



CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP – 30TH JUNE 2016

**SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS DELIVERED DURING
2015/16 AS A RESULT OF THE WHQS PROGRAMME**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the CHTG of the community benefit outcomes delivered as a result of the Council's £200m WHQS investment in homes.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the ballot in February 2012 the Council made a commitment to ensure that its £200m investment in homes would also help transform lives and communities.
- 2.2 As a result, the Council included both core (mandatory) and non-core (non mandatory) community benefit requirements into its supply partner and internal works contracts.
- 2.3 The Council has delivered a number of targeted recruitment and training community benefits directly.

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 specified standards.
- 3.2 The Council is committed to ensuring that the WHQS investment transforms not only homes but also lives and communities.
- 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."
- 3.4 The delivery of the WHQS programme 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.

- 3.5 The delivery of the WHQS programme relates directly to the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which requires public bodies to work towards a shared vision comprising 7 goals and adopt the 5 "Ways of Working". The goals and the 5 Ways of Working will underpin the delivery of the programme and include planning and acting for the long term, integration, involvement, collaboration and prevention.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Council has included a suite of core and non core community benefit requirements into its internal works and supply partner contracts
- 4.2 Each of the Council's three internal works contractors have started to deliver against the targets contained within the contracts. Monthly contractor monitoring meetings are attended by the Strategic Coordination Manager and officers from Procurement and Community Regeneration.

Community Benefits - Core

Employment

- 4.3 In line with the transforming lives agenda, the emphasis has been placed on encouraging the contractors to work with colleagues responsible for delivering the Welsh Government's LIFT and Communities4Work programmes as well as those delivering employment support programmes in order to meet their community benefit commitments. Through knitting the two together and building the relationships between the contractors and the teams within community regeneration, the Council can ensure that individuals from within the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are able to access the opportunities created.
- 4.4 The Council has also invested an additional £50,000 in the Welsh Government's LIFT programme during 2015/16 as a result of having recognised the benefits that the programme can bring to workless households throughout the county borough. 60% of those who took part in the programme during 2015/16 confirmed that they were Council tenants.
- 4.5 During the last year, Keepmoat have created 4 permanent full time opportunities as a result of the WHQS contract. The target for Keepmoat is 18 over the lifetime of the contract. Vinci have created 22 and Contract Services, 33. Both Vinci and Contract Services have a target of 12 over the lifetime of the entire contract. The 33 new permanent opportunities created by Contract Services have been achieved as a result of moving from a sub contracting arrangement to direct employment which has not only had the benefit of delivering a greater number of employment opportunities but has also helped create a more responsive service. Since 1st April 2015, the Council's supply partner, Robert Price, has also created 6 full time permanent opportunities of which two have been for people who would be categorised as long term unemployed (unemployed for more than 26 weeks).
- 4.6 As a result of the need to deliver against increasing targets and the 2020 deadline, the Council has also increased the resources available to deliver the programme.

43 opportunities have been advertised within WHQS team during 2015/16. These have been a combination of new opportunities and back filling of existing posts.

Apprenticeships

- 4.8 Since 1st April 2015, 17 apprenticeships have been created as a result of the Council's internal works contracts delivered by Keepmoat, Vinci and Contract Services. Robert Price recruited 4 apprentices in the period 2013/14 and all four have subsequently completed their apprenticeship in 2015/16.
- 4.9 Within the Council's WHQS team, one administrative apprenticeship has been created during 2015/16 however 7 opportunities have recently been advertised and will be filled during 2016/17.
- 4.10 Apprenticeships have also been created within HRO as a result of the additional work that the team is undertaking linked to WHQS. A further 3 apprenticeships will be offered during 2016/17.

Long Term Unemployed

- 4.11 Keepmoat, Contract Services and Robert Price have found it difficult to recruit individuals deemed long term unemployed (unemployed for over 26 weeks). This may be due to the fact that individuals who have been unemployed for a significant period have more significant barriers to overcome. However, through facilitating a closer alignment between the WHQS Lives and Communities Team, Communities First and the WG funded LIFT programme it is anticipated that the original target of 48 placements per annum and 8 opportunities for individuals deemed long term unemployed will be exceeded during 2016/17.

Work Placements

- 4.12 In an attempt to deliver against the work placement targets, Keepmoat have delivered an 'introduction to construction' programme in the eastern valley which has involved 12 participants identified by the Communities First and the LIFT team. The two week course provided participants with accredited training and an opportunity to sign up with a local agency. At least two of the participants have applied for an apprenticeship with the Council and also expressed an interest in an apprenticeship opportunity with Contract Services.
- 4.13 In coming months, Contract Services will run a similar course for potential participants from the Lower Rhymney Valley.

Community Benefits - Non Core

School / College Liaison

- 4.14 Two of the Council's contractors have chosen to sponsor a local school. Keepmoat have partnered with Blackwood Comprehensive via the Careers Wales' Business Class scheme and Contract Services have agreed to develop a partnership with St Martin's Comprehensive in Caerphilly. A significant number of St Martin's pupils come from Lansbury Park; hence the creation of a long term, mutually beneficial partnership arrangement between the school and Contract Services is likely to add value to the wider regeneration programme likely to be undertaken in Lansbury Park in future years. The relationships between both schools and the contractors are in

their infancy however it is anticipated that action plans will be drafted and progress monitored throughout 2016/17 with a view to presenting an annual report for information to the CHTG in March 2017.

Community Fund

- 4.15 All contractors have created a 'community fund' which will be used to support apprenticeships and the delivery of Communities First cluster plans across the respective areas. The fund can also be utilised for projects in non CF areas at the discretion of the Strategic Coordination Manager.
- 4.16 All contractors were asked to consider adopting the Living Wage. However, only Contract Services are registered as a Living Wage employer.
- 4.17 Colleagues in procurement have agreed to facilitate a "meet the buyer" session on behalf of the internal works contractors. The session is likely to take place in September.

Value Wales Toolkit

- 4.18 Keepmoat, Contract Services and Robert Price have all completed the Value Wales Toolkit which was also included within the contract as a requirement. The Value Wales Toolkit was introduced by the Welsh Government to capture the impact of public sector spend on the Welsh economy.
- 4.19 Vinci have been slow to engage in the community benefits agenda however they have agreed to complete and submit a toolkit in March 2017 highlighting the outcomes delivered as part of the contract.

Collaborative Working

- 4.20 Efforts during 2016/17 will focus on facilitating greater collaboration between Robert Price, Keepmoat, Vinci and Contract Services to deliver greater community benefit outcomes for Caerphilly residents as a result of the WHQS programme.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. CONSULTATIONS

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

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The report is for information.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To advise the CHTG on the outcomes delivered as a result of the Councils £200m WHQS investment in homes, lives and communities.

11. STATUTORY POWERS

11.1 Housing Acts 1985, 1996, 2004, 2014 and Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Jane Roberts-Waite, Strategic Coordination Manager
(Tel: 01443 864340, Email: roberj2@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Consultees:	Cllr David Poole	- Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing
	Christina Harray	- Corporate Director Communities
	Phil Davy	- Head of Programmes
	Shaun Couzens	- Chief Housing Officer
	Liz Lucas	- Head of Procurement
	Marcus Lloyd	- Deputy Head of Programmes
	Tina McMahon	- Community Regeneration Manager
	Steve Greedy	- WHQS Project Manager
	Kay Bowen	- Assistant Project Manager