



SPECIAL POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29TH JULY 2014

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE 5 –
INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND
COMMUNITIES**

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information in respect of progress against Improvement Objective 5 – Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Satisfactory progress has been maintained with the improvement programme during 2013/14 with in excess of 600 properties being brought to WHQS in respect of the internal condition.

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 Single Integrated Plan 2013 - 2017 has a priority to “Improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the County Borough.”
- 3.3 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 The Local Government Measure 2009 requires all Council authorities in Wales to set and publish a set of priorities called Improvement Objectives.
- 4.2 The Wales Audit Office (WAO) use Improvement Objectives and other data / information to evaluate the Council’s likelihood of improvement and the level of actual improvement that is achieved for the citizens of Caerphilly.
- 4.3 In 2012 the Council’s tenants voted to remain with the Council as their landlord. This was based on a commitment that all Council homes would be brought up to WHQS by 2019/20.

- 4.4 In September 2012 an investment plan was approved by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group/ Cabinet Sub Committee which demonstrated how the WHQS Programme would be implemented on a community based approach over the period to 2019/20. The work will be split between the in house work force and contractors and there will be separate sequences for internal and external works.
- 4.5 The dashboard at Appendix 1 provides an overview of achievements during 2013/14.
- 4.6 A comprehensive report on progress during 2013/14 is reported as a separate agenda item. Due to the way the programme has been constructed it is mainly internal works that have been undertaken during 2013/14 by the in house work force supported by specialist sub contractors. Work scheduled to be placed with external contractors is due to commence during 2014.
- 4.7 440 properties have benefited from energy improvement measures under the ECO or Arbed schemes.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Capital programme for 2013/14 is £15.5m. It is however subject to significant variances. Work to individual properties is subject to site survey and the surveys have shown that a significant amount of work to some components (e.g. heating) has been undertaken in previous years. There has been an in year underspend as a result and although this was offset by work carried forward from the previous financial year a £2.8m surplus has been carried forward to fund the WHQS Programme.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There has been a major reorganisation of staff resources and a WHQS Delivery Team has been established. During the course of 2013 there has been considerable changes made to processes and procedures. From September 2013 the management of the material supply chain was contracted to a single supplier. The volume of work will significantly increase during 2014/15. The programme for 13/14 scheduled 845 properties for survey and necessary works. The properties scheduled into the programme for 2014/15 is 3000. Staff resources within the WHQS Delivery Team are under review.

8. CONSULTATIONS

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

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Scrutiny Committee consider the progress being made against the Improvement Objective and whether the evidence provided is satisfactory.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure the Council is delivering the Improvement Objective IO5.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Measure 2009

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Cllr Dianne Price, Vice Chair CHTG
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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Improvement Objective IO5 - Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities