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Date: 27th January 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 3rd February, 2016** at **2.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	
2 Declarations of Interest. Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on the agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.	
To approve and sign the following minutes: -	
3 Cabinet held on 20th January 2016;	1 - 10
To receive and consider the following reports on which executive decisions are required: -	

A greener place Man gwyrddach



4	Junior and Youth Forum Priorities 2016.	11 - 28
5	Housing Revenue Account Charges - 2016-2017.	29 - 40
6	WHQS Compliance Policy.	41 - 66
7	Small Lots - Review of Contract Arrangements.	67 - 76
8	Rowan Place - Progress Report and Sensitive Lettings Policy.	77 - 96
9	Re-Profiling of WHQS Programme and HRA Capital Programme 2016/17.	97 - 122
10	Rowan Place Rhymney - Surrender of Lease on 70 Rowan Place and Transfer of Lease to 29 Rowan Place.	123 - 126

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs C. Forehead, N. George, D.T. Hardacre, K. James, Mrs B. A. Jones, R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, K.V. Reynolds, T.J. Williams and R. Woodyatt,

And Appropriate Officers.



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY 20TH JANUARY 2016 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor K. V. Reynolds – Chair
Councillor D.V. Poole – Vice Chair

Councillors:

C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), N. George (Community and Leisure Services), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), B. Jones (Corporate Services), R. Passmore (Education and Lifelong Learning), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering) and R. Woodyatt (Social Services).

Together with:

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), C. Harry (Corporate Director - Communities), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer) and D. Street (Corporate Director - Social Services).

Also in Attendance:

G. Williams (Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), P. Elliott (Head of Regeneration and Planning), R. Kyte (Team Leader Strategic and Development Planning), A. Wilcox (Senior Planning Officer), J. Morgan (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager), T. Shaw (Head of Engineering Services), M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services), A. Price (Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), C. Jones (Head of Property and Performance), L. Lucas (Head of Procurement) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were advised that this would be the last meeting of Cabinet that Angharad Price (Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer) would be attending, as she would shortly be leaving to take up a post with Cardiff City Council. Members thanked the Officer for her support and wished her well for the future.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors N. George and D. Hardacre declared an interest in the item relating to Community Centres Task and Finish Groups.

Councillor R. Woodyatt declared an interest in the item relating to Disposal of Duffryn House (Ty Dyffryn). Details are minuted with the respective items.

3. CABINET – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 9) be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. CABINET – 16TH DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th December 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 5) be approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

5. REVIEW OF A) THE CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY AND B) THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE PERSISTENT AND UNREASONABLE ACTIONS BY COMPLAINANTS

The report, which was considered by Audit Committee on 9th December, proposed changes to the Corporate Complaints Policy (as set out in Appendix 1 of the report) and the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants (as set out in Appendix 2).

Members noted that, in December 2012 the Audit Committee considered the implementation of the Council's new Corporate Complaints Policy which was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet and implemented on 1st April 2013. The policy was developed with a view to ensuring that complaints were dealt with in a consistent manner across Wales with the significant change being the number of stages in the process being reduced from three to two. This provision remains prescriptive and cannot under any circumstances be varied. The Audit Committee receives six monthly update reports on the complaints received under the Corporate Complaints Policy and has recently received an Annual report reviewing the complaints policy for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015. Members were advised that the policy is working well and there are no proposals to significantly amend the Policy other than to include those referred to in Appendix 1 of the report.

The introduction of the Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable Persistent and Unreasonable Action by Complainants was considered by Audit Committee on 6th November 2013 and adopted by Cabinet in November 2013. The Policy is subject to a two yearly review, this was due in November 2015. Members were informed that it remains the case that the majority of complainants pursue their complaints with the Authority in an appropriate manner. However, a small number of complainants pursue their cases in a way that can impede investigation of their complaint or have significant resource implications in dealing with the case, for example the sheer number or nature of their enquiries may lead them to be considered as persistent. Members were advised that although there have been no formal referrals under this Policy since its introduction in November 2013, Officers have had regard to its provisions when considering the actions of any complainant whose behaviour was becoming unacceptable or persistent in nature. As such it remains a useful tool to Officers when dealing with complainants under the Corporate Complaints Policy.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report:-

- (i) the changes proposed to the Corporate Complaints Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be endorsed;
- (ii) the current Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Unacceptable, Persistent and Unreasonable Actions by Complainants, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be endorsed.

6. VISIT WALES ERDF PROJECTS – THE MON AND BREC CANAL ADVENTURE TRIANGLE

The report provided Members with details of the new EU programmes, which were launched in Wales in November 2014. For some time before then, a range of proposals from Welsh Government and other bidders were under development and several have been approved now, with others at an advanced business planning stage.

The report focused on the ERDF capital infrastructure operations – specifically those being developed as regional destination management priorities and led by Visit Wales. Three individual projects have been developed for the South East Wales region via the Destination Management Group (formerly the Tourism Sub-group of the South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration (SEWDER)) and these include one for the Mon and Brec Canal.

One of the identified priority destinations (via a scoring mechanism designed by the Destination Management Group) is the Mon & Brec Canal and during the past year, Officers from Caerphilly and Torfaen have collaborated to develop a suitable proposal. These efforts have progressed to the point where it is approaching consideration for approval and the financial package now needs to be considered and endorsed by Caerphilly County Borough Council.

It was noted that, since its consideration and endorsement by Corporate Management Team on 26th November, Visit Wales has announced that the amount of ERDF funding available for the Mon & Brec Canal project has been reduced from £3.5m to £2.0m (a reduction from £1.75m to £1.0m for the Caerphilly elements). Therefore, this report has updated the financial package and the activities accordingly.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report: -

- (i) the request to commit £229,000 of the Engineering budget already allocated for 2015-16 canal improvement works, as match funding for this proposal be agreed, on the basis that it is used to carry out canal restoration work that complement the wider Visit Wales submission. In addition, it be agreed that £212,000 of the Engineering indicative budget allocation for essential improvement works for 2016-17 be used to conduct the works and act as CCBC match to the wider programme;
- (ii) the income forecast to be received from Natural Resources Wales over the next four years, totalling £60,000 be used to contribute to the project;

- (iii) the level of staffing contributions, as set out in the revenue section of Appendix 2 be noted and acknowledged that this optimum level of income may not be achievable.

7. APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC AND AGRICULTURAL ANALYSTS

The report proposed amendments to the appointment of public and agricultural analysts.

Caerphilly County Borough Council has a statutory duty to enforce the Food Safety Act 1990, which requires the authority to appoint a Public Analyst to analyse food for foreign bodies and compositional and labelling purposes. There are similar provisions in the Agriculture Act 1970 relating to the need to appoint an Agricultural Analyst.

Members, in recognising the importance of the service, considered the current appointments, as highlighted within the Officers report and noted that the amendments are required as a result of personnel changes within the various analyst services and due to the closure of Cardiff Scientific Services laboratory.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report, the current list of authorised analysts be amended and the Public and Agricultural analysts, as listed in paragraph 4.4 of the report be appointed.

8. ACTIVE TRAVEL CONSULTATION ON EXISTING ROUTES MAP

The report, which was presented to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 8th December 2015, sought Members' views on the draft Active Travel Existing Routes Maps and reported the responses from statutory and public consultation on the matter, prior to its presentation to Cabinet for approval.

Members noted that the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 places new duties on local authorities in Wales to produce and publish Active Travel Maps. The first stage of the Act requires local authorities to produce an 'Existing Routes Map' that has to be submitted to the Welsh Government for approval by 22nd January 2016.

The Existing Routes Maps prepared and consulted upon (included in Appendix 1 of the report) includes Active Travel routes in the County Borough that satisfy 4 points which summarise the definition of an existing active travel route (as detailed within the report). Of the 35 responses received during the consultation process (summarised in Appendix 2 of the report), 80% agreed with the routes as proposed.

Members noted that one minor change is required to the proposed map to Link 13 (St. Cenydd Comprehensive school to Caerphilly town centre), which amends the origin of the Active Travel route to remove the road bridge from the route. If the bridge becomes compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) then the map can be reviewed in the future.

Officers confirmed that the next stage of the Active Travel scheme is contingent on a deadline being established by Welsh Government and that the work developed to date has contributed to a number of areas of Council strategy, including that of the South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan objective to develop innovative walking, cycling and Smarter Choices programmes.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report, the results of the consultation on the draft Active Travel Existing Routes Maps be noted, and that the Existing Routes Maps (as detailed in the report) be endorsed prior to submission to Welsh Government by 22nd January 2016.

9. FOOD AND ORGANIC WASTE PROCUREMENT

The report updated Cabinet on developments since the Heads of the Valley procurement failure and outlined options that have been considered to treat organic waste over the longer term, as part of our overall waste strategy. In addition, Members were asked to consider recommendations that the Council procures its own food and green waste contract.

Members noted that the need for a new Waste Transfer Station to treat and dispose of waste had been under consideration for some time and Officers have been exploring various sites for waste transfer infrastructure for the last 13 years, but to date no solution has been delivered “on the ground”.

Ty Dyffryn was purchased by the Council in 2005, for use as a waste treatment plant. Since that time there has been a long and mixed history over the use of the site. In January 2013, Cabinet resolved that a planning application be submitted for the proposed change of use of Ty Dyffryn for waste transfer, civic amenity site and depot use and a financial proposal be prepared for consideration by Council subject to planning permission being approved. In June 2015 planning permission was granted for change of use of Ty Dyffryn to a waste transfer facility and depot.

The supporting business case for the site at Ty Dyffryn was based upon the need to create a central facility to store and bulk all waste streams (including food and green waste) as well as a new civic amenity site and a central depot to house all associated Community Services vehicles. Throughout the same period, the Council, was part of a public sector collaboration for the procurement of a long-term food waste treatment contract with two other local authorities (Heads of the Valleys (HoV) Organics Procurement).

After a lengthy procurement process, the HoV Organics Procurement hub failed to move beyond the detailed solutions stage of the procurement as the remaining private sector bidders took decisions to withdraw from the procurement. Consequently, the procurement process ceased and there is now a need to consider how food and green waste will be dealt with.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report: -

- (i) the Council formally withdraws from the HoV Organics collaboration;
- (ii) the Council commences its own AD food waste and green waste treatment procurement and consider all options available from the market, which may include food waste transfer infrastructure.

10. COMMUNITY CENTRES TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Councillors N. George and D. Hardacre declared an interest (due to their personal association with staff at specific Community Centres) and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

The report, which was considered by the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 22nd September 2015, informed Members that a Task and Finish Group had been established in order to review the Council's support of community centre provision throughout the County Borough and make any recommendations necessary under the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Members noted that the Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations from the Community Centres Task and Finish Group. With regards to the recommendation to close Tirphil, Channel View and Rhymney Day Centre (as listed in 9.4 of the report to the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee and to achieve savings of £18k), Members unanimously agreed the REMOVAL of Rhymney Day Centre from this recommendation to allow more time to increase its usage following the withdrawal of Social Services.

Members thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued. A Member suggested that, whilst they were happy to move the recommendations, proposed an additional amendment in that Channel View Community Centre also be allowed more time to increase its usage.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that, subject to Channel View Community Centre being allowed more time to increase its usage, the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report and outlined at the meeting: -

- (i) the Council cuts the budget for payment of water rates for community centres to achieve savings of £27k;
- (ii) the Council reduces its caretaking contribution from 12 hours per week to 11 hours per week for each community centre, and recharges each community centre for one hour per week (to achieve savings of £14k);
- (iii) two centres, Channel View, Risca and Rhymney Day Centre be allowed more time to develop and increase their usage, and Tirphil centre be put forward for closure;
- (iv) that miscellaneous items be cut from the budget to achieve savings of £5k.

CHAIR

At this point in the meeting, Councillor K. Reynolds left and Councillor D. Poole proceeded to Chair the meeting.

11. FORMER BEDWELLY SCHOOL SITE

The report sought the approval of Cabinet to supersede a previous decision in respect of the disposal of land at the former Bedwellty School Site, and to market the site for sale on the open market for housing.

Members noted that at its meeting on 18th March 2008, Cabinet resolved to sell the Bedwellty School Site for housing on the open market by formal tender. As part of the process the bidders were required to demonstrate that they could achieve the Council's sustainability output targets and were also required to construct a new community centre on the site as an integral part of the development.

In the intervening period, Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 12 Design have been updated to set out the Welsh Government's land use planning policy in respect of promoting sustainability and sustainable buildings through good design. Further, Part L of the Building Regulations (relating to energy efficiency) has come into force and taken together these changes have codified much of the Council's previous aspirations.

Members noted that, in order to meet the aim of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which is driving a rationalisation programme in respect of community-focussed buildings and land assets, the site should be sold on the open market, pursuant to the adopted Protocol on Disposal of Property.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed:

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report: -

- (i) the earlier Cabinet decision be superseded and the principle of selling the site on the open market for housing, pursuant to the adopted Protocol on Disposal of Property, without the previous conditions relating to achieving sustainability output targets or constructing a new community centre be agreed;
- (ii) the detailed terms of the disposal be delegated to the Head of Performance and Property Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

12. PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR SMALLER SCALE WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENT/CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND CAPACITY STUDY

The report, which was presented to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 8th December 2015, provided an update on technical work undertaken in respect of supplementary planning guidance for wind turbines and outlined the results of public consultation and representations received in respect of the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Smaller Scale Wind Turbine Development and the Caerphilly County Borough Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study.

The report sought the comments of Members on the representations received and the minor amendments proposed to the guidance in respect of wind turbine development as a result, prior to its presentation to Council for approval as formal Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP) up to 2021.

Members were advised that concerns have arisen over the significant number of applications for single and multiple wind turbines being received in the area, and the cumulative impact arising from this. Landscape Officers felt there was insufficient guidance for local authorities or developers to allow consistent assessment of the potential impacts of these smaller scale developments. In response to this, Blaenau Gwent Council (on behalf of the Heads of the Valleys Authorities, including Caerphilly County Borough Council) commissioned a specialist company to undertake a study on this matter.

This work informed the new guidance, which has been prepared in two parts (Supplementary Planning Guidance for Smaller Scale Wind Turbine Development and the Caerphilly County Borough Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study).

Members thanked the Officer for the report and expressed a need for the guidance to be applied to the development of wind turbines in order to prevent intrusion.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report: -

- (i) the representations received as part of the consultations undertaken and the minor amendments proposed in Appendix 3 of the report with regards to the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Smaller Scale Wind Turbine Development and the Caerphilly County Borough Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study be noted;
- (ii) the guidance be approved as formal Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021.

EXEMPT ITEMS

Members considered the public interest tests and concluded that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and it was: -

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

13 DISPOSAL OF DUFFRYN HOUSE (TY DYFFRYN)

Councillor R. Woodyatt declared an interest in this item, due to a previous declaration and left the meeting during its consideration.

The report recommended the disposal of Dyffryn House to a single purchaser, for the relocation of a national business.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report, the recommendations contained in paragraphs 9.1.1, 9.1.2 and 9.1.3 of the report be approved.

14. BRIDGEND COUNTY COUNCIL – CATALOGUE SUPPLIES SERVICE

The report advised Members of the decision of the Catalogue Supplies Service Joint Committee on the 18th December 2015, and recommended actions following the outcome of the Committee.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the report be approved. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report, the recommendations contained in paragraphs 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4 of the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 3.10pm

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 3rd February 2016.

CHAIR

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CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: JUNIOR AND YOUTH FORUM PRIORITIES 2016

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

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- 1.1 The Youth Forum attended Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 12th January 2016, to inform Members of issues raised by children and young people via the Youth Service's Junior and Youth Forums and the current Priority Issues chosen and to seek support and confirmation that they be presented to Cabinet for consideration. A copy of the report presented at that time is appended hereto.
 - 1.2 Members were informed that at the Annual Youth Forum Conference young people were provided with the opportunity to explore issues and present their views on each of the four themes (Education for Life; Living Environment; Health, Social Care and Well-Being; and Regeneration). The issues and priorities as identified by both the Youth Forum and Junior Forum (as detailed within para 4.1.3. and 4.1.4. of the attached report) were presented to Members, who were given the opportunity to discuss each of the issues in detail.
 - 1.3 Following consideration of the report and subsequent presentation, the Scrutiny Committee agreed to support the issues raised by both the Junior and Youth Forum and to recommend their consideration at Cabinet.

Author: Amy Dredge, Committee Services Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Education for Life Scrutiny Committee - 12th January 2016

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EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12TH JANUARY 2016

SUBJECT: JUNIOR & YOUTH FORUM PRIORITIES 2016

REPORT BY: CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of issues raised by children and young people via the Youth Service's Junior and Youth Forums and the current Priority Issues chosen and to seek support and confirmation that they be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the Youth Service's Youth Forum Conference in October 2015 and the Junior Forum Meeting in November 2015, children & young people have identified issues important to them and have voted on a Priority Issue for 2016.
- 2.2 The previously agreed process that follows the identification of issues has been as follows:
- Presentation of issues to Department Management Team (DMT) for information.
 - Young people present issues to Cabinet for information and to request support in addressing the Youth Forum priority.
 - Young People present issues to relevant scrutiny groups for information.
 - Youth Forum issues are presented directly by young people.
 - Junior Forum issues are presented via a digital story as part of the Young Peoples' presentation, for information.
 - Young people form a Project Group that meets weekly to address the Youth Forum priority issue, working directly with officers and Members as appropriate on a range of initiatives intended to have a positive impact on the issue. This work continues until September 2016, with the process re-starting in October.
 - Delegates will be invited to attend the Junior Forum meeting in June 2016 to discuss the children's priority issue

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Local Participation Action Plan 2013.
- 3.2 The Caerphilly County Borough Strategic Integrated Plan (SIP) with particular reference to the LSB Citizen Engagement Strategy 2013.
- 3.3 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Welsh Government Extending Entitlement Guidance.
- 3.4 Welsh Government (WG) Future Generations Bill

- 3.5 WG National Youth Work Strategy
- 3.6 Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) Youth Service Strategy

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The Junior & Youth Forum are structured and organised around the four themes: Education for Life; Living Environment; Health, Social Care and Well-Being; and Regeneration. Junior Forum representatives are aged 7-11 years; Youth Forum representatives are aged 11-25 years.
- 4.1.2 At the Annual Youth Forum Conference young people are provided with the opportunity to explore issues and present their views on each of the four themes and engage in a dialogue with officers that are responsible for delivering the objectives of each theme, along with Cabinet members. From exploring all themes within the context of young people's lives, young people identify and agree on a priority issue for each one.
- 4.1.3 Following the conference an overall priority is voted upon by young people representing the Youth Service, Schools and Youth Support Services. The issues voted for by 552 young people for 2016 are:
 - Education for Life – To modernise the Youth Service so it fits young people's lifestyles (for example establishing the provision of Wi-Fi in all building-based locations, improving access to the service and increasing awareness of the service through the use of social media) – 50% of the vote
 - Living Environment – To make young people feel safer in their communities (seeing people under the influence of drugs and alcohol make young people feel unsafe in their communities – 22% of the vote
 - Health, Social Care & Wellbeing – To raise awareness of what Mental Health is and how to support people - 15% of the vote
 - Regeneration – To increase employment opportunities for young people– 13% of the vote
- 4.1.4 The Junior Forum representatives identified a priority within each theme of the Fora, and then voted for an overall priority. The issues voted upon by 117 Children are:
 - Living Environment – People need to respect the natural habitat of wildlife – 37% of the vote
 - Education for Life – Misbehaving pupils can take up too much lesson time – 27% of the vote
 - Health, Social Care & Wellbeing – Stop hunger. More foodbanks available for people that need them and to help them make healthier meal choices – 23% of the vote
 - Regeneration – Public Transport needs to be cheaper and safer for children – 13% of the vote
- 4.2 The Youth Forum will attend Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 12th January 2016, to present on the issues and outline the plans to address the priority issue, and wish to proceed with attendance at Cabinet to seek support in addressing the priority issue.

