

## Wales & West

### **Relationship between Cardiff 'Affordable housing Team' and WWH in respect of development.**

#### **Current Structure**

- Quarterly Development managers meetings (moving to 4 monthly meeting going forward), all HA's in attendance. Agenda distributed in advance (any HA can submit a discussion topic).
- This is a multi-purpose meeting, in part as a forum for dissemination of relevant information from Council to HA sector/ Emerging policy direction. Ability for HA's to raise issues they are experiencing / impact on delivery.
- Identification of surplus council assets that can be disposed of direct to a HA and identification of future S106 opportunities emerging through the planning system.
- Supported housing requirements also identified.
- **Individual meetings** – prior to Each Quarters PDP individual meetings with Each HA are held (principally led by Alison Draper– to understand delivery/ future schemes/ completion of current phases) – a record of the meeting is then provided to the HA for their records.

#### **What is working Well?**

- The structure of organised and individual meetings works well, with all HA's collectively kept up to date.
- Professional way in which development opportunities are considered and circulated for councillor support.
- The negotiation of S106 opportunities through planning system – working with HA's to maximise output through the planning system.
- The assistance offered by affordable housing team (in particular Alison Draper) in minimising S106 contributions on 100% affordable housing sites
- Acting as a Liaison with other departments to secure delivery of affordable housing – highways/parks etc)
- Ensuring a fair and equal ability for the zoned RSL's to secure SHG funding
- Prompt issue of PDP's on time for each Quarter

#### **What can be improved**

- Limited or no ability for improvement – In our zoned areas Cardiff is the most professional authority in the way it administers its SHG functions.
- For the wide remit of work undertaken by the department the only area of improvement could be more staff

## Relationship between Cardiff Housing related operations and WWH

### Current Structure

- Monthly, bi-monthly, and quarterly meetings generally chaired by Cardiff CC. These range from ongoing, wide-ranging, Strategic and Management groups, to Project-based steering groups. These include:
  - Cardiff RSL Housing Management Group – to discuss major policy issues; Homelessness, Allocations Policies, Lettings Targets, Older Persons Strategy, serious ASB issues, regeneration, etc.
  - Housing First Steering Group – to manage the Housing First work
  - Welfare Reform Group – initially convened to understand the impact of Bedroom Tax and the Benefit, now deeply involved with Universal Credit
  - RSL Housing Benefit Liaison – discussions on HB performance, welfare reform issues, digitalisation, Discretionary Housing Benefit claims, etc.
  - Exclusion Panel – to discuss the admittance, or suspension, of applicants to the Common Register with declared additional issues (e.g. criminal convictions)
  - Cardiff Accessible Homes Steering Group – to match applicants to appropriate properties
  - Waiting List Operational Meeting – for users of the Common Register, 'Northgate / IWorld' system
  - Cardiff Leadership Meetings – a CEO level, strategic, meeting
  - Ad-hoc meetings as and when required.
- All meetings are diarised in advance, and agendas and papers presented in advance, with minutes and actions distributed following the meetings.

### What works well?

- Meetings are well attended and offer the opportunity for all partners to present views, and discuss future direction and approaches.
- They provide a forum for WWH to understand the strategic direction of Cardiff CC, and what involvement or support is expected, or can be offered.
- They promote good communication and relationship between all partners, for example the Housing First Group developed a good relationship at a strategic level between WWH and the Salvation Army, which has translated into good relationships between front-line staff from both organisations.
- WWH are kept up to date with current, and future pressures on service delivery across the City. In the example of the changes to Welfare Reform, WWH was able to understand the pressures and challenges faced by Cardiff CC departments, and were able to shape our own Tenancy Support service delivery to support residents, and the work of the Council.
- Sharing of information and feedback.

### What could be improved?

- There is a range of meetings, and the potential improvements are related to each of the meetings:
  - Cardiff RSL Housing Management Group – there is occasionally a focus on lettings, and could benefit from a wider discussion on trends and emerging issues.
  - Welfare Reform Group – although the Council Tax department are involved in the group, there did not seem to be a recognition of the pressure faced by residents due to income reductions
  - RSL Housing Benefit Liaison – meetings are held regularly, but the agenda can occasionally be a little brief
  - Exclusion Panel – due to the bi-monthly nature of the meetings, occasionally a large volume of cases are discussed which can limit the time available to debate thoroughly.
  - Waiting List Operational Meeting – although generally scheduled to be held quarterly, the meetings can slip to six-monthly