

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
8TH JANUARY 2009**

Title: Housing Caretaking Review - Tied Accommodation
Ward: City Wide

Report of: Head of Human Resources

Officer presenting report: Mike Cook - HR Adviser

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1. Report Summary

- 1.1 The reports seeks HR Committee's approval to award pay protection to employees who as a consequence of the above review, will lose contractual Tied Accommodation benefits. This constitutes a variation of pay protection as laid out in the Managing Change Policy, which refers to the protection of contractual pay (only).
- 1.2 To seek approval from HR Committee of the value of tied accommodation benefits for the purpose of pay protection.
- 1.3 To highlight and seek Members' views on other HR issues affecting this workgroup under the proposed restructuring of the service review.

2. Recommendation

The HR Committee is asked to:-

- 2.1 Approve the proposals set out in Paragraph 8.1 (a) and (b) below and in Paragraph 8.7.
- 2.2 Agree that the "buy out" will be equivalent to 18 months protection payment (Paragraph 8.1 (C) refers).
- 2.3 Confirm that pay protection will be awarded in this instance, as set out in Paragraph 1.1 above
- 2.4 Consider/note the proposals set out in Paragraph 9 - "members of residential staff", Paragraph 10 - revised "role of caretakers", Paragraph 11 - "residential community care paperwork", and Paragraph 12 - "retention of the Mobile Team".

3. Policy

- i. Tied Accommodation Policy 2007
- ii. Managing Change Policy 2008
- iii. Resolution of this committee that pay protection will not exceed the 3 year period contained within the Managing Change Policy (paragraph 5.3 refers).

4. Consultation

(a) Internal Trade Unions

The following concerns from Trade Unions are known through views expressed at the service review consultation.

- i. Notional values of non-cash benefits do not recognise true cost of benefits that will have to be picked up by employees.
- ii. Pay protection will result in an increase of income tax and national insurance deductions, further impacting on nett income.
- iii. Caretakers have continually had their income reduced over the years with loss of standby payments etc. With the proposal in the service review there is the potential that income could be further eroded with some staff being downgraded.

Trade Unions have presented alternative proposals for the review of the service, which will be presented to Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods to consider when making a decision on service review proposals.

(b) External

N/A

5. Background and Assessment

- 5.1 In January 2007 a paper was presented to HR Committee outlining the standardisation of benefits for employees in Tied Accommodation to alleviate the risk of any equal pay claims that may arise from the varied level of benefits that then existed.
- 5.2 HR Committee agreed the level of benefits and further

resolved;

(6) 'that consultation with trade unions take place over the next 6 months regarding the protection arrangements to be applied to existing staff and following negotiations proposals as to how this would be achieved be brought to Human Resources Committee in June/July of 2007'.

5.3 Following consultation and a dispute hearing a report was presented to HR Committee in July 2007 regarding pay protection. HR Committee resolved the following;

(1) 'that the resolution of the Disputes Committee "that pay protection be limited to a minimum of five years with a strong recommendation that it should be for a longer period" be amended and that any pay protection would be in line with the Managing Change Procedure';

(3) 'that the City Council would not exceed its three year pay protection policy when the tied accommodation proposals were applied to Neighbourhood and Housing Services'.

5.4 However clarification has been given by HR and Legal services regarding the interpretation of these resolutions in respect of applying pay protection to a contractual benefit like tied accommodation. Pay protection under the Managing Change Policy refers to 'Contractual (hourly) pay will be protected' and 'The employee's contractual pay will be frozen'. As tied accommodation is a benefit (and not pay) it is not covered under the definition of contractual pay under the current Managing Change Policy.

5.5 Although the resolutions refers 'that any pay protection would be in line with the Managing Change Procedure' the resolutions do not make it clear that HR Committee have made a decision to make a variation to the policy to allow the tied accommodation benefit to be protected.

5.6 Following a local agreement with the Trade Unions in July 1998 a level of pension emolument for non cash benefits were agreed for Housing Caretaking employees in tied accommodation (appendix A). This set an agreed notional value for these non-cash benefits (£3,025) with this figure to be adjusted each year by a percentage corresponding to the percentage increase on actual pay determined as the NJC annual pay award (2008 = £4,087).