4.3 Previously the young people have attended Education, Regeneration, Living Environment and Health & Social Care Scrutiny. However, in 2015, the young people attended Cabinet and Education for Life Scrutiny. DMT to advise which Scrutiny meetings the young people are required to attend.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from the report at this stage.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the report at this stage.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from the report at this stage.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 All responses are reflected in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Members support and confirm presentation of Junior & Youth Forum issues to Cabinet.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To ensure Members are informed of priorities identified by children & young people.

11. STATUTORY POWERS

11.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Welsh Government Extending Entitlement Guidance

Author: Clare Jones, Youth Forum Co-ordinator
Jonescl1@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees:

Chris Burns Interim Chief Executive

Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer

Bleddyn Hopkins, Assistant Director, 21st Century Schools

Councillor R. Passmore, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Councillor W. David, Chair of Education for Life Scrutiny Committee

Councillor J. Pritchard, Vice Chair of Education for Life Scrutiny Committee

Councillor M Prew, Caerphilly Youth Champion

Paul O'Neill – Senior Youth Service Manager

Gail Williams, Acting Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer

David Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)

Tanis A Cunnick, Manager Community, Youth and Adult Education

Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Service and S151 Officer

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Caerphilly Junior & Youth Forum Issues



What have we been doing in 2015?

- Junior Forum
- International work
- Consultations
- BYC awards
- UKYP
- Children's Rights Day Event
- Priority Issue Domestic Abuse

How healthy is your relationship? **Pa mor iach yw'ch perthynas?**

Control	Rheolaeth	Support	Cymorth
Lies	Celwydd	Respect	Parch
Abuse	Camdriniaeth	Honesty	Gonestrwydd
Isolation	Unigedd	Love	Cariad
Criticism	Beirniadaeth	Equality	Cydraddoldeb
No trust	Diffyg ymddiried	Privacy	Preifatrwydd

Keeping your silence won't stop the violence
Codwch eich llais er mwyn rhwystro'r trais

Live Fear Free Helpline: 0808 80 10 800

Logos: Llamau, Youth, Invested, CAERDYDD CASHFUND



Regeneration – Public transport needs to be cheaper and safer for children = 13%

Health & Social Care – Stop Hunger. More foodbanks available for people that need them and to help them make healthier meal choices = 23%

Education for Life – Misbehaving Children can take up too much lesson time = 27%

PRIORITY = Living Environment – People need to respect the natural habitat of wildlife = 37%

What is the Youth Forum issue for Regeneration?

To increase employment opportunities for
young people

13% of Votes



What is the Youth Forum issue for Environment?

To make young people feel safer in their communities - seeing people under the influence of drugs and alcohol make young people feel unsafe.

15% of Votes



What is the Youth Forum issue for Health & Social care?

Mental Health – to raise awareness of what
Mental health is and how to support people
22% of Votes



Youth Forum Priority Issue - Education

Youth Service – Modernise it so it fits young peoples lifestyles.

50% of Votes



Youth Forum recommendations to the Youth Service?

- WIFI
- All Projects and Youth Clubs need to use social media
- Leaflets are needed to make people understand what the Youth Service is
- Tuck shops have been closed in Youth Clubs – Reopen them

Youth Forum recommendations to the Youth Service?

- Any Youth Worker interviews MUST have young people on the panel
- Young people should be involved in evaluating/inspecting the Youth service each year
- Whole service events should be held
- More mental health support – the youth service needs counsellors
- Project to support LGBT young people & sexual health education specifically for LGBT.

What we want councils support for?

- Check the Youth Service listens to us and makes changes to the way it works
- Allow the Youth Service to open tuck shops again
- Please don't make any cuts to our Youth Service – we need it.



How can you support us in this issue?



Any questions?

Thank You





CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CHARGES – 2016-2017

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The attached report, which provided details of the proposed increased charges which are intended to be effective for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the 2016/17 financial year, was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016. The report sought the views of Members on the proposed increases contained therein, prior to its presentation to Cabinet.
 - 1.2 The report summarised the process involved in preparing the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget. Members were advised that a new rent policy came into effect from April 2015 (as part of the Welsh Government's (WG) new Policy for Social Housing Rents) which was accepted by the Scrutiny Committee in the 2015/16 HRA Charges report. The policy sets a target rent band for each Authority whereby councils will have to adjust average rents for their properties in line with this banding. The uplift on the new rent policy is fixed for five years and uses the previous September Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation figure (as opposed to the RPI inflation figure), plus a 1.5% real increase to the average local authority rent, with further discretion for local authorities to apply an additional £2 per week increase. WG have announced the minimum rent uplift for 2016/17 to be 1.4% (which is CPI at -0.1% plus 1.5%). However if this increase is applied it will not meet the rent policy target rent band that has been set for CCBC.
 - 1.3 It was therefore proposed to apply a minimum rent increase of 3.5% per property from April 2016 to ensure compliance with the new rent policy and to maintain the viability of the Council's current business plan. Council tenants were consulted on whether CCBC rent setting policy should change to take into account regional and energy efficiency factors that make up the WG rent matrix, with the majority in agreement that the existing policy should remain unchanged, and hence there is no intention to include these factors within the Council's rent setting policy.
 - 1.4 The report also proposed increased service charges relating to the Council's Sheltered Housing Schemes and rent increases for Council-owned garages. Officers explained that it was not proposed to increase the current guest room charge in sheltered housing complexes (in that a decrease in charges is being considered in order to increase their demand) and that a consultation exercise on alternative uses for these rooms is being arranged.
 - 1.5 Discussion took place regarding the consultation exercise in respect of the rent setting policy and the mix of Council tenants surveyed, and Officers outlined the processes used in contacting tenants to invite them to the consultation events. Members were informed that from 970 tenants who were invited to take part in the consultation, 56 tenants attended the events and a further 17 tenants attended a tenant information exchange. Those in attendance gave constructive and in-depth feedback on the proposals, with representation from a number of areas across the county borough. Members suggested that it would be useful for the details of the demographic mix of tenants surveyed to be included in the report in order to demonstrate that tenants within the borough were fairly represented. Officers advised

Members that the tenants who attended the focus groups were from all parts of the borough, lived in a variety of property types, were of mixed ages and held various employment status.

- 1.6 Discussion also took place in regards to the letting and use of Council-owned garages, the number of vacant garages within the Authority's portfolio, and a recently approved programme to improve and rationalise the Council's garage stock. In response to Members' queries, Officers confirmed that replacement hard standing parking would be considered in those cases where garages are removed, and that a 2% increase in garage rental charges was considered to be appropriate in line with the Council's plans to improve their existing garage stock.
- 1.7 Following consideration of the report, and by a show of hands and the majority present (and in noting there was 1 abstention) the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that for the reasons contained therein:-
- (i) a minimum rent increase of 3.5% per property be applied from April 2016 to ensure compliance with the new rent policy and to maintain the viability of the current business plan, which is equivalent to an increase of CPI plus £1.63 (52 week basis);
 - (ii) that the current rent setting policy agreed in December 1997 remains in place;
 - (iii) the variable service charge at sheltered complexes with communal facilities be set at £28.18 (bronze service), £30.63 (silver service) and £34.20 (gold service) over a 48 week basis from April 2016;
 - (iv) the variable service charge in the four declassified sheltered schemes without communal facilities be set at £10.31 (bronze service), £12.76 (silver service) and £16.33 (gold service) over a 48 week basis from April 2016;
 - (v) the service charge payable by residents of Tredegar Court be increased to £65.26 over a 48 week basis from April 2016;
 - (vi) the meal cost at Tredegar Court be increased to £35.89 based on a 48 week basis from April 2016;
 - (vii) the guest room charge for sheltered housing complexes be not increased from April 2016;
 - (viii) the garage charges for Council and non-Council tenants be increased to £7.96 based on a 48 week basis from April 2016.
- 1.8 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016 – Agenda Item 8



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2016

SUBJECT: HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CHARGES – 2016-2017

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For Members to consider and take a view on the increased charges proposed in this report, prior to Cabinet approval on the 3rd February 2016. The charges are intended to be effective for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the 2016/17 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the preparation of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget is quite separate to the work involved in setting the General Fund Budget and Council Tax.
- In previous years The Welsh Government (WG) determined the annual guideline rent increases. The standard uplift policy for Local Authorities used to be based on the previous September Retail Price Index (RPI) plus a 2% real increase in support of rent convergence. The Minister for Housing and Regeneration has recently changed this uplift policy as part of the new Policy for Social Housing Rents. The new rent policy came into effect from April 2015 and was accepted by Members in the 2015/16 HRA charges report. The policy sets a target rent band for each Authority and if the average weekly rent is below the target rent, the Authority will have to increase average rents, and if the average is above the target rent, average rents will increase at a lower rate.
 - The uplift on the new rent policy is fixed for five years and uses the previous September Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation figure (as opposed to the RPI inflation figure) and also applies a 1.5% real increase to the average local authority rent. The previous September CPI inflation figure was -0.1% (minus) and has been at or around 0% for most of 2015 so already putting Local Authorities in a less favourable rent increase position. WG have announced the minimum rent uplift for 2016/17 to be 1.4% which is CPI at -0.1% plus 1.5%. However if this increase is applied it will not meet the rent policy target rent band that has been set for CCBC.
- 2.2 The responsibility for setting the rents for individual dwellings remains with the individual landlords, however the new policy sets a target rent band for each landlord who will be required to operate with average weekly rent levels that fall within the scope of those bands. The new policy is intended to provide landlords with a continuing measure of discretion over their overall rent levels and there is no proposal to alter the current rent structure for the 2016/17 rent charges, only to apply an inflationary increase that is within the new policy.

- 2.3 The Welsh Government national target rent bands for each landlord are based on a rent matrix that sets the principles for each size and type of dwelling in each Local Authority area. Those rent figures are aggregated for each landlord, based on characteristics and location of their housing stock, to provide an overall average matrix rent for each landlord. The key components are:
- Regional factors (house prices, private rents and place of work and place of residence based earnings)
 - Size (number of bedrooms)
 - Type (house flat and bungalow)
 - Energy efficiency of stock (SAP rating)
- 2.4 The current rent setting policy used by Caerphilly County Borough Council was agreed by members in December 1997 and was based upon three factors
- Number of bedrooms
 - Size i.e. square meterage of property
 - Type (house flat and bungalow)
- 2.5 Focus groups were held with tenants during June/July 2015 to ask their opinion on whether CCBC rent setting policy should be changed to also include the following factors that make up the WG rent matrix
- Regional factors
 - Energy efficiency of property
- 2.6 A total of 56 tenants attended the consultation events (970 were contacted and invited to attend the events) together with 17 tenants who attended the tenant information exchange
- 2.7 The results of the consultation exercise were
- 74% of tenants consulted did not agree that regional factors should be used to determine the rent levels
 - 89% did not agree that the energy efficiency of a property should be used to determine the rent levels
- 2.8 Therefore as the majority of tenants consulted agreed that the existing policy should remain unchanged there is no intention to include regional and energy efficiency factors within the Council's rent setting policy.
- 2.9 The target rent bands provide a low end figure, a mid point and a high end figure for each landlord. The average weekly rent level for each landlord is compared to the target rent band and the difference dictates whether the rent needs to be increased to fall within the target rent band.
- 2.10 In order to meet the deadlines for advising tenants of increases in rents and other charges, the increases have to be determined and fully agreed by 16th February 2016. All charges must be formally agreed by this date or it will not allow sufficient time for notice of increase to tenants, which is a legal requirement. This would result in a weekly loss in rent of £30k (based on a 3.5% increase).
- 2.11 All relevant charges are highlighted within this report detailing the amount of additional income that would be generated (excluding voids) if the proposed increases were implemented, along with the percentage of service users receiving housing benefit.

- 2.12 The report also includes proposals for increased service charges relating to our Sheltered Schemes and rent increases for garages.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The recommendations within this report provide the council with additional income that will be used to supplement existing funding arrangements to provide management, repair and improvement of the housing stock. This funding is used to maximize the resources available to assist in meeting and maintaining the WHQS. The rent increase is applied equally to all tenants. The report therefore links to the following strategic objectives:
- Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales (Welsh Government, 2010) which sets out the national context on meeting housing need, homelessness and housing related support services.
 - Caerphilly Delivers (Single Integrated Plan 2013: P2 “improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the county borough”.
 - IO5: Investment in Council homes to transform homes, lives and communities (WHQS).
 - People, Property & Places: A Local Housing Strategy for Caerphilly County Borough (2008/2013) Strategic Aim 6 – *Our aim is to provide good quality, well managed homes in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations.*

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Rent Increase

- 4.1.1 For a number of years the WG have effectively determined the level of annual rent increases, and these increases have been linked with the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy (HRAS) calculations, thus restricting an Authority from completely controlling its rental income. Members will be aware of the recent buy out of the HRAS system which introduced self financing from April 2015.
- 4.1.2 Under the new rent policy a target rent band for each Authority is set by WG so there is still some degree of control retained by WG however, all of the rental income will be retained by the Authority and used to fund expenditure, service debt and create borrowing headroom for future investment.
- 4.1.3 As a result of the housing benefit limitation scheme, rent increases above DWP rent limits do not produce extra income from tenants in receipt of housing benefit. At this stage however, details regarding the DWP limit under the new rent policy are yet to be confirmed. Approximately 72% of tenants are in receipt of housing benefit.
- 4.1.4 The WG draft proposal for 2016/2017 of its policy rent band for CCBC is
- Low end £79.16 per week
 - Mid Point £83.33 per week
 - High end £87.50 per week
- 4.1.5 CCBC's current average rent for 2015/2016 is £77.48 (52 week basis). A 1.4%% uplift on this average rent equates to £78.56 which is a 60p/wk shortfall from the low end rent band. Therefore a further increase of 0.8% is necessary to ensure CCBC is within its rent band and to comply with the new rent policy. The total minimum increase is therefore 2.2%. However, the WHQS business plan has assumed a 3.5% increase in rent to ensure the plan remains

viable so 3.5% would be recommended as a minimum increase which would create an average rent of £80.19 per week (52 week basis)/ £86.88 per week (48 week basis). This is equivalent to CPI plus £1.63 (52 week basis) or CPI plus £1.76 (48 week basis). The total weekly increase is £2.71 (52 week basis) or £2.94 (48 week basis).

- 4.1.6 WG have stated in their policy that “ *The rent policy allows you to apply the inflation plus £2 (per week) if you are aiming to move to a higher point within the Target Rent Band to meet your business plan commitments...*”
- 4.1.7 There is a transitional protection arrangement in place which ensures that rents cannot be increased by more than CPI plus 1.5% plus £2 for any individual tenant. This means that the maximum CCBC can increase its rent is 3.52% before the protection arrangement is compromised, which would create an average rent of £80.21 per week (52 week basis)/ £86.89 per week (48 week basis).
- 4.1.8 The current average rent for CCBC is £77.48 based on 52 weeks (£83.93 based on 48 weeks). The latest business plan submitted to WG includes a rent increase of 3.5% for 2016/17 and this has resulted in a £43.7m borrowing requirement in order to meet the WHQS by 2019/20. A rent increase of less than 3.5% will mean less income for the WHQS programme which will obviously result in increased borrowing. As part of the HRAS buy out there is an imposed borrowing cap of approx. £60m so there is limited flexibility to increase borrowing. Furthermore there has been some cost escalation in the WHQS programme that will require further borrowing to achieve the standard. If the borrowing levels go beyond the cap then the WHQS will be unaffordable.
- 4.1.9
- An increase of 2.2% would result in a £1.70 weekly increase to £79.18 on a 52 week basis (£1.85 per week to £85.78 on a 48 week basis). This is an additional rental stream of £963k that would be some £600k short of what is assumed in the current business plan resulting in a further borrowing requirement of £1m.
 - An increase of 3.5% would result in a £2.71 weekly increase to £80.19 on a 52 week basis (£2.94 per week to £86.88 on a 48 week basis). This is an additional rental stream of £1.5m, and meets the income requirement needed in the current business plan.
 - Both Increases are within the rent envelope (low end) for CCBC but only the 3.5% increase meets the current business plan requirements.
- 4.1.10 The Stock Condition Survey carried out in 2008 reported that high levels of investment are required to maintain the properties and meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. Experience has shown that significant variances will arise once the properties are surveyed and contract packages are specified and indications of cost escalation have emerged based on trends from tender prices and valuations. The small level of uncommitted borrowing that remains up to the borrowing cap will therefore be crucial in meeting these costs, and would be compromised if additional borrowing is committed to supplement a rent increase less favourable to the business plan.. A rent increase less than 3.5% would inevitably reduce the Council’s ability to manage and maintain the housing stock to the necessary standards, and as noted above failure to implement these increased charges would increase the shortfall in resources identified in the Housing Business Plan required to meet the WHQS by 2019/20 and maintain it thereafter. An increase above 3.5% would create more flexibility within the business plan and have a positive impact on the level of borrowing required to meet the WHQS but the maximum allowable under WG policy for 2016/17 is 3.52%.

4.2 Service Charges at Older Persons Housing (excluding utility charges)

- 4.2.1 These are applied to Sheltered Housing Officer assisted accommodation, of which there are three types: -

- Sheltered Housing with Sheltered Housing Officer assistance and communal facilities (962 units)
- Declassified Sheltered Housing schemes with no communal facilities (133 units)
- Tredegar Court extra care scheme (25 units)

4.2.2 Charges

Tenants currently pay a service charge in accordance with a banded system that was agreed as part of the Sheltered Housing review in 2013.

Sheltered Housing with Sheltered Housing Officer assistance operates within a Bronze, Silver or Gold banding depending on the individual assessed needs of the tenant. All charges include a support and a management element. The support element is met by Supporting People, and the management element is met by Housing Benefits, where tenants are eligible.

Recently declassified sheltered housing schemes operate under a reduced rate due to receiving fewer services than the sheltered schemes.

A 2% increase is intended to be applied to these charges in order to meet the requirements of the business plan.

Charge per Week (48 wk basis)	Current Charges £	Proposed Charges £
Bronze Band (De-classified)	10.11	10.31
Silver Band (De-classified)	12.51	12.76
Gold Band (De-classified)	16.01	16.33
Bronze Band (Baseline Service for everyone)	27.63	28.18
Silver Band	30.03	30.63
Gold Band	33.53	34.20

4.2.3 Tenants in receipt of benefit

75% of tenants who receive the Sheltered Housing Officer assisted services are in receipt of housing benefit.

77% of tenants in the declassified sheltered housing schemes are in receipt of housing benefits.

4.2.4 Financial Impact

The income generated from this service is difficult to predict as tenants are individually assessed to determine their banding, which can change depending on tenants individual circumstances. Currently for the sheltered schemes, 80% of tenants are assessed as Bronze band, 18% Silver band and 2% Gold band. The additional income will therefore be £26k.

For the declassified schemes, there are currently 88% assessed as Bronze and 12% assessed as silver. The additional income will therefore be £1k.

4.3 Tredegar Court Extra Care Scheme service charge

4.3.1 The Extra Care Scheme was not included as part of the sheltered review

4.3.2 Charges

The current charge is £63.98 per week and it is proposed to increase by 2% to £65.26 in line with the Councils current business plan.

4.3.3 Tenants in receipt of benefit

65% of tenants who receive this service are in receipt of benefit and therefore do not pay the charge.

4.3.4 Financial Impact

The proposed increase would generate additional annual income of £1.5k.

4.4 Meal Charges (Tredegar Court only)

4.4.1 Charges

Residents of Tredegar Court receive a hot 2 course meal at a cost of £4.64 per day. This is equivalent to a weekly charge of £32.48 or £35.19 when collected over 48 weeks. Catering DSO currently provide the service to the HRA.

