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**Date: 11th May 2016**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Caerphilly Homes Task Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Thursday, 19th May, 2016** at **5.00 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 this 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 Caerphilly Homes Task Group (WHQS) held on 18th February 2016.	1 - 4
To receive and consider the following report and make recommendations to Cabinet: -	

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4	Tenant Participation Strategy 2016 - 2019.	5 - 12
To receive and note report(s) subject to Officer delegated decision but referred to CHTG for consultation: -		
5	WHQS Local Employment Fund - Supporting LIFT.	13 - 18
To receive and note the following information items: -		
6	Sheltered Housing Schemes.	19 - 22
7	Supply Partner Arrangement - Progress Report.	23 - 26
8	WHQS Programme - 2015/16 Outturn.	27 - 32
9	To receive any requests for an item to be included in the next available agenda.	

**Circulation:**

Task Group Members: L. Ackerman, Mrs Y. Bryant, Mr C. Davies (Chair), Miss E. Forehead (Vice Chair), Ms J. Gale, K. James, Mrs B. A. Jones, Ms S. Jones, Miss A. Lewis, C.P. Mann, Mrs D. Moore, Mr J. Moore, D.V. Poole and Mr J. Smith, (unless otherwise amended at the AGM)

And Appropriate Officers



## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP (WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH  
(SIRHOWY ROOM) ON WEDNESDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY 2016 AT 5.00 P.M.

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PRESENT:

C. Davies - Chair

### Task Group Members:

Ms J. Gale, Mrs S. Jones, Mrs B. Jones, Mrs D. Moore, J. Moore and D.V. Poole

P. Davy (Head of Programmes), S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer)

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from L. Ackerman, E. Forehead, Miss A. Lewis and C. Mann.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

C. Davies, Mrs S. Jones, Mrs B. Jones, Mrs D. Moore and J. Moore, as Council Tenants declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in all agenda items.

### 3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIR

The Task Group were asked to note that Max McDermott, Tenant Representative has resigned as a Member of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group and the Task Group wished to express their gratitude for contributions to the Group and wished him all the best for the future.

### 4. MINUTES – 10TH DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 5. MINUTES – 27TH JANUARY 2016

RESOLVED that, subject to an amendment to Minute No. 4 in relation to Sheltered Housing Schemes – Managed Service Provider, in that the special meeting was

convened because of the concerns over the lack of consultation with tenants in the sheltered housing schemes, and to include the commitment of the Cabinet Member to undertake consultation at the appropriate time, the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**Matter Arising:**

Sheltered Housing Schemes – Managed Service Provider (Minute No. 4)

Arising from the minute and by way of an update, a query was raised regarding the consultation process. The Task Group were advised that, whilst there was the commitment by the Cabinet Member to consult, this was made on the understanding that there was sufficient interest in the tender process for the Managed Service Provider. However, the interest has been less than expected, and discussion is ongoing on how to take this forward. The Task Group noted that, at this present time, it is difficult to determine the basis of any consultation as there needs to be some certainty in respect of the programme for the sheltered schemes. It was reiterated that consultation would be undertaken as soon as practicable.

**6. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FUNDS**

The report proposed to absorb the WHQS Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund into the Environmental Programme budget and sought the views CHTG prior to its presentation to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

It was noted that, following the stock transfer ballot in February 2012, the Council agreed that it would deliver the promises made in its Offer Document to tenants and deliver the 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 £200 million WHQS investment as a catalyst to Transform Homes, Lives and Communities. These additional benefits included the creation of a Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund. The Council also created a Local Employment Fund, which has been relatively successful and will be subject shortly to a separate report. £50,000 is allocated to each fund annually.

Officers explained that each year, despite a number of promotional approaches by staff, there is a significant underspend in the funds allocated to the Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund. Whilst the limited number of projects have been worthy recipients, the Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund have not met their original expectations, in that they were designed to increase community cohesion and address local priorities. It was therefore advocated that these Funds be incorporated into the Environmental Programme budget.

Discussion took place regarding future applications to the fund and it was noted that, if any projects emerge that would previously have been candidates for the two funds they will, if appropriate, be incorporated within proposals for specific estates and be subject to the consultation arrangements that will inform the decision making as to which project proposals can be supported from the environmental budget.

A Task Group Member raised concerns around the allocation of funding and projects in the larger estates across the county borough and sought reassurance that, when work on the Environmental Programme begins, consideration should be given to all estates.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands (and in noting there was one abstention) 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 that the separate Community Improvement Fund and Community Safety Fund are terminated and the allocation apportionments absorbed within the Environmental Programme budget.

**7. INFORMATION ITEMS**

The Task Group noted the following items for information, full details of which were included within the Officers reports. They were not brought forward for review.

1. Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Report 2015/16 (Period 7);
2. WHQS Monitoring Report April 2015 – September 2015 (Half Year).

**8. TO RECEIVE ANY REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA**

The following requests were received:-

1. Mrs S. Jones requested an update report on the Housing Improvement Partnership (HIP).

The meeting closed at 17:44pm.

