

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Partnerships, Planning & Policy, Lesley-ann Fenton (Introduced by the Executive Member (Business))	Executive Cabinet	18 th February 2010

TRANSFER BACK OF CHORLEY HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update members on the progress of the transfer of the Home Improvement Agency back to the Council, approved on 3/12/09.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To note the contents of the report .

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

3. To keep Members updated on the progress of the transfer.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4. None.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		Develop local solutions to climate change.	✓
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	✓	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	✓
Involving people in their communities		Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	✓

BACKGROUND

HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

6. Approval was obtained from Executive Cabinet in November 2009 to instigate proceedings to establish an in-house Home Improvement Agency offering Disabled Facility Grants, Home Repair Assistance and Energy Efficiency grants/ advice. It was agreed that a follow up report will be provided, detailing the staffing structure required to operate the service from April 2010.



5. Since the date of the decision, a project team has been set up to oversee the transfer and ensure that measures are put in place to prepare the Council for the transfer on 1st April 2010. This includes looking at the procedures and systems used, including the ICT, procurement of (local) contractors and dealing with TUPE matters.
6. Liaison meetings have taken place with Anchor and they have confirmed that one member of staff, a Home Improvement Caseworker, will be subject to TUPE and will transfer to the Council. This is in addition to the two Technical Officers who have been seconded to Anchor and will simply come back to the Council. The structure of the Housing Service following this transfer is attached in appendix one.
7. In order to prepare staff for the transfer and ensure smooth running of procedures, staff will spending a session mapping the processes for the grants and agreeing a clear procedure.
8. A legal document is to be agreed between the Council and Anchor which will include all the information which is to be exchanged between the two parties, at transfer and also will detail how cases where works are not yet complete, will be handled and by whom. This will ensure that service provided to customers is not disrupted and that a smooth transition can take place. Agreement will also be reached with regards to a consistent message to be provided to customers, both existing and new, who contact Anchor and are redirected to the Council.
9. In order to make full use of existing resources and enable the Council to promote the services of its in house service, the Customer Contact centre will be engaged in providing the frontline service and training will be provided to enable staff to answer general queries regarding grants and energy efficiency.
10. It is not envisaged that this transfer will result in any additional revenue costs to the Council. In 08/09 it cost the council £43,014 for Anchor to provide this service and by transferring the service back, these costs will be saved from the overall grant and therefore, increase the amount of grant we have available to help vulnerable people.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

11. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources	√	Equality and Diversity	
Legal	√	No significant implications in this area	

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

12. The proposed transfer of the Home Improvement Agency from Anchor to Chorley Council would potentially involve the transfer of employee(s) currently employed by Anchor who are wholly or mainly engaged on the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants and Decent Homes Assistance. Any transfer would be carried out in accordance with the TUPE Regulations 2006. Furthermore, the two Officers currently seconded to Anchor would return to the employment of Chorley Council..

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNANCE

13. The transfer of the service will ensure that the legal obligations in relation to Home Improvement Repair and Disabled Facilities Grants continue to be met. The legal implications of the transfer inhouse are being addressed as the matter progresses.

COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION

14. The return to Chorley Council of the Home Improvement Agency service will have impact

on current budgets, as essentially the costs will be covered within the budget already contributing to the service. I would hope, however, in the longer term that efficiencies can be made from this service through redesigning the processes involved and better procurement.

LESLEY-ANN FENTON

Director, Partnerships, Planning & Policy.

There are no background papers to this report.

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