Meal charges at similar extra care schemes In the Caerphilly Council area are substantially higher at more then £7 per day.

It is proposed to increase the charge by 2% in line with the Councils current business plan, which is equivalent to £35.89 per week, based on a 48 week collection or £4.73 per day.

4.4.2 Tenants in receipt of benefit

61% of tenants who receive meals are in receipt of housing benefit and will only pay a non-eligible amount. The non eligible amount for 2016/17 is £17.85 per week.

4.4.3 Financial impact

The proposed increase would generate additional income of around £1k which would be passported to the Catering DSO for providing the service.

4.5 Guest Room

4.5.1 Charges

A number of sheltered housing schemes have guest rooms and the charge to visitors is £18.00 per night plus VAT. It is not proposed to increase this charge this year as the charge is similar to other providers. Also there is an ongoing review of these rooms due to their

current low levels of use. Consideration is being given to a pilot project to reduce the guest room charges in a number of schemes with a view to them being utilised more frequently. We are also currently in consultation with tenants of a number of schemes regarding possible alternative uses of guest rooms and have recently converted two guest bedrooms into offices to improve facilities for privacy and support for tenants and their families.

4.5.2 Tenants in receipt of benefit

Guest room charges do not apply to tenants, and are not eligible for housing benefit.

4.5.3 Financial impact

No additional income will be generated.

4.6 **Garage Charges**

4.6.1 The Council has 943 garages in stock, of which 565 are currently let (72% are let to non-council tenants, 28% are let to council tenants). The current weekly rent is £7.80 and it is proposed to increase the charges by 2% in line with the Council's current business plan to £7.96 per week. A report has been approved by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group which recommended proposals to improve and rationalise our garage stock. The approved programme has led to a reduction in our garage stock and will result in improvements to our remaining stock. This work, which is ongoing has an impact on void levels as the garages must be vacated prior to commencement of works.

4.6.2 Tenants in receipt of benefit

Garage rents are not eligible for housing benefit and the majority (72%) of garage tenants are not council house tenants.

4.6.3 Financial impact

The increase will generate additional income of 7k.

5. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Equalities monitoring of tenants will continue to be an important source of information in order to ensure fairness, and also to highlight any direct impact the increases have on tenants who fall under one or more of the protected characteristics as defined by the 2010 Equality Act.. Any direct impact noted can lead to additional support and advice being offered or signposted in order to help those particular tenants.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This report deals with the financial implications of the proposed rent increases which affects the HRA.

6.2 The impact of the Welfare Reform Act is not taken into consideration.

7. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The proposals contained in this report will not alter the current arrangements for the collection of housing revenue account monies.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All consultation responses have been reflected in this report. The report will be presented to Cabinet on the 3rd February 2016. An information report will also be presented to CHTG on the 18th February 2016.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to consider and give a view on the following recommendations which will be presented to Cabinet on the 3rd February 2016;
- (a) Members agree as a minimum to apply a 3.5% increase per property from April 2016 to ensure compliance with the new rent policy and to maintain the viability of the current business plan.
 - (b) That the current rent setting policy agreed in December 1997 remains in place.
 - (c) The variable service charge at sheltered complexes with communal facilities be set at £28.18 (bronze service), £30.63 (silver service), and £34.20 (gold service) over a 48 week basis from April 2016.
 - (d) The variable service charge in the four declassified sheltered schemes without communal facilities be set at £10.31 (bronze service), £12.76 (silver service), and £16.33 (gold service) over a 48 week basis from April 2016.
 - (e) The service charge payable by residents of Tredegar Court be increased to £65.26 over a 48 week basis from April 2016.
 - (f) The meal cost at Tredegar Court be increased to £35.89 based on a 48 week basis from April 2016.
 - (g) The guest room charge for sheltered housing complexes are not increased from April 2016.
 - (h) The garage charges for Council and non-Council tenants increase to £7.96 based on a 48 week basis from April 2016.
 - (i) This report be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Inflationary increases on providing all aspects of the housing service are experienced annually, however as the HRA cannot legitimately set a deficit budget, the loss of additional income will result in reduced resources being available to effectively manage and maintain the stock.
- 10.2 Housing benefit will cover the increased costs for the majority of the charges mentioned in this report. Failure to implement the increased charges proposed will result in the services received by those tenants being further subsidised by the rent payments of those tenants not receiving that service.
- 10.3 If charges are not increased annually it has a detrimental effect on subsequent years as higher increases are then needed to recover the shortfalls from previous years.
- 10.4 The Council's Business Plan relies on inflationary increases to remain viable.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 1972. This is a Cabinet function.

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Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Fiona Wilkins Public Sector Housing Manager
Jo Green, Housing Manager – Older Persons Services
Amanda Main, Acting Benefits Manager
Mark Jennings, Housing Strategy Officer
Stephen Harris, Acting Head of Corporate Services
Cllr D Poole, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
David A. Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer

Background Papers (available on request):

Report to Policy and Resources Committee 20th January 2015 - Housing Revenue Account Charges
– 2015-2016

Welsh Government Rent Policy Guidelines

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CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: WHQS COMPLIANCE POLICY

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016, having previously been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 10th December 2015. The report sought the views of Members on the draft WHQS (Welsh Housing Quality Standard) Compliance Policy, which is a Welsh Government requirement, prior to its presentation to Cabinet.
 - 1.2 Members were advised that social housing landlords are required to put in place a Compliance Policy by 1st April 2016. The Compliance Policy is intended to provide the Welsh Government tenants and the Council with assurance that WHQS will be achieved and maintained and must set out the arrangements for independent verification. A copy of the draft policy was appended to the report.
 - 1.3 It was noted that the Caerphilly Homes Task Group had expressed a need for the Environmental Programme to be more fully incorporated into the Policy, as it is an integral part of the programme, and at that meeting it was agreed that an additional paragraph be included in the Policy as follows:-

“There will be a separate environmental programme which will address Part 6 of the WHQS. The process will involve engagement and consultation with residents to identify community aspirations and to determine priorities for environmental improvements. An engagement plan has been agreed that will run from January 2016. Project implementation is likely to commence during 2016 and will be phased through to the end of the programme in 2020. Improvements may include landmarks/gateways, street furniture, traffic calming, street lighting, rationalising pedestrian routes, landscaping, safe play areas, car parking, defensible space and demarcation of boundaries”.
 - 1.4 Following consideration of the report and the recommendation from the Caerphilly Homes Task Group, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet that for the reasons contained therein, and subject to the inclusion of reference to the Environmental Programme, the WHQS Compliance Policy be adopted.
 - 1.5 Members are asked to consider the recommendation.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016 – Agenda Item 13

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POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2016

SUBJECT: WHQS COMPLIANCE POLICY

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

- 1.1 The report was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) on the 10th December 2015 and sought views on the draft WHQS Compliance Policy, which is a Welsh Government requirement, prior to its consideration at Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
- 1.2 Social housing landlords are required to put in place a Compliance Policy by 1st April 2016, which would be subject to annual review. The Compliance Policy is intended to provide the Welsh Government, tenants and the Council with assurance that WHQS will be achieved and maintained and must set out the arrangements for independent verification.
- 1.3 The Task Group debated various aspects of the report and raised concern for the brief reference to the Environmental Programme within the Policy. It was agreed that as the Environmental Programme was an integral part of the programme and has to be delivered to achieve WHQS, that a fuller explanation should be incorporated within the Policy. The Scrutiny Committee are asked to note that in view of the concerns expressed, the following additional paragraph has been included in the Policy:-

"There will be a separate environmental programme which will address Part 6 of the WHQS. The process will involve engagement and consultation with residents to identify community aspirations and to determine priorities for environmental improvements. An engagement plan has been agreed that will run from January 2016. Project implementation is likely to commence during 2016 and will be phased through to the end of the programme in 2020. Improvements may include landmarks/gateways, street furniture, traffic calming, street lighting, rationalising pedestrian routes, landscaping, safe play areas, car parking, defensible space and demarcation of boundaries".
- 1.4 The Task Group discussed the progress being made on surveys and it was noted that additional resources are required in order to increase the number of surveys completed in advance of works commencing.
- 1.5 Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that subject to the inclusion of reference to the Environmental Programme, the Policy be recommended for approval by Cabinet. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend the adoption of the revised WHQS Compliance Policy to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

- 1.6 Members are invited to consider the report and the above recommendation.

Author: C. Evans, Committee Services Officer, Ext 4210.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Caerphilly Homes Task Group Report – 10th December 2015



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 10TH DECEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: WHQS COMPLIANCE POLICY

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consult CHTG on the draft WHQS Compliance Policy which is a Welsh Government requirement. The report is seeking the views of the CHTG prior to its presentation to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Social housing landlords are required to put in place a Compliance Policy by 1st April 2016 and review it annually. The Compliance Policy is intended to provide the Welsh Government, tenants and the Council with assurance that WHQS will be achieved and maintained and must set out the arrangements for independent verification. A copy of the draft policy is attached in the Appendix to the report.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard 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 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.”
- 3.4 The Caerphilly Homes Task Group is a formal mechanism to engage with tenant representatives and ensure their views are reflected in decisions relating to public sector housing.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 An earlier report to the CHTG in May 2015 set out the background and Welsh Government requirements.
- 4.2 The main elements of the policy are:-

- Interpretation of WHQS
- Interpretation and recording of acceptable fails
- Data collection and storage
- WHQS progress and reporting
- Independent verification
- Annual financial investment in the stock
- Community Benefits.

4.3 The Internal Audit service will be used to verify the systems used to collect, store and ensure the accuracy of information used to demonstrate progress in implementing the WHQS programme. Provision will be made in the Internal Audit Plan on an annual basis to test aspects of the systems and ensure the validity of the information used to demonstrate compliance with WHQS.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An EqlA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and for lower level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqlA has not been carried out.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The implementation of the Compliance Policy has major financial commitments which are addressed through the HRA business plan.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are significant staff resources to implement the WHQS Programme to achieve and maintain compliance. Staff resources are kept under review and have been strengthened where appropriate.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 No comments have been received.

9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 The Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet the adoption of the WHQS Compliance Policy.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To meet a requirement from Welsh Government to prepare and adopt a WHQS Compliance Policy by 1st April 2016.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

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Consultees:

Cllr D V Poole	-	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Housing
C Burns	-	Interim Chief Executive
C Harry	-	Corporate Director Communities
N Scammell	-	Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer
S Couzens	-	Chief Housing Officer
G Williams	-	Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
R Harris	-	Internal Audit Manager

Appendix1: Draft WHQS Compliance Policy

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Draft WHQS Compliance Policy

Background

The Council owns around 10,900 properties and in addition there are 417 leasehold flats. The Council balloted tenants early in 2012 in respect of transfer of their homes to a registered social landlord. Tenants voted to remain with the Council. During the ballot the Council had outlined to tenants a retention plan to achieve Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) by 2020. Towards the end of 2012 a more detailed investment strategy and implementation plan was agreed following further consultation with tenants. There are separate programmes for internal and external works operating on a community basis with concurrent contracts in the three housing areas (Lower Rhymney Valley, Upper Rhymney Valley, and Eastern Valleys). The contract works are split roughly 50:50 between the in house work force and contractors. There will be a separate environmental programme.

Due to a number of setbacks that resulted in programme slippage during 2014/15, the investment strategy was updated in February 2015. Since then a number of decisions have been taken that will impact on this programme and another re profiling of the programme will be undertaken prior to the commencement of the 2016/17 financial year.

The WHQS business plan is based on the Savills stock condition survey undertaken in 2008. The conclusion from the survey was the stock had been well maintained on a day to day basis but required substantial investment to meet the requirements of the WHQS. A significant number of components were identified as having reached or were reaching the end of their useful life and required replacement in the short term. The main areas of failure against the Standard related to the lack of internal modernisation to the properties and issues surrounding the environment around the properties.

With the lapse of time since the Savills survey and given that the survey was only a 15% sample, and that there was continuing investment in the stock between 2008 and 2012 it was determined that all properties would need to have an individual survey to determine the scope of the works necessary to meet the standard and / or verify whether previous works were fully compliant with the standard. The surveys are also used to update/amend the asset database for component renewal beyond 2020.

The Council has an in house team of surveyors who use the WHQS Guidance (July 2008) as a means to establish the scope of work required to each property. The surveyors have to exercise judgement in reaching a determination as to whether any component should be renewed, and whether any component may fall out of compliance prior to 2020. Every property is different due to works undertaken in previous years under either planned programmes or response repairs.

The contract approach and general specification was the subject of extensive dialogue with a representative group of tenants following the ballot. The Council attempts to ensure that the minimum requirements of all parts of the standard are met, but in many instances will go beyond the minimum to achieve a satisfactory outcome for tenants. However this approach has to be balanced against the cost implications for the budget. This does not mean that every tenant will get exactly the same and especially in those circumstances where work has previously been undertaken that already achieves the standard. Also there may be physical and cost considerations that limit what is practical and reasonable.

Interpretation of WHQS

The scope of work for each property is assessed on the basis of The Welsh Housing Quality Standard Guidance July 2008, and in particular Parts 1,2,3,4 and 7, and by application of The Standard Assessment Checklist. Internally work is focused on four key components – kitchens, bathrooms, rewires, and heating systems. Externally it is the condition of key components including roofs, windows, doors, walls, paths and fences. The topography of the County Borough is a particular constraint when it comes to external works as many properties have steep gardens and there are extensive retaining walls. In addition there is a garage stock of in excess of 1200 garages in variable condition on sites throughout the major estates.

From the individual surveys a schedule of work for each property is prepared. Properties are then grouped together to create packages which are then issued to the relevant contractor or the in house work force depending on the community area.

Where it is apparent from the first visit to the property that the household may have special needs a referral is made to the Occupational Therapist within the Tenant Liaison Team. The OT officer will make an assessment and as necessary prepare an intervention plan recommending adaptations which are then incorporated within the works schedule. It is the Council's policy to undertake work that is necessary to bring the property into compliance with the standard. This will include any component that is judged will require renewal or replacement prior to 2020, but otherwise component replacement will be deferred until after 2020 and included in future planned maintenance programmes.

Interpretation and Recording of Acceptable Fails

The Council accepts that residents' should have a choice about the works proposed for their homes. If, for whatever reason, the tenant decides they do not want the improvement work undertaken this will be accepted. The only exception to this would be where there is a health and safety consideration, for example electrical rewiring, and in these circumstances the landlord would enforce the work. Where the tenant refuses work this will be recorded as an acceptable fail due to resident's choice.

Where properties drop out of the programme they will subsequently be dealt with either when they become void or as part of a mop up contract in the latter part of the programme. The position with voids is that the minimum necessary work will be undertaken to enable the property to be re let in the shortest time as the emphasis is delivering the WHQS through a planned programme. However where the condition of the property is such that one internal component has to be replaced (e.g. kitchen or bathroom) this will be to WHQS, and any other internal components that require renewal will be undertaken at the same time.

The accommodation in the individual units of many of the sheltered housing schemes has limited space to fully meet the space standards of WHQS and they may be recorded as acceptable fails for reasons of timing, cost and physical constraint. Six schemes are subject to review in respect of remodelling and where this proceeds meeting the WHQS will be part of the design criteria. However remodelling may not take place prior to 2020 for all schemes.

In order to meet the needs of certain tenants with disabilities a wet room may be installed resulting in the provision of a shower but no bath. When the property is re let the wet room will normally remain if in good condition. Depending on the family circumstances of the new tenant the landlord may replace the wet room with a bath and over bath shower.

The use of the acceptable fail criteria will be applied in a common sense manner. For example there are a number of properties where party walls are absent within the loft space, or defective. In terms of WHQS this raises both safety and security considerations. But practically it is only possible to deal with this matter when the properties are being re roofed. A common attic void can be recorded within the database (see IT section) and the work would be deferred on the grounds of timing and physical constraint. A note should be added to the asset records to include within roof works post 2020.

The extent of external works may be constrained by topography and some acceptable fails are likely due to physical constraint and cost of remedy. In these circumstances it is difficult to see how an acceptable fail could be converted to a pass at any time without major civil engineering works or estate redevelopment. For the foreseeable future this is very unlikely.

IT Systems

With separate programmes for internal and external works there are in excess of 20,000 individual property projects. The IT systems manage the information flows from the initial survey stage, works scheduling, through the works stage, to the completion and valuation process. The management and monitoring of the WHQS Programme is via Keystone. This provides core asset management (KAM), contract management (KPM), component accounting, cyclical servicing, and energy measurement functions. The Keystone system utilises a Microsoft SQL Server database and a Microsoft Windows application server. Mobile working is undertaken by CCBC staff using Keystone's Foundation (FOU) software on Dell tablets using Microsoft Windows 8.

Keystone components and WHQS

The Savills' survey was a component based stock condition survey which has been used to establish the data base but subsequently enhanced to ensure that each of the WHQS elements has a corresponding component or components (see appendix 1 Keystone Component List). Certain WHQS elements do not relate to a physical component and can only be confirmed as compliant by surveyor observation.

There are approximately 13,500 property assets in the system – homes, garages, block and communal assets. After the initial data conversion of the Savills' survey an exercise was undertaken to identify components that had been installed by CCBC planned maintenance works, responsive repairs, and end of tenancy works. This improved the data quality by replacing cloned data based on estimated component ages with data based on actual installation dates within specific properties. Component information continues to be updated via stock condition surveys and works contracts.

Updating component information via stock condition surveys

There are separate internal and external works surveys. Surveyors conduct internal condition surveys via tablet pcs and record compliance status for WHQS components. At the same time a contract survey is undertaken to identify all the items of work required prior to the 2020 deadline. Where no work is required for a component prior to 2020, surveyors will update the Keystone database with their assessment of when the item will require repair/renewal. This also applies for external works surveys.

Updating component information via contract works

In order to ensure that every Council owned home is compliant with WHQS each individual property is added to both an internal and external contract of works, even if no works are to be undertaken on a property. Contracts are created within the Keystone contract management module. For internal works these contracts usually contain 20 to 30 properties and may also have sub contracts for associated works where a separate contractor is undertaking the work e.g. heating, electrics, tiling, flooring, or asbestos works.

Contract surveys are carried out that identify works required using a schedule of rates (SOR). These SOR items are added to a schedule of works (SOW) for each property. Where works are not required because components are already compliant (and will be at 2020) dummy SOR items are added at an elemental level i.e. one per kitchen, bathroom, heating, and electrics, rather than component level. The same applies for external work that has been previously achieved.

The same elemental level approach is used for recording acceptable fails under WHQS. For example if kitchen work is refused by a tenant individual acceptable fails would not be recorded against all components within a kitchen, but a single fail against the kitchen as a whole would be recorded. This approach has been adopted as a practical measure to reduce the complexity of the surveying process and to reduce the overall number of data items recorded.

Recording actual works required, acceptable fails and work that has been previously achieved enables compliance to be tracked for each individual property within the WHQS Programme. The data collected from the surveys is extracted and loaded into a data warehouse which is then used for management reporting.

The table below shows a typical data warehouse table for three properties in the same contract.

Data item	Property 1	Property 2	Property 3
Contract ID	54	54	54
Property Reference	A1960023	A1960027	A1960033
Kitchen Element	Type-Kitchen Full Works	Type-2 kitchen	
Bathroom Element	Type-Bathroom with wet room and WC	Type-2 bathroom	
Electrics Element	Type-In House Rewire	Type-No Type Specified	Type-No Type Specified
Heating Element	Type-Radiator Renewal	Achieved Previously	Type-Boiler and Rads Renewal
Unsurveyed Count			1
Completion Status	3. Complete	1. Incomplete	
Complete Count	1	0	
No Work Count			
Compliant	1		

Property 1 is WHQS compliant in relation to internal elements because works have been completed to kitchen, bathroom, electrics and heating. Property 2 is not yet compliant because the works identified on the kitchen, bathroom and electrics have not been completed, but the heating element is already compliant and requires no work. Property 3 has been identified as “un surveyed” because there are items missing from the kitchen and bathroom elements.