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 31st March 2016.

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CHAIR

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## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 19TH MAY 2016

**SUBJECT: TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2016 - 2019**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) with the draft Tenant Participation Strategy (2016 -19) and to seek views prior to the strategy being submitted to Cabinet for approval.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The 2016-19 Strategy defines our Purpose (the reason for tenant participation) and responds to the challenges and opportunities of the world within which Caerphilly Homes operates. The Strategy has been developed in consultation with tenants & staff (through a number of workshop and feedback sessions).
- 2.2 This report outlines the Purpose of the new Strategy, its 4 Key Objectives, along with information on how it was developed. The strategy also refers to the development of an Action Plan to support the delivery of the strategic objectives over the next 3 years.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, list 7 goals that provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards. The goal that most closely links with the Tenant Participation Strategy is “A Wales of cohesive communities - attractive, viable, safe and well connected communities”.
- 3.2 Tenant Involvement also links with the current Local Housing Strategy Aim 6:  
*“providing good quality, well managed homes in communities where people want to live and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations”*
- 3.3 The National Housing Strategy 2010 ‘Improving Lives and Communities’ emphasises the need to:  
*“Give tenants a clear voice in decisions that affect them” and that “services should reflect the needs of those who use them, not the needs of the organisations who deliver them”.*
- 3.4 Corporately, the Tenant Participation Strategy will also link to the Council’s Public Engagement Strategy, the Council’s Strategic Equality Objectives 3 & 4, and also to the themes in “Caerphilly Delivers”, the Local Service Board single integrated plan.

3.5 Also, Key Aim 1 of the Caerphilly Homes Communications Strategy 2015 - 2018 is “to raise the awareness of stakeholders on the range of services we provide, how to access our services, our performance in providing these services and how they can influence our services”.

#### 4. THE REPORT

4.1 This Tenant Participation Strategy has been designed to support the delivery of the Local Housing Strategy by ensuring that robust and valid evidence is generated through tenant participation to support the delivery of good and improving housing services. To achieve this, the Tenant & Community Involvement Team undertook a programme of engagement with staff and tenants.

4.2 The existing Tenant Participation Strategy (2013-16) had served its purpose and required review and updating. To support the development of the new Strategy a number of staff participated in a Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Project “Working together to challenge tenant involvement”. This project involved 5 workshop sessions over 5 months with other landlords on issues covering challenges to tenant involvement, cultural change and co-creation. Consultancy time with a CIH associate was also part of the project.

4.3 Joint staff and tenant workshop sessions (made up of 7 tenants and 7 staff) were undertaken in the Autumn 2015 to **Review the Purpose of tenant participation, provide an assessment on how we have done to date and understand the factors that affect us and what we do.** The workshops were held over 2 days and were independently facilitated by the CIH associate. Themes that emerged from the workshop were:

- Understand the needs of current and future tenants
- Need to involve a range of tenants/lack of diversity
- Feedback and evidence of service improvement/progress
- Two way communication/feedback
- Value for money
- Measure results

4.4 To understand the outputs of the joint staff and tenant workshop sessions, the Tenant & Community Involvement Team held its own workshop day also facilitated by the CIH associate. The information taken from these workshops as well as a review of lessons learnt from the delivery of the Tenant Participation Strategy (2013-16) has been used to inform the development of our 2016-19 Tenant Participation Strategy. We wanted to create a short, focused Strategy that would provide the vision and key objectives that would drive our tenant participation activities for the next 3 years and beyond.

4.5 The Strategy Purpose is “To have tenant driven and continually improving services”. To support this purpose, 4 objectives underpin the Strategy. These are:

- Objective 1 - we will understand the needs of our current and future tenants
- Objective 2 - we will turn the feedback into information that will support improving services
- Objective 3 - we will deliver effective two-way communication between Caerphilly Homes and our tenants
- Objective 4 - we will review the effectiveness of the tenant participation service and update our approach based on evidence

4.6 The Strategy will be supported by an annual operational Action plan which will align with the Purpose and 4 Objectives. The activities/tasks within the Action plan will be based on SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and with Timescales) ensuring that the 4 objectives can be met. It is important to continually review our progress against our strategic objectives to ensure that it continues to drive service improvement. See Appendix 1 for copy of Strategy.



## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The National Housing Strategy 2010 demonstrates the need to ensure that all tenants are allowed a voice and have their individual needs taken into account, regardless of their individual circumstances and backgrounds.
- 5.2 The overriding principle of the 2016-19 Strategy is to generate representative evidence from the total population. To ensure this, the delivery of the Strategy must ensure equal access for all tenants under Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015 and the Council's own Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020.
- 5.3 The specific activities within the Action plan will have to be supported by individual impact assessments.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Any activities associated with the Strategy will be accommodated within the existing Tenant Participation budget.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications. The Strategy will be supported through the Tenant & Community Involvement Team (and if required other existing staff resources).

