surveys are completed by the Repair Clerks on 20% of the repairs completed each day and within minutes of the repair being completed.

> The introduction of mobile working has not only improved control and performance, but has also resulted in efficiency savings through travelling costs, administration costs and overhead costs.

> This system has totally transformed the way we deliver our repairs service to our tenants and has also increased productivity.

4.4 **Performance**

The tables below highlight the improvements made in performance for repair target times over the past 10 years.

> The first table details the improvements that were made prior to the implementation of the new repairs IT system with the target time for routine repairs being halved from 120 days to 60 days within three years and further reduction in the target to 50 days for 2008/9

Priority	Definition	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
01	Emergency repairs during normal hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours
02	Emergency repairs outside normal hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours
03	Urgent Repairs	10 Days	10 Days	10 Days	10 Days	10 Days	10 Days
04	Priority Repairs	30 Days	30 Days	30 Days	Dis - continued	N/A	N/A
05	Routine repairs	120 Days	98 Days	70 Days	60 Days	50 Days	50 Days
08	Appointments	N/A	N/A	N/A	10 Days	10 Days	10 Days

4.5 The second table details the improvements that have been made following the implementation of the IT system and the introduction of the appointment system through mobile working. With the development of the new system in 2012/13 repair appointments are being offered on all repair priorities.

Priority	Definition	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
01	Emergency repairs during normal hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours	2 Hours
02	Emergency repairs outside normal hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours	24 hours
03	Appointments	Appointment 10 Days	Appointment 25 days	Appointment 25 days	Appointment 25 days	Appointment 25 days
04	Priority Repairs	Floating Appointment 50 Days	Floating Appointment 50 Days	Floating Appointment 50 Days	Appointment EOT Gas Safety	Appointment EOT Gas Safety
05	Routine repairs	50 Days	50 Days	50 Days	Floating Appointment 50 Days	Floating Appointment 50 Days
08	WHQS & Appointment Works	WHQS 90 Days	WHQS 90 Days	WHQS 90 Days	Floating Appointment 66 Days	Floating Appointment 66 Days

4.6   The table below highlights actual performance on completing repairs prior to the implementation of the new IT System.

Average Number of days to complete						
Category	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Emergency	1	1	1	1	1	No Data
Urgent	14	14	7	9	7.3	No Data
Routine	94	114	95	70	69.5	No Data

➢ Emergencies remained stable at 1 day. There was a reduction in the Urgent Works category from 14 to 7 days. Routine Works reduced from 97 to 70 days however there was no formal appointment system in place at this time with all repairs being completed on paper job tickets.

4.7   The table below highlights the actual performance following the implementation of the new IT system (July 2009)

Average Number of days to complete						
Total Optitime	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Emergency	1	1	1	1	1
Appointed	5	10	13	14	12
Routine	85	92	96	53	36

➢ Emergency repairs remain at one day. Urgent works are now being completed by an electronic appointment system. Although the number of days has increased from 7.3 to 12 days this is due to tenants being offered a time slot convenient to them within a 25-day diary timescale. The most noticeable improvement is the Routine repairs, which has reduced 69.5 to 36 days by offering appointments (Floating) following the completion of the pre-inspection by the Surveyor.

