

Public Document Pack

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Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Cllr Ron Hampson (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox,
Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Glenys Diskin,
Rosetta Dolphin, Jim Falshaw, George Hardcastle,
Ray Hughes, Hilary Isherwood, Brian Lloyd,
Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

15 May 2014

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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **CLWYD COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **WEDNESDAY, 21ST MAY, 2014** at **10.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2014 (copy enclosed).

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 4 **DOMESTIC ABUSE** (Pages 9 - 14)
Report of Head of Housing enclosed.
- 5 **RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP POLICY** (Pages 15 - 64)
Report of Head of Housing enclosed.
- 6 **UPDATE ON THE HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT SERVICE** (Pages 65 - 76)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 77 - 80)
Report of Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

Agenda Item 3

HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **16 APRIL 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 16 April 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Hilary Isherwood, Brian Lloyd, Mike Reece and Gareth Roberts

APOLOGY: Councillor Jim Falshaw

CONTRIBUTORS: Cabinet Member for Housing, Director of Community Services, Head of Housing, Team Manager, Advice & Homeless Service, Neighbourhood Housing Manager (North), Performance Support Manager, Team Leader (North) and Team Leader, Income Section

IN ATTENDANCE: Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman congratulated the Director of Community Services and Head of Housing on their successful appointments to new roles within the Council structure.

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Councillor Hilary Isherwood declared a personal interest on all items due to her husband being the Housing Shadow Minister.

60. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 21 January, 28 January (joint meeting), 5 February and 6 February 2014 (joint meeting) had been circulated with the agenda.

Matters Arising - Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 21 January 2014

Minute number 50: Councillor Peter Curtis advised that he was still awaiting information on the Eco energy selection process. The Head of Housing said that this would be re-sent.

Matters Arising - Joint Housing and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 6 February 2014

Minute number 10: Delivering Home Adaptations - Following requests from Councillors Rosetta Dolphin and Hilary Isherwood, the Facilitator agreed to re-circulate the information on costs relating to the installation and removal of level access showers.

RESOLVED:

That the four sets of minutes be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

61. WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

The Team Manager, Advice & Homeless Service introduced an update report on the latest position regarding Welfare Reform. The report detailed work carried out by the Welfare Reform Response Team including targeting help to the 42 households in Flintshire which had been affected by the benefit cap. An update on the Maximum Rent Social Sector (MRSS), commonly known as the Bedroom Tax, reported a recent change in legislation and it was also noted that two major reports were being produced on the impact of MRSS across Wales and the whole of the UK. On the Discretionary Assistance Fund, a Council officer had worked with a Welsh Government (WG) Task Group to assess the impact of changes and to identify ways of extending the scheme to benefit more vulnerable people. Although the Fund was currently available until the end of March 2015, WG was seeking clarification on the longer term.

The Committee was also advised that the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) had implemented a new system to improve the timescale for processing applications for Personal Independent Payments, prior to the migration of working-age Disability Living Allowance claimants in Autumn 2015. As part of the initial stage of implementing Universal Credit across the UK, ten areas had been selected to accept claims from restricted groups, with Shotton Jobcentre beginning to accept claims from single unemployed claimants from 7 April 2014, with three claims being made during the first week. Plans to rollout Universal Credit to other areas over time would involve the widening of criteria to include other claimant groups. On Discretionary Housing Payments, proactive work was also being carried out to help households to manage their circumstances by alternative means, as this limited fund was unlikely to be extended over the longer term. An update was also received on the comprehensive training programme which would continue to be rolled out and highlighted the successful outcomes from work by the Welfare Reform Response Team.

Whilst giving an overview of the appendices to the report, the Neighbourhood Housing Manager (North) explained the approach taken to engage with those affected by welfare reform to provide information and discuss options on managing the impacts. As a result of the Maximum Rent Social Sector (Bedroom Tax), 890 tenants in Flintshire were currently subject to a reduction in Housing Benefit, although only a limited number had asked to be rehoused. She was pleased to report that through a supportive approach by the Welfare Reform Response Team and Income Management Section, there had been no evictions as a result of rent arrears. On the allocation statistics, it was noted that 9% of tenants had been transferred to alternative properties due to the Bedroom Tax, which exceeded the national average of 6%, however it was recognised that further work was needed.

The Chairman remarked on the positive work undertaken by the Rent Arrears Team.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood thanked the Housing team for the report and commented on the positive engagement with Shotton Jobcentre on Universal Credit. She felt it was important to offer assistance to vulnerable people, particularly those with mental health and substance misuse issues. In response to queries, the Neighbourhood Housing Manager agreed to provide a separate response on the number of tenants who had taken in a lodger and any known problems arising from this. She also agreed to advise of the number of tenants who were unable to transfer to another property for 12 months due to anti-social behaviour issues. It was noted that Members had previously agreed not to allow property transfers in the cases of existing Court Orders, although discretion could be applied. On the Bond scheme, the Head of Housing agreed to provide information on the number taken out and whether any reports had been received of Bonds not being returned from private landlords.

In response to queries from Councillor Rosetta Dolphin, the Team Manager, Advice & Homeless Service provided explanation on Universal Credit and said that the Benefit Cap impacted on housing benefit for households with four or more dependent children. In relation to working-age housing benefit claimants who had fallen behind with rent arrears due to the Bedroom Tax, he estimated that around a third were unable to pay anything with a similar number paying a proportion. Following concerns about the cost to the Council from Government decisions on welfare reform, it was explained that a report by the Wales Audit Office due to be published later in the year would include findings on this. The Head of Housing agreed that detail on the cost to Flintshire would be incorporated in the next update report to the Committee.

Councillor George Hardcastle thanked the officers and their teams for the positive approach which had been taken, particularly as the rent arrears position at year end 2013/14 had not been significantly affected during this challenging time. When asked about the households which had chosen not to accept the support offered and whether these had been in rent arrears prior to the changes, the Team Manager, Advice & Homeless Service said that support would continue to be available if the individuals wished to take this up. The Head of Housing spoke of the possibility of these households being subject to rent arrears and other issues, and agreed to look into this. In response to a question about the cost of removals, it was noted that the Tenant Incentive Scheme could provide some help however each case was considered on its own merits.

Councillor Amanda Bragg praised the early intervention steps to help those affected by the Benefit Cap and asked if those who had declined help were still able to access at a later date. The Team Manager, Advice & Homeless Service said that ongoing support was available with further attempts made to engage with households, subject to resources available. He agreed with comments that the full impact of those affected by welfare reform was not yet known. In response to a question about those affected by the Bedroom Tax falling into rent arrears, the Head of Housing pointed out the challenges in availability of suitable size accommodation and that in accordance with the agreed policy, Council properties would continue to be allocated based on need. She went on to suggest that this may be an area requiring future discussion by the Committee.

Concerns were raised by Councillor Peter Curtis about direct payments to tenants and checks carried out in relation to lodgers in households affected by the Bedroom Tax. The Head of Housing stressed that the Council did not recommend that such households place an advertisement for a lodger and that in many cases, these were acquaintances of the tenant.

Councillor Dolphin thanked the Team Leader (North) for helping to provide a positive solution to a property within her ward which had proved difficult to let, and suggested that this should be repeated for other similar properties.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the report and the positive measures being implemented by the Housing Service to mitigate the full extent of impacts from the welfare reforms from falling upon council tenants and to protect, as far as practical, the Housing Revenue Account income stream.

62. IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT

The Director of Community Services introduced the report for the Committee to note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Committee for the period October to December 2013.

The Director and Head of Housing each gave a short presentation on performance within each of the sub-priority areas, highlighting work which had been undertaken to improve performance and areas where improvement was needed, as outlined within each report.

Extra Care Housing

The Director reported that the Llys Jasmine complex had been shortlisted for the UK Housing Awards in the large development category, for consideration later in the month. He went on to confirm that £550K was being made available from Welsh Government (WG) Intermediate Care Funding towards the development of two more extra care developments in Flint and Holywell.

In welcoming plans to develop further facilities following the success of Llys Eleanor and Llys Jasmine, Councillor Rosetta Dolphin asked how these would be publicised. The Director said that events would be held locally to advertise the benefits of these types of facilities, however word of mouth about the quality of service had helped to quickly fill places available at the two current sites.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood spoke about a need for facilities in all of the Council's wards and suggested that consideration of residents in surrounding areas should be built into the planning process for future developments to ensure that neighbouring properties were not overlooked. The Director said that there had been local Member representation on the Board and that consideration had been given to the wider community. When asked about the cost to individuals wishing to take up extra care provision such as Llys Jasmine, the Facilitator agreed to re-circulate details of costs.

In response to comments on plans for a facility in Holywell, the Director confirmed that plans to identify an appropriate site were underway and that all suggestions on potential sites had been evaluated.

Following a comment from Councillor Gareth Roberts, the Director confirmed that mixed tenure was part of the model, however demand for purchasing units was currently low across North Wales.

Councillor Brian Lloyd asked if priority was given to Council tenants as this would free up housing stock for allocation to others. The Head of Housing said that many Council tenants had been accepted into Llys Jasmine as they had met the necessary qualification criteria for extra care.

Modern, Efficient and Adapted Homes

In response to a query from Councillor George Hardcastle on the 29 empty homes which had been brought back into use during the period, the Performance Support Manager replied that these were a mix of 2-3 bedroom properties which had remained empty for at least six months.

Councillor Peter Curtis referred to a recent local press article which had raised concerns about page 10 of the revised Tenancy Agreement. The Neighbourhood Housing Manager explained that the changes had reflected the existing legal rights of tenants in terms of managing their properties. She agreed to email Councillor Curtis to explain this in more detail. It was noted that the Council had made a formal response to the press article.

When asked by Councillor Dolphin about repayment of loans for private houses, the Head of Housing confirmed that charges applied to these properties and that different funding streams were available to bring empty homes back into use. Under the Empty Homes initiative, loans for completing properties must be repaid to the WG within two or three years respectively if the property was sold or rented.

Achieve the Wales Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

As a point of accuracy on page 1 of Appendix 3, the Head of Housing clarified that there was a six year work programme to achieve the WHQS and that the funding gap had been reduced from £14m to £8m.

In response to a comment from Councillor Hardcastle on exceeding the target on the number of bathrooms replaced in the capital programme, the Head of Housing explained that despite none being promised within the Choices Document, it was predicated that 60 would be replaced in 2013/14, in addition to wet room installations as part of Disabled Facilities Grant work.

Councillor Dolphin praised all those involved in exceeding the planned work targets and requested an updated list with proposed timescales. The Head of Housing said that Members and tenants would be consulted on areas of priority over the Summer period, prior to endorsement by Cabinet in the Autumn.

Welfare Reform

In relation to the homelessness service, the Chairman asked about current bed and breakfast placements. The Head of Housing was pleased to report that this was being well managed as this currently only applied to a small number of individuals and that partnership with the private sector would help to further reduce this need.

Fuel Poverty

Councillor Dolphin praised the energy efficiency measures being taken to help households and asked that her thanks be passed on to Gavin Griffith.

Following a query from Councillor Mike Reece on solid wall insulation, the Head of Housing said that funding was available through various sources such as Arbed, Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Green Deal, however funding previously available was restricted to certain areas.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be received; and
- (b) That feedback be provided to the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

63. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme.

It was agreed that the meeting scheduled for 10 June 2014 would include an update on the Housing Strategy and that the Facilitator would liaise with the Chairman and Head of Housing to bring updates on the housing company and Asset Management Plan to a future meeting.

Although all Members had been invited to the recent garage review workshop, Councillor Rosetta Dolphin suggested that the item should be discussed at a joint meeting with the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Head of Housing gave assurance of consultation with local Members on ward issues and spoke of plans to bring a report to the Committee in June/July 2014 to deal with some of the garage sites identified at the workshop. Following a suggestion by Councillor Gareth Roberts for involvement by Planning, she said that consideration would be given to holding a joint meeting.

In response to a comment from Councillor Mike Reece on grass cutting services, the Head of Housing said that any specific issues could be raised with officers outside the meeting. She explained that recent billing problems, due to the data used, had been recognised and would be revisited. Following remarks by other Members, it was pointed out that the service was not mandatory and that tenants had been offered the choice and would continue to receive the service if they did not respond otherwise.

Following comments from Councillor Peter Curtis, it was explained that there were other elements within the welfare benefits system to help disabled tenants maintain their gardens.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood commented on the need to utilise resources that were already available and referred to employment of local people.

In response to Members' concerns, the Head of Housing agreed to bring an update report in six months' time to provide feedback in respect of quality of the service and the employment of local people in the service.

Councillor Isherwood asked about the potential for bulk buying oil for residents. The Head of Housing was aware of schemes in operation at some other Councils and agreed to look into this.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly.

64. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.25 pm)

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Chairman

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF HOUSING**

SUBJECT: **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and update of the work taking place within Neighbourhood Housing in relation to customers who are affected by domestic abuse.

