



SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.00 pm THURSDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2016

COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2 - PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. To receive any declarations of interest from Members
2. To receive the Minutes of the previous Social Care, Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee held on 21 January 2016. (Pages 3 - 8)
3. To receive the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2015/16 (Pages 9 - 10)

To scrutinise decision, information and monitoring issues being reported by:

Head of Business Strategy and Public Protection

4. Renewal, Housing Options and Community Care Support Service Report Card (Pages 11 - 22)
5. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board Agenda for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.D.Jones

**Vice
Chairperson:** Councillor Mrs.A.Wingrave

Councillors: H.M.Bebell, Mrs P.Bebell, J.S.Evans, R.James,
J.Miller, L.M.Purcell, A.Taylor, R.Thomas,
J.Warman, D.Whitelock and H.N.James

Notes:

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.*
- (4) The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*
- (5) Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

21 January 2016

Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.D.Jones

Vice Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.A.Wingrave

Councillors: Mrs P.Bebell, J.S.Evans, J.Miller, L.M.Purcell,
A.Taylor, D.Whitelock and H.N.James

Officers In Attendance L. Barry, N. Jarman, Mrs.A.Thomas, N.Evans
and G.Evans

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors P.D.Richards and J.Rogers

1. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2015.**

Noted by the Committee.

2. **HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE REPORT CARD**

Members received the report of the Head of Business Strategy, Commissioning and Public Protection in relation to the Housing Options Service Report Card.

Officers informed Members that the legislative framework had recently changed and placed additional responsibilities on the Council.

Members noted that there was a new indicator in place in relation to the number of private rented tenancies made available by the Housing Options Service that were suitable and likely to be available for at least 6 months. Officers stated that the target had already been exceeded by the end of the 3rd Quarter and confirmed that for 2016/2017 the target will be set higher in line with the current year's performance.

Members asked whether the number of people requiring the service would rise above the 2000 currently seeking advice. It was confirmed that the number requiring advice remains constant year on year however, what is likely to change is the level of work that will need to be done with the individuals going forward. This will increase because of the new statutory duties.

Members queried the sickness absence figures and were advised that with marginally less staff the level of sickness absence had reduced significantly.

Members noted the good work undertaken by the staff within the service and requested that their thanks be extended to the staff.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

3. **TO RECEIVE THE SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15.**

Noted by the Committee.

4. **PRE SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinise the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

- i. Annual Report – Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2013 – 2016

Members considered the update report on the progress on the implementation of Valuing Carers, the Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2013/2016.

Members stated they had slight concerns over the statement that there was a lack of a co-ordinated 'Cultural Change' and asked if officers were confident this was happening. Members were advised that this report was a backward look to the previous year but there had been movement since then and the service has moved on significantly.

Members highlighted that Appendix A was difficult to understand particularly in relation to the RAG status and this was not clear. It was asked whether the template was a local document or a Welsh

Government template. Officers stated that it was a generic template from Welsh Government but took on board the issues and assured Members that future reports will include an easily identifiable RAG status. It was also agreed that future reports would include local information appropriate to Neath Port Talbot.

Members asked whether carers work towards a set of standards and governed by a code of conduct. It was confirmed that this was the case.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

- ii. Changes in the way in which Adult Social Care Services will be delivered in line with the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

Members considered a report that informed Members of the service delivery changes required within Adult Social Care to maximise choice and independence in line with the Social Services Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014.

Members were advised that under the Sustainability section of the report an amendment was required. The section should now read:

Sustainability

In the current financial climate the council needs to identify the most cost effective ways to support its vulnerable adults and carers, while still providing services that meet the increasing levels of complex conditions and needs. In offering choice to individuals, the allocation of public funding must take into account not only individual eligible need but also the overall demand for finite resources. Ultimately, the Council will have to consider how needs identified in the Social Care Assessment can be met in a way which is both cost effective and ensures a fair allocation of scarce resources among those requiring support.

Every case will be decided on an individual basis, however in the interests of responsible financial management the Local Authority has to look at the levels of social care provision in the community, and therefore the following will apply:

- When a care and support package is being designed, the council will ensure the cost effectiveness of the community

package will meet the assessed needs. This will take into account the personal outcomes of the service users and the range of provision available in NPT.