5.7 The Housing Caretakers in tied accommodation currently receive the following benefits;

- Rent free accommodation
- Water and Sewage charges paid by BCC
- 75% of Council tax paid by BCC
- Heating charges paid by BCC - where this heating is provided through electricity, charges paid will also include lighting etc as unable to separate out.
- Other charges that apply to the property eg CCTV
- Agreed pension emolument value

5.8 Under the policy agreed by HR Committee in January 2007 Housing Caretakers in tied accommodation will receive the following benefits;

- Rent to be discounted by 75%
- Council tax to be discounted by 75%
- Service Charge (excluding digital tv and laundry charges) to be discounted by 75%
- Pension emoluments will cease

5.9 Certain benefits - rent, Council tax and water rates - are exempt from income tax and NI charges because the accommodation is provided for the better performance of an employee's duties. However the benefits of providing heating and lighting are subject to tax charges. BCC has been paying these charges through a PAYE Settlement Agreement for the Housing Caretaking work group. Therefore no charges for taxation have been picked up by employees.

6. Service Review

6.1 As outlined in appendix E there has been consultation with all stakeholders about the proposals for the service. Staff and Trade Unions were initially consulted on the draft Vision for the service that was published in March 2008 and a number of changes to the draft Vision were made in response to the views expressed.

6.2 The draft Vision was subsequently considered by the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission on 14 July 2008. The report to the Commission set out the results of the consultation on the draft Vision, including identifying a number of issues which were contentious for staff and/or other stakeholders. At this meeting the Trade Unions took the opportunity to present their views on the review to the Commission. A key issue of concern for the Trade Unions was the original proposal to no longer have a residential service. The report set out a number of options in respect of this issue. The Commission indicated its preference for an option which included a

reduced but appropriate number of residential caretakers who would work on an area basis (rather than on a block basis).

- 6.3 Following the Scrutiny Commission meeting, there has been further negotiation and consultation with the Trade Unions and staff. The Trade Unions have been formally consulted on the draft Service Review and their comments (together with the management response) are set out in appendix F.
- 6.4. The Trade Unions have also included the submission of alternative proposals to the service review, which proposed a higher level of caretaking staff, at increased grades and further reductions in management levels. This option would cost £400,000 more than the management proposal and would mean that tenants' service charges could not be reduced.
- 6.5 The responses from the Trade Unions raise a number of service related issues. The key HR issues raised are as follows:-
 - The value of any pay protection for loss of emoluments not matching actual benefits.
 - A request to pay protect tax and national insurance payments that would be due on any pay protection for emoluments.
 - That there is no scientific basis for the reduced number of residential caretakers, that there should be more residential caretakers and concerns about the impact on income for those staff who would lose their residential status.
 - That the role of the caretaker has not been sufficiently enhanced, which will result in the grades of the resident community caretaker reducing.
 - That the community caretaker job design should remain unaltered.
 - That the Mobile Caretaking Team should remain.
- 6.6 Under the Housing Caretaking review it is proposed there is a reduction of residential employees. This will see all current Site Team Leaders and up to eight Community Caretakers lose their tied accommodation benefits

completely. Others will maintain their residential status but with the reduced benefits as laid out in the Tied Accommodation Policy.

- 6.7 Assuming HR Committee clarify that pay protection is to be varied so to be applied to tied accommodation benefits, then a proposal is required to determine the protection arrangements for both employees who are remaining as residential staff but with reduced benefits and those who are losing all their residential benefits (see Section 8).
- 6.8 The Trade Unions have quoted case law - *Newbold v Leicester City Council* as a precedent for levels of compensation. However advice from BCC Legal team has stated there is little relevance as this case concerned the failure to honour an agreement.