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The views of consultees listed have been incorporated within the report.
- 8.2 The Tenant & Staff workshop group and Tenant Information Exchange (TIE) have both received a presentation on the Purpose & four Objectives of the Strategy. Discussions were held at both consultation events and comments/suggestions put forward. Both groups fully supported the Strategy. Some minor alterations have been made to the wording of the Strategy based on the feedback.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members of the CHTG are asked to provide comments in relation to the proposed strategy prior to submission to Cabinet.

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

- 10.1 To keep members of the CHTG updated and informed on tenant participation progress.

Author: Elizabeth Bayliss - Tenant Participation Officer  
Consultees: Councillor David Poole - Cabinet Member for Housing  
Christina Harry - Corporate Director Communities and Education  
Nicole Scammell - Director of Corporate Finance  
Shaun Couzens - Chief Housing Officer  
Phil Davy - Head of Programmes (WHQS)  
Fiona Wilkins - Public Sector Housing Manager  
Mandy Betts - Tenant & Community Involvement Manager  
Gail Taylor - Tenant Participation Officer

Kelsey Watkins - Communications & Tenant Engagement Officer  
David A Thomas - Senior Policy Officer (Equalities & Welsh Language)  
Mark Jennings - Housing Strategy Officer

Appendix 1: Tenant Participation Strategy (2013 -16)

Background Papers: Feedback session notes with joint staff & tenant workshop group and TIE

## Introduction

To enable us to achieve our tenant participation strategic purpose...

**“to have tenant driven and continually improving services”,**

we must understand the world in which we exist. Our operating environment poses many challenges and opportunities and by identifying and understanding both will enable us to plan effectively to mitigate the risks and seize the opportunities.

## Understanding our World

- We know that services designed and tailored to meet the needs of tenants will be:
  - Higher performing
  - More likely to improve
  - Be more efficient
- The housing market is dynamic and changing rapidly, the needs and expectations of our current and future tenants will continue to change and our engagement with our tenants (customers) must remain fit for purpose.
- Resource levels, including the level of rental income in the future is uncertain - tailoring services through tenant engagement is a necessity to deliver required efficiency savings (tenant participation can help us save money and deliver more)
- Changing demographics - the age profile/household composition projections show that the population is getting older and that their service requirement will change (Welsh LA population projections).
- Communication and engagement preferences - the way in which people want to communicate and engage will continue to change. This presents challenges and opportunities in relation to electronic channels of communication



## Our Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives for 2016 - 19 are designed to enable us to achieve our strategic purpose. The development of these objectives has been informed by our understanding of the challenges and opportunity we face.

### **Objective 1:**

We will understand the needs of our current and future tenants

- we will ensure that we engage with tenants and future tenants to ensure representative views
- we will utilise a variety of methods to understand the needs
- we will identify the most effective engagement methods

### **Objective 2:**

We will turn the feedback into information that will support improving services

- we will provide Caerphilly Homes (the business) with information to improve the way we work to meet tenants needs
- we will provide evidence to enable us to do more of what tenants want and less of what is not needed

### **Objective 3:**

We will deliver effective two way communication between Caerphilly Homes and our tenants

- we will keep our tenants informed – “You said....we did” (feedback on what we have done with the information we collected)
- we will use the right communication techniques to maximise the engagement of our tenants
- we will explore and implement opportunities to maximise engagement through electronic channels with our tenants



## **Objective 4:**

We will review the effectiveness of the tenant participation service and update our approach based on evidence

- we will measure the effectiveness of tenant participation in meeting the purpose
- we will monitor and understand value for money of our tenant participation activities

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is important to continually review our progress against the strategic objectives to ensure the Strategy achieves its purpose.

We will use the following performance measures to measure the organisation's effectiveness in delivering our Tenant Participation Strategy:

1. Number of tenants meaningfully engaged (engaged in service improvement consultation)
2. Satisfaction with "listens to my views and acts on them"
3. Representative sample: average age of engaged tenants
4. Evidence that services improve

## **Operational Action Plan**

The Strategy will be supported by an annual operational Action Plan to deliver the strategic objectives over the 3 years. The Action Plan will be based on SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and with Timescales), to ensure the objectives are met.

## **Equalities and Welsh Language**

The overriding principle of the Strategy is to generate representative evidence. To ensure this, the delivery of the Strategy must ensure equal access for all tenants and therefore will not prejudice those rights under current Equalities and Welsh Language legislation in Wales and the Council's own Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020. The specific activities will be supported by individual impact assessments.