- Direct Payments will be actively promoted to enable individuals to maximise their choice and independence.
- Only Neath Port Talbot funding will be taken into consideration when determining the cost of a community care package. NHS and Independent Living Fund monies will be excluded from these cost calculations.
- When the cost of a support package exceeds what can be provided through social care in the community, the council will work with service users and carers to explore a range of options to ensure that individual's preferred package of support can be provided. This may include service users supplementing the Council's allocated resources via alternative means such as; private resources/personal assets, benefits, Continuing Health Care, community resources, and/or third sector. However, the Care Manager must be satisfied that the final support plan meets eligible need and that any risk is managed in line with Neath Port Talbot's Positive Risk Taking Framework.

There may be individuals who disagree with the outcomes identified within a care plan and the way in which the Neath Port Talbot Council will meet identified outcomes and/or disagree with the provision of service to meet those outcomes. As a result the authority will have developed an appeals process which sets out how an individual can appeal against the decision making process. This appeals process will not replace the council's existing complaints procedure but will run alongside it to quality assure our decisions.

Members asked for confirmation that this will be included in revised documentation and officers stated that the amendments would be included in full in the minutes and all relevant documentation would be amended to include the revised text.

Officers highlighted that the changes would result in the Local Area Co-ordination of services funded from Western Bay and is a model that has been successful in Western Australia. Members were informed that 3 posts have been created and recruited to that will be responsible for linking the community and developing relevant services.

Members asked what would be the outcome if an individual refused to accept direct payments. Officers stated that there was currently a lot of resistance because Direct Payments were something new. Members were also advised that work had been undertaken to inform the relevant staff fully as there had been some misunderstanding on the impacts of Direct Payments. Where an individual refuses Direct Payments then the Council will provide an appropriate care package.

Clarity was sought on the term community and how this should be interpreted. Officers stated that there were many explanations of what a community could be but this was generally going to be an area where services would be joined up to provide the most relevant services for individuals. It was further clarified that the use of social capital would assist in achieving the outcome. Members asked what was meant by social capital and officers confirmed that this was a term used to highlight what resources people had available to them to deliver services.

Members were advised that a cultural change is required because the change would move away from a one size fits all approach to a service that is suitable for individuals.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

iii. Medication Policy

Members considered a report that sought approval for a revised medication policy in respect of domiciliary care services for older and disabled people.

Officers asked Members to note that the original policy had now been split into two distinct parts i) the Medication Policy and ii) Medication Handbook.

Following scrutiny the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

CHAIRPERSON

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Social Care Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item
19 th February 2016	Renewal, Housing Options and Community Care Support Service Report Card
	Pre-scrutiny - Cabinet Board Items
	Quarterly Performance Reporting
17 th March 2016	Western Bay-Sara Harvey and Nick Jarman
	Pre-scrutiny - Cabinet Board Items
14 th April 2016	
	Pre-scrutiny - Cabinet Board Items

12 th May 2016	
	Pre-scrutiny - Cabinet Board Items

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING CABINET BOARD

19th February 2016

PRIVATE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF BUSINESS STRATEGY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION – A. Thomas

SECTION A – FOR INFORMATION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

HOUSING RENEWAL & ADAPTATION SERVICE SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015/16

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members of the Scrutiny Committee with information to assist them to scrutinise the performance of the Housing Renewal and Adaptation Service, which sits within the portfolio of Head of Business Strategy and Public Protection.

BACKGROUND

The Council introduced a revised Performance Management Framework in 2014/15. One of the requirements within that framework is the production of service report cards by service managers which will enable Members to scrutinise the performance of all services within its remit.

This report will also enable the Cabinet Board and Scrutiny Members to discharge their functions in relation to performance management.

Report Card

The following report card provides members with details of the services provided by the teams and a review of performance for 2015-16.

The Housing Renewal and Adaptation Service has developed the service report card to demonstrate what is being achieved and delivered for the funding invested in that service area.

The funding for the service comes from a number of different sources;

The Adaptation Service is funded from the councils General Capital fund which provides Disabled Facility Grants and Rapid Adaptation Grants, while the regeneration works is funded from a combination of Welsh Government schemes, Specific Capital Grant, Vibrant and Viable Places programme and ARBED, the regeneration schemes are also supported by the energy provider Npower with Energy Company Obligation funding (ECO).

