



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 16TH APRIL 2014

SUBJECT: WHQS – TARGETED RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING 2013/14

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides an indication of the number of targeted recruitment and training opportunities created during the first year of the WHQS programme.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the ballot in February 2012, the Council agreed that it would deliver the promises made in its Offer Document to tenants and deliver WHQS by 2019/2020. It also gave a commitment to ensuring that the capital investment of £200 million delivered social outcomes thereby contributing towards the transforming homes, lives and communities ambition.
- 2.2 The key outcomes expected to be delivered as a result of the investment during the lifetime of the programme relate to new employment opportunities, training opportunities, work placements, JGW / Passport placements and apprenticeships.
- 2.3 Opportunities have been created as a result of a combination of direct recruitment, agency opportunities, work placements, JGW and Passport placements, apprenticeships and targeted recruitment and training clauses built into the Single Source Supply Partner contract.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 3.2 The WHQS Programme is coterminous with the Caerphilly Single Plan priority of creating 'Prosperous Communities' (P2).
- 3.3 The Council is committed to ensuring that the WHQS investment transforms not only homes but also lives and communities.
- 3.4 The Council's Local Housing Strategy "People, Property, and Places" has the following aim:
"To provide good quality, well managed houses in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations."

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Following the ballot in February 2012 the Council made a commitment to ensure that the £200m investment in its housing stock would deliver much more than simply new kitchens and new bathrooms.
- 4.2 At the outset of the programme the Council agreed that the investment would deliver new opportunities for local people largely as a result of the strategy to award 50% of the work to the Council's internal workforce and 50% to contractors.
- 4.3 By awarding 50% of the work to the internal workforce the Council committed to helping sustain the local economy and securing future employment for its employee's. 90% of the workforce reside within the county borough and as a result will spend a reasonable proportion of their monthly salary within the county borough thereby again helping to sustain the local economy.
- 4.4 In order to manage the ambitious delivery programme the Council increased its internal workforce by 14 additional trade staff including 6 apprentices between February 2013 and April 2013. In addition approximately 50 additional multi skilled agency staff have been employed between April 2013 and January 2014.
- 4.5 The WHQS Administration Team have also provided two Jobs Growth Wales placements and recruited a member of staff from Remploy.
- 4.6 Since April 2013, 12 work placements have been provided to participants on the Passport Programme.
- 4.7 In total, since April 2012, the Council have employed an additional 23 staff as a result of the WHQS investment programme. These opportunities range from new Tenant Liaison Officer roles, additional foremen and supplier liaison staff.
- 4.8 Many of the office based staff have been recruited internally for the new positions however this has resulted in other vacancies within the organisation becoming available which have then be filled by Passport participants or back filled by staff wishing to further their career. Additional staff employed by the internal workforce have previously been employed by local companies or recruited as apprentices.
- 4.9 The WHQS Team has recently reviewed the way in which they recruit apprentices and from November last year made a commitment to only recruit apprentices via the Council's flagship Passport Programme. The internal workforce employed one of the Passport participants towards the end of last year as an apprentice plumber and currently have two further participants which they will seek to support into employment either within the team or with a contractor awarded work as a result of the WHQS.
- 4.10 The award of 50% of the work to contractors will help strengthen the local supply chain, increase local employment opportunities and help sustain and grow micro enterprises through the introduction of 1 tier sub contracting arrangements, 10 day invoicing and encouraging contractors to adopt the living wage.
- 4.11 In order to create new opportunities as a result of the WHQS programme, community benefit clauses including targeted recruitment and training requirements were built into the Single Source Supply Partner contract as a core requirement.
- 4.12 The contract worth an estimated £70m over a period of 10 years requires Robert Price to create the following minimum opportunities throughout the contract period as a requirement of the contract:
 - 1,000 FTE person weeks of employment opportunities

- 50 unwaged work experience opportunities for people aged 16+
- 10 six month Jobs Growth Wales opportunities
- 5 apprentice starts and completions
- 10 employment opportunities for people registered as long term unemployed (more than 26 weeks)
- 2 FTE opportunities for graduates

4.13 Since April 1st 2013 Robert Price have created the following opportunities

- 1 full time employment opportunities (equivalent over 12 months to 52 weeks)
- 3 Jobs Growth Wales opportunities
- 2 Unwaged work experience opportunities

4.14 In order for the targets to be achieved it is necessary to help facilitate a direct relationship between Robert Price, its supply chain and the Council's Passport programme. There is an on-going dialogue between the Council and Robert Price to ensure that community benefit targets are met throughout the lifetime of the contract.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The report is for information purposes only so the Councils' EqIA process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications arising from the report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All comments received as a result of the consultation have been incorporated into the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To inform the Caerphilly Homes Task Group of progress in delivering community benefits as part of the WHQS Programme.

11. STATUTORY POWER

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

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