1.02 Members are requested to consider the report and note its content.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Measuring the extent of domestic abuse has historically been notoriously difficult. The most reliable estimates of the extent of domestic abuse come from the Crime Survey of England & Wales. Being a household survey, this picks up more crime than official police figures as not all crimes are reported to the police.

The Crime Survey of England & Wales estimated that in 2011/12, an estimated 1.2 million women, and 800,000 men had experienced domestic abuse in that year. This equates to 7% of all women and 5% of all men.

The survey also found that overall, in their lifetime, 5 million women had experienced domestic abuse at some time.

In Flintshire, statistics provided by the police show that in 2012/13, there were 2348 recorded incidents of domestic abuse.

There were 1249 referrals to DASU (Domestic Abuse Safety Unit)

There were 1481 referrals to Delyn Women's Aid

2.02 Flintshire has good multi-agency arrangements around domestic abuse. The MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) plans for the safety of the most high risk individuals. MARAC is a national model, and is audited on a regular basis by CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse) to ensure it's effectiveness.

In 2012/13 the MARAC dealt with 195 cases of domestic abuse.

Team Leaders from Housing Services routinely attend the MARAC, sharing information and contributing to the safety planning process.

However, having reviewed the number of referrals made to MARAC by housing staff, the numbers have been historically low. One reason for this is that incidents that housing staff have become aware of, are already known by the police or other agencies who have made the appropriate referrals to MARAC already.

This in itself however has prompted the team in Neighbourhood Housing to ask whether there are opportunities to identify domestic abuse being missed.

Research suggests that people living with domestic abuse often endure more than 30 incidents before they ask for help and whilst domestic abuse incidents often occur within the home, housing staff who are often familiar faces to customers are well placed to identify issues, and ensure the right support and help is in place to keep those affected by domestic abuse, safe.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Housing Service is working with the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator within Community Safety and other social landlords in the area to enhance the approach to identifying and dealing with incidents of domestic abuse.

- The starting point for this has been to train Housing Officers, and arrange training for all frontline staff who may be going into customer's homes. In particular as well as Housing Officers, trades staff such as joiners who attend out of hours repairs emergencies will also be given awareness training, so they are clear on what to do if they attend a property and have concerns about domestic abuse.
- Domestic abuse can also include financial abuse in a variety of forms, and therefore the council's Income Officers are also going to be trained in recognising domestic abuse, and being confident to ask the right questions.
- DASU have agreed to provide the training for council staff free of charge.
- In addition, with the recruitment of additional specialist officers in anti-social behaviour, they will be the lead officers within neighbourhood housing for reports of domestic abuse. They will be able to act as a link between neighbourhood housing, support services and other agencies such as the police. The

team have a good mix of skills to enable them to do this. One officer has a background in housing and anti-social behaviour, another has worked for the police and has experience of dealing with domestic abuse, and our most recent recruit has a legal background, with a specialism in family law.

- The service also has in development a leaflet specific to housing to be able to give customers an understanding of the role that housing can play in tackling domestic abuse, and details of the help that is available.
- The Housing Service is also looking to develop clear branding that customers can clearly identify. This will be used on communications, in locations such as Connects and can be chosen to be worn (for example on a badge or lanyard) to identify to customers that they are trained in domestic abuse. This is to overcome concerns that people may have when wanting to disclose domestic abuse, that they may not be believed, or the person they want to disclose to may not know what to do. By developing clear branding, it will be easier to communicate to customers that staff are trained, and will be able to deal with disclosures confidently and compassionately.
- Team Briefings within Neighbourhood Housing will include domestic abuse as a standard agenda item, with opportunities to invite specialist domestic abuse service providers to come and meet the team. The first of these is to include the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates being invited to speak at Team Brief to talk about the work that they do, and increase familiarity and positive relationships between Officers and the service providers.

3.02 **Re-housing**

It is common practice across housing providers that when customers request re-housing due to domestic abuse, accommodation is offered out of the local area. The rationale for this is that the further away someone is, the safer they are.

However, each set of individual circumstances needs to be assessed on a case by case basis.

For some people, their support network is crucial and removing them from friends and family's support can be extremely detrimental and isolating.

Housing staff are being encouraged and trained to treat cases on an individual basis, talking through safety implications of leaving, and helping individuals to find somewhere safe to live, giving due consideration to support networks, schooling for children etc.

3.03 **Re-Charges**

The council's tenancy agreement holds the tenant responsible for any damage to their home, and where tenants leave a property where there is deliberate damage or neglect, invoices are raised to re-charge the outgoing tenant for the cost.

It is important however, that where there have been incidents of domestic abuse at the family home, where the damage has been caused by the perpetrator of the abuse, that the council pursues the perpetrator and not the victim for financial recompense.

A failure to correctly apportion responsibility for such costs, can leave victims struggling to pay off debts which are not legitimately theirs, and which can adversely affect their prospects of re-housing in the future.

3.04 **Antisocial Behaviour**

Housing staff are also becoming mindful of issues of domestic abuse where there have been reports of anti-social behaviour by neighbours.

This is particularly important where a perpetrator of domestic abuse may not be the actual tenant, but may be living with, or visiting a council tenant.

Research carried out by Caroline Hunter & Judy Nixon (Taking the blame and losing the home) identified that nationally female victims of domestic abuse were held accountable for the behaviour of their abusive partners over whom they had no influence or control to amend their behaviour.

It is therefore crucial that Antisocial Behaviour Officers consider whether domestic abuse is a factor when dealing with complaints of anti-social behaviour and ensure the right advice and support is offered in the first instance.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members of this Committee are asked to consider the content of this report and support the ongoing work of the Neighbourhood Housing Team in tackling domestic abuse.

5.00 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 Managed within existing resources.
Training provided free of charge.

6.00 **ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 No known impact

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 No known impact

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The work around domestic abuse is statistically likely to have a more positive effect on females.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Managed within existing staffing resources.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No further consultation is required at this stage.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Consultation with MARAC and feedback from individuals involved in previous cases.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF HOUSING**

SUBJECT: **RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP POLICY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 This purpose of this report is to introduce the Housing Service's proposed Responsible Pet Ownership Policy which is annexed to this report for ease of reference.

1.02 Members are requested to consider and support the content of the policy.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The development of a policy relating to pets or animals in council housing needs to find the right balance between recognising the value that pets and animals bring to people's lives, the welfare of the animal, and the impact on other residents when things go wrong. As a landlord, the council is committed to getting this balance right and it is envisaged that the development of this policy will be an important step in achieving this.

The need to develop such has emerged for a wide variety of reasons. The Neighbourhood Housing Team receives calls for service for a broad range of animal and pet-related issues. These range from complaints about animal related nuisance, such as noise, fouling and escaping animals, to more serious issues of aggressive animals and attacks or concern for the welfare of animals kept in council property.

It was also identified from the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) carried out in 2013 that dog fouling was a key concern raised by customers.

Additional problems have arisen when animals have been found abandoned in empty properties, or when pet owners are unexpectedly unable to take care of their animals, for example, when they have been taken into hospital in an emergency.

The service is also faced with challenges on occasion when properties require extra expenditure due to issues such as fleas, or when pets have caused damage to the interior or exterior of a Flintshire County Council property.

- 2.02 It is a requirement of both the current tenancy agreement, and the proposed one (currently out to consultation with customers) that written permission must be obtained from Flintshire County Council to keep a pet or animal. Some customers have complained however, that there is a lack of consistency in the decision making process, with consent being granted by some Neighbourhood Housing Officers, and consent being declined by others, when the applicants circumstances are materially the same.

It is therefore intended that the Responsible Pet Ownership Policy will provide the Neighbourhood Housing Teams with a clear framework for decision making so that there is a more consistent approach across the whole county.

- 2.03 The focus of the policy is to prevent problems from arising both in respect of animal related nuisance which affects neighbours and local residents, but also by promoting the welfare of all animals which live in Flintshire County Council's housing stock.

- 2.04 The policy has been developed through feedback from residents who have reported animal related problems, through a member workshop held in March 2014 and in consultation with the Tenants Federation.

Specialist legal advice in relation to the policy has been provided free of charge by The Dogs Trust.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Implementation issues:

Whilst it has historically always been a requirement that tenants of the council request permission for pets and animals, many tenants have not done so.

This means that consideration needs to be given as to how this policy may be implemented if approved.

It is proposed that prior to implementation of the policy, tenants of the Council are informed of the date of implementation, and requested to provide details of any animals that they have for which they do not currently have permission. These animals will then be exempted from the new rules providing permission would likely have been granted prior to the new policy.

The policy will then apply to any new requests from that date forward.

It is recognised that the issue of pets can be very emotive, and the Council is not seeking to cause any distress to tenants by asking them to re-home pets obtained prior to the implementation of this policy.

The only exceptions to this being circumstances where the pet or animal would not have been permitted in any event, such as a banned breed of dog, a wild animal etc.

3.02 Legal Framework:

The policy sets out the legal framework relevant to both housing management, and also to animal welfare.

The basis of the contractual relationship between the council and its tenants is the tenancy agreement. The two agreements used by the council are Secure Tenancies (covered by the Housing Act 1985) and Introductory Tenancies (covered by the Housing Act 1996)

This legislation also sets the legal enforcement powers of the Council as a social landlord for enforcing tenancy conditions, and taking legal action to prevent the recurrence of nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 sets out the responsibilities and obligations of people who keep animals and can be summarised as needing to provide or ensure:

- for a suitable environment (place to live)
- for a suitable diet
- to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- to be housed with or apart from other animals (if applicable)
- to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

It is also necessary for the Council to have regard to other relevant legislation such as the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

3.03 Application Process:

The policy proposes a new application procedure, where applicants to keep a pet/animal would be required to read the Council's leaflet "Responsible Pet Ownership: A Guide for Flintshire County Council Tenants" [copies of which will be available in other formats]

Tenants will be required to complete a formal application [a copy of which is annexed to this report] which will prompt them to give thought to a whole range of considerations with the aim of promoting the well-being of animals and reduce the likelihood of nuisance issues occurring.

Decisions will continue to be made by the Neighbourhood Housing Officers, with a right for tenants to request a review of any decision made.

3.04 **Decision Making:**

In order to improve the consistency of decision making across the Neighbourhood Housing Teams, the policy sets out both factors to be considered and circumstances where permission is very unlikely to be granted. All requests will be considered on their own merits, with few 'blanket' exclusions but it is envisaged that the principles underpinning the decision making process will result in a fairer and more consistent process.

The types of factors that will be taken into consideration are as follows:

- The type and breed of the animal
- The type of property that the prospective pet owner lives in
- The requirements of the animal – such as space, shelter and equipment
- The needs of the individual – for example Assistance Dogs
- The risk posed to others and
- The relevant legislation

Where consent is granted, this will always be subject to terms and conditions aim at preventing nuisance arising, and promoting the welfare of animals.

Permission will be given in writing with advice on animal care provided by a reputable animal organisation / charity.

Details of free or subsidised schemes for micro-chipping and neutering will also be provided.

3.05 **Enforcement:**

The policy further sets out the Council's approach to dealing with animal related problems as and when they arise, and is as such linked to the Council's Antisocial Behaviour Policy.

It is envisaged that in the majority of cases, the Neighbourhood Housing Team will intervene quickly and informally giving advice, guidance and support to pet owners.

In more serious or prolonged cases or in instances where the keeper of the animal refuses to co-operate with the council then further legal and non-legal remedies may be employed.

Currently the legal remedies available to providers of social housing predominantly include:

Antisocial Behaviour Injunctions
Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Demotion Orders
Possession Orders

Dependent upon the nature of the problem, the Neighbourhood Housing Team may be required to take a multi-agency approach so that enforcement powers available to other agencies, but not to Housing may be used.

Examples of this may be, for example, working with colleagues in Environment who have powers to abate nuisance such as noise, or when premises are in an unsanitary condition such to make them prejudicial to health.

In respect of dangerous or aggressive dogs, the police have powers available to them under the criminal system.

Where the Council believes that an animal's welfare is in jeopardy, then it will work with the RSPCA.

3.06 Community Animal Welfare Footprints Scheme

The RSPCA give awards to social housing providers who can reach specified standards in relation to their approach to pet ownership.

A copy of the leaflet pertaining to this is attached. It is hoped that by developing a policy based on these good practice principles, the council can enter the work it has undertaken to be considered for one of these awards.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Members of this Committee are asked to consider the content of this report and support the proposed policy.