7. Caretaking Service Review Proposals - Impact

- 7.1 Under the review proposals the eleven resident Site Team Leaders are likely to be ring-fenced to the Site Co-ordinator posts, which are non residential posts. Based on the assumed grade of the post this could result in an overall loss of up to £3,038 (13.7%) for those appointed. However there will be 26 employees in total ring-fenced for these 15 posts.
- 7.2 There are currently 36 Resident Community Caretakers and the proposal in the review is that only 28 employees will retain residential status. However some of these will be at Senior Caretaker level and some at Caretaker level.
- 7.3 There are currently 43 Community Caretakers (36 resident and 7 non resident) who will be ring-fenced for the 14 Senior Caretaker posts (assumed BG5). In addition there are 75 Caretaker posts (assumed BG4) with only 39 direct appointments (36 vacancies). The effects of appointing current residential community caretakers is as follows;
- Resident Community Caretakers who are successfully appointed to the Senior Caretakers post and remain residential could see overall reduction of up to £1,720 (8.2%)
 - Resident Community Caretakers who are successfully appointed to the Senior Caretakers post and but do not remain residential could see overall reduction of up to £4,945 (23.5%)
 - Resident Community Caretakers who are not appointed to the Senior Caretaker post but accept a

Caretaker post and remain resident could see an overall loss of up to £3,042 (12.6%)

- Resident Community Caretakers who are not appointed to the Senior Caretaker post but accept a Caretaker post and do not remain residential could see an overall loss of up to £6,267 (29.8%)

- 7.4 All grades for the posts within the reviewed service are assumed based on desk top results and will be subject to formal job evaluation.
- 7.5 The service review sees no requirement for the Mobile Caretaking team and these twelve posts will be deleted. It is proposed the Mobile Caretakers will be ring fenced to the 15 Site Co-ordinator posts along with the Site Team Leaders. Therefore an overall reduction of these two work groups of eleven staff. These staff will be displaced and attempts will be made to redeploy them. Should this fail then they will be in a redundancy situation.
- 7.6 The current seven non-residential Community Caretakers will be ring fenced for the 14 Senior Caretaker posts along with the residential caretakers. Those who are unsuccessful in obtaining one of these posts can be offered the Caretaker role as suitable alternative employment.
- 7.7 The number of posts within the new structure is equivalent to the number of existing permanent staff within comparable posts. However due to the differential in levels, grades and benefits this will make some post unsuitable in terms of being offered as alternative employment. The impact of this will be between 6-11 Resident Site Team Leaders or Mobile Caretakers, and up to 8 Residential Community Caretakers who did not retain residential status, could not be matched to any vacant Caretaker post.

8. Proposal - Benefit protection

- 8.1 Trade Union raised concerns over the loss or reduction of benefits for caretakers in tied accommodation, therefore management is proposing the following outcome be applied;

a. Caretakers retaining residential posts. (28 staff)

- i. Apply the new benefits (in line with previous HR Committee resolution)
- ii. Continue to pay water rates and utility bills for three year period.

- iii. Continue to pay remaining 25% rent, 25% service and CCTV charges for three year period.
- iv. Cease PAYE Settlement agreement - taxable benefits (utilities bills) would need to be notified to tax office via P11D
- v. Cease pension emolument (in line with previous HR committee resolution)
- vi. Cease payment of laundry and digital tv charges (in line with previous HR Committee resolution)

At the end of the three year protected period, residential caretakers would revert to the level of benefits outlined in Tied Accommodation policy and no further compensation or protection will apply.

Individual employees could choose to accept an up front payment equivalent to eighteen months of the difference between the notional value defined within the local agreement for emoluments and the value of the benefits under the Tied Accommodation policy (equal to £1,453) as an alternative to receiving (ii) and (iii) as full and final settlement. Should employees who choose this option leave, following payment, they would not be expected to repay any of this amount.

b. Caretakers and Site Team Leaders not retaining their residential status (19 staff)

- i. Apply pay protection to the notional value as determined in the local agreement for the pension emolument (currently £4,087.75 pa) for a three year period. Annual pay awards will not be applied during protection period.
- ii. Cease payment of all bills and issue an introductory tenancy.
- iii. Cease pension emolument.
- iv. Employees to be responsible for tax and NI on pay protection.

c. “Buy Out” Option for staff not retaining residential status

Individual employees could choose to accept an up front payment equivalent to eighteen months of the notional value defined within the local agreement for emoluments (equal to £6,131) as an alternative to receiving (i) as full and final settlement. Should employees who choose this option leave, following payment, they would not be expected to

repay any of this amount.

