



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 17TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: END OF YEAR REPORT ON THE HOUSING DIVISION'S 2014/15 SERVICE PLAN

REPORT BY: CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) with an end of year update on progress made against the key outcomes contained within the 2014/15 divisional service plan.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The 2014/15 service plan was produced in accordance with corporate guidance issued by the performance management unit.
- 2.2 The service planning process allows the housing management team to focus the efforts of the division on increasing efficiency and maximising the effectiveness of the range of services that are provided.
- 2.3 For the reasons outlined in section 4 of this report and the appended part 6 extract of the service plan, performance throughout the year is regarded by the housing management team as being partially successful.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 **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.
- 3.2 **Caerphilly Delivers (Single Integrated Plan, 2013): P2:** *“Improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the county borough.”*
- 3.3 **People, Property, Places: A Housing Strategy for Caerphilly County Borough** provides the context for the provision of housing and related services in the county borough.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The 2014/15 service plan is produced in accordance with corporate guidance issued by the performance management unit. The plan covers the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015.
- 4.2 The key outcomes listed below were selected by the housing management team. Key outcomes 1 and 2 were also corporate Improvement Objectives during 2014/15.

1. Investment in homes to transform lives and communities (IO5).
2. Improve the availability of private and public sector housing to reduce the number of residents who may become homeless (IO6).
3. Following the adoption of a revised Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy, there is a need to develop an administrative base for the provision of Home Improvement Repayment Loans, HMO Loans and Loans provided via the proposed National Loan Scheme.
4. Development of Older Persons Service following Sheltered Housing Review.
5. Reduce the number of long-term empty properties and bring existing empty properties back into beneficial use.
6. Improve & increase access to affordable housing to include the development of a Common Housing Register, Common Allocations Policy and Social Lettings Agency.
7. Improve the quality and standards of the response maintenance and voids service.

4.3 Under each key outcome sits a series of actions, which were carried out in order to achieve the intended outcome, performance indicators to measure progress of those actions and risks which identify the impact and likelihood of the actions not being fully/successfully completed.

4.4 The actions contained within the service plan were monitored throughout the year using the following methods:

| Frequency | Monitoring Arrangement |
|------------------|---|
| Weekly | Review financial & operational performance reports Consider weekly workloads |
| Fortnightly | WHQS Project Board |
| Monthly | Aspireview review meetings Service plan review meetings Financial and operational performance and strategy review meetings. Financial monitoring meetings (capital) |
| Bi-monthly | Financial monitoring meetings (revenue) |
| 6 weekly | Caerphilly Homes Task Group (WHQS) Housing management team meeting |
| Quarterly | Ffynnon updated and reviewed Performance management meetings Performance management unit review support meeting Performance management reports – Aspireview Progress reports to chief officer |
| 6 monthly | Reports to scrutiny committees (policy and resources and regeneration and environment) and cabinet Progress reports to chief officer Performance management meeting |
| Annually | Performance development reviews for all staff Benchmarking (APSE) AspireView updated and reviewed Year end report to chief officer |

4.5 At the end of each quarter throughout the year progress made against the actions contained within the service plan was recorded and reported to the housing management team. This process provided the housing management team with the opportunity to address any areas of underperformance and, where appropriate, impose measures to address these areas.

4.6 Throughout the year officers have submitted individual performance management reports to the CHTG.

4.7 Information on the progress made against the two Improvement Objectives was maintained throughout the year on Aspireview (performance management software). Half yearly and end of year reports on both Improvement Objectives were presented to Policy & Resources scrutiny committee for consideration.

4.8 In terms of some of the actions carried out during 2014/15 that have been successful:

- Drew down Welsh Government Arbed funding to provide energy efficiency measures to around 317 properties in Phillipstown both public and private sector.
- Strengthened the homelessness prevention service to respond to the challenges presented by the change in legislation.
- Fully implemented a new service model for older persons housing services.
- Drew down £341,893.52 from the House into Homes scheme for 7 loans valuing in that have provided 15 additional units of accommodation. In addition we drew down a further £88,424 in anticipation of the completion of 4 further loans, which will provide 4 further units of accommodation.
- Worked closely with partner housing associations to develop a draft common allocation policy ready for public consultation.
- Introduced a new re-let standard for void council properties.

4.9 In terms of some of the actions carried out during 2014/15 that have been partially successful or unsuccessful:

- Partially completed the WHQS capital investment programme in respect of internal and external repairs and improvements (42%).
- At a local level the review was not fully developed for the existing pre-release prison protocols with the prison service, as due to the complexity it was determined that this would be progressed at a national level. We are, therefore, actively working at a national level to achieve this.
- Delayed in confirming outsourcing of certain aspects of the administration of home improvement repayment loans.
- Delayed in completing the review of Tredegar Court extra care scheme.
- Delayed in carryout the public consultation exercise on the common allocation policy.
- Delayed in upgrading the housing repair operations section repairs management system to Total Mobile 5.

4.10 Full details of progress made throughout the year are included in Appendix 1.

4.11 The key outcomes contained within the 2015/16 service plan are:

1. Investment in homes to transform lives and communities (IO 5).
2. To successfully complete the relocation of staff from Pontllanfraith House.
3. We want to change existing working practices to strengthen the homelessness prevention function.
4. A reduction in the waiting time for a disabled facilities grant (DFG).
5. Tackling the effects of welfare reform & Universal Credit.
6. Realigning different aspects of the service area to support the WHQS programme.
7. Ensuring that the service area is adequately prepared to deal with the legislative change brought about by the introduction of different Parts of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
8. Implement initiatives to address empty properties in the social and private sectors.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 An equalities impact assessment (EIA) is not needed because the issues covered in this report are for information purposes only, therefore, the council's full EIA process does not need to be applied.

5.2 Where applicable, EIAs have been carried out on individual actions / projects contained within the service plan.

5.3 The equalities improvement and monitoring form within the service plan (pp. 67-73) contains a series of statements detailing how our services contribute to the promotion of equality of opportunity.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Many of the service plan actions are financed from existing budgets. The requirement for additional resources is listed clearly in the plan against the relevant action(s)/task(s).

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications arising directly out of this report.
- 7.2 Any personnel implications relating to individual action(s)/task(s) contained within the service plan, where applicable, are listed against the relevant action(s)/task(s).

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All responses from consultees have been incorporated into this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That CHTG Members consider the contents of the report and note progress in meeting the delivery of the key outcomes and agree with the judgement made in paragraph 2.3.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 N/a

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 *Local Government Measure 2009* requires improvement objectives to be approved by the council's executive function.
- 11.2 Some of the actions contained within the service plan are carried out as part of a statutory function, e.g. homelessness, the enforcement of conditions in the private rented sector, disabled adaptations etc.

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Appendices:
Appendix 1 – Part 6 extract of the 2014/15 Service Plan