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## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 19TH MAY 2016

**SUBJECT: WHQS LOCAL EMPLOYMENT FUND – SUPPORTING LIFT**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The report is seeking the views of CHTG prior to a decision being made on the allocation of the 2016/17 Local Employment Fund budget to support the delivery of the Welsh Government funded LIFT programme delivered within the County Borough via Communities First.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 As part of the Council's commitment to tenants outlined in the Offer Document the Council allocated £50,000 per annum to a suite of funds designed to engage and support the local community in the helping to transform homes, lives and communities.
- 2.2 The Local Employment Fund was created to support projects that aim to support unemployed / inactive tenants into work. £50,000 is allocated annually by the Council to the Fund.
- 2.3 In previous years the Fund has supported the partial refurbishment of Hafod Deg, Rhymney as a community 'Hub', the employment of a Passport Support Officer to support young people participating in the Council's Passport Programme and receiving placements via the Council's WHQS programme and the delivery of a pre Passport scheme delivered by White Rose Resource Centre for young people in New Tredegar.
- 2.4 During 2015/16, Cabinet approved the transfer of the entire allocation of £50,000 to support the delivery of the Welsh Government's LIFT programme on the basis that the LIFT programme is designed specifically to support workless households – many of which, will reside within the Council's housing areas.
- 2.5 The programme is specifically aimed at supporting people living within workless households in the Upper Rhymney Valley and Caerphilly Basin.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 3.2 The WHQS Programme is coterminous with the Caerphilly Single Plan priority of creating 'Prosperous Communities' (P2).
- 3.3 The Council is committed to ensuring that the WHQS investment transforms not only homes but also lives and communities.
- 3.4 The Council's Local Housing Strategy "People, Property, and Places" has the following aim:

"To provide good quality, well managed houses in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations."
- 3.5 The proposal is coterminous with the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan and the Council's Poverty Strategy.

### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 St James 3 (comprising a large part of Lansbury Park) is the most deprived area in Wales in the recently published 2014 WIMD (previously ranking as the second most deprived area in WIMD 2011) and forms part of the Caerphilly Basin Cluster.
- 4.2 St James 3 is the most deprived Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in the Education domain. It falls within the ten most deprived LSOAs for the Income, Employment Health and Education domains, which have a combined weight of 75% in the overall index. It also falls within the 10% most deprived LSOAs for the Community Safety domain. The LSOA has changed little in overall rank since WIMD 2011, but its relative deprivation has increased substantially in the Housing and Access to Services domains, and Education domain moving from 24 in WIMD 2011 to 1 in WIMD 2014 (see page 11 WIMD 2014).
- 4.3 The Van Community Partnership Audit (2009) showed there were concerns in the area with what people termed as a 'benefit culture' and a general level of apathy associated with looking for work. There were also concerns about a perceived lack of employment opportunities in the area. The Van Community Audit also found lack of awareness of local training opportunities and a need for childcare.
- 4.4 The WIMD 2014 calculates that St James 3 is 3rd (out of 1909) most deprived LSOA in Wales in relation to Employment despite being adjacent to some of the borough's key employment sites.
- 4.5 The URV has the highest concentration of poverty in the County Borough. As such both the Council and the Local Service Board have identified it as a priority area for investment and intervention.
- 4.6 Twyn Carno 1 is the 2nd most deprived area within Caerphilly according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 and lies within the top 10% of the most deprived LSOA's in Wales in relation to Income, Employment, Health, Education and Community Safety. It ranks as 6 within the overall index of multiple deprivation. There



are a high proportion of households within the URV where none of the adults aged 16-64 are in employment.

- 4.7 The Welsh Government has introduced the LIFT programme as part of its commitment to tackling poverty in Wales' most deprived areas. The programme aims to target 5000 households across Wales through the provision of bespoke support and mentoring. Every adult (16-64) within an eligible household (where all working age adults are unemployed) will be provided with individual support to move towards obtaining employment through participating in training, overcoming barriers and undertaking work experience opportunities.
- 4.8 Since 1st April last year 156 adults of working age who reside within the Caerphilly Basin and the Upper Rhymney Valley have been identified and engaged in the programme. Of these 60% have confirmed they are Council tenants.
- 4.9 As a result 97 Council tenants have benefited from the delivery of the LIFT project during the last year.
- 4.10 Opportunities provided through the LIFT Programme for tenants include: -
- a) Training courses linked specifically to a participant's employability.
  - b) Work experience or placements to enhance the participant's employability.
  - c) Actual employment and volunteering which leads to a recognised qualification appropriate for work.
- 4.11 Placement and employment opportunities for LIFT participants have also been created as a result of including community benefit requirements into the internal works contracts supporting the delivery of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. Meetings with contractors regarding their community benefit commitments are scheduled monthly and include representatives from LIFT, the new ESF funded Communities4Work programme and Communities First to ensure that local unemployed people are in the best position possible to access opportunities that may be created.
- 4.12 It is proposed to utilise the WHQS Local Employment Fund to add value to the LIFT programme through enhancing the delivery budget available to support participants in the Upper Rhymney Valley and Caerphilly Basin. The allocation of £50,000 from the 2016/17 Local Employment Fund will also enhance the support that workless households are able to access through the programme and the resources available to coordinate the programme in each area.
- 4.13 The Community Regeneration Manager will provide a report to the WHQS Project Board and the CHTG on the outcomes delivered during 2016/17 as a result of the WHQS investment.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications arising from the report. The report is for consultation.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council has previously allocated £50,000 to the Local Employment Fund to support and add value to programmes and projects that support people currently unemployed towards opportunities designed to increase their employability.
- 6.2 The LIFT budget for 2016/17 is £150,000.
- 6.3 The Local Employment Fund budget for 2016/17 has not yet been allocated.
- 6.4 If the funds are not allocated to support the delivery of LIFT it is likely that they will remain unspent as there are few opportunities to support smaller projects due to the fact that the majority of employment support programmes are now delivered strategically and prescribed by Welsh Government or the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 6.5 With this in mind, it is proposed to allocate the entire 2016/17 budget to add value and support the delivery of the LIFT programme throughout the Caerphilly Basin and Upper Rhymney Valley Clusters.
- 6.6 The decision is delegated to the Head of Programmes.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 Comments received on the draft report have been incorporated.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The report is seeking the views of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group prior to the decision being made under officer delegated powers.