4.02 Members are asked to support the recommendation that this policy only be applied going forward, and not retrospectively.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 Printing costs for leaflets and application forms.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 No impact

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 The policy will positively impact on environmental issues such as dog fouling and noise nuisance by promoting responsible pet ownership, and providing guidance to officers on tackling problems.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Consideration has been given to assistance dogs. The guidance is such that these would always be permitted or where the accommodation is unsuitable, help for re-housing would be provided.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 To be managed within existing staffing resources.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Issues being consulted currently with the Federation of Tenants and Residents.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 A member workshop has been held in April 2014 and one to one interviews have taken place with a sample of customers who have previously reported issues relating to pet ownership. Neighbourhood Housing Officers have also been consulted.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - Responsible Pet Ownership Policy
Appendix 2 - Draft Application Form
Appendix 3 - CAWF Leaflet

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Contact Officer: Helen Grant
Telephone: 01352 701755
Email: Helen_Grant@flintshire.gov.uk

**Responsible Pet
Ownership Policy
for
Council House Tenants
2013-2016**

DRAFT

Prepared by

Neighbourhood Housing Management

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REVISION HISTORY

WHO	STATUS	ISSUED TO	DATE OF ISSUE
Neighbourhood Housing Management	1 st Version Complete Awaiting Approval		
TENANTS FED			
<i>TENANTS FED REVISIONS</i>			
MEMBERS			
<i>MEMBERS REVISIONS</i>			
SCRUTINY			
<i>SCRUTINY REVISIONS</i>			
IMPLEMENTAION			

FCC QUALITY STATEMENT

This Policy was:

Prepared by:

Helen Grant
Neighbourhood Housing Manager

Approved by:

Clare Budden
Head of Housing

Date:

1. Introduction

Flintshire County Council understands the pleasure that keeping pets and animals can bring to people.

In order to balance the benefits of keeping pets with the principles of animal welfare and our commitment to tackling neighbour nuisance issues, the Council has developed this policy.

Its aim is to provide a clear framework for customers, officers and elected members, so that a consistent approach to responsible pet ownership is applied across the county.

2. Scope

All tenants sign a Flintshire County Council tenancy agreement when they move into their homes. It is an obligation of this legal contract, that tenants will request permission before keeping any pets or animals at the property, and that they must not obtain pets or animals without first getting the written consent of the Council.

This policy sets out the process for requesting permission, how decisions will be reached, and what terms and conditions may be attached to the Council's consent.

It will also address what action the Council may take when tenants don't request permission, or when the pet or animal causes nuisance, or when the terms and conditions of the consent are breached.

3. Background

The Council's Housing Department regularly deals with issues and complaints relating to pets and animals.

The kinds of problems which have historically arisen have been for example;

- Dogs which bark excessively, cockerels crowing
- Fouling in public places, or communal spaces
- Damage to property by pets
- Animal welfare concerns
- Animals which have escaped, or let out unsupervised
- Animal attacks

Fleas in property
Animals abandoned in property
Dead animals
Excessive numbers of animals

4. Legal Framework

The Housing Act 1985 and the Housing Act 1996

The basis of the Councils contract with its tenants is the Flintshire County Council tenancy agreement. Tenants of the Council hold either a secure tenancy as defined by the Housing Act 1985 or an Introductory Tenancy as defined by the Housing Act 1996. The tenancy agreement contains obligations on the part of both the Council and the tenant(s). Breaches of tenant's obligations under the terms of the tenancy agreement may lead to an action for possession of the property pursuant to the relevant grounds for possession.

The Housing Act 1996 and the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003

The Housing Act 1996 and The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also allow for the Council to apply for an injunction where there are issues of nuisance and annoyance which interfere with the Council's housing management function to prevent the problems from recurring where this is probable without injunctive relief.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 was implemented in Wales on 27th March 2007.

It makes owners responsible for ensuring that their animals' welfare needs are met.

These include the need:

- For a suitable environment (place to live)
- For a suitable diet
- To exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- To be housed with or apart from other animals (if applicable)
- To be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

The law also increases the minimum age a person can buy an animal to 16 and prohibits giving animals as prizes to unaccompanied children under this age. Anyone who is cruel to an animal or does not provide for its welfare needs may be banned from owning animals, fined up to £20,000 and/or sent to prison.

Other relevant legislation includes the Dangerous Dogs Act (1991) as amended 1997.

[NB – This legislation is due to change and an amendment will be inserted here to reflect the new legislation]

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 contains two main sections:

Section 1 of the Act stipulates that owners of the 'type of dog known as a pit bull terrier' and three other breed types (Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino and Fila Brasileiro) must fulfil certain strict requirements. These requirements include keeping the dog muzzled and on a lead at all times whilst in a public place, having the dog micro-chipped, keeping the dog insured against third party liability and having the dog neutered with the aim that these types of dogs would eventually become extinct in the UK. The dog also had to have its details registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs maintained by DEFRA on behalf of the Government.

Owners of these types of dogs could no longer give away or sell their dogs. Unless the requirements were met, keeping such a dog in the UK would become illegal and any person who owned a prohibited type dog would be committing an offence unless the dog had been registered on the Index. Owners were offered the option of accepting a token compensation from the Government if they chose to have their dogs voluntarily destroyed.

The second part of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, Section 3, affects all dogs regardless of breed or type. It makes it a criminal offence to allow a dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place. This includes any instance during which an injury of any sort occurs or there is a fear that an injury might occur. In addition, under Section 3(3) of the Act, the owner (or person in charge at the time) of a dog can be prosecuted if an incident occurs in a non- public place where the dog was not permitted to be.

Before the introduction of The Dangerous Dogs (Amendment Act) 1997, owners convicted under the 1991 Act of having either a prohibited dog or a dog which had injured a person, no matter how minor the injury, faced a mandatory Court Order to have the dog destroyed.

The Dangerous Dogs (Amendment Act) 1997:

The introduction of the 1997 Act gave the Courts discretion on sentencing. Provided the Court is satisfied that the dog will not constitute a danger to public safety, as an alternative to making a compulsory order for the destruction of the dog, the Court can instead impose a control order specifying the measures the owner must take to keep the dog under proper control. These measures can include muzzling, keeping the dog on a lead and neutering if appropriate.

The 1997 Act also reopened the Index of Exempted Dogs. As a result, in cases involving dogs of a prohibited type, when the Court is satisfied that the dog will not pose a risk to the safety of the public, the Court has the power to make a contingent destruction order to allow the dog to be registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs within two months of the date of the order provided the conditions of the order are met.

This legislation currently applies in England and Wales
(Source – The Dogs Trust, 2014)

The Environmental Protection Act 1990

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 is also relevant as it gives Local Authorities the powers to investigate complaints relating to noise nuisance and premises which may be prejudicial to health.

Many complaints which are received relate to dogs barking excessively, but the legislation can also cover issues such as cockerels crowing.

Properties where there are issues around animal faeces and general sanitation may also come within the remit of this legislation.

Where the Local Authority investigates and finds evidence of a statutory nuisance, or is satisfied that premises may be prejudicial to health, it may prosecute the occupier.

The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

These pieces of legislation cover the circumstances in which certain animals can be kept, or culled, as well as animals which are protected within England and Wales.

The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 allows for private individuals to apply to their Local Authority for a license to keep an animal covered by this legislation.

Forthcoming legislation

Welsh Government has announced plans to make it compulsory for all dogs to be micro-chipped in Wales from 2015.

5. Requesting permission to keep a pet or an animal

Flintshire County Council has produced a leaflet entitled “Responsible Pet Ownership: A Guide for Flintshire County Council Tenants.

This leaflet sets out a summary of this policy and provides advice and guidance for customers who may be considering getting a pet or animal.

It also includes an application form which customers will need to complete and return to the Neighbourhood Housing Team.

The relevant Neighbourhood Housing Officer will then have 15 working days in which to process the application and provide the customer with a written decision.

Where consent is granted, this will contain terms and conditions to reduce the likelihood of nuisance, and to promote the animals welfare.

Permission will be provided in writing and will include useful animal care information from a reputable animal organisation / charity.

Details of local veterinary practices, animal charities and organisations will also be provided.

6. Factors to be taken into account

In order to promote a consistent approach to decision making, Flintshire County Council has developed the following guidance which Neighbourhood Housing Officers will be required to take into account when deciding on whether to grant consent for an animal to be kept at a Flintshire County Council property.

Type of Animal / Breed

Dogs

Permission will not be granted for any dog to which Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 applies unless the dog has been exempted from the prohibition by Court Order and all of the conditions of the exemption are being complied with.

Currently these breeds are:

- Pit Bull Terrier
- Japanese Tosa
- Dogo Argentino
- Fila Brasileiro

Permission will be considered for other breeds up to a maximum of 2 depending upon other factors to be considered as highlighted below.

Permission will *always* be granted for assistance dogs, and where the tenant does not live in suitable accommodation, the Neighbourhood Housing Team will provide advice on re-housing, so that the assistance dog can be accommodated.

Cats

In most circumstances, permission will be granted to keep cats up to a maximum number. Usually this will be a maximum of two but a Neighbourhood Housing Officer will have the discretion to allow more if they agree that this is appropriate, and the property is of an adequate size.

Wild Animals / Protected Species

The Council will also not consider giving permission for any animal covered by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 or protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Livestock

The Council will not give permission for livestock such as sheep, goats, cows or pigs (including micro-pigs) to be kept.

Poultry, Fowl and other birds.

The Council recognises that many of its homes are situated in rural or semi-rural communities, and that keeping chickens is a growing hobby which brings many tenants the added benefit of free-range eggs! As such, providing there is suitable space, and subject to terms and conditions, permission may be considered for chickens. Space requirements for chickens will be a sufficiently sized coop, and a minimum of 1 metre² of run per chicken.

Cockerels will not be permitted, nor would peacocks, ducks or geese. Consideration may be given for other birds which would be housed externally to the main property, for example, pigeons, quail, and pheasants. Permission would be subject to the type of property of the applicant, and suitable welfare requirements and terms and conditions being met.

Birds which are housed within the interior of the property will usually be considered subject a maximum number and not being a protected species. As with all applications, any consent will be subject to terms and conditions, and Officer will need to consider the appropriateness of birds which may be particularly noisy.

Small caged mammals

In most cases, applications for permission to keep small caged animals will not be denied, subject to a maximum number, and terms and conditions. This means animals like rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, chinchillas, degus etc

Reptiles

Consideration will be given to applications to keep some common reptiles, such as small lizards and non-venomous, non-constricting/dangerous snakes subject to terms and conditions.

Horses and Ponies

Due to the space required by horses and ponies, it is extremely unlikely that permission would ever be granted for a horse or pony to be kept in a Flintshire County Council property.

Donkeys

Due to the specific needs of donkeys, Flintshire County Council is extremely unlikely to ever grant permission for a donkey to be kept in a Flintshire County Council property.

Other

Any animals or pets not listed above will be considered on a case by case basis and with advice from animal charities on the appropriateness of the animal and the accommodation type.

Type of Accommodation

The Neighbourhood Housing Officer will need to give consideration to the type of property that the tenant lives in.

So, for example, a high rise property would not be suitable for many animals to be kept in, but may be suitable for a small caged pet.

Likewise, animals or pets which need to be kept outside, for example chickens, would require the tenants to have their own enclosed garden.

Some landlords do not give permission for dogs, where the tenant does not have their own enclosed garden, however, the Council appreciates that the vast majority of our dog-owning tenants, are very responsible, and therefore permission may be granted for dogs where the owner does not have a garden, but subject to terms and conditions such as not allowing the dog to foul the communal space, or be left unattended in a communal garden and with specifications that the dog be provided with plenty of exercise.

Animal Welfare

When applying for permission to keep a pet or animal, the Neighbourhood Housing Officer will consider the welfare of the animal.

The application form contains a number of questions to ensure that prospective pet owners have given consideration to the kind of care and commitment that the animal needs and deserved.

The prospective pet owner will need to sign to confirm that they have read the leaflet and are able to provide and care for their animal.

The leaflet will prompt prospective animal owners to consider a wide range of issues pertaining to the welfare of their animal such as, the type of accommodation the animal will require, veterinary bills and pet insurance, vaccinations, dietary requirements and the cost of food, obedience training, any specialist equipment they may need, and what will happen if they are no longer able to care for the animal, for example if they are in hospital. Customers are also prompted to consider the level of commitment needed, for example daily exercise routines, who will care for the animal if they are on holiday and the expected life span of the pet.

Applicants

The applicant for consent to keep a pet must be the tenant themselves.

Consent to keep a pet will not be given to any person who has been prohibited from keeping animals by the courts for offences relating to animal cruelty.

Tenants will be required to provide details of a nominated person who is prepared to look after their animal/pet in the event that they are unable to, for example, if they are taken into hospital suddenly.

Breeding

Breeding will be in the main will be prohibited and neutering will be actively encouraged for dogs and cats with details of subsidised schemes for those on benefits or low incomes being provided.

7. When things go wrong

Pets and animals can cause nuisance in a variety of ways. Where problems occur, the Neighbourhood Housing Team will work with pet owners and affected residents to resolve the issues.