4.8   The table below highlights the percentage of repairs completed in target prior to the implementation of the new IT system.
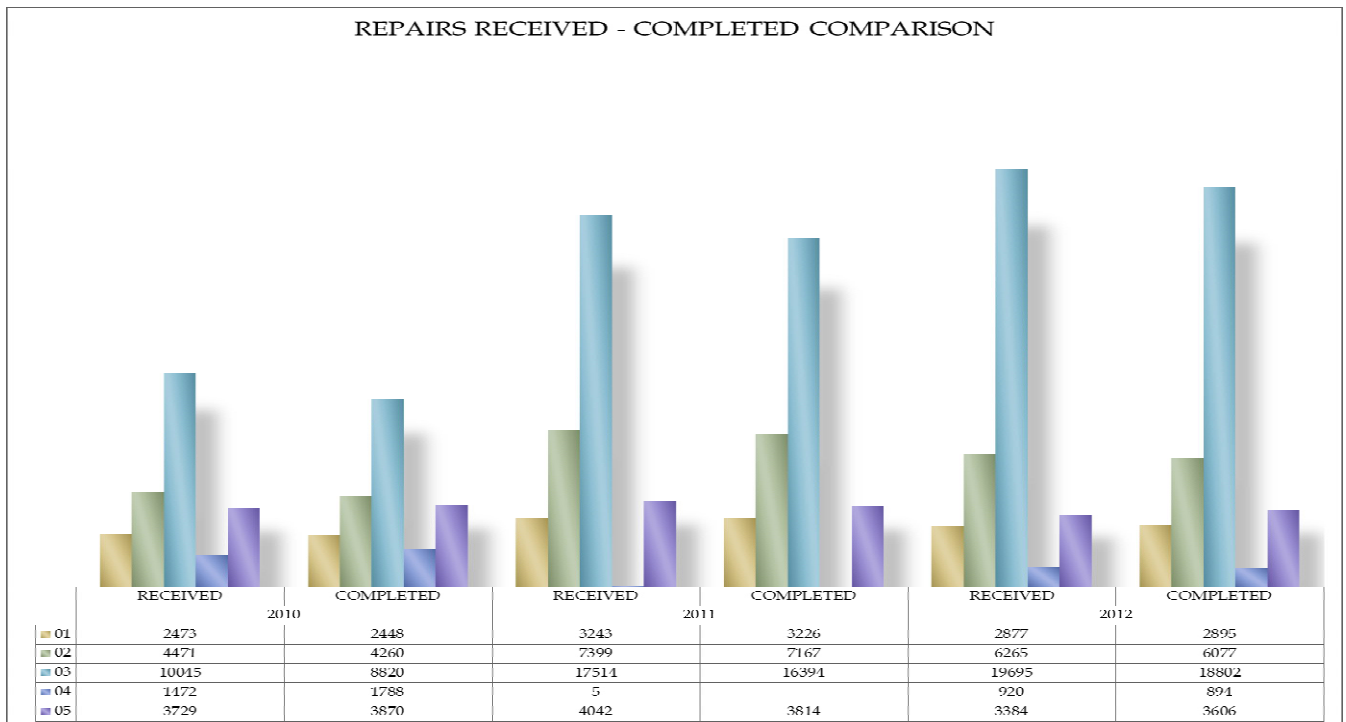
Percentage completions in target						
Category	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Emergency	94	96	97	95	98	No Data
Urgent	60	59	89	81	78	No Data
Routine	64	58	66	62	71	No Data

4.9   This table highlights the improvements to the repair completion times following the introduction of the new IT system in 2009.

Percentage completions in target					
Total Optitime	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Emergency	97	98	98	97	98
Appointed	97	95	95	95	94
Routine	40	45.25	49	75	90

➤ In 2012/13 and 2013/14 over 89% of all repairs categories were completed in target.

4.10   The table below shows a comparison over the numbers of jobs received compared to completions within the same time-scales. It must be noted that there is a noticeable increase in the amount of appointed repairs being reported in the priority 02 and 03 categories.

REPAIRS RECEIVED - COMPLETED COMPARISON

|	2010 RECEIVED	2010 COMPLETED	2011 RECEIVED	2011 COMPLETED	2012 RECEIVED	2012 COMPLETED
01	2473	2448	3243	3226	2877	2895
02	4471	4260	7399	7167	6265	6077
03	10015	8820	17514	16394	19695	18802
04	1172	1788	5		920	894
05	3729	3870	4042	3814	3384	3606

4.11   This table highlights the reduction in outstanding repairs since the implementation of the new IT system. With routine repairs being appointed has seen a significant improvement in this area where more appointments are now being offered to meet customer needs.

Backlog Analysis			
Category	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Emergency	22	20	31
Appointed	601	590	525
Routine	3800	1350	108

4.12 The final table highlights the Satisfaction Survey Results as outlined in 4.3 following the telephone customer questionnaire completed to 20% of all repairs completed each day.