## **10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To deliver and enhance the impact of the LIFT programme and the WHQS transforming lives and communities agenda, through adding value and pooling resources.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Housing Acts and Local Government Acts 2000.

Author: Jane Roberts-Waite, Strategic Coordination Manager  
Tel: 01443 8664340, Email: roberj2@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Councillor Dave Poole, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing  
Councillor Ken James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration  
Christina Harry, Corporate Director – Communities  
Phil Davy, Head of Programmes

Shaun Couzens, Chief Housing Officer  
Dave Whetter, Interim Head of Regeneration  
Tina McMahon, Community Regeneration Manager  
Lesley Allen, Group Accountant  
Dave Roberts, Group Accountant

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## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 19TH MAY 2016

**SUBJECT: SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update in relation to the WHQS works to the sheltered housing schemes.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 A report was considered by CHTG in April 2015 in respect of additional measures necessary to cope with the volume of work and specifically that the management and delivery of the WHQS works on the sheltered housing schemes would be undertaken by a suitable consultancy on behalf of the Council. This was seen as a means of buying in extra capacity to oversee a discrete part of the WHQS Programme. The recommendation was subsequently approved by Cabinet on 29th April 2015.
- 2.2 A special meeting of the CHTG was convened on 27th January 2016 arising from concerns raised by tenant representatives about the proposals to appoint a managed service provider and the view there had been a lack of consultation with tenants in the sheltered housing schemes.
- 2.3 The special meeting was held during the tender period for the managed service provider. The CHTG was advised there was no pre-determined outcome to the tender process and the consultation would be undertaken at the appropriate time.
- 2.4 This report provides an update and outlines how the Council now intends to proceed.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 3.2 The Single Integrated Plan 2013-17 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 report presented to CHTG on 27th January 2016 outlined the background to the decision to pursue a managed service provider and that the Invitation to Tender (ITT) has been structured around 2 Lots. It was explained the Council did not have to award either Lot 1 or Lot 2 if the tender submissions fail to meet the Council's requirements or there are concerns about value for money. The tender process involved a mini competition from the National Procurement Service Construction Consultancy Framework Agreement.
- 4.2 There was a disappointing response to the ITT for the sheltered housing schemes. In light of this and the fact that new external works contract arrangements in the Lower Rhymney Valley are required has led to a major review and change of direction has been determined. Neither Lot 1 nor Lot 2 from the sheltered housing schemes ITT will proceed. The concerns raised by tenant representatives have also been taken into account.
- 4.3 An alternative approach has been agreed which will involve the following:-
- The WHQS work to the sheltered housing schemes will be managed internally.
  - The in house work force will undertake the WHQS improvement works to the majority of the sheltered housing schemes supported as necessary by sub-contractors which will be similar to the way work has been managed in Rowan Place, Rhymney.
  - There are a small number of schemes with communal boiler plant where the work will be contracted.
  - The feasibility/design studies for the six sheltered schemes the subject of remodelling proposals will be taken forward by the Council's Building Consultancy team.
  - Additional contract arrangements will be put in place for the Lower Rhymney Valley and a new support framework for the in house team both of which will be utilised with taking work forward on the sheltered housing schemes.
  - Technical resources will be strengthened which may include some consultancy support where appropriate.

The proposals outlined are intended to ensure that delivery of the WHQS works to the sheltered schemes can be completed by 2020.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An EqIA screening has not been undertaken as the report is for information.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The WHQS capital works cost for the sheltered housing schemes is incorporated as part of the HRA business plan.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There will be a requirement to increase technical resources and the in house workforce may need to recruit additional trades to cope with the work in the sheltered housing schemes.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The report has been circulated to consultees.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The report is for information.

## **10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To provide an update and keep the CHTG informed of developments concerning the sheltered housing schemes.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Housing Acts 1985, 1996, 2004, 2014.