Some examples of the types of problems that occur are cited below although the list is not exhaustive.

- Roaming and unattended animals.
- Excessive noise (e.g. dogs barking).
- Pets fouling.
- Aggressive pets.
- Too many pets in the property.

The Council may also need to get involved where there are concerns about the welfare or well being of a pet or animal. The following are some examples of when this may happen:

- Animals abandoned at a property
- Animals under-nourished
- Animals experiencing cruelty
- Animals kept in unsanitary conditions

Depending upon the circumstances and severity of the case, it will be usual for the Council to initially take steps to resolve problems informally. This may involve visiting the pet owner, or asking them to come into the office, and discussing the problem, and offering advice on how it may be resolved. In some cases, the Neighbourhood Team may put the pet owner in touch with specialist animal charities or organisations who can give more detailed advice.

If this doesn't work, or the pet owner doesn't co-operate with the Council then further action may be required. The kinds of action that the Council may consider at this stage include:

- Formal Written Warnings

- Acceptable Behaviour Contract
- Mediation
- Referrals to Environmental Health, Police, RSPCA
- Withdrawal of consent to keep an animal/pet

If after non-legal remedies have not been successful then the Council may consider enforcement action through the courts. Such decisions will be made on a case by case basis, but will usually be where the problems are prolonged or very serious and legal action is necessary and proportionate to make the problems stop.


8. Refusal or Withdrawal of Consent to keep animals Appeals Procedure

The council has established an appeals process where customers who do not agree with the outcome of their request to keep a pet, can ask for a review of the decision.

In the first instance, customers should write to the Neighbourhood Housing Team Leader for their area who will review the facts of the case and provide the customer with a final decision.

The Council will consider all appeal requests within 20 working days.

If you would like this document in another format we can change it into:
Os hoffech gopi o'r ddogfen hon/cyhoeddiad hwn mewn fformat arall, gallwn ei newid i'r canlynol:

Unrhyw iaith arall
Unrhyw liw arall
Iaith Arwyddion Prydain
Braille
Fformat lluniau 
Sain

Font mwy
A llawer rhagor...

Any other language
Another colour / Another colour
British Sign Language
Braille
Picture Format 
Audio

A Larger font
And many more...

Jeśli chcą Państwo otrzymać ten dokument w języku polskim, prosimy o kontakt z obsługą klienta pod numerem tel. 01352 702121

Jei norite šį dokumentą skaityti Lietuvių kalba, kreipkitės į Klientų aptarnavimo skyrių telefonu 01352 702121

A dokumentumból a 01352 702121 ügyfélszolgálati telefonszámon igényelhető magyar nyelvére változtat.

যাংসা জাহায় এই ডকুমেন্টটি পেজে চাইলে অনুগ্রহপূর্বক 01352 702121 নম্বরে কাস্টমার সার্ভিসের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Ak by ste mali záujem o tento dokument v Slovenčine, prosim kontaktujte zákaznicku linku na čísle 01352 702121

Ffoniwch y tîm Gwasanaethau Cwsmeriaid ar 01352 702121 / Please contact the Customer Services team on 01352 702121



APPENDIX 2

Application to keep a pet or animal in your council home

Please note that permission is not granted until you receive written confirmation from the Council.

If permission is granted, it will be subject to terms and conditions relevant to the type of pet or animal you are proposing to keep.

Your details

Your name:	
Address:	
Telephone number	
Email:	

Type of accommodation where the pet or pets will be kept: (eg. Two-bedroom ground-floor flat)	
Does the property have direct access to its own garden?	Yes/No
Does the property have direct access to a shared garden or open space?	Yes/No

Have you or any member of your household ever been denied permission to keep a pet in the past?		Yes/No
Have you or any member of your household ever been prosecuted for any offence against an animal?		Yes/No
If you answered yes to either of the two questions above, please provide details:		
Details of Pet or Animal you wish to keep		
Type of pet/animal		
Numbers of each type of pet/animal you want to keep		
Please state the breed or type:		
For female pets/animals, please say what you have done / will do to prevent breeding:		
Please provide details of someone who would be prepared to look after your pets/animals if you were unable to, for example in an emergency:		
Name:		
Address:		
Telephone Number		
*Can you meet the welfare needs of the animal(s) / pet(s) by providing suitable accommodation and any specialist equipment they may need?	Yes/No	

--	--

Any comments:

If you have already obtained your pet, please provide details of their micro-chip number, pets name and a photograph [these can be provided at a later date if you are unable to provide these details yet]

Declaration

By making this application to keep a pet, I can confirm that I have read and fully understood the “Responsible Pet Ownership: A Guide for Flintshire County Council Tenants” leaflet and I understand my responsibilities under my tenancy agreement.

I confirm that I will keep to the following conditions.

1. I understand that I am fully responsible for the care, welfare and behaviour of my pets and will make sure that they do not cause any nuisance or distress to my neighbours or others, (for example, if I have a dog, I will not allow it to bark for long periods, I will clean up any mess it makes, and I will not allow it to cause damage to property).
2. If I have applied to keep a dog, I understand that I must microchip it so that it can be identified if it goes missing.
3. I will understand that breeding is prohibited and will consider neutering my animal to prevent unwanted babies. [details of subsidised schemes for customers in receipt of means tested benefits can be obtained from the Neighbourhood Housing Team]
4. I will look after my pet/animal properly by giving it a proper diet (food and water), making sure it is free from pain, suffering, injury or disease and making sure it gets regular exercise.
5. I will make sure that my pet/animal has somewhere suitable to live and will prevent it from escaping into neighbouring properties or shared areas. My pet/animal will not be allowed to roam in shared areas.
6. I will make sure that if my pet/animal fouls in any shared or public areas, or in my own garden, I will clear this up immediately and dispose of it appropriately (for example, by flushing it down the toilet). I will not just leave it or put it in the bin.
7. I understand that I will have to pay for any damage caused by my pet. This includes damage to your property (for example, the cost of treatment to get rid of fleas or other

pests and the cost of repairing any damage caused to my property, garden or shared areas as a result of not clearing up after my pet).

8. I can confirm that I (and all other members of my household) have never been denied permission to keep a pet, and have never been prosecuted for an offence against an animal.
9. I understand that you have the right to withdraw permission to keep a pet and that irresponsible pet owners will not be allowed to keep any pets in your properties and may be reported to the RSPCA.
10. I understand that you may give my details to local veterinary practices and the RSPCA so they can give me information about caring for my pet. I give you permission to do this.

Print full name:

Signature:

Date:

We aim to respond to applications with 15 working days. If you need a response sooner, please explain why:

Please return your completed form to:

**Neighbourhood Housing Team, Flintshire County Council, Chapel Street, Flint,
Flintshire, CH6 5BD**



Community Animal Welfare Footprints 2014

A GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICE AND ENTRY CRITERIA



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We want to celebrate good practice

In 2013 the RSPCA Community Animal Welfare Footprint (CAWF) Awards celebrated a record number of entries achieving a gold footprint across the scheme.

In total 117 applications for footprints were received and 116 were awarded, with a record 62 at gold. Additionally, four organisations received Innovator in Animal Welfare Awards and two received Innovator Commendations.

The aim of the footprint scheme is to recognise and promote those that have gone beyond basic service requirements to achieve higher animal welfare standards in the delivery of services. Many housing providers and local authority departments have found that the internal and external recognition CAWF has brought them has helped ensure that their funding levels have been maintained or, in some cases, enhanced – important in these tough economic times. Better still, the success of the scheme has provided models of good practice across England and Wales to inspire and motivate.

Please note that new evidence must be submitted for all 2014 applications. The criteria for the 2014 CAWF scheme have changed, acknowledging comments from local authority officers and the nature of local authority funding, yet still encouraging good practice. The requirements in green italics are planned requirements for 2015 and not necessary for 2014 applications, to allow as much notice as possible.

The RSPCA is grateful to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), Trading Standards Institute (TSI) and the Local Government Association (LGA) for their support for this scheme.

CAWF covers processes, policies and activities during the 2013/14 financial year.

RSPCA Community Animal Welfare Footprints

There are four footprints, each reflecting a different area of local authority service provision.

»» Stray Dogs Footprint

Covers policies that ensure stray dog welfare during the collection and kennelling processes, proactive work to educate owners, and preventative measures to reduce both straying and long-term strays.

»» Housing Footprint

Includes the provision of a positive and clear policy on pet ownership, as well as proactive work to educate the public about animal welfare-related issues.

»» Contingency Planning Footprint

Covers policies, procedures and exercises within contingency plans that deal with companion animals, both domestic and commercially owned, as well as advice for preparedness.

»» Animal Welfare Footprint

Is concerned with policies that improve and promote animal welfare through a clear animal welfare charter and the use of tools such as council websites.

The recognition you deserve

If you meet the requirements of an individual footprint you will receive a certificate commemorating your achievement and will be able to use the RSPCA CAWF logo – in gold, silver or bronze – on council publications and website for a 12-month period (see the entry form for the terms of logo use).

THE FOOTPRINTS HAVE THREE TIERS:



Foreword

Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles MP

Secretary of State for
Communities and Local Government



Whether it's a cute cockapoo or, for the more adventurous amongst us, a bearded dragon, we are a nation of animal lovers.

The Community Animal Welfare Footprints recognises the councils and agencies that help us to maintain the UK's excellent reputation for the welfare of animals.

It's in part thanks to the RSPCA's good practice guide that the number of strays on our streets is down, and that elderly and disabled owners, where possible, are being helped to keep their pets at home with them.

As a champion for localism, it's great to see so many community-grown solutions to tackling animal protection.

The scheme, through the prestigious Innovator Awards, has encouraged local authorities to go above and beyond what is expected of them – a standard that deserves to be recognised and awarded.

I hope 2014 will once again showcase the hard work that local authorities, housing providers and multi-agency groups are doing to improve animal welfare in their communities.

I encourage you to participate in the awards and wish you every success with your application.

Eric Pickles

RSPCA Innovator in Animal Welfare Award 2014

The RSPCA set up the Innovator in Animal Welfare Award to celebrate and recognise local authorities, housing providers and community groups that have tried something different and/or achieved excellent results when tackling an issue relating to animal welfare.

»» WHO CAN ENTER?

Councils, housing providers and multi-agency groups can win an award for their interesting approach to improving one of the footprint areas or for another animal welfare area not covered here.

This award recognises the work and achievement of public service providers and their employees in an area that is often criticised and rarely rewarded.

»» THERE ARE FIVE INNOVATION AWARDS

1. English unitary authorities. Covers all single and upper-tier authorities in England.
2. English county authorities. Covers all single and upper-tier authorities in England.
3. Welsh unitary authorities. Covers the 22 unitary authorities in Wales.
4. Borough and district councils. Covers lower-tier authorities in England.
5. Housing providers and multi-agency groups. Covers all housing providers and multi-agency groups (including animal and dog forums and LRFs) in England and Wales.

»» ENTRY CRITERIA

You don't need to tick boxes to enter for an Innovator in Animal Welfare Award as its purpose is to reward those who have gained outstanding results or tackled an animal welfare issue in an imaginative or innovative way.

To apply for an award, please use the entry form to submit no more than 1,500 words outlining the council's innovative approach to animal welfare. Any supporting evidence must be attached.

You may find it useful to consider these questions.

- What makes the initiative/project innovative?
- What were the reasons for doing it?
- What are the aims?
- How does it work?
- Do you work in partnership with anyone?
- How has it been received?
- Do you have any statistical or anecdotal information to support your case?
- Is it sustainable?
- Did you achieve your aims?
- What are your plans for the future?

2013 INNOVATOR IN ANIMAL WELFARE AWARD WINNERS

English District and Borough Innovator: **Cherwell District Council**

Wales Unitary Innovator: **Cardiff Council – Cardiff Dogs Home**

Multi-Agency Innovator: **AMGA Civil Contingencies and Resilience Unit**

English Unitary Innovator: **Oldham Council**



All pictures: Philip Toscano/RSPCA Photolibrary





www.politicalanimal.org.uk/cawf

05

The 2013 RSPCA Innovator in Animal Welfare Award winners.



»» CARDIFF COUNCIL – CARDIFF DOGS HOME
Winner of the RSPCA Innovator Award 2013
in the Welsh Innovator category.

Cardiff Dogs Home brought in volunteers from the local community and created a group with the primary aim of improving the welfare of dogs in their care. Their innovation was to build a sensory garden – of the kind sometimes found in private boarding establishments – to improve environmental enrichment for Cardiff's stray dogs.

The outdoor area includes a sandpit, fountain and tunnel which allow the dogs to play, explore and sniff outside of the kennel environment. It can even improve their chances of being rehomed as prospective new owners can meet them in a more natural, relaxed setting. It is hoped that other local authorities will consider implementing similar facilities to improve the welfare of their stray dogs.