Quarter 1 2013/14

Satisfaction Survey Results Summary
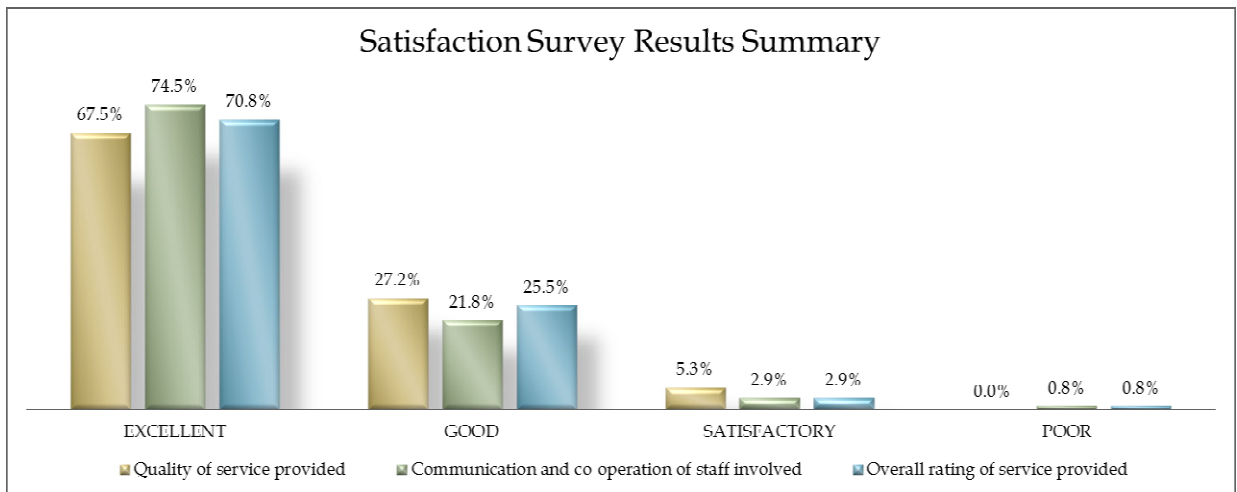
This survey has only been introduced this financial year, but provides us with a good 'snapshot' of tenants' views of the service the same day the repair is completed.

The Repair Clerks utilise a pro-forma of set questions which focus on the quality which covers timeliness of service delivery, standard of workmanship, whether the repair was fully completed on the first visit, if the repair as unable to be completed on first visit was a follow up appointment provided.

Communication and co-operation of staff involved provides us with feedback on the procedures in place and the performance of the various staff involved in delivering the service including Repair Clerks, Surveyors and Operatives.

Finally, we ask the tenant to rate the level of the overall service provided from the time they first reported the repair to its full completion.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This is an information report therefore there are no potential equality implications and no requirement to complete the Equalities Impact Questionnaire.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The response budget over the last 3 years has been £7.8m. Over the past 10 years it has fluctuated to address demands on various priorities, but overall has increased by 5% since 2004/5 to 2012/13.

6.2 However, due to the volatile nature of this budget which is difficult to predict, actual expenditure has tended to be about 10% over budget each year. It is not the intention to increase the budget to reflect the actual spend from previous years, but rather to make improvements such as those reflected in this report to make the service more efficient going forward.

6.3 In April 2013 the Building Maintenance DLO ceased operating as a trading account and merged with its main client in the Housing Revenue Account. This decision was taken to streamline operations in order to achieve the WHQS. As part of the process, it was necessary to split the former operations of the BM DLO into (1) Response and (2) WHQS with new budgets allocated in the HRA for both.

6.4   The Response budget for 2013/14 was reduced by £800k to reflect the fact that priority 8 historically included work that was WHQS related and should therefore be carried out under the WHQS programme. The Response budget is therefore £7m for 2013/14.

7.   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1   As part of the merger to the HRA and in order to maintain an acceptable level of performance, the two operations (Response & WHQS) have each retained 50% of the total workforce. The in-house contractor (WHQS) has already commenced work on the internal and external 6/7 year WHQS Works Programme to be completed in 2019/20.

7.2   The transfer of the Centralised Repair Team to the Response Team retained the same number of staff.

8.   CONSULTATIONS

8.1   Comments received following consultations during the course of preparing this report have been reflected within the content.

8.2   As part of ongoing consultation and tenant involvement in the improvement of housing services, regular meetings are held with the Repairs and Improvement Group which consists of tenant representatives and key officers. This group is continuously reviewing the response repairs service which covers performance, quality, customer satisfaction, tenant inspections as well as reviewing policies and procedures, and identifying areas for further improvements.

9.   RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1   This report is for information purposes only and provides members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group with an update on the progress of the housing response repair service.

10.   REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1   To inform members of Caerphilly Homes Task Group on the changes and performance to the repairs service within Caerphilly County Borough Council.

11.   STATUTORY POWER

11.1   Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and Housing Act 1985.

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