The report looks at what has been delivered in each area and how the service is performing compared to the previous year.

It also outlines what the service has been doing to improve the processes and details the current staffing positions and customer satisfaction.

Appendices:

HRAS - Service Report Card.

List of Background Papers:

None

OFFICER CONTACT

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Robert Davies, Principal Officer Housing Renewal & Adaptation
Service Tel: 01639 683514, email r.i.davies@npt.gov.uk

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

Brief description of the service

The Housing Renewal and Adaption Service (HRAS) comprises of 3 main service areas with a team of 24 staff based over three offices, Tregelles court, Neath Abbey, King Edward House, Neath and Wellington Place, Aberavon. The service areas are : The Adaptation Service, Renewal Area Team and the specialist services team, the service is made up of building surveyors, support officers and administration staff.

The service benefitted from a system thinking review in 2009 and has made significant changes and improvements to suit the findings including reducing the amount of staff considerably from 44 to 24 posts. The service has a single staffing structure to allow for a flexible approach to be able to move staff to suit the current workloads and demands of the three areas of the service.

- **Adaptation service**

The provision of a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) is a statutory requirement of the Authority , which is governed by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) order 2002.

The Adaptation Service provides adaptations to private home owners and tenants through Disabled Facility Grants and Rapid Adaptation Grants (RAG)

A DFG pays for essential adaptations to aid disabled people gain better freedom of movement into and around their homes by providing access to essential facilities within their home. The core group of adaptations facilitate access to the living room, bathroom, bedroom, kitchen and / or access and egress to the property.

The HRAS offers and carries out a full “in house service” to ensure the correct adaptation solution is delivered to the applicant to a high standard helping them maintain their independence and continue living in their own property for as long as possible.

The Rapid Adaptation Grant was introduced as an experiment in 2014/15; £150,000 was allocated from the Intermediate Care fund. The grant is aimed at providing replacement or emergency works to clients already known to the authority where a formal Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment is not required. (A DFG requires a formal OT assessment, waiting time approx. 4-5months)

The Adaptation service also helps to fund an Essential Access Grant (EAG) which is aimed at providing a client with a quick and simple route for minor adaptations such as grab rails, stair rails and handrails to a maximum value of £200, this grant is administered by Care & Repair and is accessed through the Gateway team where they transfer the client directly to Care & Repair.

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

• **Renewal Areas and Regeneration**

The Renewal Area team is responsible for the regeneration works in the authority's declared Renewal areas as below:

- Sandfields East and Aberavon which is in its 12th out of 13th year
 - Over £10.5m of Specific Capital grant (SCG) funding spent on nearly 1000 properties
- Neath East which is in its 6th year out of 10.
 - Over £3.6m of SCG funding spent on nearly 500 properties
 - Over £4.6m of Community Energy Saving Programme funding spent on 540 properties,

The Renewal Area regeneration schemes can include external renovation works to housing such as, roofs, windows, doors, rendering and external wall insulation, plus environment and community improvements such as multi use games areas, street improvements, alley gate schemes to reduce arson and fly tipping in the rear lanes and starting youth clubs and other community groups. The renewal areas are funded by the Welsh Governments Specific Capital Grant programme.

This service is responsible for delivering the neighbourhood renewal project for the Vibrant and Viable Places programme which involves very similar renovation works and improving energy efficiency to 300 properties over the 3 year period of the programme.

• **Specialist Services**

The specialist services team deal with the income generating areas of the service which includes :

- Issuing the recyclable Houses to Homes & Home Improvement Loans,
- Carrying out and preparing Energy Performance Surveys & Green Deal assessment reports.
- Asbestos surveying
- Asbestos drawings
- Also responsible for applying for Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding to support the regeneration schemes.

Service performance and progress on priorities, April 2015 – February 2016

The service has two priorities included in the Corporate Improvement Plan.

