

Policy & Scrutiny Committee Task Group on CityWest Homes

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Introductory note

This presentation addresses in outline Campbell Tickell's high level assessment of CityWest Homes, in terms of four broad areas:

- CityWest's alignment with the Council and its strategic objectives;
- CityWest's service delivery;
- Its organisational and staff culture; and
- The Council's clienting of CityWest.

In each of these areas, we have indicated changes that we would recommend, based on the present structures. We do not address the changes that might be needed were the Council to bring the service in-house. The Council will in due course decide whether to retain CityWest Homes as an ALMO, or to return the service in-house. Should the Council opt to bring it in-house, a number of the changes recommended would still be needed.

CityWest Homes – *Alignment with the Council*

Current position -

- For 16 years, CWH has been allowed/encouraged to be stand-alone rather than arm's length
- Alignment with WCC strategy exists, but alongside other priorities
- Council has in effect delegated control of HRA to CWH

How this could be changed -

- Recognition that CWH is an agent of the Council, and that is its role
- Council to take back control of HRA
- Council's strategic objectives hardwired into CWH's own strategy
- Council to review the role of and interface with CWH

CityWest Homes – *Service delivery*

Current position -

- Historically CWH seen as having performed well and achieved positive customer satisfaction
- Significant problems experienced in 2017 with implementation of new Target Operating Model – *trying to do too much too quickly*
- Limited housing management experience at CWH Executive level, exacerbated by departures of experienced managers

How this could be changed -

- Turnaround process in progress should continue – *'back to basics'*
- Ensure that housing management expertise is present at senior and mid levels within CWH

CityWest Homes – Culture

Current position -

- Failure to appreciate CWH's role and its accountabilities to the Council and customers
- CWH Board failure to recognise weak performance and address risk, and to provide effective governance oversight
- Sense of 'us and them'

How this could be changed -

- Analyse organisational and staff culture and put in place culture change programme
- Place front and centre CWH's role as agent of the Council, responsible for delivering high quality services to residents

CityWest Homes – *Clienting by the Council*

Current position -

- Clienting of CWH by WCC has been light-touch and vertical rather than horizontal
- CWH Board has been left to drift
- Resident scrutiny exists but structure is not representative

How this could be changed -

- Council clienting structure appropriately staffed and promoting horizontal engagement – *‘intelligent clienting’ approach*
- CWH Board restructured to ensure appropriate skills and effective engagement with the Council
- Resident scrutiny beefed up, including ensuring involvement of tenants (as well as leaseholders)

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Thank You

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