As each SOR item has a value it is possible to track commitment costs for each property and contract in the WHQS Programme. Schedule of work items for a property are marked as completed and then valued using the Keystone system, providing actual cost information. Variations to the original schedule of work can also be identified and monitored.

Completions and variations can be undertaken on site using tablet pcs or in the office.

The data collected for each contract is used by the Keystone system to produce;

- Automated letters to tenants
- Bills of quantities
- Valuations
- Site instructions
- Other contract documentation

This provides significant efficiencies as schedules of works, tenants, properties and contract related data does not have to be re keyed in order to populate these documents. This approach ensures that everyone involved in the process is working from a single set of data within the Keystone system. Keystone also stores scanned image copies of kitchen / bathroom plans, contract related spreadsheets and other associated documentation against individual contracts providing a full audit trail.

When contracts have been completed all works carried out in that contract that relate to the components listed in the Appendix 1 (Keystone Component List) are automatically updated with actual component installation dates and with new replacement dates beyond 2020.

Data Audits

The Keystone system has an audit table associated with most of the major database tables. These audit tables track the majority of the insert, update and delete transactions undertaken by users within the system, together with the name of the user carrying out the transaction and the date that the transaction took place. A comprehensive audit trail is therefore available for changes to the information held in the database.

In addition to the internal audit tables within Keystone CCBC staff who manage the database have developed a range of audit reports that identify errors and inconsistencies within the data. These reports are checked by staff and corrections applied when necessary.

Data Warehousing

WHQS information within the Keystone database is regularly extracted, transformed and loaded into the data warehouse where it is combined with information from the other housing systems. The use of the data warehouse enhances performance management reporting and management decision making.

The data warehouse facilitates the snapshotting and storage of WHQS performance management information which allows the historical context to be preserved in order to accurately evaluate performance over time.

The data warehouse also allows for enhanced auditing of data within the Keystone system. To aid interrogation of the database a series of financial, contract and customer satisfaction dashboards have been developed. All dashboards have high level summary data but can be searched down to individual properties.

WHQS Compliance Certificates

In the period to 2020 tenants will be provided with a pass/ fail certificate where a property is being re let together with information from the indicative works programme as to when it is anticipated the property will be fully compliant. This information can be generated from the Keystone database.

WHQS Progress and Reporting

Delivering the WHQS is a Corporate Plan priority for the Council.

The WHQS Programme is an Improvement Objective (Investment in homes to transform lives and communities); is part of the 2013-16 Outcome agreement No 3 with Welsh Government (Welsh Homes Improving Quality); and is a priority in the Single Integrated Plan under the Prosperous Caerphilly theme (P2 Improve standards of housing and communities).

In September 2012 a Caerphilly Homes Task Group was established with 7 tenants and 7 councillors. The terms of reference include:

“To review and make recommendations on the overall strategic direction and allocation of resources appertaining to the WHQS and the housing service” and

“To monitor progress in achieving the WHQS and the service improvement commitments made in the addendum document issued to tenants as part of the ballot process.”

A half year and a full year report is presented which sets out progress across all the contracts with a volume metrics analysis and expenditure analysis. Based on the customer satisfaction surveys there is a summary of overall satisfaction and an assessment of the extent to which the Charter for Trust service standards are being met by the contractors.

The Caerphilly Homes Task Group is consulted on any programme changes necessary to ensure the overall objective of delivering WHQS by 2020 is achieved.

Key changes to the investment plan and additional measures to support the implementation of the programme are determined by the Cabinet.

The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee receive regular reports relating to performance against annual targets.

There is a tenants' Repairs and Improvements Group which is monitoring progress towards the WHQS against the commitments made by the Council at the time of the ballot.

Independent Verification

The Internal Audit service will be used to verify the systems used to collect, store, and ensure the accuracy of information used to demonstrate progress in implementing the WHQS Programme. Provision will be made in the Internal Audit Plan on an annual basis to test aspects of the system and ensure the validity of the information used to demonstrate compliance with WHQS.

An initial review of data collection and management was undertaken by Internal Audit during early 2015. This identified a number of improvements and in particular there should be one

integrated system providing a comprehensive data base for all management information. An action plan is being prepared in conjunction with the IT Service to address the audit recommendations.

Annual Financial Investment in Stock

The Welsh Government has a requirement for retention local authorities to prepare a housing stock Business Plan. The Business Plan is a long term financial forecast reliant on key assumptions to assess the financial viability of achieving and maintaining the Welsh Housing Quality Standard within a timeframe.

The Business Plan is a key document for WG as part of the criteria for awarding the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) grant. The purpose of the MRA is to provide a financial contribution towards the cost of capital works to achieve the WHQS by 2020 and maintain it thereafter. The Business Plan is submitted annually to support the MRA application and has a 30 year time horizon. It identifies all the costs required to operate the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as well as forecasting rental income streams and potential operating surpluses that can be utilised to fund the WHQS capital programme. It is, however, reliant on making assumptions at a point in time and the Business Plan does have to be regularly updated due to constantly changing circumstances. Assumptions underpinning the Business Plan relate to:

- Interest Rates
- Inflation
- Rental increases
- Voids and bad debts
- Right to Buys
- Management and Response costs

Changes in these assumptions will affect the level of operating surpluses that the programme is dependent on, as well as increasing risks to the cost of borrowing that the Business Plan relies on. Significant assumption changes can therefore have an impact on meeting and maintaining WHQS.

The 15% stock condition survey carried out by Savills in 2008 has formed the basis for the financial modelling in the Business Plan for the capital investment that is required to meet and maintain the WHQS. The 15% data has been extrapolated to the whole of the housing stock to produce a financial requirement per property to achieve WHQS. As the works programme progresses and more up to date information on each property is collected, the financial assumptions used from the Savills survey are updated in both Keystone and the Business Plan.

The current Business Plan has original data from the Savills survey from 2020/21 onwards. Capital works to 2019/20 are constantly updated to reflect actual work required to achieve WHQS by 2020. Current indications suggest £216m is required to meet the standard by 2020.

It is anticipated that works from 2020/21 will be revised in the Business Plan once the WHQS is near completion so that all components identified are included in the correct year going forward for their expected lifecycle replacement.

The Business Plan works on unit cost per total stock for the major cost elements and multiplies this against the estimated stock levels expected in each year based on assumptions about Right to Buy. The cost per unit for Capital and Response is shown in Appendix 2. This is taken from the current Business Plan and therefore reflects the current WHQS position up to 2019/20 and the Savills costs per unit from 2020/21 onwards. The Response and Cyclical cost reflect the current position and maintains this for the remainder of the plan. The plan accounts for inflationary increases year on year as a key assumption.

In April 2014 self financing was introduced in Wales. This enables Welsh local authorities with housing stock to retain all the rental income generated from the housing stock replacing the limitation imposed by the previous HRA subsidy system. In order to become self financing the local authorities had to make a one off payment to buy out the subsidy and agree to a borrowing cap.

The cost of the buy out has been factored into the current Business Plan with a significant increase in interest and loan charges. This has been offset favourably from the savings achieved by no longer paying a negative subsidy charge. However the introduction of the borrowing cap has limited the flexibility if there are any major cost increases in the WHQS Programme. The current plan borrowing requirement is £44m to meet the standard by 2020 with some £16m headroom before the cap is reached. The Business Plan has to ensure the borrowing limit is not compromised while still ensuring WHQS achievement by 2020.

The annual capital programme flows from the investment strategy and Business Plan that sets out how the WHQS will be delivered by 2020. The renewals and improvements are based on either internal or external works grouping relevant components together to create works contracts by community area. The capital programme budget for 2015/16 is £36m. The renewals element is £30m based on a planned programme of work to 4,500 properties. Due to the slippage that has arisen and the increase in the carried forward balances within the HRA a first tranche of borrowing is not projected as being required until the 2016/17 year.

Actual expenditure is showing significant variances from the Savills cost plan estimates, particularly for external works. A cost plan review will be undertaken prior to the 2016/17 financial year to examine the trend in the valuations for the internal works together with tendered prices on external works contracts in the Upper Rhymney Valley and the Eastern Valleys together with an assessment of the impact on the Business Plan.

Community Benefits

The Council is committed to ensuring that the WHQS capital investment delivers wider outcomes to help transform lives and communities. Community benefit clauses have been incorporated within the supply partner and the main internal works contracts. These are longer term contracts and include both core and non core community benefits.

The supply partner 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 core requirement of the contract:

- 1000 FTE person weeks of employment opportunities
- 50 unwaged work experience opportunities for people aged 16+
- 5 apprentice starts and completions
- 10 employment opportunities for people registered as long term unemployed (more than 26 weeks)

The contract places an obligation on the supply partner to complete the Value Wales Toolkit on an annual basis but this has proved difficult when collating information relating to the benefits and impact of a materials supply only contract.

The internal works contractors are required to deliver the following minimum requirements as core:

	Numbers – Lot 1	Lots 2 & 3
Permanent F/T Employment Opportunities	18	6
Opportunities for Long Term Unemployed	12	6
Apprenticeship Starts and Completions	24	12
Unwaged Work Experience Opportunities (16+)	120	60
Graduate Opportunities	6	6

In addition the following core requirements are also included:

- Deliver a minimum of 6 meet the buyer events
- Pay all supply chain partners within 10 days of invoice
- Advertise all tier 2 opportunities via the Sell 2Wales website
- Provide training and transfer of business acumen to supply chain
- Undertake 18 primary and secondary school visits throughout the duration of the contract (18 per lot)
- Volunteer at 18 school / college events (18 per lot)
- Work with schools / colleges to help develop bespoke qualifications
- Minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill
- Minimise / avoid movements and associated business mileage

The following non core requirements have been included in the internal works contract arrangements:

- Adoption of the Living Wage
- Add value to existing community initiatives
- Add value to existing community funds

In order to capture the impact and benefits generated as a result of incorporating community benefits into WHQS internal works contracts the contractors are mandated to complete the Value Wales Toolkit on a bi annual basis.

Around 50% of the total programme will be undertaken by the Council's in house work force. The majority of this work force resides within the County Borough and as a result will spend part of their salaries locally helping to sustain the local economy. The workforce has been increased to around 145 operatives from the original 100 through a combination of permanent, fixed term and agency contracts.

The Council is using the small lots exemption within the Public Contracts Regulations to target a percentage of the external improvement works on Caerphilly based companies to bring direct benefit to the local economy.

Consultation

The Compliance Policy has been the subject of consultation with the tenants Repairs and Improvements Group; the Caerphilly Homes Task Group; Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet considered the final draft and recommended the policy for adoption by the Council.

(Consultation responses to be incorporated as appropriate)

Approval

The Compliance Policy was approved by Council on x March 2016.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Keystone Component List

Appendix 2 Financial Investment in Stock (based on current business plan assumptions)

Phil G Davy
Head of Programmes

(First Draft July 2015)

APPENDIX 1 – KEYSTONE COMPONENT LIST

Repair Element	Parent Component	Child Component	Child Component Attribute
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom	Bathroom Only
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom	Bathroom with Shower
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom	Shower Over Bath
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom Extract Fan	Present/Not Present
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom Layout	Adequate
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom Layout	Inadequate-Imprvmnt Not Poss
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom Layout	Inadequate-Imprvmnt Possible
Bathrooms	Bathroom	Bathroom non-slip floor	Present/Not Present
Bathrooms	Bathroom	W.C. (Additional)	Present/Not Present
Bathrooms	Bathroom	WHB (Additional)	Present/Not Present
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Condensation/Damp/Ventilation	Condensation/Damp/Ventilation
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Electric Heating
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	From Communal Boiler
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Gas Boiler
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Gas with Back Boiler
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Oil Boiler
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Other
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Solid fuel
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Gas Condensing Boiler
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Air/Solar Source Heating
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Boiler type	Planned CESP boiler works
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Radiators/Storage heaters	Radiator Heating
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Heating - Radiators/Storage heaters	Storage Heating
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Plumbing (CWST & HWST)	Present/Not Present
Heating Systems	Heating Systems	Water Main	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Bathrooms	Communal Bathroom	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Bathrooms	Communal Plumbing Distribution	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Bathrooms	Communal Shower Rooms	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Bathrooms	Communal W.C/Disabled W.C	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Bin Store	Communal Bin Store/Refuse Chute	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Boilers	Communal Boiler	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Electrical	Communal CCTV	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Electrical	Communal Door Entry System	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Electrical	Communal External Security/Walkway Lighting	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Electrical	Communal Fire Alarm Systems	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Electrical	Communal Mains Electrical Distribution	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Electrical	Communal Wiring/Emergency Lighting	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Ext Doors	Communal Doors - Main Entrance	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Ext Doors	Communal Doors - Secondary Entrance	Present/Not Present

Repair Element	Parent Component	Child Component	Child Component Attribute
Communal	Communal Ext Doors	Communal Doors - Store Room/Boiler Room	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Kitchens	Communal Kitchen	Commercial
Communal	Communal Kitchens	Communal Kitchen	Domestic
Communal	Communal Lifts	Communal Passenger Lift	1 to 2 Floors Served
Communal	Communal Lifts	Communal Passenger Lift	3 to 5 Floors Served
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Chimney	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Fascias/Soffit/Bargeboards	Not Present (open or finlock)
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Fascias/Soffit/Bargeboards	Present/Not Present
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Loft Insulation (mm)	100mm or Less
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Loft Insulation (mm)	101 - 199mm
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Loft Insulation (mm)	200mm +
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Loft Insulation (mm)	Not Applicable
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Rainwater Goods	External
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Rainwater Goods	Finlock Lining
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Rainwater Goods	Internal
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Flat	Asphalt
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Flat	Corrugated Sheeting
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Flat	Felt
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Flat	Lead/Other Specialist
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Flat	Other
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Pitched	Clay
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Pitched	Concrete Tiles
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Pitched	Natural Slate
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Pitched	Other/Specialist
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof - Pitched	Synthetic Slate
Communal	Communal Roof	Communal Roof Structure Sagging	Sagging at party wall
Communal	Communal Windows	Communal Window	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Ceiling Track Hoist - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Consumer Unit	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Detector - CO (Carbon Monoxide)	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Drymaster - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Lighting External	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	PV Panel - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	PV Panel Invertor - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Stairlift - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Vertical Lift - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Wiring	Wiring - Certified
Electrical Systems	Electrical System	Wiring	Certificate Electrical EOT
External Doors	External Door	Door - External Front/Back/Side/Balcony	Fibre Glass

Repair Element	Parent Component	Child Component	Child Component Attribute
External Doors	External Door	Door - External Front/Back/Side/Balcony	PVCu
External Doors	External Door	Door - External Front/Back/Side/Balcony	Steel
External Doors	External Door	Door - External Front/Back/Side/Balcony	Timber
External Doors	External Door	Door - Flat Direct Entrance	Present/Not Present
External Doors	External Door	Doors - Patio	Fibre Glass
External Doors	External Door	Doors - Patio	PVCu
External Doors	External Door	Doors - Patio	Steel
External Doors	External Door	Doors - Patio	Timber
External Doors	External Stores	Door - External Store (to dwelling)	PVCu/GRP/Other
External Doors	External Stores	Door - External Store (to dwelling)	Timber
External Doors	Outbuilding Door	Door - Outbuilding	Other
External Doors	Outbuilding Door	Door - Outbuilding	Timber
External Works	Balcony	Balcony Balustrading / Railings	Present/Not Present
External Works	Balcony	Balcony/Walkway Floor	Present/Not Present
External Works	Canopies	Canopy	Present/Not Present
External Works	Disabled Adaptations	Disabled Adaptation	Handrails to Steps/Ramp
External Works	DPC	DPC/Dampness	Present/Not Present
External Works	Drainage	Drainage	Drainage
External Works	Fences Gates & Walls	Fences/Gates	Metal Security
External Works	Fences Gates & Walls	Fences/Gates	Present Other
External Works	Fences Gates & Walls	Walls - Boundary	Present/Not Present
External Works	Lintels	Lintel	Lintels
External Works	Parking	Parking (on Roadway)	Present/Not Present
External Works	Parking	Parking Off-Road (within demise)	Present/Not Present
External Works	Paths & Hardstands	Paths & Hardstanding	Present/Not Present
External Works	Porch (pod type)	Porch	Present/Not Present
External Works	Structural Stability	Structural Stability / repair	Structural Stability / repairs
External Works	Structural Stability	Structural Stability / repair	No Structural Issues
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Insulated overcladding
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Non Trad
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Other Cladding / Panelling
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Pointed Brickwork
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Pointed Stonework
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Render
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Tile Hanging
External Works	Wall	Wall - Finish	Un-Repaired Non Trad.
External Works	Wall	Wall - Insulation	Cavity Filled
External Works	Wall	Wall - Insulation	Cavity Unfilled
External Works	Wall	Wall - Insulation	Solid Insulated
External Works	Wall	Wall - Insulation	Solid Uninsulated
External Works	Wall	Wall - Insulation	Planned CESP solid wall insulation
External Works	Wall Outbuilding	Walls - Outbuilding	Other
External Works	Wall Outbuilding	Walls - Outbuilding	Pointed Brickwork/Stonework

Repair Element	Parent Component	Child Component	Child Component Attribute
Garages	Garage	Door - Garage	Other
Garages	Garage	Door - Garage	Steel
Garages	Garage	Door - Garage	Timber
Garages	Garage	Roof - Garage	Flat Roof
Garages	Garage	Roof - Garage	Pitched Roof
Garages	Garage	Walls - Garage	Other
Garages	Garage	Walls - Garage	Pointed Brickwork/Stonework
Garages	Garage	Window - Garage	Present/Not Present
Kitchens	Kitchen	Kitchen	Present/Not Present
Kitchens	Kitchen	Kitchen Extract Fan	Present/Not Present
Kitchens	Kitchen	Kitchen Layout	Adequate
Kitchens	Kitchen	Kitchen Layout	Inadequate-Imprvmnt Not Poss
Kitchens	Kitchen	Kitchen Layout	Inadequate-Imprvmnt Possible
Kitchens	Kitchen	Kitchen non-slip floor	Present/Not Present
Mains Pow. Detectors	Detectors	Detector - Multisensor (hard wired)	Present/Not Present
Mains Pow. Detectors	Detectors	Heat Detector - NEW not Savills	Present/Not Present
Mains Pow. Detectors	Detectors	Smoke Detectors (Hard Wired)	Present/Not Present
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Asbestos survey - full
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Asbestos survey - partial
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Full Management Survey - Void
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Full Management Survey - WHQS
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Full Management Survey - Historic
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Localised R&D Survey
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Partial Survey
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Bulk Sample Certificate
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Certificate of Cleanliness
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Clearance Certificate
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Work on non-licensed asbestos
Other Items	Other Items	Asbestos information	Asbestos Removed
Other Items	Other Items	Improvements to flats	Bedsit Modification
Other Items	Other Items	Sound Insulation	Potential Excessive Noise
Other Items	Other Items	Sound Insulation	Sound Insulation Difficulties
Other Items	Other Items	Z - Other Item	General Repairs / Dis-repair
Other Items	Other Items	Z - Other Item	Plaster repairs - walls/ceilings
Roofs & Associated	Outbuilding Roof	Roof - Outbuilding	Flat Roof
Roofs & Associated	Outbuilding Roof	Roof - Outbuilding	Pitched Roof
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Chimney	Present/Not Present
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Common attic void	Yes/No
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Fascias/Soffit/Bargeboards	Not Present (open or finlock)
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Fascias/Soffit/Bargeboards	Present/Not Present
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Loft Insulation (mm)	100mm or Less