»» OLDHAM COUNCIL

Winner of the RSPCA Innovator Award 2013
in the English Unitary Innovator category.

Following the gas explosion in Oldham in June 2012, which led to the tragic death of two-year-old Jamie Heaton, Oldham Council implemented a contingency plan to rescue animals in the areas around the blast. The innovations were developed under fast paced, dynamically evolving situations, helping animals that had been stranded in homes that were unsafe for owners to return to.

Oldham Council, with the help of the RSPCA, set traps behind the cordon to capture stranded cats and reunite them with their owners. Then, the disaster team arranged for staff to enter properties behind the safety cordon to rescue restrained pets such as hamsters, tortoises, ferrets, fish and terrapins. The Council set up 'good news' boards at rest centres, moving photographs of companion animals onto these from the 'missing' board as soon as they were found. The Council also implemented measures not originally in their animal welfare plan, for example arranging for local vets to provide free checks for animals involved in the explosion. Oldham Council disaster team ensured that each and every pet was rescued and reunited with his/her owner – including six cats from one house that was pulled down two weeks after the explosion.

»» CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Winner of the RSPCA Innovator Award 2013 in the English District and Borough Council category.

Local authorities are defying the tough economic times by developing methods to improve animal welfare, such as Cherwell District Council, that has developed a pioneering dog tagging system to help reunite stray dogs with their owners. This voluntary dog registration scheme provides each dog with a unique number that goes onto a database. As registrations have increased, the numbers of stray dogs has decreased, as have the overall costs to the service.

Highly commended in this category was awarded to:

Winchester City Council
West Oxfordshire District Council

»» AGMA – CIVIL CONTINGENCIES
AND RESILIENCE UNIT

Winner of the RSPCA Innovator Award 2013 in the Multi-Agency Group Category.

Following the explosion in Oldham in June 2012, the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) pooled its experience to develop a plan across all 10 local authorities, as it was clear that animal welfare needed to be embedded into their Emergency and Contingency planning. The pioneering plan, which focuses on what key priorities should be when faced with a major emergency, has been called 'The 3 Ps':

›People ›Pets ›Possessions

Happily, this approach to emergency planning means that pets will be a priority in any future emergency response.

Stray Dogs Footprint

While the RSPCA's interest in the stray dog issue is rooted in animal welfare, the service that local authorities provide has an impact on other areas, from street cleanliness and fouling to public protection and anti-social behaviour.

With public budgets tightening further across England and Wales, it is more important than ever for the RSPCA to highlight the vital role that local authority stray dog/animal welfare services play in the local community as the sole statutory responder to stray dogs and stray dog-related issues.

Since the scheme's inception in 2008, this footprint has been the most popular, with achievers inspiring others to develop and improve their service.



»» ENTRY CRITERIA

The main aim of this footprint is to set a level of good practice for stray dog provision by acknowledging local authority services that have mechanisms and policies to ensure dog welfare, provide staff training, and promote responsible dog ownership. It also aims to encourage local authorities to look at this important and often undervalued service and address any resource and service issues that may help them to meet the footprint criteria in the future.

This footprint was developed after discussions with local authority officers, with input from the RSPCA's inspectorate and some of the Society's branches.

The Stray Dogs Footprint is open to all local authorities in England and Wales that provide a stray dog service (unitary, metropolitan, London borough, Wales unitary and district councils). If you contract-out your stray dog service you can still receive a footprint provided you prove that the minimum requirements are requested in your procurement policy for this service, and that your service provider meets them.

Andrew Forsyth, Joe Murphy/RSPCA Photolibrary



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Stray Dogs Footprint: Minimum requirements



EVIDENCE OF:

- Basic dog handling, welfare and behaviour training for all officers responsible for stray dog collection (including holiday cover) in a safe environment.
This will ensure consistency of service as well as health and safety for all officers involved in stray dog collection – even if just covering holiday.
- Procedure in place to treat injured and sick stray dogs efficiently and humanely, including those found by the public.
This will ensure that the length of time a stray dog suffers from injury or sickness will be minimised. In any procedure, consideration should be made for members of the public who find and report injured strays, particularly out of hours. This should also include clear procedures to ensure cover for staff sickness and holiday, as well as disease outbreaks.
- Written procedural policy to scan (or check for other identification) all stray dogs collected or received by the local authority.
Although most local authorities scan and check for the identification of strays, it is important that a procedural policy is in place to ensure this happens every time. This could reunite owners faster and encourage more of them to permanently ID their dogs.
- Written procedural policy to scan dead dogs for microchips and other forms of identification.
Dead dogs are often collected by waste management rather than the service responsible for stray dogs. People are more likely to permanently ID their dog if it makes it more likely that they will discover the fate of their dog should it stray.
- The council or contractor's stray dog kennels and out-of-hours reception centre has clear facilities, protocols and procedures that meet the five needs defined under the Animal Welfare Act.
This will ensure that the local authority maintains the welfare standards required under the Animal Welfare Act. For further information see the RSPCA and CIEH's publication: A good practice guide for enforcement bodies – meeting the welfare needs of seized dogs in a kennel environment.
- Staffed out-of-hours kennels/reception centre.
This is essential to ensure the welfare of the dogs should an emergency occur.
- Information provided to owners reclaiming strays on how to prevent the animal straying again.
Educating the owner will reduce the chance of a dog straying again.
- Records kept, and regularly updated, of all strays received and how they were disposed of.
Clear records will help local authorities when focusing resources on reducing the problem of straying dogs. These records should include the number of dogs returned, rehomed, euthanased on medical grounds, and euthanased on non-medical grounds.
- Entries from Wales must demonstrate how microchipping records are kept and updated.



ALL OF BRONZE, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- A clear rehoming policy for kennels to ensure all dogs rehomed are assessed – behaviourally and physically – and permanently identified, and that potential new owners are vetted.

This policy will reduce the likelihood of dogs being returned to the kennels, thus reducing the cost to local authorities of rehoming again and, in turn, improving the quality of life for the dog. The policy should apply to any third party kennels that the council may use after the statutory seven day period. Where rehoming is not possible, clear evidence must be provided to demonstrate that efforts have been made to address this.

- Active promotion through council website and leaflets of microchipping and/or other methods of permanent identification, neutering and the duty of care under section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

The provision of easily accessible information plays an important part in preventing welfare issues occurring due to ignorance. This in turn can reduce the likelihood of dogs straying, fouling and causing a nuisance.



ALL OF BRONZE AND SILVER, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- Adequate provision of an out-of-hours service for local circumstances to ensure animal welfare.

Please evidence with an explanation of reasons for level of service and how the welfare of the dogs is ensured out-of-hours.

- Microchipping or other permanent identification offered to all stray dogs before being returned to owners or rehomed.

This policy will ensure that the dogs are more likely to be returned to their owner if they stray again, saving the local authority money and the owner time searching, and keeps the dog from straying away from home.

- Regular proactive work to encourage responsible pet ownership.

This policy will ensure that the dogs are less likely to stray from home again, but if they do then they are more likely to be returned to their owner, saving the local authority money and the owner time searching.

- Evidence of policies and procedures that have been implemented to reduce stray dogs in your area, for example working in partnership with other organisations, or local engagement and education initiatives.

Housing Footprint

The keeping of pets in sheltered, social and council accommodation can pose many challenges for housing providers. Yet research shows that animals, when well cared for and responsibly kept, can be an asset to any community.

The importance of a good pets policy and associated procedures cannot be underestimated in terms of their impact in tackling both social and health issues. However, a poor policy and procedures can create an environment with problems such as fouling, straying, anti-social use of animals (for example, using dogs as weapons) and animal welfare and health concerns.

»» ENTRY CRITERIA

The aim of this footprint is to encourage housing providers, be it local authorities, arms-length management organisations (ALMOs) or housing associations, to take positive steps to encourage and ensure responsible pet ownership in the properties they manage, and to recognise others that are doing so. In addition, the footprint aims to encourage a considered pets-in-housing policy that is not simply a knee-jerk response to problems that have arisen through a weak pet policy or tensions created by an anti-social minority.

The Housing Footprint is open to any housing provider in England and Wales, of any size.



Andrew Forsyth xZ/RSFCA Photolibrary



Housing Footprint: Minimum requirements



EVIDENCE OF:

- A clear and positive written policy for all housing controlled or influenced by the local authority or housing associations. The following should be a part of the policy.
 1. Clearly defined guidance, with some flexibility to allow requests to keep pets on a case-by-case basis where the owner can meet the animal's welfare needs.
 2. Details of the owner's responsibility and a definition of which species of animal and how many are allowed. It should not discourage pet ownership where facilities exist for proper care
 3. A clear procedure for managing complaints and the concerns of both pet owners and neighbours regarding nuisance animals, welfare, health or cruelty issues.
 4. A ban on business activity involving the breeding and/or vending of animals on premises. The policy should also discourage non-commercial breeding.

This can define the number of animals per dwelling and what constitutes suitable accommodation, and set out clear obligations that the owner must adhere to in order to ensure an animal's welfare and that it does not become a nuisance. The importance of allowing discretion means that cases can be looked at where they do not meet the conditions outlined, but there may be a solution.

A grievance procedure will give both pet owners and non pet-owners a clear procedure for complaints, so that neither animal welfare nor human health and safety are compromised. For further information see the RSPCA's publication: Housing – a guide to good practice, Community Animal Welfare Footprints.

- A list of local, reputable animal welfare organisations made available to residents.

If people know where to go for advice, then animal welfare issues, particularly those surrounding sickness or injury, are less likely to become a problem.



ALL OF BRONZE, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- Written pet care advice/information by, or approved by, a recognised animal welfare source made available to residents on registering their pets in the accommodation.

Basic information/education on the welfare needs of pets, along with contact details of reputable animal welfare organisations, can reduce the number of welfare-related problems. The RSPCA has produced pet care fact cards that you can use. To view samples visit: www.rspca.org.uk/petcare

- The active promotion of permanent identification and neutering of pets.
The neutering of animals has many potential welfare benefits, including a reduction in the number of unwanted litters, and may reduce the chances of dogs, in particular, straying. Microchipping increases the chances of straying animals being returned to their owners safely, while the process of microchipping provides an opportunity for a knowledgeable animal handler to see the animal and talk to the owner about any other issues.

- Provision for the pets of owners in temporary or emergency housing.
Measures should be in place to ensure that people placed in temporary accommodation do not have to give up their pets permanently. These could include liaison with recognised organisations that provide animal fostering services or an arrangement with an animal centre and/or licensed boarding establishment.

- A register of all animals kept in each dwelling, which is kept and updated as required.
A register works in three ways. Firstly, it ensures that the housing manager has an idea of which animals are kept in each home – this means that if an animal strays it is likely to be reunited with the owner. Secondly, it allows officers to locate owners of reported nuisance pets faster. Thirdly, pets can be evacuated more quickly in the case of emergency if officers have a list of where they are located.

- *Proportionate response to prohibited types of dogs (i.e. those prohibited under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991)*

It is important that housing providers have clear and consistent policies that protect animal welfare but also deal with issues arising in a proportionate and case-by-case basis (blanket approaches tend to be unsuitable). If a dog is permitted entry to the IED and the conditions listed above are complied with, a housing provider could take the lead from the court in that it can decide, upon examination of the available evidence, that a dog does not pose a danger to public safety (a scrutiny process the majority of other dogs do not undergo, so extremely useful from a risk assessment point of view). A housing provider could, therefore, allow exempted dogs to be kept within properties as long as the owner continues to comply with exemption conditions.



ALL OF BRONZE AND SILVER, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- Provision of discounted permanent ID for pets and a neutering discount to prevent unwanted breeding.

Cost, particularly for neutering, is an issue for some pet owners. Discounting needs active involvement from the local authority or other housing provider.

- An established link with a recognised animal welfare organisation that provides residents with advice on pet care on request or by monthly or quarterly visits.

Regular contact with animal experts will give residents the opportunity to talk about concerns regarding their pets' behaviour or health before it becomes a serious welfare issue.

Contingency Planning Footprint

In the last few years the RSPCA has, alongside emergency services and local authorities, assisted in the rescuing of residents and pets in flood-hit communities around the country. Many of the people rescued would not have left their homes had the safety of their pets not been assured.

While human welfare will always remain the priority, there must be consideration for people's animals. Indeed, examples from emergencies in both the UK and overseas over the last few years, have shown that human safety and public order issues can arise if contingency plans don't prepare for animal welfare.

Awareness of preparedness with regard to animals has grown significantly in the last few years and there has been a concurrent rise in the number of entries for this footprint. These entries have provided some excellent case studies that we hope will encourage many more to consider animals – and more specifically companion animals – in their plans

»» ENTRY CRITERIA

The aim of this footprint is to encourage LRFs to consider animal welfare by recognising those and their member authorities that have, with the involvement of animal welfare organisations, considered, planned and practised situations that involve the rescue and/or evacuation of both domestic and commercially owned pets. It also aims to remind local authorities of the importance of considering animals when planning for their owners.