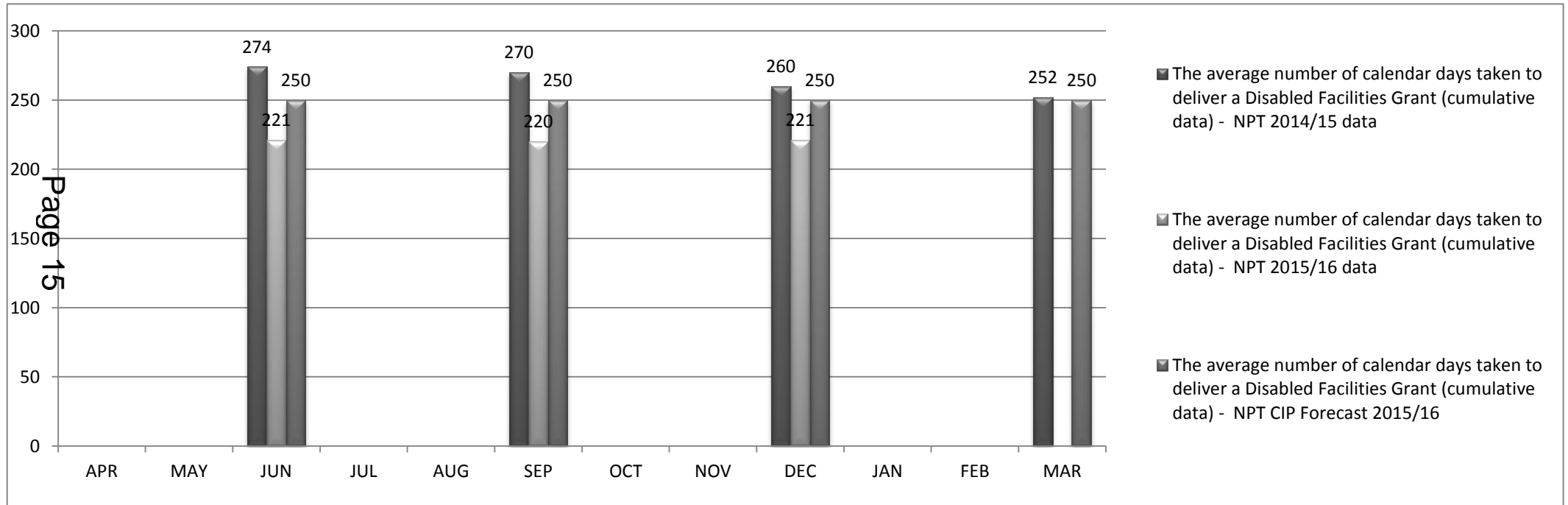
SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

Priority 1

- Improvement Objective 3 – Improving outcomes, Improving lives
 Improve residents' ability to remain independent in their own homes through the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants for adaptations to houses to meet the needs of disabled residents.
 This is measured by the average number of calendar days taken to deliver a DFG.

The table below indicates the number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facility Grant per each quarter in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