Repair Element	Parent Component	Child Component	Child Component Attribute
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Loft Insulation (mm)	101 - 199mm
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Loft Insulation (mm)	200mm +
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Loft Insulation (mm)	Not Applicable
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Loft Insulation (mm)	CESP loft insulation 270mm+
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Rainwater Goods	External
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Rainwater Goods	Finlock Lining
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Rainwater Goods	Internal
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Flat	Asphalt
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Flat	Corrugated Sheeting
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Flat	Felt
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Flat	Lead/Other Specialist
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Flat	Other
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Pitched	Clay
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Pitched	Concrete Tiles
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Pitched	Natural Slate
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Pitched	Other/Specialist
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof - Pitched	Synthetic Slate
Roofs & Associated	Roof	Roof Structure Sagging	Sagging at party wall
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 1a) Is the house structurally stable & no disrepair? (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 1b) Is the dwelling free from damp? (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2) Window limiting stays fitted on first floor windows?	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2a) Stairs must have at least one handrail (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2b) Adequate space for kitchen appliances (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2c) Work surface sufficient for food preparation (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2d) Kitchen storage sufficient to meet needs (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2e) Kitchen sockets sufficient & convenient (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2fi) Flooring to the kitchen non-slip (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2fii) Flooring to the bathroom non-slip (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2g) External fire escape (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2h) Adequate fire alarm equipment (NOT SMOKE) (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2i) Bedrms have escape route not passing thru other roo	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2k) Bedroom window locks	Yes/No

Repair Element	Parent Component	Child Component	Child Component Attribute
		without automatic locking (S)	
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2n) Doors & windw have reasonable level of security (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 2o) Gardens safe for play & easy to maintain (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 3b) Ext doors & windows adequately draught proofed (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 3c) Living room separated from main entrance (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 3d) Hot water tank effectively insulated (P)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 4b) Adequate facilities for washing, drying & airing (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6a) Roads & footpaths accessible & safe (S)	Not Applicable
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6a) Roads & footpaths accessible & safe (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6b) Landscaping affects safety in protected areas (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6c) Is there adequate street lighting (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6d) Adequate & safe play space for young children (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6e) Adequate/practical/maintainable communal areas (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6f) Dwellings clearly identified with defined boundary	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 6g) Utility services practically located & identified (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 7a) Dwelling has sufficient space for everyday living	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 7b) Internal & external general storage space adequate	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 7c) Dwelling layout meet the special cultural needs (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 7d) Dwelling has necessary adaptations (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 7e) Garden with level area >=10m2 near dwelling (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 7f) Paved access to the drying line & garden gate (S)	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 99 Bathroom achieved previously	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 99 Electrical rewiring achieved previously	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 99 Heating install achieved previously	Yes/No
WHQS	WHQS	WHQS 99 Kitchen achieved previously	Yes/No
Windows	Outbuilding Window	Window - Outbuilding	Present/Not Present
Windows	Window	Windows	Other Double Glazed
Windows	Window	Windows	Other Single Glazed
Windows	Window	Windows	PVCu Double Glazed
Windows	Window	Windows	PVCu Single Glazed
Windows	Window	Windows	Timber Single Glazed
Windows	Window	Windows	Timber Double Glazed

APPENDIX 2

FINANCIAL INVESTMENT IN THE STOCK - EXPRESSED PER UNIT

	Response	WHQS	Other	TOTAL
	£	£	£	
2015/16	953	2961	373	4287
2016/17	955	2629	420	4004
2017/18	957	3191	420	4569
2018/19	959	2583	421	3963
2019/20	960	1678	422	3060
2020/21	962	381	109	1452
2021/22	964	381	109	1454
2022/23	966	381	109	1456
2023/24	968	381	109	1458
2024/25	969	1148	109	2226
2025/26	971	1371	109	2452
2026/27	973	1371	109	2454
2027/28	975	1371	109	2456
2028/29	977	1371	109	2457
2029/30	979	1371	109	2459
2030/31	980	1931	109	3021
2031/32	982	1931	109	3023
2032/33	984	1931	109	3025
2033/34	986	1931	109	3026
2034/35	988	1931	109	3028
2035/36	990	664	109	1763
2036/37	992	664	109	1765
2037/38	994	664	109	1767
2038/39	996	664	109	1769
2039/40	997	664	109	1770
2040/41	999	1219	109	2327
2041/42	1001	1219	109	2329
2042/43	1003	1219	109	2331
2043/44	1005	1219	109	2333
2044/45	1007	1219	109	2335

Based on current business plan assumptions

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CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: SMALL LOTS – REVIEW OF CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

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- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016, having previously been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 10th December 2015. The report proposed changes to the contract arrangements for external works in the Eastern Valleys and sought the views of Members on these proposals, prior to its presentation to Cabinet.
 - 1.2 The external works within the Eastern Valleys are being undertaken through a series of small lots contracts. Experience over the last 2 years has given rise to concerns that if continued reliance is placed on this method alone there are significant risks that this part of the WHQS programme will not be delivered by 2020. A review of the contract arrangements has concluded that the external works on 2 large estates (Cefn Fforest and Ty Sign) should be undertaken by alternative means and there is an opportunity to link this with the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley.
 - 1.3 Officers referred to Section 4.17 of the report, which suggested that the location restriction remain for the residual value of the small lots work. Members were advised that it was proposed to make an amendment to the report in that this location restriction be removed (and therefore tender invites for small lots contracts be extended to contractors located outside the county borough. Discussion took place regarding the rationale behind this proposal and Members sought assurances that the change in these contract arrangements would be of long-term benefit to the Authority. Officers explained that due to a change in the market conditions, there is a shortage of local contractors to fulfil the available small lots contracts (and therefore a need to extend the location criteria to include a wider geographical area).
 - 1.4 Members expressed a wish to see local contractors used wherever possible to fulfil small lots contracts and discussion took place as to the feasibility of preference being afforded to such businesses. Officers outlined the associated procurement process, explaining that should the location restriction be removed, all bids would be assessed using a fixed set of criteria and that precedence could not be given to local contractors. Members were reminded of the support and encouragement given by the Authority to local businesses and were assured that this would continue. Members requested that their views on this matter be reported to Cabinet.
 - 1.5 Arising from the discussion during the course of the meeting, and in taking into the recommendation of Officers in respect of the removal of the Caerphilly location restriction for small lots contracts, it was moved and seconded that an amendment be made to Recommendation (iii) of the Officer's covering report to reflect this proposal. Subject to this amendment, and by a show of hands and the majority present (and in noting there was 1 abstention) it was agreed that the Review of Contracts Arrangements in relation to Small Lots be supported. As such, it was recommended to Cabinet that:-

- (i) there be a reduction in the amount of work to be procured via small lots over the remaining period of the programme in view of the risks of not completing this by March 2020;
- (ii) the external works on the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates be incorporated within the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley;
- (iii) the adoption of 2 value bands be supported for small lots contract packages over the remainder of the programme period, subject to review in light of tender returns, and the Caerphilly location restriction for the residual value of the small lots work be removed;
- (iv) the Project Board continue to endorse the award of any small lot contract with a final tendered sum that exceeds the upper limit of either value band range where appropriate.

1.6 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016 – Agenda Item 9



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2016

SUBJECT: SMALL LOTS - REVIEW OF CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

- 1.1 The report was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) on the 10th December 2015 and proposed changes to the contract arrangements for external works in the Eastern Valleys; in addition the report sought the views of the Task Group prior to consideration by Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 The external works within the Eastern Valleys are being undertaken through a series of small lots contracts. Experience over the last 2 years has given rise to concerns that if continued reliance is placed on this method alone, there are significant risks that this part of the WHQS programme will not be delivered by 2020. A review of the contract arrangements has concluded that the external works on 2 large estates (Cefn Fforest and Ty Sign) should be undertaken by alternative means and there is an opportunity to link this with the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley.
- 1.3 The Task Group sought reassurance that sufficient contingency plans are implemented to ensure consistency and the continuation of the programme, in the event that contractors withdraw from the tender process.
- 1.4 Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommended that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee support the Review of Contract Arrangements in relation to Small Lots and recommend its adoption at Cabinet. By a show of hands this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report the Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet:

- (i) a reduction in the amount of work to be procured via small lots over the remaining period of the programme in view of the risks of not completing this by 2020,
- (ii) the external works on the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates be incorporated within the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley,
- (iii) the adoption of 2 value bands be supported for small lots contract packages over the remainder of the programme period, subject to review in light of tender returns,
- (iv) the Project Board continue to endorse the award of any small lot contract with a final tendered sum that exceeds the upper limit of either value band range where appropriate.

1.5 Members are invited to consider the report and the above recommendations.

Author: C. Evans, Committee Services Officer, Ext 4210.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Caerphilly Homes Task Group Report – 10th December 2015



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 10TH DECEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: SMALL LOTS – REVIEW OF CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose changes to the contract arrangements for external works in the Eastern Valleys. The report is seeking the views of CHTG prior to its presentation to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The external works within the Eastern Valleys are being undertaken through a series of small lots contracts. Experience over the last 2 years has given rise to concerns that if continued reliance is placed on this method alone there are significant risks that this part of the WHQS programme will not be delivered by 2020. A review of the contract arrangements has concluded that the external works on 2 large estates (Cefn Fforest and Ty Sign) should be undertaken by alternative means and there is an opportunity to link this with the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards. It is a Welsh Government requirement that the WHQS is achieved by 2020.
- 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 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.”

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The contract structure for the delivery of the WHQS Programme was approved by CHTG/Cabinet Sub Committee in September 2012.
- 4.2 The new Public Contracts Regulations came into force in February 2015 and continue to provide the same option for disaggregation of spend into small contracts up to the value of £833,400 for works as long as the total value of all such contracts does not exceed 20% of the value of the main contract or contracts tendered for the same requirements. The application of small contracts was seen as an opportunity for part of the WHQS Programme to be

delivered by local companies with a beneficial effect on the local economy. It was estimated that the value of work that could be awarded under the small lots amounts to £17.5m. This was broadly the estimated value of external works in the Eastern Valleys.

- 4.3 It was envisaged that around 20 small contracts would be tendered on a more limited basis. There was a cautionary note at the time of the original report that there would need to be a limit on the overall numbers of contracts awarded due to the resource implications for procurement, contract preparation and management.
- 4.4 As the detail of the small lots contracts has developed it has become necessary to break the packages down into smaller value lots in order for the smaller Caerphilly based businesses to be able to tender for work. As a consequence over the first two years (2014/15 and 2015/16) there will be 21 contracts. With the estimated value of work to be awarded over the remaining 4 years of the programme, which includes a large spike in 2018/19, there will be a proliferation in the number of contracts to be procured and managed, possibly in the region of 30 to 40 contracts. There will be particular management issues on the two large estates of Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest where multiple contracts will be necessary. It is unlikely that existing staff resources will cope with this large increase in contracts which will have to be tendered and works completed within the four year timeframe 2016/17 to 2019/20.
- 4.5 Furthermore experience with the small lots contracts to date has raised a number of concerns. There have been 10 small lots contracts tendered to date. The aggregate cost of these 10 have a tendered value 60% higher than the Savills cost plan budget. This results in an average spend per property of £12,268. This compares with a cost plan average of £5,000 per property.
- 4.6 Contract packages are tendered on the basis of value bands and there has been a disappointing response to a number of the contracts that have been tendered. The construction sector is currently buoyant with many more opportunities available and there appears to be capacity problems within the market which is contributing to the reduced number of tenders being received, compounded by demand for skilled construction workers.
- 4.7 There have been time overruns on nearly all the contracts. At the end of October 2015 only one contract of 53 properties in Markham has been completed. Although 6 more contracts are due for completion by December 2015 they all form part of the 2014/15 programme.
- 4.8 The first contract for 2015/16 has been awarded for 21 properties in Ynysddu/Cwmfelinfach. A further 11 contracts have still to be tendered for the 2015/16 small lots programme. These have been delayed due to the necessity to re-survey following the introduction of revised guidance for external works in light of concerns about cost escalation. The majority of the 2015/16 small lots will run into the 2016/17 financial year.
- 4.9 The original objectives of ensuring local contractors get the opportunity to tender for WHQS work remains an important aim. However, given the time pressure on delivering the WHQS programme in its entirety by March 2020 it is necessary to re-examine the practicality of delivering all the external works in the Eastern Valleys through the mechanism of small lots. With the large number of additional contracts forecast there is a big risk this will not be manageable within the staff resources currently available. Furthermore there would appear to be a cost premium to deliver works through a large number of small contracts and this may be difficult to sustain given the cost pressures on the programme generally.
- 4.10 The Ty Sign estate in Risca is scheduled for external works in 2016/17 (Lower) and 2018/19 (Upper) with a budget estimate of circa £6m affecting some 450 properties. To undertake this scale of work via small lots could involve 12 separate contracts all with associated resource implications for procurement, contract preparation and management. Given all the concerns highlighted leads to a conclusion that a different approach is now required that will provide greater certainty in respect of delivery by March 2020 and that will be simpler to administer and less staff resource intensive.

- 4.11 Although the overall estimated value of work is much lower there will be similar challenges on the Cefn Fforest estate where 320 properties will have external works undertaken.
- 4.12 It is advocated that the small lots programme should be curtailed and be limited to the smaller estates in the Eastern Valley which can be more easily parcelled into smaller contracts. Different contract arrangements should be adopted for the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates. There is an opportunity to incorporate these two estates within the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley which will avoid the need for a completely separate contract procurement.

- 4.13 During 2015/16 the small lots contracts have been tendered within three value bands:-

Band	Value Range
A	£ 50,000 - £200,000
B	£200,001 - £400,000
C	£400,001 - £800,000

- 4.14 In addition there is a location restriction which only allows the participation of contractors that have a Constructionline profile which show a location of work or branch office located within Caerphilly County Borough.
- 4.15 In view of the proposed changes to the small lots that will reduce the overall value of work to be offered over the remaining years of the programme it is also proposed that the value bands be amended to:-

Band	Value Range
A	£ 50,000 - £300,000
B	£300,001 - £750,000

The threshold between Band A and Band B may be subject to adjustment in light of research of those companies registered on Constructionline.

- 4.16 As tendered costs have generally exceeded the pre-tender estimate some flexibility has been allowed at the top of Band B as the overall limit set by the Public Contracts Regulations cannot be exceeded.
- 4.17 The location restriction should remain for the residual value of the small lots work as the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates will be opened to a wider market.
- 4.18 The WHQS Project Board will continue to be consulted in relation to the award of any small lots contract with a final tendered sum that exceeds the upper limit of either Value Band range recognising that the maximum value of any small lot cannot exceed £833,400 and the decision to proceed will be made by the relevant officer under Delegated Powers.
- 4.19 A fresh approach should be made to the local market and all interested contractors will need to undertake a PQQ notwithstanding if one has previously been completed.
- 4.20 Constructionline will be used to generate the list of eligible contractors who will be invited to participate in the new selection process. On completion of the new selection process the value band contractor lists will be put in place for the remaining four years of the programme but will be subject to review in the event of limited tender returns.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An EqlA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and for lower level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqlA has not been carried out.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The estimated value of external works in the Eastern Valleys (based on the Savills cost plan) for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 is £10.5m. If the Ty Sign and Cefn Forest estates are removed from the small lots programme there would be a reduction in estimated value of 65% to £3.6m. This would require a much smaller number of contracts to be awarded over the four year period to March 2020. The financial implications relating to individual contracts will be addressed at the time work packages are tendered.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposed changes would result in a more manageable number of small lots contracts and place less strain on the staff resources within the Procurement and WHQS teams. This will help to reduce the risks of this part of the WHQS Programme not being completed by March 2020.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Comments received have been taken into consideration within the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet a reduction in the amount of work to be procured via small lots over the remaining period of the programme in view of the risks of not completing this by March 2020.
- 9.2 The external works on the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates be incorporated within the procurement of new contract arrangements for external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley.
- 9.3 The adoption of 2 value bands is supported for small lots contract packages over the remainder of the programme period, subject to review in light of tender returns.
- 9.4 The Project Board continue to endorse the award of any small lot contract with a final tendered sum that exceeds the upper limit of either value band range where appropriate.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To agree a revised strategy for the small lots over the remaining programme period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Housing Acts 1985, 1996, 2004. This is a Cabinet function.

Author: P G Davy, Head of Programmes
Email: davyppg@caerphilly.gov.uk, Tel: 01443 8664208

Consultees:

Cllr D V Poole	-	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Housing
Cllr B Jones	-	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Services
C Harrhy	-	Corporate Director Communities
N Scammell	-	Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer
S Couzens	-	Chief Housing Officer
M Lloyd	-	Deputy Head of Programmes
C Roden	-	WHQS Project Manager
S Martin	-	WHQS Assistant Project Manager
J Roberts-Waite	-	Strategic Co-ordination Manager
L Allen	-	Principal Accountant
R Lewis	-	Systems and Performance Manager
L Lucas	-	Head of Procurement
N Abbott	-	Procurement Officer
J Ford	-	Systems Support Officer
G Williams	-	Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

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CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: ROWAN PLACE – PROGRESS REPORT AND SENSITIVE LETTINGS POLICY

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016, having previously been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 10th December 2015. The report provided an update on the progress made in relation to delivering a targeted regeneration programme in Rowan Place, Rhymney, and sought the views of Members on the adoption of a sensitive lettings policy and introductory tenancies specifically in relation to Rowan Place, prior to its presentation to Cabinet.
 - 1.2 Members were advised that following the identification of severe damp and external defects to the fabric of the properties in Rowan Place, Council approved a £4.2m budget to undertake a comprehensive refurbishment of the 72 Council properties on this estate. This regeneration programme has commenced and has been supplemented by funding from the Welsh Government which will facilitate environmental enhancements within Rowan Place. To date, internal works have been completed to 16 bungalows and 14 flats and the majority of external works to the bungalow have been completed. External wall insulation has been completed in 5 blocks of flats, groundworks are ongoing in 3 blocks, and roof work has commenced to 6 houses.
 - 1.3 In previous years, Rowan Place has been plagued by high levels of anti-social behaviour, crime and drug and alcohol abuse. Consequentially, it was proposed to introduce a Sensitive Lettings Policy (attached at Appendix 1) which will cover all 2-bedroom flats in Rowan Place. The Policy incorporates a strict set of criteria against which applicants will be assessed prior to the granting of a tenancy, and will include introductory tenancies for new allocations. This will facilitate a 12-month trial period before a secure tenancy is awarded and include a provision for the tenancy to be brought to an end during this time, should the tenant breach the tenancy requirements. It was noted that introductory tenancies would only apply to new tenants and that any current tenant of Caerphilly Homes who transfers into Rowan Place will continue on an existing tenancy.
 - 1.4 During the course of the ensuing debate, it was queried as to whether the Council's existing Sensitive Lettings Policy or Common Allocation Policy could be adapted to incorporate the proposed criteria instead, and concerns were raised as to whether the proposed Policy could be viewed as discriminatory to those residents of Rowan Place residing in the eligible properties. Officers highlighted the need for a separate Policy in order to address specific reputational problems associated with Rowan Place and improve demand for housing in the area. Members were also advised that an Equalities Impact Assessment of the Policy had been undertaken (attached at Appendix 2).
 - 1.5 A query was raised regarding the criteria timeframes listed within the draft Sensitive Lettings Policy (in that some made reference to the last 12 months and others to the last 2 years). Members also expressed the need for cases of historical chaotic behaviour to be considered

sensitively in that this could have arisen from underlying mental health issues. Officers confirmed that all listed criteria should refer to the last 2 years and that this amendment would be made to the draft Sensitive Lettings Policy prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

- 1.6 Following consideration of the report (and subject to the aforementioned amendment) the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet that for the reasons contained therein the adoption of the Sensitive Lettings Policy (including introductory tenancies for new tenants in Rowan Place) as set out in the Appendix to the report be approved.
- 1.7 Members are asked to consider the recommendation.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016 – Agenda Item 11



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2016

**SUBJECT: ROWAN PLACE – PROGRESS REPORT AND SENSITIVE LETTINGS
POLICY**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

-
- 1.1 The report was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) on the 10th December 2015 and provided an update on the progress made in relation to delivering a targeted regeneration programme in Rowan Place, Rhymney. It also sought the views of the Task Group on the adoption of a sensitive lettings policy and introductory tenancies, (specifically in relation to the Rowan Place flats) prior to its consideration at Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and thereafter, Cabinet.
 - 1.2 Following the identification of severe damp and external defects to the fabric of the properties in Rowan Place, the Council approved a budget totalling £4.2m to undertake a comprehensive refurbishment of the 72 Council owned properties. The programme underway in Rowan Place has been enhanced by a further £720,000 from the Welsh Government as part of its Vibrant and Viable Places programme which will facilitate enhancements to the environment within Rowan Place.
 - 1.3 In previous years, Rowan Place has been plagued by high levels of anti social behaviour, crime and drug and alcohol abuse. As a consequence, and for the benefit of existing tenants, the Council proposes to introduce introductory tenancies for new allocations within Rowan Place. Introductory tenancies would give all new tenants a 12 month trial period before they would be eligible to be awarded a secure tenancy and the tenancy could be brought to an end, during the introductory period, if the tenant fails to adhere to the requirements. This will ensure that anyone behaving inappropriately can be removed from the tenancy quickly.
 - 1.4 A Sensitive Lettings Policy, which can be applied in addition to the Introductory tenancies to only a limited number of properties (existing tenants will not be affected), would cover all 2 bedroom flats in Rowan Place, Rhymney. Caerphilly Homes Allocations Scheme allows for the allocation of families with 1 or 2 children and childless couples. Due to the size of the second bedroom only families with 1 child, or families with access will be considered and to reduce excessive child density in the area, childless couples may take precedence over families with one child.
 - 1.5 A strict set of criteria has been devised and any applicant that meets one of the criteria would not be offered a tenancy on one of the 2 bedroom flats in Rowan Place, for a period of at least 2 years. In addition, prospective tenants will be required to satisfy an income/expenditure assessment of their affordability of the tenancy and where two or more applicants have equal priority, preference would be giving to applicants who are in employment or training.