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## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 19TH MAY 2016

**SUBJECT: SUPPLY PARTNER ARRANGEMENT – PROGRESS REPORT**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress to date in relation to the Supply Partner arrangement.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Supply Partner contract is a 10-year arrangement for the Supply of Plant and Materials to WHQS and HRO.
- 2.2 The contract also extends to contractors in relation to Key Components. Key Components have been structured to ensure consistency of products.
- 2.3 The Supply Partner is responsible for managing the Supply Chain effectively; ensuring robust processes are in place for the selection and vetting of their Supply Chain partners. Additionally they are expected to remove bottlenecks and drive out unnecessary costs throughout the supply chain, focussing attention on adding value.
- 2.4 All materials required by WHQS and HRO are purchased via the Supply Partner, thus eliminating contract leakage and maverick spend.
- 2.5 Innovation and continuous improvement are a key requirement of the Supply Partner contract.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is intended to ensure that all local authority and housing association homes are improved and maintained to achieve specified standards.
- 3.2 The 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 WHQS Procurement Strategy.
- 3.6 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.

#### **4. THE REPORT**

- 4.1 The Supply Partner Contract was implemented in 2013, and will run for a period of 10 years. The contract was awarded to Robert Price Builders Merchants, a Welsh SME. The estimated value (over 10 years) is £70 million.
- 4.2 The Supply Partner (SP) contract is to supply all key components and ancillary items for the WHQS programme and Housing Repairs, and extend to the supply of all key components to external contractors.
- 4.3 With spend on plant and materials for the in house work force now 100% via the Supply Partner, the contract has enabled us to eliminate contract leakage and maverick spend. There remains some doubt whether all external contractors are purchasing 100% of key components from the Supply Partner, and to date, this has been difficult to police, however the Relationship Manager will be undertaking random checks on contractor spend via the Supply Partner to ensure contractual obligations are being met.
- 4.4 An important area for development is Just In Time (JIT) deliveries. For JIT to work effectively requires robust processes and procedures on both sides, which will be the focus over the coming months. This will have significant advantages in removing waste, such as transportation waste, processing waste and inventory waste.
- 4.5 Community Benefits were built into the Supply Partner contract. Robert Price have supported many initiatives including sponsorship, donating items such as sheds and materials, attending various events including the Big Cheese and Blackwood Beach Party, supporting the Authority's Food Bank initiative and implementing a Legacy Fund. The Non-Core Community Benefits submitted by the Supply Partner include a Legacy Fund/Community Pot. This is a sum of money that Robert Price receives from non-local suppliers. It is linked to the value of spend with the individual supplier, and value of the pot is currently £6500.00. To date the fund has been used to support Community Groups and Sponsor the Learning Festival. How to best use the fund in the future is under review, with one consideration being to support apprentices (employed by the in-house external contractors) with work tools. In line with the core TR&T, Robert Price continue to progress with the requirements set out in the contract, and have recently extended this to their supply chain.
- 4.6 The SP contract was seen as a catalyst for change, and one of the drivers for change is innovation. Some of the improvements to date include:
  - 4.6.1 **Closure of Central Stores:** The Supply Partner acts as the stores for WHQS and HRO. Through implementation of rigid procedures, and joint working with HRO Senior Officers, Relationship Manager and Robert Price, it has been possible to

close the central stores in Tir-Y-Berth. This is a major financial benefit to the Authority and has resulted in significant savings in relation to overheads such as stores staff, stock and the building itself. The four members of staff affected by the closure of the stores either retired or were redeployed.

- 4.6.2 Call-Off Manager:** Robert Price offered a system of ordering kitchens directly linked to the manufacturer. This system (Call-Off Manager) has been in operation for around 12 months, and works on the principle of uploading the kitchen designs (which is being undertaken by the manufacturer) and when the upgrade to the property has been planned, the kitchen is called in by a simple press of a button.
- 4.6.3 Collection Cards:** The scope of the Supply Partner was based on planned deliveries for WHQS, and improved services for HRO. HRO operated a collection order process, and were raising in excess of 200 low value orders per month. Robert Price introduced a collection card, which is unique to each operative, and can be used in any of their depots. This has had a positive impact on resource. The collection cards are also used by WHQS foremen/operatives, but are intended for urgent items where demand is unplanned.
- 4.6.4 Product Packs:** Robert Price have introduced packs, which are groups of materials required for individual jobs, such as rewiring properties; plumbing in kitchens and bathrooms or heating works. This system saves considerable time in the order process and allows all relevant materials to be delivered as required.
- 4.6.5 Invoicing:** The implementation of the Supply Partner contract has significantly reduced the number of invoices received. Prior to the start of this contract, invoices were received from a significant number of framework suppliers, daily (per delivery), weekly or monthly (depending on supplier). With the introduction of just one supplier, invoices have now reduced to four per month – three for HRO (due to different cost accounts) and one for WHQS. 100% invoice matching is undertaken for WHQS invoices, with accuracy level at around 99%.
- 4.6.6 Imprest Stock:** The Supply Partner have replicated the Imprest Stock system for HRO, which will be reviewed shortly to identify improvements. Imprest Stock system is currently being explored by WHQS as a means of holding minimal stock on site.
- 4.6.7 Product Core Group:** A group has been set up, with representatives from HRO, WHQS and Public Sector Housing, to focus on standardising products, review new products, discuss products that may be causing concern and consider alternatives with reduced environmental impact.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The report is for information and therefore an EqIA has not been undertaken.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Robert Price contract operates on the basis of cost price plus management fee with prices reviewed on an annual basis. For the period 2015/16 Robert Price were able to secure a number of savings across key components which included:-

13% savings on Worcester boilers  
6.6% savings on radiators

6.67% savings on showers and improved warranty  
4% savings on smoke and CO detectors.