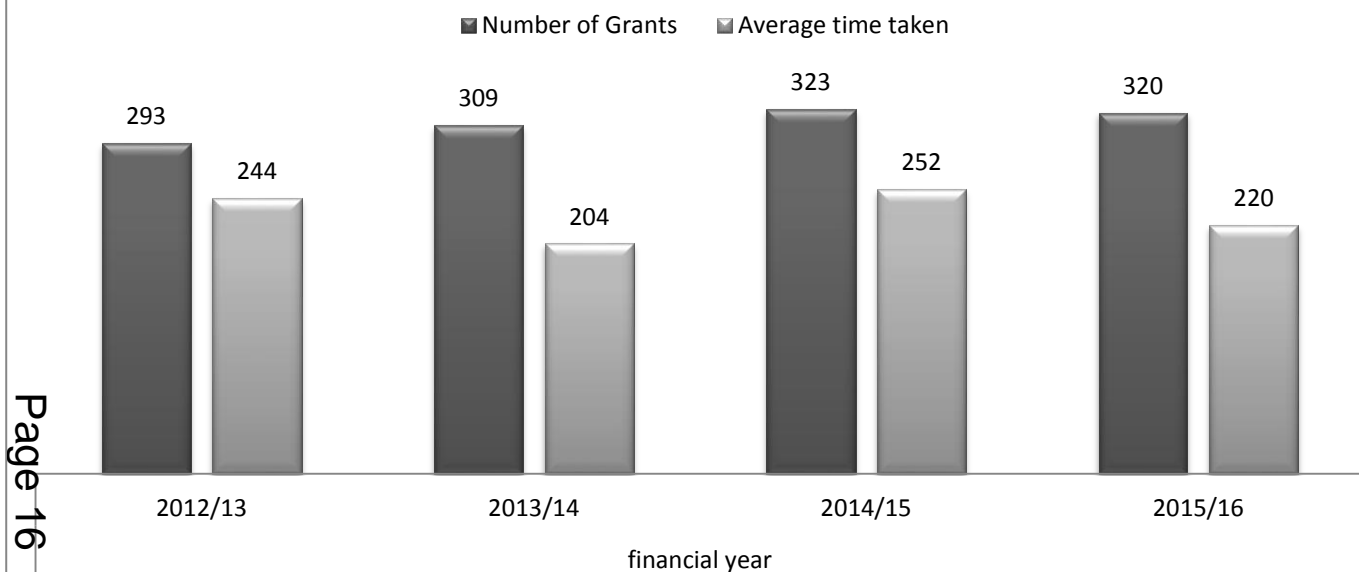


The table below indicates the number of grants completed and the average time taken for each financial year.

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HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

Number of Grants / Average time taken



Wales Average 2014/15:

231 days

NPT Quarter 3 2014/15:

260 Days

NPT Quarter 3 2015/16:

221 Days

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The data above indicates the process is quicker this year than last year, this can be attributed to improvements in the system and a change in the type of demand, this year the demand for extensions is down 30% compared to last year. The service is on target to show an improvement on the predicted 250 days figure for this year, it is expected the days taken will remain very similar to the current amount of 221 days.

Priority 2

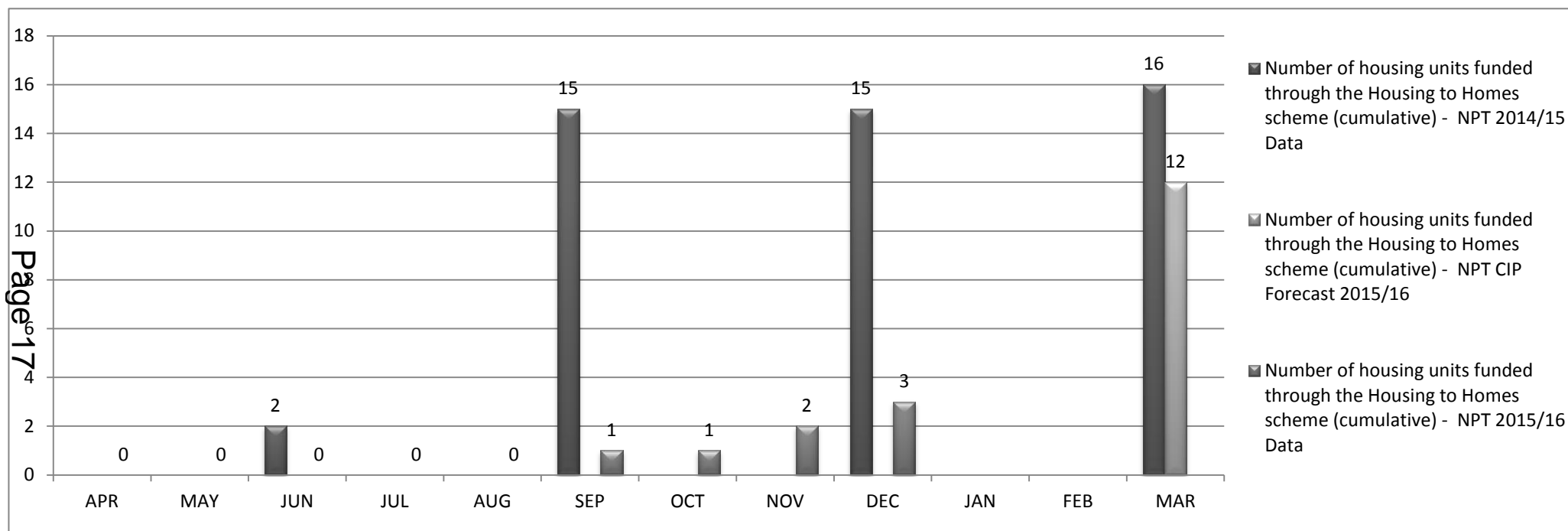
- Improvement Objective 4 – Prosperity for all
Continue to offer the “Housing to Homes” interest free loans to encourage landlords, developers and home owners to renovate

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

empty houses that have fallen into disrepair to allow them to be offered back into the housing market for sale or rent. This is measured by the number of units funded through the scheme.