- 1.6 The Task Group highlighted the current issue with voids within the area and whether the implementation of the Sensitive Lettings Policy would compound the issue. It was noted that the policy aims to improve the area and peoples perspective. It is unclear, until the Policy is in place, whether the number of voids would increase, however a review would be conducted 12 months following completion to determine its effectiveness.
- 1.7 Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommended that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee support the Sensitive Lettings Policy, including introductory tenancies for new tenants in Rowan Place, and recommend its adoption at Cabinet. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report the Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, the adoption of the sensitive lettings policy, including introductory tenancies for new tenants in Rowan Place, as set out in the Appendix to the report.

- 1.8 Members are invited to consider the report and the above recommendation.

Author: C. Evans, Committee Services Officer, Ext 4210.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Caerphilly Homes Task Group Report – 10th December 2015



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 10TH DECEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: ROWAN PLACE – PROGRESS REPORT & SENSITIVE LETTINGS POLICY

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress made in relation to delivering a targeted regeneration programme in Rowan Place, Rhymney.
- 1.2 To consider the adoption of a sensitive lettings policy and introductory tenancies specifically in relation to Rowan Place.
- 1.3 The report is seeking the views of the Caerphilly Homes Task prior to its presentation to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and thereafter, Cabinet.

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 delivering numerous additional benefits which were also outlined in the Offer Document, which would add value to the WHQS programme and help deliver the Council's ambition of using the £210 million WHQS investment as a catalyst to Transform Homes, Lives and Communities.
- 2.2 Rowan Place is located within the Twyn Carno ward and is part of the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) known as Twyn Carno 1.
- 2.3 Rowan Place comprises 82 properties of which 6 are owner occupied and 4 are leasehold.
- 2.4 For many years the area of Rowan Place in which the flats are located has been regarded locally as a 'no go zone' and largely been home to transient single people and families with particular challenges including drug and alcohol issues, criminal records and anti social behaviour issues.
- 2.5 Following the identification of severe damp and external defects to the fabric of the properties in Rowan Place, the Council approved expenditure totalling £4.2m.
- 2.6 The Council also agreed to refurbish the existing void properties to a standard over and above the normal refurbishment of voids programme (to include decoration throughout, skirting boards, new internal doors and architraves etc) and to create a multi agency partnership comprising representatives from Communities First, GAVO, Gwent Police, Drug and Alcohol Services and the ABHB to foster greater collaboration to address the key issues which are prevalent within the area and to help tackle poverty.

- 2.7 The programme underway in Rowan Place has been enhanced by a further £720,000 from the Welsh Government as part of its Vibrant and Viable Places programme which will facilitate enhancements to the environment within Rowan Place.

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 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."

- 3.5 The programme underway in Rowan Place is coterminous with the aims of the Council's Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017 which aims to 'improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the county borough' and the recently approved, Caerphilly Poverty Strategy 2015.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 A report on Rowan Place was presented to the CHTG in October 2013 and May 2014. The reports drew attention to various social problems, low demand and long term voids in addition to severe damp and extensive defects to the external fabric of the properties in Rowan Place.

- 4.2 In May 2014 the CHTG agreed to bring forward external works programmed for 2016/17 in parallel with the internal works to commence in 2014/15.

- 4.3 CHTG and the Cabinet Sub Committee also agreed to accept the estimated additional cost associated with undertaking the comprehensive refurbishment of Council homes suffering from severe damp within Rowan Place and to establish a multi agency task group to tackle the social problems prevalent within the area.

- 4.4 In October 2014 tenants were visited following a survey and informed of the works that would be undertaken to their homes.

- 4.5 To date, internal works have been completed to 16 bungalows and 14 flats.

- 4.6 Internal works are ongoing in 9 others with 3 more planned throughout October and 8 due to start in November (completion anticipated in February 2016).

- 4.7 The 9 flats remaining are within blocks which include leaseholders. External surveys have been undertaken on leaseholder properties in order to determine the charge that will result. The leaseholder consultation undertaken by the leaseholder services officer has started with a view to commencing works to leaseholder properties in February 2016 through to May 2016.

- 4.8 Internal works to 7 houses are scheduled for surveying in November.

- 4.9 Surveys to owner occupied properties have been undertaken in order to determine the scope of external works. The cost of external works to owner occupied homes will be funded via the Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places programme.

- 4.10 The majority of external works to the bungalows have been completed. External wall insulation has been completed in 5 blocks of flats and groundworks are on-going to 3. Roof work has started on 6 of the houses.
- 4.11 The site is scheduled for completion by October 2016.
- 4.12 Bats were found nesting within the site hence a bat license was applied for during August 2014 and approved in November 2014. The license permits roofing works to take place only between October and March hence any further work will need to be programmed carefully in order to take account of the license requirements.
- 4.13 7 existing tenants have been permanently transferred from homes awaiting refurbishment to newly refurbished flats.
- 4.14 There are currently 22 voids within the site. This is due to the fact that the Council has chosen not to let properties within Rowan Place until a formal sensitive lettings policy has been adopted.
- 4.15 In previous years, Rowan Place has been plagued by high levels of anti social behaviour, crime and drug and alcohol abuse. As a consequence and for the benefit of existing tenants, the Council proposes to introduce introductory tenancies for new allocations within Rowan Place.
- 4.16 Research has shown that introductory tenancies are most effective when used as part of a range of initiatives rather than as a policy 'tool'. When used as part of an integrated, multi agency approach to support tenants they have helped improve community safety and quality of life by reducing crime, nuisance behaviour and fear of crime'.
- 4.17 Introductory tenancies would give all new tenants a 12 month trial period before they would be eligible to be awarded a secure tenancy. The tenancy could be brought to an end during the introductory period if the tenant fails to adhere to the requirements contained within the appendix attached. They can be brought to an end within the trial period if a Court issues a possession order. This will ensure that anyone behaving inappropriately can be removed from the tenancy quickly.
- 4.18 In practice, the policy will only apply to a limited number of properties. Existing tenants will not be affected and will carry on with their secure tenancy.
- 4.19 Appendix 1 attached will apply only to the two bedroom flats in Rowan Place. The Appendix outlines the circumstances in which a tenancy may or may not be offered.
- 4.20 Caerphilly Homes Allocations Scheme allows for the allocation of families with 1 or 2 children and childless couples. Due to the size of the second bedroom only families with 1 child, or families with access will be considered and to reduce excessive child density in the area, childless couples may take precedence over families with one child.
- 4.21 Any applicant that meets one of the following criteria will be refused a tenancy:
- Is known to have been involved in anti-social behaviour in the last 2 years
 - Is unable to demonstrate an ability to sustain a tenancy for a minimum period of the last 12 months. References may/will be taken up which will include from private landlords/hostels.
 - Has an unspent criminal conviction
 - Has convictions for drug dealing
 - Has been convicted of, or has been held responsible for criminal damage or arson within the last 12 months
 - Has a history of chaotic behaviour
 - Has drug or alcohol related support needs unless on a rehabilitation programme – continuing on the programme will be an additional condition of tenancy

- Has high support needs that may affect their ability to sustain a tenancy, and is not engaging with support. If there are high support needs but support is in place, fully engaging with the support will be an additional condition of tenancy.
- Applicants or members of the household who were former tenants of the council and who have excessive outstanding rent arrears and/or recharges that makes the repayments together with current rent and other charges unaffordable.

- 4.22 To ensure that prospective tenants are not financially disadvantaged they will be required to satisfy an income/expenditure assessment of their affordability of the tenancy.
- 4.23 Where two or more applicants have equal priority, preference will be given to applicants who are working or in training.
- 4.24 The tenancy will become secure after 12 months if there are no breaches.
- 4.25 The eviction procedure will mirror that of the procedure for termination of a demoted tenancy and therefore there will be opportunities for decisions to be reviewed prior to eviction.
- 4.26 The Sensitive Lettings Policy will be reviewed after 12 months and a process developed to underpin delivery. Depending on demand for these properties, there is a potential for increased void periods due to the proposal for sensitive lettings.
- 4.27 An on-going dialogue between the Council, tenants and residents is underway in Rowan Place. Tenants and residents have indicated on numerous occasions that they do not wish to see a return to the situation that prevailed prior to the Council's investment programme in the area whereby anti social behaviour and crime was a common occurrence.
- 4.28 The work underway within Rowan Place and the events that have taken place at the show flat has generated some interest from new and existing tenants located in Rhymney and elsewhere within the county borough. The area housing team have been unable to allocate newly refurbished homes until the sensitive letting policy attached as Appendix 1 is approved.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and is attached as Appendix 2 for Information.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from the report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The views of consultees listed are incorporated within the report.
- 8.2 Informal consultation has been undertaken with tenants and residents within the area who have strongly indicated that they do not wish to see a return to the situation in the area that prevailed before the start of the investment programme.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet the adoption of the sensitive lettings policy including introductory tenancies for new tenants in Rowan Place as set out in the Appendix to the report.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 **To help deliver the Council's ambition of using the WHQS programme as a catalyst to transform homes, lives and communities.**

11. STATUTORY POWER

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

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Debbie Bishop, Area Housing Manager
Telephone: 01443 873519/ bishod@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Consultees: Cllr. David Poole, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr. Barbara Jones, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Cllr Ken James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Sustainable Development
Cllr Carl Cuss, Twyn Carno Ward Member
Christina Harray, Corporate Director Communities
Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services
Nicole Scammel, Interim Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer
Phil Davy, Head of Programmes
Marcus Lloyd, Deputy Head of Programmes
Pauline Elliott, Head of Regeneration and Planning
Tina McMahon, Community Regeneration Manager
Alan Edmunds, Project Manager

Appendices:
Appendix 1: Rowan Place - Draft Sensitive Lettings Policy
Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

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ROWAN PLACE – DRAFT SENSITIVE LETTINGS POLICY

1. The sensitive lettings policy covers all 2 bedroom flats in Rowan Place, Rhymney. Caerphilly Homes Allocations Scheme allows for the allocation of families with 1 or 2 children and childless couples. Due to the size of the second bedroom only families with 1 child, or families with access will be considered and to reduce excessive child density in the area, childless couples may take precedence over families with one child.
2. Any applicant that meets one of the following criteria will be bypassed and not offered a tenancy of the 2 bed flats in Rowan Place for a period of at least two years if the applicant:
 - Is known to have been involved in anti-social behaviour in the last 2 years
 - Is unable to demonstrate an ability to sustain a tenancy for a minimum period of the last 12 months. References may/will be taken up which will include from private landlords/hostels.
 - Has an unspent criminal conviction
 - Has convictions for drug dealing
 - Has been convicted of, or has been held responsible for criminal damage or arson within the last 12 months
 - Has a history of chaotic behaviour
 - Has drug or alcohol related support needs unless on a rehabilitation programme – continuing on the programme will be an additional condition of tenancy
 - Has high support needs that may affect their ability to sustain a tenancy, and is not engaging with support. If there are high support needs but support is in place, fully engaging with the support will be an additional condition of tenancy.
 - Applicants or members of the household who were former tenants of the council and who have excessive outstanding rent arrears and/or recharges that makes the repayments together with current rent and other charges unaffordable.
3. All prospective tenants will be required to satisfy an income/expenditure assessment of their affordability of the tenancy.
4. Where two or more applicants have equal priority, preference will be given to applicants who are working or in training.
5. Any current tenant of Caerphilly Homes who transfers into Rowan Place will continue on a secure tenancy. However all other tenancies will commence on a 12 month introductory tenancy in order that any tenant who behaves inappropriately can be removed from the tenancy quickly.
6. The tenancy will become secure after 12 months if there are no breaches.

7. The eviction procedure will mirror that of the procedure for termination of a demoted tenancy and therefore there will be opportunities for decision to be reviewed prior to eviction.
8. The Sensitive Lettings Policy will be reviewed after 12 months.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

December 2014

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL*	Rowan Place Sensitive Lettings and Introductory Tenancies
DIRECTORATE	Communities
SERVICE AREA	Caerphilly Homes
CONTACT OFFICER	Jane Roberts-Waite / Deb Bishop
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	December 2016

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, 'proposal' is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities issues have been consciously considered throughout the decision making processes of the work undertaken by every service area in the Council and work done at a corporate level.

The form should be used if you have identified a need for a full EIA following the screening process covered in the Equalities Implications in Committee Reports Guidance document (available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal on the intranet).

The EIA should highlight any areas of risk and maximise the benefits of proposals in terms of Equalities. It therefore helps to ensure that the Council has considered everyone who might be affected by the proposal.

It also helps the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011. There is also a requirement under Human Rights legislation for Local Authorities to consider Human Rights in developing proposals.

The Council's work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the Strategic Equalities Objectives and Action Plan 2012.

This approach strengthens work to promote Equalities by helping to identify and address any potential discriminatory effects before introducing something new or changing working practices, and reduces the risk of potential legal challenges.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the Equalities and Welsh Language Portal (the Committee report guidance mentioned above, the Consultation and Monitoring guidance) and the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team can offer support as the EIA is being developed - the contact email is equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	<p>What is the proposal intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description of the purpose of the new or updated proposal by way of introduction.)</i></p> <p>Rowan Place is an area of Rhymney comprising 82 properties, 72 of which are owned by Caerphilly County Borough Council. For many years, the area has been plagued by high levels of anti social behaviour and crime. In October 2013 Cabinet approved a targeted regeneration effort aimed at tackling the root causes of poverty through improvements to housing conditions and the provision of referrals and support for tenants and residents to much needed services provided at Hafod Deg (including mental health services, drug and alcohol support services, employment advice and opportunities, healthy eating and well being).</p> <p>The sensitive lettings policy was developed with a focus on equality for existing tenants and residents as well as prospective tenants in Rowan Place. The policy should not be viewed in isolation to the multi agency approach that has been adopted and is underway in Rowan Place which seeks to support tenants with complex needs through improvements in their housing conditions and facilitating greater access to support services to help sustain tenancies and reduce anti social behaviour and crime within the area.</p> <p>An informal sensitive lettings policy has been implemented by the area housing team for some time in this area. The report intends to formalise the arrangements and make it clear to existing and prospective tenants, the circumstances in which a new tenancy within Rowan Place will be granted. Local lettings policies have also been implemented in certain areas across the county borough in order to manage anti social behaviour and create more cohesive communities.</p> <p>The use of introductory or probationary tenancies is commonplace throughout England and Wales as a means to help create safer communities. In this instance introductory tenancies will only apply to two bedroom flats within Rowan Place which traditionally have been a magnet for crime and anti social behaviour. Their introduction will assist with the management of ASB and provide the elderly, those with limited mobility and families with greater security. Introductory tenancies will only apply to new tenants seeking two bedroom accommodation in Rowan Place.</p>
2	<p>Who are the service users affected by the proposal? <i>(Who will be affected by the delivery of this proposal? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc.)</i></p> <p>New prospective tenants seeking 2 bedroom accommodation within flats at Rowan Place, Rhymney.</p>

IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	<p>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals?</p> <p><i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i></p> <p>The Caerphilly Homes allocation scheme already allows for the assessment of persons with a history of the following in order to determine their suitability for an offer of tenancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons who have been charged with or convicted of a serious sexual offence or violent crime • Persons released from custody having served a sentence for a serious sexual offence or crime of violence (including arson and / or serious criminal damage) • Persons being discharged from other institutional care whose history includes offences of a violent and / or sexual nature • Persons with a history of drug, alcohol or other substance misuse who have been convicted of related offences <p>The proposal to introduce a sensitive lettings policy which suggests that any new applicant which meets one of the following criteria will be refused a tenancy incorporates the opportunity for people who may be considered, vulnerable to receive the necessary support and be allocated a home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is known to have been involved in anti-social behaviour in the last 2 years • Is unable to demonstrate an ability to sustain a tenancy for a minimum period of the last 12 months. References may/will be taken up which will include from private landlords/hostels. • Has an unspent criminal conviction • Has convictions for drug dealing • Has been convicted of, or has been held responsible for criminal damage or arson within the last 12 months • Has a history of chaotic behaviour • Has drug or alcohol related support needs unless on a rehabilitation programme – continuing on the programme will be an additional condition of tenancy • Has high support needs that may affect their ability to sustain a tenancy and is not engaging with support – if there are high support needs but support is in place, fully engaging with the support will be an additional condition of tenancy. • Applicants or members of the household who were former tenants of the council and who have excessive outstanding rent arrears and/or recharges that makes the repayments together with current rent and other charges unaffordable. <p>Prospective tenants seeking two bedroom accommodation in Rowan Place and who do not meet any of the criteria above will be awarded a 12 month introductory tenancy.</p> <p>The proposal ensures that everyone has the opportunity to obtain a tenancy providing they do not meet the criteria above. An affordability test will be undertaken to ensure that prospective tenants are not adversely affected by recent welfare reform changes</p>
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	<p>(i.e. bedroom tax).</p> <p>The proposal will impact positively on the following groups: Older people, disabled persons and those with limited mobility, families, prospective tenants who have not previously been involved in anti social behaviour and those who may be receiving support to tackle drug / alcohol dependency.</p> <p>The proposal will impact negatively on the following groups: Those who are known to have been involved in anti social behaviour in the last two years. Prospective tenants who have ben convicted of drug dealing, criminal damage, arson or who have a history of chaotic behaviour. Persons who have previously been tenants of the Council and who have excessive outstanding rent arrears or recharges that would deem the rent unaffordable.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>None</p>