- 6.2 Through the operation of the pain/gain mechanism within the contract there has also been a financial benefit to the Council of £21,000 in the past two years.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 Comments received from consultees have been incorporated within the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The report is for information.

## **10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To meet a request from the Caerphilly Homes Task Group to be informed about the operation of the Robert Price contract.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Housing Acts and Local Government Acts.

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Christina HARRY	- Corporate Director Communities
Shaun Couzens	- Chief Housing Officer
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Colin Roden	- WHQS Project Manager
Alan Edmunds	- WHQS Project Manager
Steve Greedy	- WHQS Project Manager
Paul Smythe	- Housing Repairs Operation Manager
Lesley Allen	- Principal Accountant
Liz Lucas	- Head of Procurement



## CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 19TH MAY 2016

**SUBJECT: WHQS PROGRAMME – 2015/16 OUTTURN**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To outline progress with the WHQS Programme at the end of the 2015/16 financial year.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 During the course of 2015/16 1415 properties have benefitted from internal improvements. Eight external works contracts have reached practical completion relating to 203 properties in Markham, Argoed, Oakdale and Hengoed. The estimated outturn capital expenditure is circa £25m (the actual figure will be confirmed when the accounts are closed in May 2016). This figure is more than double the former housing capital programme that pre-dated the WHQS Programme.

2.2 There is a significant pipeline of external works already on the ground, at contract award stage or being tendered. Nevertheless the external works are a major risk area to the programme deadline of March 2020. There are also some major gaps in the contract arrangements relating to the external works in the Lower Rhymney Valley and the sheltered housing schemes where decisions are pending.

### **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

### Internal Works

- 4.1 Internal works completions for 2015/16 are 1415 against a target of 1835, a performance of 77%. The slippage is due to a number of reasons including no access to properties, contractors under performance, capacity within the WHQS team to provide complete contract packages with adequate lead in periods, delays with external asbestos surveys, backlog of IT intervention plans. During the year there has been concerted effort to improve the position on a number of fronts. However the no access is a growing problem which represents around 40% of the slippage. There are landlord powers to enforce access to undertake repairs or improvements but this will trigger proceedings to seek repossession of the property. Following a review it has been determined that access for WHQS works will only be enforced in relation to re-wires due to health and safety considerations. On the third attempt to gain access for other internal improvement works the tenant will be advised that if there is no response to the letter within a specific time it will be deemed as a tenant refusal. The intention is to remove the no access properties from the slippage figures at the year end so they do not distort the carried forward properties where works can be undertaken. The no access properties will be recorded in the database for future consideration which may be after 2020.
- 4.2 An additional 93 void properties have been brought up to WHQS internally by HRO prior to re-letting, improving the overall position for the year to 1508.
- 4.3 Performance against target for each of the individual contract arrangements is as follows:-

In house work force (all areas)	81%
Keepmoat (EV)	71%
Vinci (URV)	85%
Contract Services (LRV)	76%

The number of carried forward properties in 2016/17 for each of the contract arrangements is shown below:-

	Carried forward following adjustment for no access
In house workforce	154
Keepmoat	111
Vinci	2
Contract Services	46

- 4.4 Whilst the slippage situation needs to be minimised it is unlikely to be completely eradicated as there will always be issues affecting individual properties. Based on the performance levels achieved during 2015/16 there is sufficient flexibility to complete the internal works programme by March 2020. This is because the contractors' profiled numbers of properties only run to March 2019 so there is a year in hand.
- 4.5 The in house programme does include the financial year 2019/20. In order to complete all the programmed properties (although some will drop out due to no access) an average weekly completion rate of 14 will need to be sustained by the in house work force over the next 4 financial years. In the last few weeks the in house output has increased as a result of resources being redeployed from Rowan Place (as this is nearing completion) back to internal works. The weekly output will be closely monitored and if necessary alternative contract arrangements implemented to maintain progress to meet the deadline.
- 4.6 The carried forward properties from 2015/16 will be absorbed within the 2016/17 programme but the progress will be monitored and reported separately in the weekly performance table.