The table below indicates the number of housing units funded through the Houses to Homes scheme.



This year the Houses to Homes schemes has so far brought 3 units of accommodation back into use, a further 11 units on target to be completed this financial year, with an additional 40 units at various stages in the pipeline.

The scheme is on target to achieve the forecasted figure of 12 for FY 15/16.

Below is a summary of the services key actions and progress made against each one for this financial year.

Key Actions:

- To fully spend allocated Adaptation budget.

The budget is fully committed with a number of jobs at various stages.

It is anticipated by the end of financial year that 320 grants will have been completed, this compares to 323 for 2014/15.

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HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

The service has dealt with 448 enquiries for grant aid with 100 enquiries being cancelled; this is mainly due to financial reasons such as a contribution required or applicant not wanting to divulge finances.

Currently the end to end time from the client's first contact to the completion of works on site is 220 days this is compared to 252 for 2014/15.

The average grant is currently £6429 This is compared with £7951 for 2014/15.

The average cost and end to end time has improved due to less extensions being constructed in 15/16 compared to 14/15 and changes to the process.

- To review the DFG system

A mini review of the system was carried out which identified areas of the process that could be improved, due to losing specific skilled staff due through ER VR early in the year, some of the remaining surveyors required training on AutoCAD to ensure the process of preparing drawings was not delayed, this was successfully carried out and all surveyors are now competent with the preparation of drawings.

The benefits of having an in house Occupational Therapist (OT) were looked at in consultation with the COT (Community Occupational Therapist) manager. The benefits of reducing the applicants time on the waiting list was obvious and it was agreed to second an OT from the COT service, an OT was in post by September 2015. The in house OT is currently working on the COT service backlog, the benefits of this post should be seen early in new financial year where the OT should be responsive to request for assistance.

- To procure new framework of contractors.

The process to procure and appoint a new framework of contractors is underway, it was intended to implement new framework on 1st April 2016, due to the extent of the work and involvement required it is hoped to implement the new framework in the autumn of 2016. The procurement section is currently working on the requirements and application.

- To deliver the 15/16 projects identified in the operational plan for SCG funded Renewal Areas

Following approval of the SCG allocation by the Welsh Government, properties were identified and an operational plan for both Renewal Areas was developed and approved. Currently both schemes are on target for a full spend by the end of the financial year, 63 properties will have benefited from renovation works funded by SCG. This is compared to 37 from 2014/15.

- To deliver the 15/16 projects identified in the operational plan for Welsh Government funded VVP & ARBED schemes

ARBED funding was applied for and approved in September 2015; this funding was to support the Vibrant and Viable Scheme and also a standalone ARBED scheme.

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

A requirement of VVP and ARBED was to also secure Energy Company Obligation Funding, this was successfully done with the support of NPower energy supplier.

Properties were identified and an operational plan put in place, All the schemes are on site and weather dependant will complete this financial year. The target amount of properties for this financial year was 150 properties; the schemes are on target to slightly exceed this amount.

- To develop and implement the process for delivering Private Sector Home Improvement Loans (HIL)

Following the final approval of the scheme by Welsh Government in late 2015, 5 HIL's have been issued to a value of approximately £33,000, with a further £200,000 worth of enquiries at different stages, it is estimated that 15 loans will be issued this financial year.

- To deliver the established Houses into Homes recyclable loan scheme

The established Houses into Homes scheme continues to be offered and 3 loans have been issued this year worth a total of £205,000 with a further £280,000 worth of applications in the pipeline at various stages. A total of 3 units have been brought back in to use during 15/16 with a further 11 due to complete before the end of this financial year, this is compared to 16 brought back into use in 14/15.

