



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.**

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.

CHAIR