4	<p>What are the consequences of the above for specific groups? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect affect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy or savings proposal differ dependent upon people's disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language, religion/belief?)</i></p> <p>The consequences of the policy will not differ according to a disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language or religion / belief.</p> <p>If a prospective tenant meets one or more of the criteria included within the sensitive lettings policy they will be refused a tenancy within Rowan Place and will be assisted by the Area Housing Office to identify and obtain alternative, more appropriate accommodation elsewhere within the county borough via the Council's allocation process.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>Staff involved in the allocation of properties within Rowan Place will receive training to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently and that its implementation does not differ depending on disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language, religion or belief.</p>

INFORMATION COLLECTION

5	<p>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available? <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service? Does any savings proposals include an analysis of those affected?)</i></p> <p>The service is available to prospective tenants seeking two bedroom Council accommodation in Rowan Place, Rhymney. The service is actively engaging with all potential tenants through the marketing of available flats, events and the area management process.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>None</p>

CONSULTATION

6	<p>What consultation has taken place? <i>(What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this proposal? Have the Council's Equalities staff been consulted? Have you referred to the Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance?)</i></p> <p>The refurbishment and eventual redevelopment of Rowan Place is a much wider scheme involving a targeted regeneration effort by multiple services. As a result, consultation and engagement with tenants and residents is ongoing and has been undertaken via face to face contact between the designated Tenant Liaison Officer, questionnaires and events held at the show flat.</p> <p>During conversations with local tenants and residents they have all indicated how pleased they are with the investment being made by the Council and Welsh Government and have urged the housing team in particular, not to allow the area to return to the way it was before the regeneration programme began.</p> <p>The proposal has born these requests in mind and as a result, has been designed specifically to create a cohesive and thriving community in the heart of Rhymney.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>None</p>

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MONITORING AND REVIEW

7	<p>How will the proposal be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community, or that the savings proposals are achieving the intended outcomes with no adverse impact? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category to be able analyse responses from particular groups?)</i></p> <p>The allocations process will be monitored by the North area housing team to ensure compliance with the Council's allocation policy and equalities policies. The effects of the proposal will be reviewed and reported to CHTG and P&R after a 12 month implementation period.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>12 month review / report to be drafted</p>
8	<p>How will the above be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p> <p>The allocation of flats within Rowan Place will be monitored by the North area housing team as part of their standard allocation policy monitoring process and reported to CHTG and P&R.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>None</p>
9	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equality training of some sort?)</i></p> <p>Staff who are directly involved in implementing the policy will receive appropriate training to ensure that the service provided to prospective tenants with a protective characteristic does not differ.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>Training to be identified and delivered during 2015/16.</p>

10	<p>Where you have identified mitigating factors in previous answers that lessen the impact on any particular group in the community, or have identified any elsewhere, please summarise them here.</p> <p>None</p>
11	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment? <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i></p> <p>The Equality Impact Assessment will be submitted to the CHTG as an appendix to the report.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIA, when completed, to be returned to equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for publishing on the Council's website.

Completed By:	Jane Roberts-Waite
Date:	13 th November 2015
Position:	Strategic Coordination Manager
Name of Head of Service:	Phil Davy



CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: RE-PROFILING OF WHQS PROGRAMME AND HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016-17

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016, having previously been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 10th December 2015. The report highlighted the changes to the Welsh Quality Housing Standard (WHQS) programme and set out the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme, and sought the views of Members on the proposed adoption of these programmes, prior to its presentation to Cabinet.
 - 1.2 Members were reminded of the major slippage to the WHQS programme during 2014/15 which necessitated a review of the investment strategy, and which was approved by Cabinet in February 2015, together with the Capital Programme for the 2015/16 financial year. The new programme was front-loaded in an attempt to catch up on the slippage but has led to resourcing issues (particularly in the Eastern Valleys) and has caused problems for the WHQS team due to the number of properties being worked on across the county borough. The number of the properties in the internal works programme reduces in the later years of the programme and a further re-profiling is advocated to have a more consistent number of properties each year. This is a benefit to some community areas that will be pulled forward, although others will slip back. Some of the changes are also to avoid gaps arising on the larger estates and enable continuity of phasing of works.
 - 1.3 Officers explained that it will not be possible to catch up on the external works programme within 2015/16, with most of the current financial year planned programme expected to run into 2016/17. A number of sequence changes to external works take account of the change in approach in the Lower Rhymney Valley and will minimise (as far as practical) conflicts between internal and external works, with overlaps being managed as they arise. The HRA Capital Programme budget allocates the necessary resources based on the Savills cost plan to deliver the programme during 2016/17. Experience has shown that significant variances will arise once the properties are surveyed and contract packages are specified. A large contingency has therefore been included within the budget proposal. Appended to the report were details of community sequence changes in respect of internal and external works to Council homes, a re-profiled investment strategy and the HRA Capital Programme for 2016/17.
 - 1.4 Discussion took place regarding the community sequence changes and Members referred to some communities where external works have been significantly postponed as a result of the re-profiling. Officers explained that a sensible approach needed to be undertaken in respect of these works and that by staggering these over a number of years, this would spread the investment needed, reduce pressure on available resources and ensure there is a manageable amount of work taking place at any one time.

- 1.5 In response to a Member's query, Officers confirmed that details of the re-profiling arrangements would be communicated to tenants via the Council's website, tenant newsletters and Tenant Liaison Officers. Concerns were expressed regarding the significant re-profiling of external works in some communities (in that this delay could have an impact on tenants) and Officers explained that such delays were mainly restricted to external works only as they have a lesser impact to tenants than internal works. Discussion took place regarding tenant expectations in respect of the programme of works and Officers explained that although the initial programme of works had been published through to 2020, it had been made clear that this could be subject to change. Members were also advised that there had been little feedback received from tenants regarding changes to the programme of works to date.
- 1.6 Following consideration of the report, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet that for the reasons contained therein:-
- (i) the re-profiling of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard Programme and the Capital Programme for 2016/17 that flows from the re-profiling be adopted;
 - (ii) a further report be presented when sufficient information is available to update the Savills cost plan based on an analysis of actual costs being incurred for internal and external works.
- 1.7 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 19th January 2016 – Agenda Item 12



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH JANUARY 2016

SUBJECT: RE-PROFILING OF WHQS PROGRAMME AND HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/17

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

-
- 1.1 The report was considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) on the 10th December 2015 and highlighted the changes to the WHQS Programme and set out the HRA Capital Programme budget for 2016/17. In addition, the report sought the views of the CHTG prior to its presentation to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
 - 1.2 Major slippage during the 2014/15 financial year has necessitated a review of the investment strategy. A revised strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2015, together with the Capital Programme for the 2015/16 financial year. The new programme was front loaded in an attempt to catch up on the slippage. However, this has led to resourcing issues, particularly in the Eastern-Valleys and has caused problems for the WHQS team due to the number of properties being worked on across the County Borough.
 - 1.3 The Task Group noted that it would not be possible to catch up on the external works programme within 2015/16. Most of the current financial year planned programme is expected to run into 2016/17. There are a number of sequence changes to the external works to take account of the change in approach in the Lower Rhymney Valley and to minimise, as far as is practical, conflicts between the internal and external works. Where overlaps arise, these will need to be managed on the ground.
 - 1.4 The HRA Capital Programme budget allocates the necessary resources based on the Savills cost plan to deliver the programme during 2016/17. It was noted that, as per experience, significant variances may arise once the properties have been surveyed and works specifications prepared. A large contingency has therefore been included within the budget proposal.
 - 1.5 Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee support the Re-profiling of WHQS Programme and HRA Capital Programme 2016/17 and recommend its adoption at Cabinet. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed: -

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report:

- (i) The Caerphilly Homes Task Group recommend to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet the adoption of the reprofiling of the WHQS Programme and the Capital Programme for 2016/17 that flows from the reprofiling.

- (ii) A further report be presented when sufficient information is available to update the Savills cost plan based on an analysis of actual costs being incurred for internal and external works.

1.6 Members are invited to consider the report and the above recommendations.

Author: C. Evans, Committee Services Officer, Ext 4210.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Caerphilly Homes Task Group Report – 10th December 2015



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 10TH DECEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: RE-PROFILING OF WHQS PROGRAMME AND HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/17

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise on changes to the WHQS Programme and set out the HRA Capital Programme budget for 2016/17. The report is seeking the views of the CHTG prior to its presentation to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Major slippage during the 2014/15 financial year necessitated a review of the investment strategy. A revised strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2015 together with the Capital Programme for the 2015/16 financial year. The new programme was front loaded in an attempt to catch up on the slippage. However this has led to resourcing issues particularly in the Eastern Valleys and has caused problems for the WHQS team due to the number of properties being worked on across the County Borough.
- 2.2 The number of properties in the internal works programme reduces in the later years of the programme and a further re-profiling is advocated to have a more consistent number of properties each year. This is a benefit to some community areas that will be pulled forward although others will slip back. Some of the changes are also to avoid gaps arising on the larger estates and enable continuity of phasing of works.
- 2.3 It will not be possible to catch up on the external works programme within 2015/16. Most of the current financial year planned programme is expected to run into 2016/17. There are a number of sequence changes to the external works to take account of the change in approach in the Lower Rhymney Valley and to minimise, as far as practical, conflicts between the internal and external works. Where overlaps arise, these will need to be managed on the ground.
- 2.4 The HRA Capital Programme budget allocates the necessary resources based on the Savills cost plan to deliver the programme during 2016/17. Experience has shown that significant variances will arise once the properties are surveyed and contract packages are specified. A large contingency has therefore been included within the budget proposal.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards. It is a Welsh Government requirement that the WHQS is achieved by 2020.

- 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 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.”
- 3.4 The HRA Capital Programme is aligned to the delivery of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) and links to the WHQS Investment Strategy and Business Plan.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 In September 2012 an investment strategy was approved by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group/Cabinet Sub Committee which outlined how the WHQS Programme would be implemented on a community based approach over the period to 2019/20. The work is split between the in house work force and contractors and there are separate sequences for internal and external works.
- 4.2 As a result of various setbacks during 2014/15 which caused slippage to the programme the investment strategy was reviewed and a revised programme was approved in February 2015. This formed the basis for the 2015/16 Capital Programme.
- 4.3 This revised programme was front loaded in an attempt to catch up on slippage. However this has given rise to a situation where too many properties were opened leading to delays in completing work to individual properties and complaints from tenants. This also caused difficulties for the TLOs and COWs as resources were spread too thinly. It has been necessary to review the position and ensure there is a manageable process on the ground.
- 4.4 The number of properties in the internal works programme is at a lower level after 2015/16. A more consistent number of properties in each year can be better managed and will benefit the contractors’ resourcing, the WHQS team, and the tenants especially if this ensures that properties are not open for extensive periods of time. The re-profiling of the programme will result in changes to the community sequences. A number of areas will benefit as they will be pulled forward in the programme whereas some will slip back. The end date of March 2020 is, of course, unchanged.
- 4.5 It will not be possible to catch up on the slippage on the external works programme during 2015/16. By October 2015 only one external works contract from the 2014/15 programme had been completed relating to 53 properties in Markham. There are several more small lots in the Eastern Valleys expected to be completed prior to the end of 2015 relating to 126 properties.
- 4.6 Only 2 contracts in the 2015/16 external works programme have been awarded in the Upper Rhymney Valley (Phillipstown 160 properties and New Tredegar 178 properties). Other major contracts are in preparation for Gelligaer and Hengoed.
- 4.7 The small lots programme for 2015/16 has not yet commenced.
- 4.8 Some delays have arisen due to the need to undertake re-surveys and amend the specification for the works. This was instigated because of concerns about cost escalation and the fact that some elements of work were considered to go beyond what is essential for WHQS.
- 4.9 It is currently anticipated that the 2015/16 external works programme will not be completed until the latter part of 2016. There have also been changes affecting the external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley. Originally it was proposed that this part of the programme would be undertaken by the in house work force but due to pressure elsewhere, particularly Rowan

Place, it was decided to contract out the LRV. The new contract arrangements are not expected to be in place until 2016/17. Although some work is continuing to the blocks of flats in the LRV through the Private Sector Housing Team.

- 4.10 The other major change is the decision to outsource the WHQS works for the sheltered housing schemes to a managed service provider. This is currently at the procurement stage.
- 4.11 Taking account of various factors impacting on the programme a revised profile is shown in the table below. Note that this excludes the sheltered housing schemes which are being outsourced. They will have a separate programme in due course. On a positive note surveying for the 2016/17 programme has commenced with the aim of seeing contracts commence much earlier in the financial year.
- 4.12 The programme profile assumes that the number of properties for either internal or external works will be delivered in the year shown and provides the basis for planning. However the reality is that this will never be the case on the ground and adjustments will inevitably arise between the years for a variety of reasons. An overriding concern is to limit the amount of slippage as the scope to catch up in the last year is limited.

Revised Property Profile

Year	Internal Work	External Work
2015/16	1835	1520
2016/17	1992	2071
2017/18	1899	2368
2018/19	1411	2181
2019/20	741	1531
	7878	9671

- 4.13 The average rate of weekly completions for internal works is 32. For the first six months of 2015/16 the average rate of completions for internal work has been around 30. There can therefore be some confidence that the internal works can be completed by March 2020.
- 4.14 For external works the average weekly rate of completions is 39. Currently the programme is falling well short with only one contract for 53 properties completed. The position will improve over the remaining months of 2015/16 but it will take more than one financial year to pull back the slippage. Note that external completions will be measured on the basis of contracts rather than individual properties due to the nature of the works and how they are organised.
- 4.15 The revised property profile will result in various amendments to the sequence of community areas. The changes are summarised in Appendix 1. For internal works 18 community areas benefit by being pulled forward and 4 community areas are pushed back. For external works the impact of slippage is more apparent with the majority of changes resulting in community areas being pushed back. The major impact is on the Lower Rhymney Valley due to the need to implement a new contract arrangement.
- 4.16 The re-profiled investment strategy is shown in Appendix 2. The expenditure estimates are derived from the Savills cost plan so have to be treated with some caution as experience has shown there will be significant variances. There are regular reviews of the cost plan based on trend data from valuations and tender prices. The latest assessment suggests that the programme currently remains within the limits of affordability set by the HRA business plan.
- 4.17 The HRA capital programme 2016/17 is shown in Appendix 3. As well as the programme renewals provision is included for adaptations undertaken on a response basis, major repairs to voids prior to re-letting incorporating WHQS works, and the continuation of the improvement programme to the HRA garages.

- 4.18 Energy efficiency measures continue to be investigated and there is some prospect of securing grant funding under ECO for the Wimpey No Fines properties located in Gelligaer, Pontlottyn and Gilfach. However this will not be 100% funded and match funding will be necessary. Notwithstanding there will still be a benefit in terms of cost saving to the WHQS programme.
- 4.19 Due to the ongoing variances to the budget a significant contingency sum has been included.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An EqlA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and for lower level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqlA has not been carried out.
- 5.2 The implementation of the WHQS Programme will ensure compliance where appropriate with current Building Regulations and DDA requirements. The Council's procurement processes include equalities requirements and compliance by contractors undertaking WHQS work.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The budget estimate for 2016/17 is £36m. The budget estimates for the programme renewals are based on the Savills cost plan but adjustments have been included for Rowan Place and Cefn Hengoed based on anticipated additional costs. Due to the experience of large in year variances the contingency sum has been increased to 10% of the programme renewals estimate.
- 6.2 Based on the estimates the works programme for 2016/17 will require an average expenditure of between £500,000 and £600,000 a week.
- 6.3 There are indications of cost escalation based on trends emerging from external works tender prices and valuations for internal works.
- 6.4 Most of the tenders received to date for external works relate to small lots contracts in the Eastern Valleys. In the light of experience some of these contracts were over specified. The requirements for external works have been reviewed and revised guidance issued to the surveyors including the application of "acceptable fail" criteria. The early tender costs will not be a reliable indicator for projecting future budget costs.
- 6.5 There have been two external works contracts awarded in the Upper Rhymney Valley which were tendered from a framework. The tender costs were in excess of the Savills budget cost for the respective estates but based on an average cost per property they were more in line with expectations when compared to the Savills average cost per property across the whole programme.
- 6.6 Valuations from the early contract packages given to the internal works contractors have resulted in a mixed picture. More detailed analysis is currently being undertaken to work out average costs for the internal components to compare with the Savills cost plan.
- 6.7 Currently there is insufficient robust data to be able to project a meaningful revised cost plan. Furthermore until all the properties have been surveyed there will not be a complete picture of all the work necessary to achieve the WHQS, nor will the full extent of exceptional items be known.
- 6.8 Although outside the HRA there is an additional Welsh Government grant (VVP) of £600,000 in the 2016/17 financial year to undertake environmental enhancements to the Rowan Place estate.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The timetable pressure is increasing and there has to be the capacity within the staff resources to cope with the volume of work. During the course of 2015 steps have been taken to strengthen the team in a number of critical front line roles including Surveyors, Quantity Surveyors, Clerk of Works and Tenant Liaison Officers with mixed success. Staff movement and recruitment difficulties remain a risk to the programme. It is also proposed to recruit another Project Manager due to the pressures arising from contract management.
- 7.2 Elements of the programme have been allocated to third parties as a means to spread the risk and create extra capacity. These relate to the HRA garages allocated to Building Consultancy, the external works to the blocks of flats in the LRV allocated to the Private Sector Housing Team, and the outsourcing of the sheltered housing schemes to a managed service provider.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Comments received have been taken into consideration within the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The CHTG recommend to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet the adoption of the re-profiling of the WHQS Programme and the Capital Programme for 2016/17 that flows from the re-profiling.
- 9.2 A further report be presented when sufficient information is available to update the Savills cost plan based on an analysis of actual costs being incurred for internal and external works.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To appraise the Task Group, Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet of changes to the WHQS Programme and to approve the HRA Capital Programme for 2016/17.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Housing Acts 1985, 1996, 2004. This is a Cabinet function.