- Continue and expand income generating services

The service is in contract with Swansea Council to carry out Energy Performance Surveys on their housing stock and to carry out Green Deal Assessments on their Renewal Area schemes, this year the service has carried out over 350 Energy Performance surveys and 150 Green Deal assessments.

NPT Homes awarded the service a contract to prepare 9500 floor plans for their tenant packs indicating the location of any asbestos containing material within the property. To date over 4500 drawings have been completed.

Almost £100,000 worth of ECO funding has been secured to support the regeneration works.

Financial

Funding for the service is received from a number of different sources

- **Adaptation Service**

£3,000,000 from General Capital Fund.

The Adaptation Budget has remained at the same level for 6 years due to the demand for adaptations, there is always a large waiting list at the end of the financial year, by the end of this financial year the waiting list is predicted to contain approx. £1.5m worth of work.

The service is on target for a full spend of this budget by the end of the financial year.

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

- **Renewal Area** receives funding from different sources as below:

£920,000 from Welsh Governments Specific Capital Grant for declared Renewal Areas

£1,295,000 from Welsh Governments ARBED fund.

£370,000 from Vibrant and Viable Places Programme

£92,500 from Npower ECO fund to support Renewal and Arbed schemes.

The Renewal Area budget has been very similar for the last 3 years. 16/17 is the final year for funding of this scheme.

The last two years has seen the service being awarded funding for additional regeneration schemes and the introduction of the loans, this has brought a substantial amount of additional money and work into the service.

The service is on target for a full and complete spend of all funds by the end of the financial year.

- **Specialist Services**

£913,238 for Houses to Homes Recyclable fund

£892,244 Home Improvement Loans – borough wide use

£600,000 Home Improvement Loans – VVP area only.

The loans are recyclable and available for a set period of time, currently £625,000 worth of loans have been allocated with a number of applications at various stages.

Currently the service is on target to generate a surplus of approximately £90,000, A vacancy saving of £25,000 has also been taken into account.

Employee/Staffing

- The service has not had any unplanned resignations in this financial year,
- Two staff took advantage of last year's ER/VR scheme and finished at the end of March 2015, at the same time following the expiration of an SLA with NPT Homes, two staff transferred to NPT Homes.
- All teams have regular team briefings where any issues are discussed including and learning or development needs and also ideas on how to improve processes are discussed.
- Currently not all staff have had an Employee Development Review, it is intended to complete each review by end of March 2016.

Sickness

- The service has had a number of long term sickness issues which along with all sickness is being closely managed and cautions issued when required.
- All staff are aware of the sickness policy and the different management stages.

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

Average FTE working days lost per Employee - Quarter 3 (1st April 2015 to 31st January 2016)

Measure	2014/15 Actual (Full year)	Quarter 3 2014/15 (cumulative)	Quarter 3 2015/16 (cumulative)
Service	4.8	4.2	7.1
Directorate	11.7	8.4	9.4
Council	9.4	6.7	6.8

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Customer

- The adaptation service carries out a customer satisfaction survey on the completion of each grant covering the key areas and how they felt the service performed, the builder and the impact the DFG adaptation has made to their lives. , since the introduction of this survey in July 2014 247 clients returned the survey.
The results are below:
 - 93% were very satisfied with the support provided by the services officers.
 - 83% were very satisfied with the length of time it took to provide the adaptations
 - 91% were very satisfied with the amount the client was listened to during the job
 - 90% were very satisfied with the builder, quality of work, tidiness and time keeping etc.
 - **96% strongly agreed that the DFG has improved their quality of life.**
 - 95% strongly agree that they now feel safer at home.
 - 93% strongly agree that they now feel more independent
 - 92% strongly agree it is easier for family and carers to help with daily needs.
 - 84% strongly agree they no longer need to consider moving house.

SERVICE REPORT CARD 2015-16

HOUSING RENEWAL AND ADAPTATION SERVICE

Compliments and complaints.

There have been no complaints recorded against the service for 2015/16; it is the same for 2014/15.

No compliments have been recorded for the same periods.

The service has prided itself on working very closely with clients and contractors to ensure all processes go as smoothly as possible and deal with any issues as they arise to avoid any formal complaints being raised.

The customer satisfaction survey reflects the positive feedback the service gets.