

**JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TRANSITION – HOUSING TASK GROUP  
12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2009**

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**KEY ISSUES AND RISKS UPDATE**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To update the task group about the current key issues and risks currently facing the Housing Directorate as it progresses through transformation to the new one council.

**Action Required of the Task Group**

- 2 To ascertain the updated position regarding key issues and risks affecting the transition for housing services.

**Previously Reported Housing Top Ten Risks in the Transformation Process**

- 3 The Service Director for Housing listed the following in a report to the task group on the 1<sup>st</sup> August, as the top ten risks for housing being monitored as part of the transition process. Other risks were identified between 1<sup>st</sup> August and the last Task Group meeting (13<sup>th</sup> February 2009) and risks were reported into 3 categories:
  - a. 1C4W
  - b. 1C4W & Ongoing
  - c. Ongoing only

Only High and Medium risks are considered herein.

The Task Group reviewed the Risk Register for Housing at this last meeting and a further update is provided herein. Where these risks are covered in this update, this is stated in brackets:

- (i) drop in standards and performance (*represented below*)
- (ii) resources / capacity - unable to give the time necessary to support the transition (*represented below*)
- (iii) staff leaving / retention (*represented below*)
- (iv) inability to agree new policies (*removed as 'Low' risk*)

- (v) loss of geographical knowledge of housing service (*removed as 'Low' risk*)
- (vi) staff health, motivation and morale (*removed as 'Low' risk*)
- (vii) communication with key stakeholders (*removed 'Low' risk*)
- (viii) failure to obtain delegated powers (*removed as 'Low' risk*)
- (ix) other work streams in the transition that housing depends upon – fall behind the agreed timetable (*represented below*)
- (x) lack of priority given to capital funding schemes (*represented below*)

In addition, the IC4W Day 1 Plan and the Transformation Programme (Critical Path) identified the following key issues and risks associated within Housing leading up to one council:

- (xi) contractual arrangements including service level agreements and IT support contracts (*represented below*)
- (xi) the credit crunch and its impact on affordable housing schemes for the next capital programme 2009-12 (*removed as 'Low' risk*)
- (xii) strategic housing governance arrangements to be agreed by the IE before the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, so that there is a clear understanding of the decision making process, reporting arrangements and accountability (*a discussion paper has now been prepared and is under review by the Service Director*)

### **Updated Position on Risks – March 2009**

#### **4.1 Housing Risk Register**

A risk register for Housing, in the Wiltshire County Council (WCC) format, has now been defined and is undergoing review. 38 risks have been identified, the split between 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low' risk being:

High	3
Medium	13
Total	16

#### 4.2 Risk Register Review Process

At the last Task Group meeting, it was decided to:

- Risk owners need assigning
- Direction of travel needs agreeing
- Additional control measures need to be defined with the risk owner

These actions are now all complete.

#### 4.3 High Risks (scoring 12 – 16)

There are 3 ‘High’ risks with a combined risk score of 12 – 16 (details of the risk mitigation is stated in brackets and italics). These are detailed below:

- (i) SAP training (capacity issues escalated to Carlton Brand)
- (ii) Failure to Launch the new CBL system on time (risks are being very closely monitored)
- (iii) Investment in Social Housing (WCC has expressed it’s overall intention but no detail has yet been submitted)

#### 4.4 Medium Risks (scoring 6 - 9)

There are 13 ‘Medium’ risks with a combined score of 6 – 9 (again, details of the risk mitigation is stated in brackets and italics). These are detailed below;

- (i) SAP – Housing postholders are identified too late (*an interim solution has now been provided to allow requisitioning and authorisation ready for Day 1*)
- (ii) SAP – SIMDELL interface is behind schedule and cannot be recovered within deadline timing (*in-house testing is now happening and results look favourable*)
- (iii) Service / Performance – Service Heads are not recruited in a timely manner to allow lower level roles to be concluded thereby risking drops in performance (*All Service Head posts have now been filled except the Head of New Homes which will be filled by an Interim Manager until such time a permanent member of staff is recruited*)

- (iv) Contracts / Service level agreements – legal are still not in a position to review all relevant documents (*finalised list is almost available and some 1C4W funding has been approved for the review process*)
- (v) Temporary & Consultancy Resources – these temporary resources leave the business and cannot be replaced in time for 01<sup>st</sup> Apr 09 (*all permanent vacancies are being regularly reported to ensure resource capacity is sufficient*)
- (vi) Housing resources / capacity unable to give the time to support the transformation project (*regular review via the project workstreams is mitigating this risk*)
- (vii) Customers – do not know what is going on that affects them leading up to and after 01<sup>st</sup> April 2009 (*escalated to the service director responsible for Area Boards, marketing & communications*)
- (viii) Capital for new affordable housing (*being linked with Community Safety targets and grant funding capital programme*)
- (ix) IT Software – Libra housing software staff leave which results in a depletion of key staff maintaining the system (*training is in place to ensure flexible cover*)
- (x) Staff shortages from Freezing posts in Homelessness (*posts now being defined and approved*)
- (xi) Emergency in supported housing scheme – vulnerable people affected (*review of business continuity plans are being reviewed*)
- (xii) Other service functions get behind schedule (*regular review of project plan is mitigating this risk*)
- (xiii) Decent Homes Standard – future deficit projected in the HRA – (*contract extensions being negotiated to protect HRA funds*)

## **Conclusion**

5. The task group is invited to discuss the above key issues and risks with the Service Director for Housing and the Interim Housing Project Manager.

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*Report Author: Simon Dale, Interim Housing Project Manager (07770 867141)*