



CABINET - 17TH FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT: GROUNDWORK WALES UPDATE

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for CCBC to resign from the Board of Groundwork Caerphilly.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Cabinet (12 November 2014) authorised officers to progress the merger of Groundwork Caerphilly into Groundwork Wales. At the time of the Cabinet report it was envisaged that Groundwork Caerphilly would close upon novation of all contracts into Groundwork Wales. However, there are contracts that have proved impossible to transfer into Groundwork Wales in the short term. Groundwork Wales has requested that Caerphilly County Borough Council now resign as a member of Groundwork Caerphilly, which would allow the company to become a wholly owned subsidiary of Groundwork Wales.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The work of Groundwork links to the Greener outcome of *Caerphilly Delivers the Single Integrated Plan 2013-14*. Groundwork Caerphilly's Chief Executive is the Lead for the Greener Outcome sitting on the Single Integrated Plan leads group.

3.2 Groundwork also contributes to other outcome themes of the Single Integrated Plan, in particular Prosperous with the employment initiatives, as well as Health through Go Green for Health.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Cabinet (12 November 2014) were informed of the merger of Groundwork Caerphilly into Groundwork Wales to strengthen the national voice and capacity of Groundwork, whilst retaining a local voice and capacity. Cabinet noted the merger and authorised "officers to take appropriate steps in ensuring the merger."

4.2 Subsequently Caerphilly County Borough Council was accepted as a Member on to the Groundwork Wales Board, with Full Council (27th January 2015) agreeing the Council's representative on the Board through its one nomination. The other company member of Groundwork Wales is Groundwork UK.

4.3 While the merger was completed in February 2015, there are contracts that have proved impossible to transfer into Groundwork Wales in the short term, and also Groundwork Wales has been ineligible for smaller grants as a national organisation. This has made it necessary

to keep Groundwork Caerphilly open. An approach has been made by the Chief Executive Officer of Groundwork Wales at the request of the Board for the Council now to resign from Groundwork Caerphilly.

- 4.4 It is proposed by Groundwork Wales that the Council should resign as a member of Groundwork Caerphilly, which would allow the company to become a wholly owned subsidiary of Groundwork Wales. The interests of the Council (which funds Groundwork Wales) are then served by its membership of Groundwork Wales and its nomination of a director to the Board of Groundwork Wales (currently Cllr Havard).
- 4.5 Groundwork Caerphilly as a subsidiary of Groundwork Wales will not need a formal Board, but a South East Wales advisory group will be set up as a regional sub-committee, to which the Council will be able to nominate Member and Officer representation. The need to retain Groundwork Caerphilly will be reviewed annually.
- 4.6 Discussions are ongoing between Officers and the Chief Executive Officer of Groundwork Wales on forming a new Groundwork Wales Service Level Agreement for 2016-17. No final decision has been made on whether the SLA should be with Groundwork Wales or Groundwork Caerphilly, but Legal Services have advised that having a future SLA with Groundwork Caerphilly would have no bearing on the decision to resign from Groundwork Caerphilly.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Equalities implications are fully taken into account by the work of Groundwork, which is based on improving life chances of local people, and improving the living environment of the borough.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Council currently provides core funding for Groundwork Wales, which for 2015-16 stands at £43,860.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report. Relations with Groundwork Wales are managed through the Groundwork Wales Liaison Group, which meets quarterly with the Chief Executive Officer of Groundwork Wales. Sitting on the Groundwork Caerphilly Liaison Group are the Council's Policy & Research Manager, Team Leader, Sustainable Development & Living Environment, and Group Manager (Strategy Funding & Support).

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Cabinet approve the Council's resignation from Groundwork Caerphilly.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To allow Groundwork Caerphilly to become a wholly owned subsidiary of Groundwork Wales.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Jackie Dix, Policy & Research Manager
Consultees: Cllr Nigel George, Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure Services
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property
Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection
Katy Stevenson, Chief Executive Officer, Groundwork Wales
Paul Cooke, Team Leader, Sustainable Development & Living Environment
Antony Bolter, Group Manager (Strategy Funding & Support)
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager
Shaun Watkins, Human Resources Manager
David A. Thomas Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)