Author: P G Davy, Head of Programmes
Email: davypgg@caerphilly.gov.uk, Tel: 01443 8664208

Consultees:

Cllr D V Poole	-	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr B Jones	-	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
C Harrhy	-	Corporate Director Communities
N Scammell	-	Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer
S Couzens	-	Chief Housing Officer
M Lloyd	-	Deputy Head of Programmes
C Roden	-	WHQS Project Manager
A Edmunds	-	WHQS Project Manager
S Greedy	-	WHQS Project Manager
J Roberts-Waite	-	Strategic Co-ordination Manager
L Allen	-	Principal Accountant
R Lewis	-	Systems and Performance Manager
E Lucas	-	Head of Procurement

G Williams - Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Community Sequence Changes

Appendix 2: Re-profiled Investment Strategy

Appendix 3: HRA Capital Programme 2016/17

Area/Community	Internal Changes	External Changes
Eastern Valleys		
CROSSKEYS	INT Moved from 18/19 to 17/18	EXT Moved from 17/18 to 19/20
		EXT Moved from 17/18 to 19/20 - Leaseholders
CWMCARN	INT Moved from 18/19 to 17/18	EXT Moved from 17/18 to 19/20
PENLLWYN LOWER		EXT Moved from 18/19 to 17/18
PONTYMISTER	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	
PONTYWAUN	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	
TY-SIGN LOWER	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	
Lower Rhymney Valley		
BEDWAS	INT Moved from 18/19 to 17/18	EXT Moved from 14/15 to 15/16 - DLO to CON (PS)
		EXT Moved from 14/15 to 16/17 - DLO to CON
		EXT Moved from 14/15 to 16/17
BRYNCENYDD		EXT DLO to CON
CAERBRAGDY		EXT DLO to CON
CHURCHILL PARK	INT Moved from 17/18 to 16/17	EXT Moved from 16/17 to 18/19 - DLO to CON
CLAUDE ROAD	INT Moved from 19/20 to 17/18	EXT DLO to CON
GRAIG Y RHACCA		EXT DLO to CON
LANSBURY PARK		EXT DLO to CON
LLANBRADACH		EXT DLO to CON
MACHEN		EXT Moved from 15/16 to 18/19 - DLO to CON
PENYRHEOL LOWER		EXT Moved from 15/16 to 17/18 - DLO to CON
PENYRHEOL UPPER	INT Moved from 18/19 to 19/20	EXT Moved from 15/16 to 18/19 - DLO to CON
PORSET PARK	INT Moved from DLO 17/18 to CON 18/19	EXT Moved from DLO 18/19 to CON 19/20
PWLLYPANT		EXT Moved from 15/16 to 16/17 - DLO to CON
RUDRY	INT Moved from 19/20 to 17/18	EXT Moved from 15/16 to 16/17 - DLO to CON
SENGHENYDD		EXT DLO to CON
THOMASVILLE		EXT Moved from 15/16 to 18/19 - DLO to CON
TRAPWELL	INT Moved from 19/20 to 17/18	EXT Moved from 15/16 to 16/17 - DLO to CON
TRECENYDD		EXT DLO to CON
TRETHOMAS		EXT DLO to CON
TY ISAF		EXT Moved from 15/16 to 18/19 - DLO to CON
TY NANT		EXT Moved from 15/16 to 18/19 - DLO to CON
WAUNFACH	INT Moved from 19/20 to 17/18	EXT DLO to CON
Upper Rhymney Valley		
ABERBARGOED MIDDLE	INT Moved from 18/19 to 16/17	EXT Moved from 16/17 to 17/18
CEFN HENGOED	INT Moved from 15/16 to 17/18	
GELIGAER	INT Moved from 16/17 to 17/18	
GILFACH LOWER	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	
GILFACH PHASE 1 GIL1	INT Moved from 18/19 to 16/17	
GILFACH PHASE 2		EXT Moved from 18/19 to 17/18
GILFACH PHASE 3	INT Moved from 18/19 to 17/18	EXT Moved from 17/18 to 18/19
MAESYCWMMER	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	
PENPEDAIRHEOL	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	
PENYBRYN	INT Moved from 19/20 to 18/19	

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WHQS Programme - Year 3 (2015/16) - Costs			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON £	DLO £	CON £
Eastern Valleys			
ARGOED	280950		
BRITANNIA	711850		
CEFN FFOREST	2997800		
CROESPENMAEN			92500
FAIRVIEW	312100		
FLEUR-DE-LLYS	401700		
GELLIGROES			95900
HIGHMEADOW			8950
MARKHAM-HOLLYBUSH	529350		
MORRISVILLE		80100	
PENGAM	254000		
PENLLWYN UPPER			350746
PENTWYNMAWR			131500
PERSONDY		208550	
SPRINGFIELD			188308
TY-SIGN UPPER		493500	
WATTSVILLE		220850	
WESTEND		102000	
YNYSDDU-CWMFELINFACH			83225
Lower Rhymney Valley			
BEDWAS			314300
BRYNCENYDD			59110
GRAIG-Y-RHACCA (PHASE 1)		824500	
LANSBURY PARK	3312750		
TRETHOMAS		554050	
Upper Rhymney Valley			
BRITHDIR			17200
CASCADE		177850	
CEFN HENGOED		532600	69175
GELLIGAER			4013380
NELSON		442450	
NEW TREDEGAR			241680
PONTLOTTYN	1999850		
TIRYBERTH		334350	
PHILLIPSTOWN			414740
TIRPHIL			99815
Annual Total	10800350	3970800	6180529

WHQS Programme - Year 3 (2015/16) - Properties			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON No	DLO No	CON No
Eastern Valleys			
ARGOED	30		
BRITANNIA	82		
CEFN FFOREST	327		
CROESPENMAEN			29
FAIRVIEW	31		
FLEUR-DE-LLYS	46		
GELLIGROES			28
HIGHMEADOW			43
MARKHAM-HOLLYBUSH	54		
MORRISVILLE		12	
PENGAM	28		
PENLLWYN UPPER			253
PENTWYNMAWR			35
PERSONDY		29	
SPRINGFIELD			218
TY-SIGN UPPER		79	
WATTSVILLE		28	
WESTEND		12	
YNYSDDU-CWMFELINFACH			22
Lower Rhymney Valley			
BEDWAS			133
BRYNCENYDD			40
GRAIG-Y-RHACCA (PHASE 1)		123	
LANSBURY PARK	424		
TRETHOMAS		83	
Upper Rhymney Valley			
BRITHDIR			8
CASCADE		18	
CEFN HENGOED		104	61
GELLIGAER			342
NELSON		48	
NEW TREDEGAR			110
PONTLOTTYN	233		
TIRYBERTH		44	
PHILLIPSTOWN			159
TIRPHIL			39
Annual Total	1255	580	1520

WHQS Programme - Year 4 (2016/17) - Costs			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON £	DLO £	CON £
Eastern Valleys			
GELLIGROES	280850		
LLANFACH			4000
MARKHAM-HOLLYBUSH	607600		
MORRISVILLE			59100
OAKDALE	700200		
PENLLWYN LOWER	669150		
PENTWYNMAWR	363950		
PERSONDY			4850
PONTYMISTER			309855
PONTYWAUN			102550
RISCA			203545
SPRINGFIELD	1931950		
TRINANT			42650
TWYN GARDENS	399600		
TY-SIGN LOWER			1080490
TY-SIGN UPPER		1433500	
WATTSVILLE			61150
WESTEND			104650
Lower Rhymney Valley			
ABERTRIDWR	1377350		
BEDWAS			1167750
CHURCHILL PARK	1243950		
CLAUDE ROAD			634570
GRAIG-Y-RHACCA (PHASE 2)		1934050	
LLANBRADACH	782100		
NANTDDU	523950		
PWLLYPANT			42670
RUDRY			49130
SENGHENYDD			128080
TRAPWELL			48160
TRECENYDD			301730
WAUNFACH			18020
Upper Rhymney Valley			
ABERBARGOED LOWER	450850		
ABERBARGOED MIDDLE	739600		
ABERTYSSWG			538090
BARGOED			139250
BRITHDIR	77400		
DERI	51200		
FOCHRIW			1787560
GILFACH LOWER			191860
GILFACH PHASE 1 GIL 1	407800		
GILFACH PHASE 2	1400650		
MAES MABON		1000700	

PONTLOTTYN			2251895
TIRPHIL	330750		
Annual Total	12338900	4368250	9271605

WHQS Programme - Year 4 (2016/17) - Properties			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON No	DLO No	CON No
Eastern Valleys			
GELLIGROES	28		
LLANFACH			24
MARKHAM-HOLLYBUSH	78		
MORRISVILLE			12
OAKDALE	73		
PENLLWYN LOWER	71		
PENTWYNMAWR	35		
PERSONDY			29
PONTYMISTER			152
PONTYWAUN			20
RISCA			102
SPRINGFIELD	218		
TRINANT			206
TWYN GARDENS	37		
TY-SIGN LOWER			133
TY-SIGN UPPER		226	
WATTSVILLE			29
WESTEND			12
Lower Rhymney Valley			
ABERTRIDWR	134		
BEDWAS			101
CHURCHILL PARK	146		10
CLAUDE ROAD			110
GRAIG-Y-RHACCA (PHASE 2)		266	
LLANBRADACH	76		
NANTDDU	52		
PWLLYPANT			38
RUDRY			20
SENGHENYDD			119
TRAPWELL			13
TRECENYDD			209
WAUNFACH			17
Upper Rhymney Valley			
ABERBARGOED LOWER	47		
ABERBARGOED MIDDLE	88		
ABERTYSSWG			52
BARGOED			136
BRITHDIR	8		
DERI	5		
FOCHRIW			156
GILFACH LOWER			108
GILFACH PHASE 1 GIL 1	42		
GILFACH PHASE 2	175		
MAES MABON		148	
PONTLOTTYN			263

TIRPHIL	39		
Annual Total	1352	640	2071

WHQS Programme - Year 5 (2017/18) - Costs			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON £	DLO £	CON £
Eastern Valleys			
BLACKWOOD			92250
BRITANNIA			285050
CROESPENMAEN	266950		
CROSSKEYS	828700		
CWMCARN	1000500		
FAIRVIEW			96150
FLEUR-DE-LYS			139300
NEWBRIDGE	649350		
PANTSIDE LOWER			202200
PANTSIDE UPPER			31050
PENGAM			40250
PENLLWYN LOWER			69100
PENLLWYN UPPER		1400350	
TRELYN UPPER			378100
TREOWEN	108500		
TRINANT	1932400		
Lower Rhymney Valley			
BEDWAS	1625150		
CAERBRAGDY		222400	
CLAUDE ROAD	670900		
HEOL TRECASTELL	564450		
LANSBURY PARK			7670515
LLANBRADACH			27890
MACHEN		510650	
PENYRHEOL LOWER			244850
RUDRY	163700		
TRAPWELL	112100		
WAUNFACH	170500		
Upper Rhymney Valley			
ABERBARGOED LOWER			39765
ABERBARGOED MIDDLE			110390
ABERBARGOED UPPER	2000500		
ABERTYSSWG		384450	
CEFN HENGOED		478500	
DERI			55650
GELLIGAER		2737700	
GILFACH PHASE 1 GIL 1			845350
GILFACH PHASE 2			832630
GILFACH PHASE 3	1274750		
HENGOED			423986
MAESYCWMMER			390610
RHYMNEY NORTH			1816490
Annual Total	11368450	5734050	13791576

WHQS Programme - Year 5 (2017/18) - Properties			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON No	DLO No	CON No
Eastern Valleys			
BLACKWOOD			117
BRITANNIA			82
CROESPENMAEN	29		
CROSSKEYS	89		
CWMCARN	104		
FAIRVIEW			31
FLEUR-DE-LYS			46
NEWBRIDGE	66		
PANTSIDE LOWER			193
PANTSIDE UPPER			78
PENGAM			28
PENLLWYN LOWER			71
PENLLWYN UPPER		183	
TRELYN UPPER			79
TREOWEN	11		
TRINANT	206		
Lower Rhymney Valley			
BEDWAS	171		
CAERBRAGDY		24	
CLAUDE ROAD	70		
HEOL TRECASTELL	57		
LANSBURY PARK			531
LLANBRADACH			76
MACHEN		63	
PENYRHEOL LOWER			136
RUDRY	15		
TRAPWELL	10		
WAUNFACH	17		
Upper Rhymney Valley			
ABERBARGOED LOWER			48
ABERBARGOED MIDDLE			88
ABERBARGOED UPPER	219		
ABERTYSSWG		52	
CEFN HENGOED		61	
DERI			5
GELLIGAER		315	
GILFACH PHASE 1 GIL 1			62
GILFACH PHASE 2			175
GILFACH PHASE 3	137		
HENGOED			90
MAESYCWMMER			75
RHYMNEY NORTH			357
Annual Total	1201	698	2368

WHQS Programme - Year 6 (2018/19) - Costs			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON £	DLO £	CON £
Eastern Valleys			
BLACKWOOD		893250	367108
CEFN FFOREST			1094110
PENLLWYN UPPER		596250	
PONTYMISTER	1445250		
PONTYWAUN	214200		
RISCA	902500		
TWYN GARDENS			132850
TY-SIGN LOWER	1273150		
TY-SIGN UPPER			4661915
YNYSDDU-CWMFELINFACH	228550		
Lower Rhymney Valley			
CAERBRAGDY			50000
CHURCHILL PARK			379070
MACHEN			135080
PENYRHEOL LOWER		1073050	
PENYRHEOL UPPER			1330150
PORSET PARK	1283200		
TRETHOMAS			380675
THOMASVILLE			116475
TY ISAF			4900
TY NANT			10450
Upper Rhymney Valley			
ABERBARGOED UPPER			205065
BARGOED		1309950	
CASCADE			18240
CEFN HENGOED			162520
FOCHRIW		1066700	
GILFACH LOWER	1056050		
GILFACH PHASE 3			2244890
MAESYCWMMER	758100		
PENPEDAIRHEOL	79700		17800
PENYBRYN	41850		250
TIRYBERTH			12350
YSTRAD MYNACH			146970
Annual Total	7282550	4939200	11470868

WHQS Programme - Year 6 (2018/19) - Properties			
Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON No	DLO No	CON No
Eastern Valleys			
BLACKWOOD		117	153
CEFN FFOREST			327
PENLLWYN UPPER		70	
PONTYMISTER	152		
PONTYWAUN	20		
RISCA	102		
TWYN GARDENS			37
TY-SIGN LOWER	126		
TY-SIGN UPPER			326
YNYSDDU-CWMFELINFACH	22		
Lower Rhymney Valley			
CAERBRAGDY			24
CHURCHILL PARK			146
MACHEN			72
PENYRHEOL LOWER		136	
PENYRHEOL UPPER			324
PORSET PARK	179		
TRETHOMAS			114
THOMASVILLE			32
TY ISAF			7
TY NANT			30
Upper Rhymney Valley			
ABERBARGOED UPPER			219
BARGOED		136	
CASCADE			18
CEFN HENGOED			104
FOCHRIW		156	
GILFACH LOWER	108		
GILFACH PHASE 3			140
MAESYCWMMER	75		
PENPEDAIRHEOL	8		8
PENYBRYN	4		4
TIRYBERTH			44
YSTRAD MYNACH			52
Annual Total	796	615	2181

WHQS Programme - Year 7 (2019/20) - Costs

Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON £	DLO £	CON £
Eastern Valleys			
BLACKWOOD		1196150	
CROSSKEYS			569140
CWMCARN			279860
NEWBRIDGE			29935
TREOWEN			6490
Lower Rhymney Valley			
GRAIG Y RHACCA			404415
PENYRHEOL UPPER		2448300	
PORSET PARK			685140
Upper Rhymney Valley			
MAES MABON			20625
NELSON			5500
NEW TREDEGAR		895000	
PHILLIPSTOWN		1152200	
RHYMNEY SOUTH			1712700
Annual Total		5691650	3713805

WHQS Programme - Year 7 (2019/20) - Properties

Community	Internal Components		External Components
	CON No	DLO No	CON No
Eastern Valleys			
BLACKWOOD		153	
CROSSKEYS			138
CWMCARN			111
NEWBRIDGE			66
TREOWEN			11
Lower Rhymney Valley			
GRAIG Y RHACCA			393
PENYRHEOL UPPER		321	
PORSET PARK			194
Upper Rhymney Valley			
MAES MABON			148
NELSON			48
NEW TREDEGAR		108	
PHILLIPSTOWN		159	
RHYMNEY SOUTH			422
Annual Total		741	1531

HRA Capital Programme 2016/17

Programme Renewals

In House Work Force (Internal Works)

	£
Eastern Valleys	1,433,500
Lower Rhymney Valley	1,934,050
Upper Rhymney Valley	1,000,700
Rowan Place URV	1,200,000

Contractors (Internal Works)

	£
Eastern Valleys	4,953,300
Lower Rhymney Valley	3,927,350
Upper Rhymney Valley	3,458,250

Contractors (External Works)

	£
Eastern Valleys	1,972,840
Lower Rhymney Valley	2,390,110
Upper Rhymney Valley	4,908,655
Cefn Hengoed	750,000

Sub Total 27,928,755

Adaptations (reactive)	1,000,000
Voids (outside planned programme)	1,000,000
HRA Garages	500,000
Energy Schemes	1,000,000
Fees and Consultancy	1,800,000
Contingency (10%)	2,792,875

TOTAL 36,021,630

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CABINET – 3RD FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: ROWAN PLACE RHYMNEY – SURRENDER OF LEASE ON 70 ROWAN PLACE AND TRANSFER OF LEASE TO 29 ROWAN PLACE

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to the surrender and transfer of the lease of 70 Rowan Place to the Council and transfer of the lease to a fully refurbished flat at 29 Rowan Place at nil cost to the leaseholder of 70 Rowan Place.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Cabinet has approved the principle of demolishing one block of flats at Rowan Place subject to obtaining Ministerial consent. The block nos. 69-72 is unoccupied but no.70 is subject to a lease with 94 years unexpired. The leaseholder has informally accepted a proposal to move from no.70 to a newly refurbished flat at no.29 Rowan Place. This will result in the Council securing full control over the block which will enable the demolition to proceed. A formal decision is required to accept a surrender and transfer of no.70 to the Council and transfer a leasehold interest in no 29 at nil cost to the leaseholder of no.70.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards. It is a Welsh Government requirement that WHQS is achieved by 2020. The properties in Rowan Place are being fully refurbished internally and externally and there are proposals to improve the environmental quality of the estate.
- 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 Cabinet considered a report on the 16th December 2015 relating to the demolition of 1 block of flats at nos.69-72 Rowan Place. The benefits of the demolition were recognised and the proposal was supported accepting that Welsh Ministers’ approval would be necessary. Confirmation has now been received that the Council does not require Welsh Ministers’ consent to demolish the flats as this is not considered to be a disposal.

- 4.2 The report indicated that although the block of flats is currently unoccupied there is a lease on no. 70. The leaseholder has informally accepted a proposal to move from no. 70 to a newly refurbished flat at no. 29. This would be effected by the surrender of the current lease of no 70 to the Council and transfer a leasehold interest in no 29 to the leaseholder of no. 70. This would benefit the leaseholder by securing a newly refurbished flat and would benefit the Council by securing full control over the block enabling the demolition to proceed.
- 4.3 No. 70 Rowan Place was bought at auction in April 2013 and has undergone some improvements internally. The leaseholder has had the property rewired, a new gas boiler and central heating system has been installed and all the rooms have been plaster boarded. A new white bathroom suite has been installed, the wall tiles have been removed but not replaced, however the floor has been tiled. The kitchen has been removed and some new units fitted. Renovations have currently ceased pending agreement on the transfer.
- 4.4 Externally the block is in a poor condition and requires major repairs.
- 4.5 There are 94 years unexpired on the lease in relation to no. 70.
- 4.6 The flat at no. 29 Rowan Place has been fully refurbished internally and externally. The flat is situated on the first floor and provides the same accommodation as no. 70 namely entrance hall, 2 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen and bathroom. A new kitchen and bathroom has been installed.
- 4.7 Unless a voluntary agreement can be reached with the leaseholder to transfer to no. 29 it will not be possible to proceed with the demolition.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An EqIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and the lower level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out. The proposal to offer a lease on no. 29 Rowan Place will result in the loss of 1 lettable flat but this is a location where currently there is a high level of voids. The Upper Rhymney Valley is generally a low demand area.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be a net cost saving to the Council if the demolition is able to proceed. The detailed terms of the transfer of the lease will be dealt with by officers under delegated powers in consultation with the Cabinet member for Housing.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications arising directly from the report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 No comments have been received which result in the need to change the substance of the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet approves the principle of the surrender of the existing lease on 70 Rowan Place and the transfer of the lease terms to 29 Rowan Place to reflect the unexpired term of the existing lease and with the same ground rent at no cost to the leaseholder. The detailed terms of the transfer will be dealt with by officers under delegated powers in consultation with the Cabinet member for Housing.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To reach a voluntary agreement to give full control over block 69-72 to enable the Council's objective of demolition to proceed.

11. STATUTORY POWER

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

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Consultees:

Cllr Dave V Poole	-	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr Carl Cuss	-	Local Ward Member
Christina Harry	-	Corporate Director Communities
Nicole Scammell	-	Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer
Shaun Couzens	-	Chief Housing Officer
Gail Williams	-	Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report – 16 December 2015 – Rowan Place, Rhymney – Proposed Demolition of Flats – Block 69-72

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