The Contingency Planning Footprint is open to all LRFs and local authorities in England and Wales.



RSPCA, Joe Bowling/RSPCA PhotoLibrary





Contingency Planning Footprint: Minimum requirements



EVIDENCE OF:

- Locations identified as temporary animal shelters with a pet evacuation plan.
This will ensure that if animals need to be removed there is a plan for where they can be housed safely and securely.
- Information on the website for pet owners that promotes preparedness, or links to another site that does.
This would include a checklist on what steps both commercial and non-commercial pet owners should take to ensure they are prepared in an emergency. This should be displayed through the LRFs and/or the member authorities' websites
- The establishment of a contact list of animal welfare organisations and local vets who can assist in an emergency situation, and liaison with these.
Advance liaison means that welfare organisations and vets are likely to be better prepared to respond in an emergency. The contact information is likely to be gathered by individual member authorities but should be collated by the LRF.
- Companion animal welfare included in written contingency plans.
There is a human health element to ensuring that pets and other animals are considered. It is easier to evacuate people from their homes if they know their animals are going to be safe. It also reduces the likelihood of owners taking a risk by returning home to rescue their animals.



ALL OF BRONZE, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- The involvement of animal welfare organisations in contingency exercises and planning meetings.
This will ensure that animals are a consideration in all contingency planning
- Support for establishments involved with large numbers of pet animals in drawing up their contingency plans.
This will help the local authority, stakeholders and animal establishments such as pet shops and boarding establishments. This does not necessarily mean writing the individual plans on their behalf, but rather providing general guidance and some officer support
- The running of at least one tabletop exercise every year specifically involving a companion animal welfare element.
This will improve the speed and safety with which animals are protected



ALL OF BRONZE AND SILVER, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- Ownership of, or access to, at least 50 kennel spaces or vari-kennels between members of the LRF, for use in an emergency.
This will help operational staff to be more flexible when setting up an emergency reception centre
- Proactive work, such as an awareness campaign, to ensure pet owners are prepared should they be evacuated.
Many pet owners may never have considered what they might need in an emergency. Proactive work to promote the need for preparedness will ensure both animal welfare and speed of evacuation in an emergency.
- At least one live exercise every two years specifically involving a companion animal welfare element. This will help operational staff to be more flexible when setting up an emergency reception centre.
Exercises involving animal welfare will help to ensure a smoother delivery of service when needed

Animal Welfare Footprint

The title of this footprint has been changed to reflect the full range of welfare services that a council provides for animals in a local authority area. The footprint still recognises the local authority's attitude and service delivery but looks beyond traditional companion animals to include equines and licensing functions within the council. Oldham is the only local authority to have achieved a gold Animal Welfare Footprint, so we hope that others can aim to achieve gold in this refreshed category.

»» ENTRY CRITERIA

This footprint is designed to encourage local authorities to make animal welfare a greater consideration in their business, whether it is in service delivery, procurement or communications. By acknowledging those local authorities that are already putting animal welfare at the forefront of their work through a written council policy and best practice sharing and promotion, the RSPCA aims to encourage more authorities to follow suit.

The Animal Welfare Footprint is open to all authorities in England and Wales.



Joe Murphy/RSPCA Photolibrary



www.politicalanimal.org.uk/cawf 21

Animal Welfare Footprint: Minimum requirements



EVIDENCE OF:

- A written council policy on animal welfare that is regularly reviewed, promoted within the council, and based on the principles outlined in the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

This will give local authorities a point of reference when considering policy that will impact on animals and their welfare. It helps to build on the basic premise of the five welfare needs that are the basis for the Animal Welfare Act.

These needs are

- a suitable environment (place to live)
- a suitable diet
- to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- to be housed with, or apart from, other animals (where applicable)
- to be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease.

- Examples of regular sharing of best practice with regards to animal welfare by officers or political representatives.

This could be via regular meetings, within animal welfare fora and/or by regular telephone contact with other authorities and bodies. It helps local authorities to discuss problems, share best practice and build contacts in the field, thus pushing up welfare standards.

- When licensing animal establishments, risk-based inspections are employed and the use of a suitably qualified vet or animal welfare expert is retained.

This policy will enable a local authority to demonstrate that the licensing process fully considers the welfare needs of animals.



ALL OF BRONZE, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- The council adoption and external promotion of a policy on using only non-caged whole eggs in any catering supplied to or by the local authority.
By adopting a policy to use only non-caged whole eggs (i.e. Freedom Food, free-range, barn and organic eggs) local authorities are showing support for an improvement in animal welfare and promoting ethical consumerism.
- The promotion of animal welfare via the council's website, which includes the following.
 - The council's animal welfare charter.
 - Seasonal animal welfare concerns such as fireworks, pets as Christmas presents, dogs dying in hot cars, contingency planning, etc.
 - Information about animal-related law, covering domestic pets and wildlife.
 - Information, links or contact details relating to pet care advice, animals on allotments, or living with wildlife.
 - Preventative measures that can be taken to reduce the chances of unwanted 'pests', provided or approved by recognisable animal welfare organisations.

Local authorities have some of the most accessible and user-friendly websites around. These sites can be a useful tool in helping to improve animal welfare locally and raising awareness of animal welfare-related issues.
- At least one public-facing activity, event or initiative that has promoted an animal welfare issue.
This will improve animal welfare and increase education in the local authority area on the issues promoted.

ALL OF BRONZE AND SILVER, PLUS EVIDENCE OF:

- The establishment of a council steering group focused on animal welfare.
The steering group can take any form, but there must be evidence that an aspect of animal welfare has been reviewed and action has been taken as a result.
- A policy that resolves to move to higher welfare meat, dairy and non-caged eggs in ingredients, in catering supplied to offices owned by, and meetings organised on behalf of, local authorities. The commitment should be supported by the adoption of at least one type of meat and one ingredient with eggs or dairy produce that is produced to higher welfare standards. Where higher welfare is not easily procured, free-range or organic is acceptable.
This is a considerable commitment, so is considered a gold standard. The phrase 'higher welfare' indicates meat, dairy produce or eggs from animals reared, transported and slaughtered according to the RSPCA's animal welfare standards and labelled with the Freedom Food logo. This step will encourage residents to consider the eggs and meat they buy and as a result they may consider changing to higher welfare.
- A clear and defined policy and procedure that ensures animal welfare when dealing with equines.

Dates and entry details

Key dates for your diary

Closing date for entries: Friday 27 June 4.00pm

Please note that new evidence will be needed to support your application for 2014.

Announcement of footprint achievers:

Wednesday 10 September 2014

Announcement of Innovator Awards:

Later in the year

How to enter

All entries must be on the relevant entry form.

Entry forms for all categories, including the Innovator in Animal Welfare Award, will be through the RSPCA Political Animal website.

Please visit: www.politicalanimal.org.uk/cawf for further details of methods of entry.

Complete the entry form, or forms if you are intending to apply for more than one category, making sure that the relevant evidence is provided.

Don't forget to read and acknowledge the terms of entry and conditions of logo use, which can be found towards the end of the entry forms.

For further information, please contact:

Lenny Rolles, RSPCA Senior Parliamentary Adviser –
Local Government

Tel: 0300 123 0132

Fax: 0303 123 0132

Email: cawf@rspca.org.uk

www.politicalanimal.org.uk/cawf

Terms of entry

Terms of Entry for the Community Animal Welfare Footprints

1. The Community Animal Welfare Footprints scheme (the "Scheme") recognises positive aspects of animal welfare in relation to the provision of certain local authority services during the financial year 2013/14 at three levels: bronze, silver and gold (each a "Footprint"). In these terms, "you" refers to the local authority and "we" or "us" refers to the RSPCA.
2. In return for your completing the application questionnaire and supplying all requisite material, we will enter your local authority into the Scheme, giving your local authority the opportunity to be awarded a Footprint. If you are awarded a Footprint, you will be granted a licence to use the Footprint logo subject to compliance with the conditions of use. In particular, we draw your attention to clause 10 of the logo conditions of use.
3. You warrant that the information and material you have provided is accurate and not misleading and that you will notify us immediately (whether before or after any Footprint has been awarded) if you become aware that any information or material supplied is inaccurate or misleading in any respect. In the event that your local authority is awarded a Footprint, you undertake to notify us of any change in your authority's policies or practices which relates, however incidentally, to that Footprint, during the one-year period following the award of the Footprint.
4. We regret that we are unable to return any information or material provided to us.
5. In consideration of the RSPCA entering your organisation into the Scheme, you grant the RSPCA the non-exclusive licence to use, copy and reproduce any information and material supplied by you as part of entering the Scheme for the purposes only of judging and publicising the Scheme and use in connection with other ongoing or future RSPCA work. The RSPCA warrants and undertakes that any such information or material supplied by you will not be used in a manner which is defamatory to your organisation.
6. The panel of judges comprises representatives of the RSPCA. The judges will determine, using such criteria as they think fit and taking into account the information you have provided and any supporting evidence or information which we may require, whether or not you will be awarded a Footprint. A decision of the judges is final.

Terms of Entry for the Community Animal Welfare Footprints Innovator in Animal Welfare Award

1. The Community Animal Welfare Footprints Innovator in Animal Welfare Award (the "Award") recognises innovation in relation to a local authority activity or service as it relates to animal welfare. In these terms, "you" refers to the local authority and "we" or "us" refers to the RSPCA.
2. In return for you submitting the requisite information and material, we will enter your local authority into the Award scheme, giving your local authority the opportunity to be given an Award. If you are given an Award, you will be granted a licence to use the Award logo subject to compliance with the conditions of use.
3. You warrant that the information and material you have provided in your submission is accurate and not misleading and that you will notify us immediately (whether before or after any Award has been given) if you become aware that any information or material supplied is inaccurate or misleading in any respect. In the event that your local authority is given an Award, you undertake to notify us of any change in your authority's policies or practices which relates, however incidentally, to that Award, during the one-year period following the grant of the Award.
4. We regret that we are unable to return any information or material provided to us.
5. In consideration of the RSPCA entering your organisation into the Award scheme, you grant the RSPCA the non-exclusive licence to use, copy and reproduce any information and material supplied by you as part of entering the Award scheme for the purposes only of judging and publicising the Award scheme and use in connection with other ongoing or future RSPCA work. The RSPCA warrants and undertakes that any such information or material supplied by you will not be used in a manner which is defamatory to your organisation.
6. The panel of judges comprises representatives of the RSPCA and three external judges. The judges will determine, using such criteria as they think fit and taking into account the information you have provided and any supporting evidence or information which we may require, whether or not you will be given an Award. A decision of the judges is final.



Cover photo, Joe Murphy/RSPCA, PhotoLibrary; back page (left to right) Andrew Laryth, RSPCA, Joe Murphy, Philip Oxenford/RSPCA, PhotoLibrary



Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
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Telephone: 0300 1234 999 www.rspca.org.uk
The RSPCA helps animals in England and Wales. Registered charity no. 219029
The RSPCA only exists because of public donations.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**
DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY 2014**
REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**
SUBJECT: **UPDATE ON THE HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

1.00 This report will update members on the progress of the Housing Asset Management service improvement work streams.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Asset Management Team have been progressing a number of service improvements to enhance quality of services delivered to tenants and provide the foundations for sustained good performance.
The work areas currently being progressed are:

- Staff Development and Training
- Second phase Fleet Review
- Implementation of mobile working
- Improve reputation and performance
- Delivery of Capital works scheme and achievement of WHQS

2.02 Main Highlights of 2013-14: -

- Full implementation of a fit for purpose staffing structure
- Introduction of a revised and reduced Schedule of Rates
- Improved performance across all categories of repairs
- Agreement of a revised business plan to achieve WHQS by 2020
- Improved performance on Voids and Gas servicing
- Full delivery of Capital Programme, again outperforming the promises made in the Choices Document

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Staff Development and Training

The team has worked closely with the Housing Training Manager throughout the year to provide both necessary and added value training to all members of the service.

There are many mandatory courses, such as legislative training in Gas Servicing and Electrical, however many additional courses have been identified and provided throughout the year which have benefits for not only the individuals being trained but also quality of service to tenants. Following is a list of some of the training provided over the last year: -

- Site Managers Supervisors Training Scheme
- Asbestos Awareness
- Dealing with Complaints
- Equality and Diversity
- Working at Heights
- Carrying out effective appraisals
- Various ILM's – Team Leader/Manager
- Data protection
- Customer care
- Risk Assessments
- Attendance Management

The multi skilling programme continues to be delivered through Coleg Cambria which will provide all trades staff with the required skills to become fully competent in a range of tasks that will allow them to attain a Level 2 NVQ in Multi Skilling. Attainment of this qualification will assist the trade operative to:

- a) improve the quality of their work
- b) complete more work in one visit
- c) improve productivity
- d) assist in the delivery of the repairs by appointment process

This will also have a positive impact for tenants and on customer satisfaction as it will provide the platform for a higher rate of jobs being completed on the first visit. Cohort 2 are now undertaking the programme and those who have completed various modules are being encouraged to apply their new skills as part of their roles on-site.