## External Works

- 4.7 Seven small lots contracts in the Eastern Valleys from the 2014/15 financial year have reached practical completion. Two other contracts planned for the 2014/15 financial year in Markham and Argoed have only recently commenced and will be completed during the 2016/17 financial year. One other contract for 14 Unity bungalows in Hengoed (URV) has also reached practical completion. The outturn performance for 2015/16 is that external works have only been completed to 203 properties.
- 4.8 All contracts that form the planned 2015/16 programme will run on into the 2016/17 financial year. This includes small lots in Ynysddu, Pentwynmawr, Croespenmaen, Gelligroes and High Meadow (EV). Additional contracts at tender stage in the Eastern Valleys are for the Penllwyn and Springfield estates. Due to the estimated value of the works it was decided it would be more cost effective to tender each estate as a single contract rather than have a multiplicity of smaller contracts.
- 4.9 In the Upper Rhymney Valley (URV) contracts are tendered from a framework. Two contracts are on the ground in New Tredegar and Phillipstown. A further contract in Cefn Hengoed is due to commence in May 2016. Gelligaer, part of the 2015/16 programme, has still be to tendered. This has been deliberately held back to limit conflict with a separate contract awarded to Eon for external wall insulation to properties in Gelligaer and Pontlottyn. This contract has secured a limited amount of external funding under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO).
- 4.10 In the Lower Rhymney Valley (LRV) there are some residual external works in Greenfield, Nantddu and Heol Trecastell, mainly roofing and painting, which were started by the in house team prior to the redeployment to Rowan Place, which are in the process of being completed.
- 4.11 The Private Sector Housing Team has awarded two contracts at Bryn Awel and Bryn Heol, Bedwas for blocks of flats, and two more contracts at Bryn Canol and Bryn Fedw are at tender stage.
- 4.12 The first 2016/17 contract in the URV at Abertysswg is at award stage. Surveying is being progressed for other community areas in readiness to prepare contracts for the 2016/17 programme.
- 4.13 Although the external works programme has suffered a number of setbacks there is a significant volume of work in the pipeline. Delays were caused during 2015/16 as a consequence of decisions taken by the Project Board to review the external works specification due to concerns about escalating costs. This resulted in a number of areas having to be re-surveyed. It has also been necessary to respond to survey findings which in many circumstances are resulting in an increased amount of work beyond that anticipated based on the original Savills stock condition survey. In particular the prevalence of damp and mould is an increasing problem.
- 4.14 The external works are a major risk area to the programme deadline. The slippage will take time to be resolved and that will put extra pressure on delivering the 2016/17 programme. The ability to speed up the programme is constrained by the availability of resources. There are only so many contracts that can be managed at any one time by the existing team.
- 4.15 The HRA garage programme is being managed by Building Consultancy and a provisional timetable has been issued to complete all the remaining work by April 2017.

## LRV and Sheltered Housing Schemes

- 4.16 There are two major gaps in the current contract arrangements. These relate to the external works in the LRV (including the Ty Sign and Cefn Fforest estates following a review of the small lots in the EV) and the sheltered housing schemes (internal and external works). The position is under review.

## Environmental Programme

- 4.17 There have been ongoing discussions within the Project Board about how the environmental programme should be taken forward amidst concerns about deliverability. A new action plan and timetable is in preparation that will also address the delivery arrangements recognising the need for engagement with residents.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An EqIA screening has not been undertaken as the report is for information.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The capital budget for 2015/16 is £36.2m. A summary breakdown of expenditure is as follows (at period 11). This will be updated following the closure of accounts.

<b>Internal Works</b>	<b>£</b>
In House	4.7m
Keepmoat	4.2m
Vinci	1.9m
Contract Services	2.9m

<b>External Works</b>	<b>£</b>
All contracts	4.5m

- 6.2 With all other expenditure against the capital programme the cost incurred at period 11 is £22m. However £5.7m (26%) relates to 2014/15 contracts carried forward in 2015/16. It is projected that the outturn capital expenditure will be circa £25m resulting in an underspend of £11m (to be confirmed). The under-spend will be utilised to fund the future years programme.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The volume of work and maintaining the pace is placing the WHQS team under pressure. Measures are currently being put in place to increase the output of external works surveys by overtime working on a Saturday morning. In addition the recruitment of additional agency surveyors is being pursued to generally assist in getting further ahead with specifying the work and scheduling contract packages. The target date of September 2018 has been set to complete all the internal and external works surveys. Agency cover is also being pursued for Assistant Project Managers to cover a post that will become vacant and to strengthen the external works team.
- 7.2 A review of the senior management within Caerphilly Homes has been initiated and this is likely to lead to further reviews of the delivery arrangements. Fundamentally there has to be the capacity to cope with the volume of work.
- 7.3 The in house work force numbers have fallen to 122 but they continue to be supported by sub contractors (circa 40 additional operatives).



7.4 Staff movement and recruitment issues will be a continuing risk to the delivery of the programme.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 Comments received have been incorporated in the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 The report is for information.

## **10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 To appraise the Caerphilly Homes Task Group of the position with the WHQS Programme at the end of the 2015/16 financial year.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Housing Acts 1985, 1996, 2004, 2014.

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