2014-15

The following training has been identified for the forthcoming year which contributes to both service requirements/continuity and also development for individual and whole service growth: -

- Manual Handling
- Lone working
- Child protection/safeguarding

- Solar Panel Maintenance
- Dealing with Aggression and Violence
- Boiler Maintenance
- Fire Safety Awareness

Specialist training has also been identified for elements of the workforce, such as Advanced Scaffolding Training, where there is an opportunity to train team members to undertake work currently carried out by external contractors. This will generate efficiencies within the service which can then be re-invested back into maintaining the housing stock.

In 2013-14 there were 885 training days provided within Asset Management compared to 490 in 2012-13. This represents an increase of 81%. Although training within the service has increased there is no evidence of a negative impact on service performance. In fact, the number of jobs undertaken has increased during the year and performance has continued to improve.

3.02 Review of the vehicle fleet

A Corporate Fleet review has been underway within the Council to review the ownership model of the Councils fleet identifying potential efficiencies in cost, utilisation and working practices. Housing Asset Management have been represented at the Fleet Transformation Board throughout the project and have been working closely with the Fleet service to identify a new fit for purpose fleet for Housing. The proposed new ownership model will generate efficiencies within the service through both cost of vehicles and improved productivity as a result of revised arrangements for vehicle servicing and safety checks. A new fleet will require reduced checks and reduced visits to the Fleet workshop for MOT's and alike and will result in reduced downtime for tradespersons meaning more jobs can be completed. The new fleet will also enhance the image of the service through an improved and more professional fleet of vehicles. An efficiency saving of £50k has been identified in the Housing Revenue Account on Fleet costs for the 2014-15 financial year.

3.03 Mobile Working

As a result of the issues encountered on the mobile working project Senior Officers from Housing and IT met with the Housing Director of Capita to discuss the ongoing concerns and seek proposals from the provider to address the issues and identify a robust solution to provide an effective, fit for purpose Mobile Working solution for the future. Flintshire's representatives presented a strong argument to highlight the issues that the Authority has encountered as part of the project including a lack of support and pro activeness from the software provider to implement an effective solution. Assurances were sought that the provider would take responsibility and a lead on proposing a revised model for mobile working.

Following the meeting the software provider tabled a proposal to move Flintshire from the current mobile working system onto a new mobile working solution developed by the provider's partners. Before committing to any revised agreement with the provider it was agreed that a site visit should be conducted by Housing and IT Officers to an Authority where the proposed system has been implemented in order to view the new solution in a working environment. This would also provide an opportunity to discuss the system, implementation and any issues encountered by another party in order for Flintshire to assess viability, risks and benefits before making any commitment to progress with a new solution.

The site visit was conducted on 23rd April and proved to be very beneficial in terms of understanding system benefits, project implementation, planning, risks and potential issues and learning points. The revised product has developed considerably from the previous solution and provides far more flexibility as a mobile working product in terms of integration to current systems, business processes and device compatibility. The revised solution is device independent and therefore allows for a wider choice and greater flexibility for varying devices for different teams and tasks. The product also allows for the development and amendment of the interface on devices which will enable these to be tailored for the end user purposes. The system allows for the attachment of departmental forms which will enable a greater level of information to be sent to the devices and will considerably aid the effectiveness of this solution in the Gas and Electrical departments in terms of certification.

An effective mobile working solution has always been a priority for the service to develop and realise potential efficiencies. Successful implementation will provide the platform to enable other key developments such as effective van stock management and job scheduling. With a robust proposal from the supplier both in terms of a project plan and cost schedule it is proposed to develop an internal project board to oversee a project team and plan to progress implementation of a revised Mobile Working Solution. The project will be undertaken in three stages: -

- Stage 1 – Evaluation of proposal – March – May
- Stage 2 – Pilot implementation – June – September
- Stage 3 – Full rollout – October - January

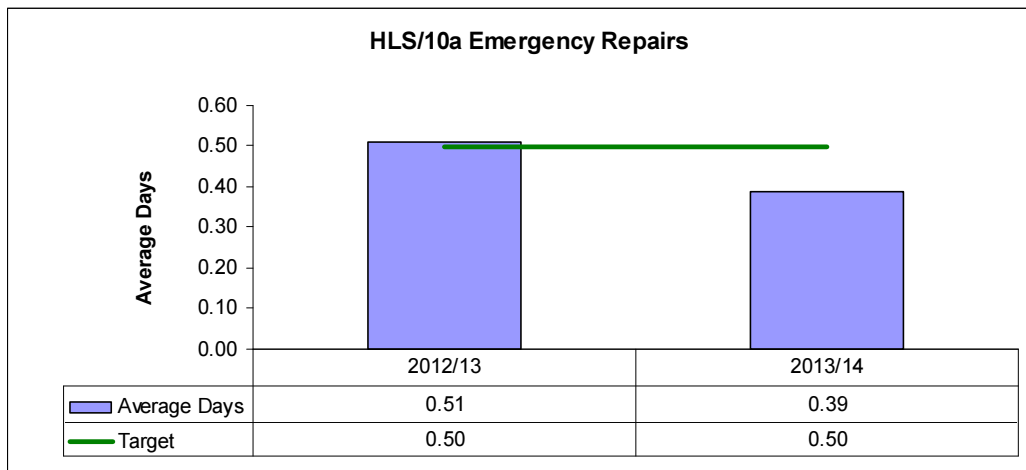
3.04 Improve reputation and performance of repairs service

The team has achieved significant improvements in performance across all categories of repairs over the last 12 months and continues to work towards further improvement with the aim of achieving top quartile status for the service.

The table below provides the performance outturns for repairs for the 2013-14 financial year and also compares the current results with the outturns for the previous financial year.

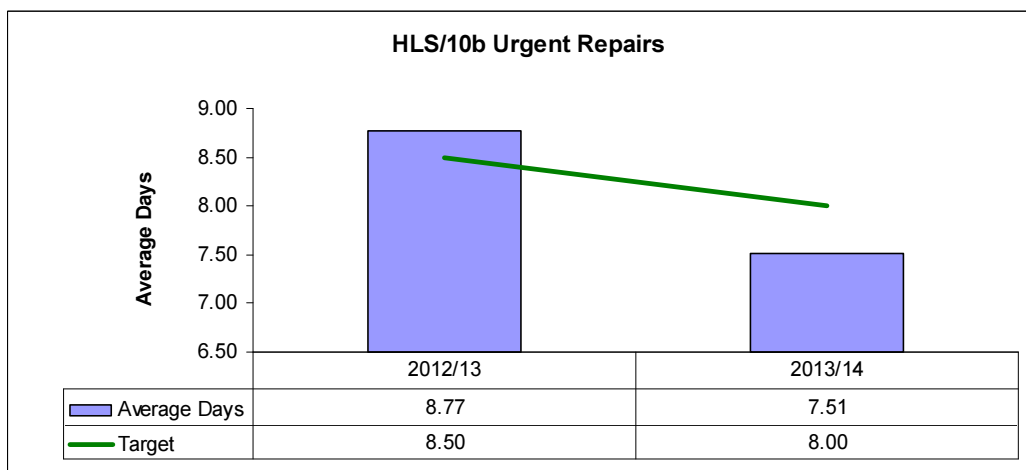
Year	Emergency	Urgent	Non urgent
2012-13	0.51	8.77	43.58
2013-14	0.39	7.51	23.03

Emergency Repairs



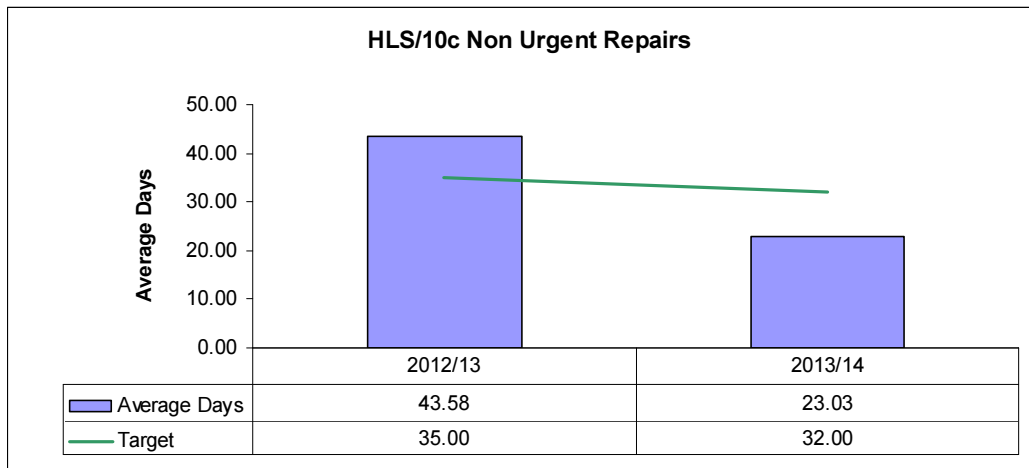
Performance on Emergency repairs has consistently achieved the target throughout the year for the first time which is a result of improved control measures introduced and improving the awareness throughout the service of performance targets and processes.

Urgent Repairs



Performance on Urgent repairs has further improved from the previous financial year and has achieved the reduced target.

Non Urgent Repairs



A further significant reduction in the average days taken to complete a non-urgent repair. Performance in this category is the most improved with performance in 2011-12 being as high as 82 days during the year.

Housing Asset Management are also predicting to have completed over 49,000 jobs in 2013-14 which is over 3000 more than last financial year and a further 2000 more than the 2011-12 financial year. This is an important point as performance has still been significantly improved whilst also carrying out a considerable number of additional repairs through the year.

As the Housing service moves towards Housemark benchmarking, with the aim of achieving top quartile status, the performance focus will shift in Housing Asset Management to concentrate on percentage of repairs completed within target time. The service has already instigated the change in focus; however a research exercise will be conducted over the 1st quarter to identify the internal targets set by comparator organisations. This is a vital exercise to ensure that when benchmarking, the service is reporting accurately and comparing data and outcomes consistently with other organisations.

3.05 Voids

Performance on Voids has also improved over the year with overall turnaround times reducing considerably from past outturns. There are still improvements to be made on Void performance to drive down the turnaround times further however this year has shown good progress. The performance for all properties in 2013-14 was an average of 42 days compared to 47 days for 2012-13.

Work on-site days consistently beat the target of 21 days for normal properties at 18 days (with an average of 39 days for major works properties, those being kitchen/heating/bathroom replacements etc).

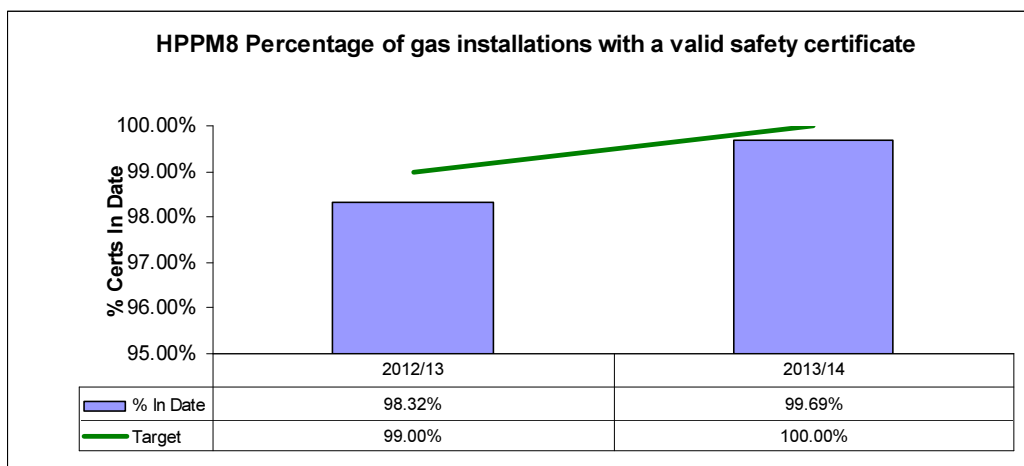
There have been a number of improvements to management

arrangements and business processes during the year which has driven the improvements and further developments are planned for the forthcoming year to continue progress. These include: -

- Revised Voids standard
- In-house WHQS kitchen team
- Improved performance reports

3.06 Gas Servicing

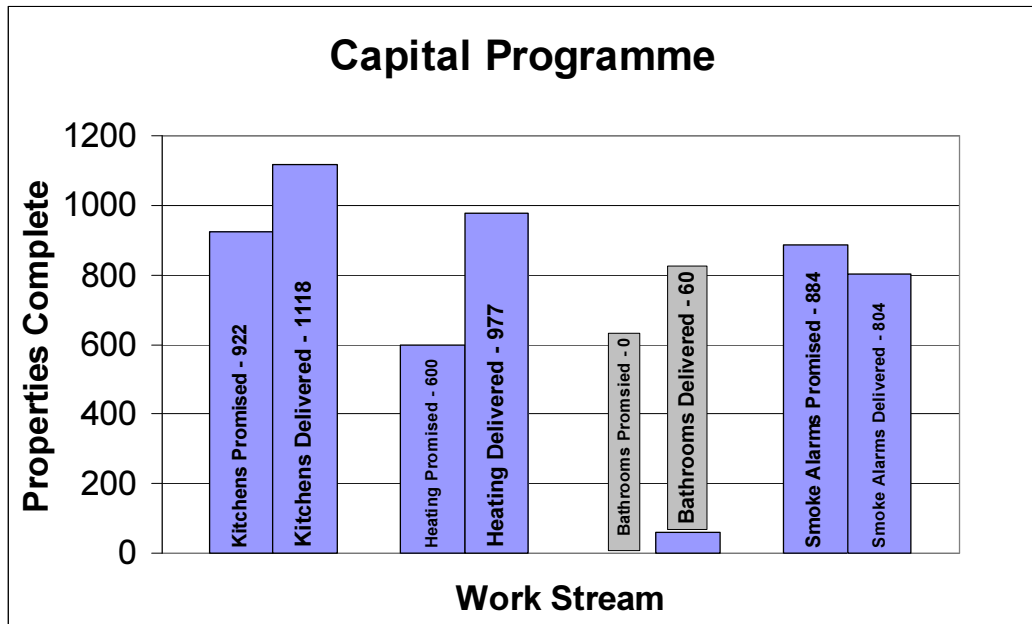
Good progress has been made to improve performance in CP12 certification during the financial year. Performance has improved from 98.32% in 2012-13 to 99.69% in 2013-14. The target remains 100% and the team is committed to working with Housing Management to achieve that in 2014-15. The improved position is largely down to improvements in business processes and teamwork on difficult cases. An exercise is currently underway to trial a revised legal process to gain entry to difficult properties and following the results of this pilot it is proposed to review the Gas Procedures. A number of site visits have also been conducted to other Local Authorities and Housing Associations in order to understand other processes which may improve our internal procedures.



3.07 Capital Works and Welsh Housing Quality Standards

The Capital Works programme for 2013/14 was intended to provide 600 Heating upgrades, 922 Kitchen replacements and 884 Smoke Alarms. As stated in the original Tenants Choices Document, there was no programme for Bathroom works, however some funding was allocated and the Capital Works Team were able to target some Bathroom Replacements.

The chart below identifies the work streams managed by the Capital Works Team, comparing the number of properties the Authority promised to deliver, against the number of those properties actually achieved



The four main streams of internal works; Kitchens, Heating, Bathrooms & Smoke Alarms; were completed by seven main contractors, one of which was the in-house DLO team; who completed approximately 600 Smoke Alarm installations.

The main Kitchen Contract was split as reported in the previous year; where 70% of the works were allocated to Keepmoat and 30% of the works were allocated to Wates. GM Jones were also allocated a small number of properties to complete whilst they were completing Major Voids.

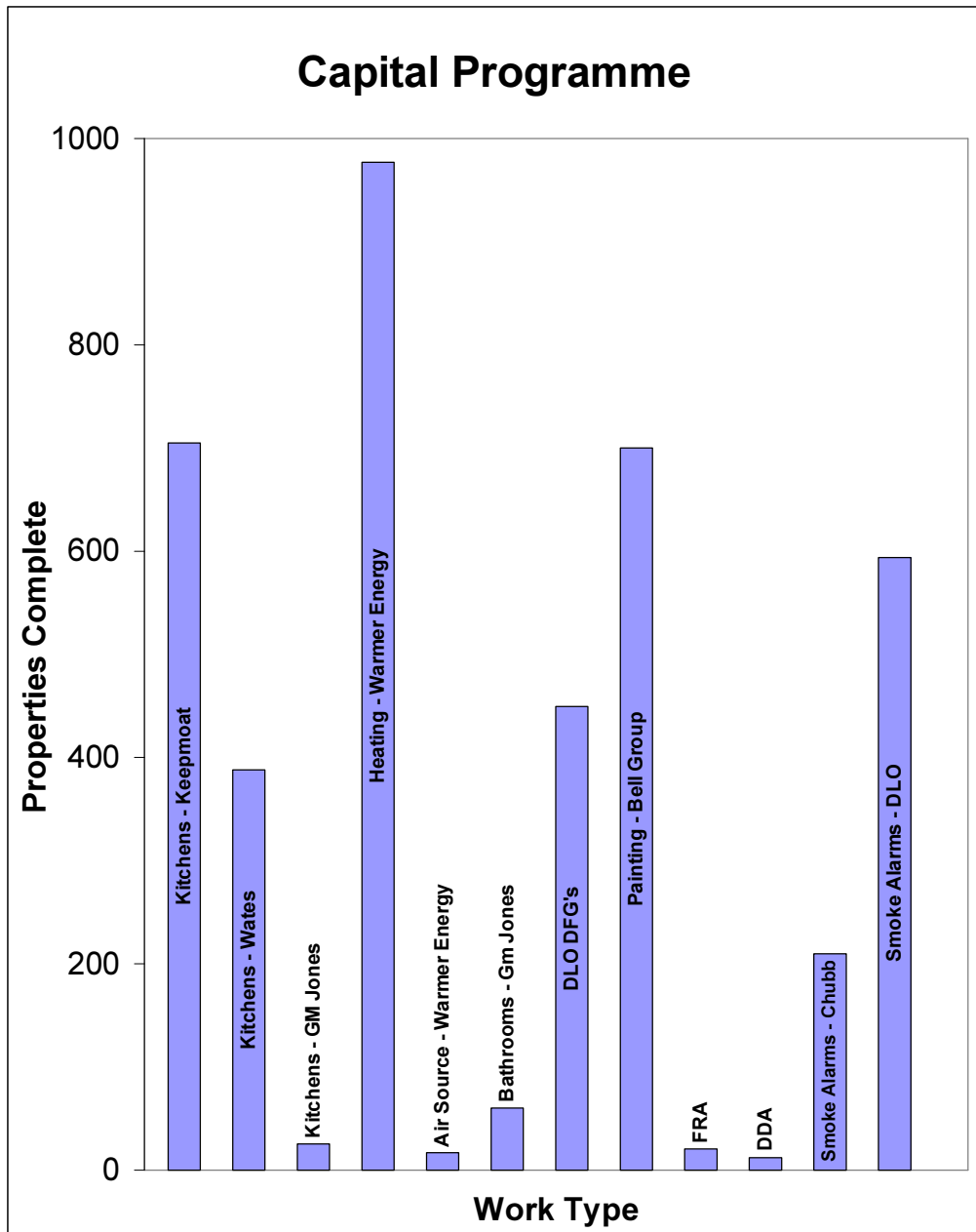
The Heating Installations were completed by Warmer Energy who also completed a small number of Air Source Heat Pumps in Buckley and Trelawnyd.

Following on from last years successful Bathroom Contract, GM Jones were allocated a further number of properties and this was completed by October 2013.

The Team also worked closely with the in-house Adaptations Team, providing additional funds for the DFG upgrades, which resulted in an additional 140 WHQS Bathroom installations.

In addition to the four main streams of work, the team have also completed works following on from Fire Risk Assessments and to date have completed works to 20 communal areas. Further DDA Works targeting 12 communal areas has also been completed, helping the authority to fulfil its legal duties.

Following on from year end reports, without including tenant refusals; the following works have been completed to tenant's homes & communal areas.



Moving forwards into 2014/15, schemes and contractors are already in place for the following works; Fire Risk Assessment, DDA works, Kitchen Replacements, Heating schemes and Smoke Alarms. Additional funding has been identified in the Capital Programme for other work streams, including Bathroom Replacements, Roofing Replacements and Environmental Works.

During the tender process, members of the Tenants Federation are asked to attend Contractor Interviews and Site Visits so that they can become more actively involved in the procurement process. The Capital Works Team commenced this as a trial last year and with positive feedback received from the group, the team are looking to expand this process in the future.

The Capital Works Team has also appointed one permanent and one temporary Tenant Liaison Officer (TLO), who have been tasked to engage with the customer at first point of contact and evaluate the Contractors performance onsite.

The future role of the TLO will of course change as different contracts and works streams are procured. With the TLO now liaising between the Project Officer and the Contractor, the tenant now has another avenue of communication to utilise; and it is anticipated that this will improve the tenant's experience and journey through each stage of the works.

The Stock Condition Survey has now been completed and the analysis process has commenced; so that the team can upload the information onto the IBS system. Initial analysis of the raw data provided indicates that the survey supports the projections and figures contained within the agreed business plan. Further analysis will now be completed before the production of a final report. Once complete, the service will be able to identify when works are required to individual properties and also identify when certain components are failing. This will enable the team to accurately plan and budget future works.

Welsh Housing Quality Standards

Following agreement with Welsh Government of a revised business plan to achieve WHQS by 2020 a number of measures have been undertaken to progress delivery of the standard. These have included: -

- Development of a revised Asset Management Strategy
- Commissioning of a number of surveys; including Stock Condition
- Consultation at Tenants Conference
- Consultation at Scrutiny
- Developing the IBS system to support delivery and planning of the programme
- Continued delivery of the existing 6 year programme

The next step is to develop a revised delivery programme incorporating information and feedback from all of the above. This will be undertaken in the following 3 stages.

1) **PLANNING STAGES** – A) April to June 2014 - Major planning works are required to analyse workload and provide options for delivery; B) July to August 2014 – Workshops with members and Tenants to review options; C) September to October – Present at Scrutiny and Cabinet for discussion and approval.

2) **PROCUREMENT STAGES** – November 2014 to March 2015 – Procure all contractors for all streams of works ready for implementation.

3) **IMPLEMENTATION STAGE** – April 2015 to July 2015 – Ensure all contracts are implemented on site to begin delivery of the revised programme.

3.08 Priorities for the forthcoming financial year 2014-15

- Implement a revised Mobile Working solution in the service
- Achieve top quartile performance
- Improve van stock management
- Develop 6 year Investment Programme to achieve WHQS
- Establish Community Benefit Model as part of Capital Works Programmes

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to consider the report and to agree that now the service is delivering sustained improved performance that an annual report to committee be provided.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None as a direct result of this report

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

None as a direct result of this report, though works to maintain and improve the stock and repair and maintenance services provide a direct benefit to the lives and living conditions for some of the poorest Flintshire residents.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

None as a direct result of this report

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

None as a direct result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of items which will require continuing negotiation and discussion with trade unions over the coming months.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

Consultation will be required as detailed above

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

Consultation with trade unions is ongoing, regular meetings are held with Trade Union representatives to discuss all aspects of the service.

12.00 APPENDICES

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Contact Officer: Nikki Evans
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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY 21ST MAY, 2014**

REPORT BY: **HOUSING AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 N/A.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
2nd June 2014					
All Member Workshop – Tackling Long Term Vacant Private Homes					
To inform Members of the mechanisms available to the Council for returning long term vacant private homes back into use and the proposed Enforced Sales Policy and how this could be used in future. Members will also be provided with information on how current mechanisms have been used through the use of case studies.					
10 June 2014	Improvement Plan 2014/15	To consider the contents of the draft Improvement Plan 2014/15	Performance Monitoring	Chief Executive	3 June, 2014
	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q4/Year End performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	
	Update on the Housing Strategy	To receive an update on the Housing Strategy	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	

Items to be scheduled

- Update on the implementation of SARTH (September, 2014)
- Update on Gas Servicing
- Energy Efficiency
- Review of Garage Sites – possible joint meeting with the Environment OSC
- Assisted Garden Service – report to include feedback from tenants on the changes to the service (October, 2014)
- Update on North East Wales Homes & Property Management
- Asset Management Plan
- WHQS Business Plan

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly / Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Director of Community
Six monthly	Update on Repairs and Improvements	To enable Members to monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.	Head of Housing
Six monthly	Private Sector Housing Renewal	To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service development and county wide projects.	Head of Housing
Quarterly	Collaborative Working within Housing Services	To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives.	Head of Housing
Six monthly	Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management	To consider progress in delivering the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	Head of Housing
Annually	Update on Delivery of Choices Document	To receive an update report on the delivery of the Choices Document.	Head of Housing
Six monthly	Welfare Reform Update	To update Members on the impact of Welfare Reform and the cost to the Council.	Head of Housing