- 8.2 This is recommended as it maintains the majority of the benefits for three years for staff who remain residential. The protection is a variance to protection under the Managing Change Policy as it is specific to Tied Accommodation rather than generic to all contractual benefits.
- 8.3 The application of a different protection package for staff losing residential status can be justified because of the different situation regarding future residential status of each.
- 8.4 The level of pay protection (£4,087.75 pa) can be justified as the notional value is defined within a signed local agreement for the workgroup.
- 8.5 Applying this method of protection for staff losing residential status is in line with the protection given to Resident Scheme Managers when they ceased to be residential in April 2008. As Scheme Managers are predominantly a female orientated work group, the application of the same protection arrangements to the male orientated caretaking work group will avert claims of equal pay/sex discrimination.
- 8.6 Where buy-outs are offered, it is the norm for these to be pitched at a value equivalent to one year of the value of the benefit.
- 8.7 This proposal will only apply to employees who remain within the caretaking service or are redeployed to another post within Bristol City Council. This option will not apply to any employee who leaves the council on the grounds of redundancy.

9. Numbers of residential staff

- 9.1 The Caretaker Service is currently provided by 108 permanent staff and approximately 12 temporary staff. Currently 47 of these permanent staff are residential. (36 resident community caretakers and 11 residential site team leaders).
- 9.2 The Draft Vision for the Caretaking Service proposed that there would no longer be any residential staff. As a result of the feedback from stakeholders a number of options, as indicated above, were presented to the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission on 14 July. These included retaining all existing residential caretaking, reducing the number of

residential caretakers but retaining some on an area basis and having no residential staff in future. As indicated above, the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission supported the option of a reduced number of caretakers who would provide clearly defined “additional services” for tenants within a defined area as a result of being residential. This option has subsequently been pursued through negotiations with the Trade Unions and is incorporated in the final proposals presented for the service.

- 9.3 It is proposed that staff that remain residential in future will have specific responsibilities which they will carry out in addition to their normal daily duties. This list of duties has been developed with the assistance of a group of Trade Union representatives and has been agreed in principle with the Trade Unions.
- 9.4 The proposals for the number of residential caretakers has been established following a full analysis of the operational arrangements for the new service including team sizes and the geographical areas to be covered by each team. There has been Trade Union involvement in this process.
- 9.5 The proposals for the number of residential caretakers are that in each of the 11 area teams covering small geographic areas (two further teams will provide services to disperse sites) there will be between 2 and 4 residential caretakers.
- 9.6 Each residential caretaker will be responsible for providing the “extra services” to tenants/leaseholders living in a defined number of blocks in their area. The proposed number of residential caretakers has taken account of the property numbers in each area and the physical size of the area.
- 9.7 There has been discussion with staff representatives and the Caretaking Service User Group about the approach we will take in deciding in which blocks to base residential caretakers. This will be a combination of location and proximity of other blocks along with any particular issues in an area such as anti-social behaviour. Although the number of resident caretakers will be reduced, they will be distributed around the city in a logical way, unlike the ad hoc arrangements which currently exist. The Trade Unions have proposed that 37 residential staff are retained. Following extensive discussion with the Trade Unions, we are not aware, however, of any concerns about specific sites having an inadequate number of residential staff.

9.8 It is considered that 28 staff will be sufficient to provide “extra services” to all of the tenants living in blocks served by the Caretaking Service within the 11 geographical areas.

10. Role of Caretakers

10.1 The Trade Unions have raised concerns that the opportunity has not been taken to sufficiently enhance the roles that caretakers should undertake, with the result that grade for residential caretakers may reduce following job evaluation.

10.2 The report to the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission in July 2008 identified a range of suggestions that had been made for extending the role of the Caretaking Service. A number of enhancements have been made to the Caretaking Service and the Caretaking role as set out below:-

- The scope of the Caretaking Service has been significantly extended to include sites that currently do not receive a caretaking service - a service will be provided to approximately 550 additional flats as a result of the review. In addition, the service will take on responsibility for managing the cleaning contract for older persons accommodation that is currently provided by Bristol Contract Services.
- The scope of the Caretaking Service will also be extended to include the site management of all sites with communal areas - currently this role is shared with the Estate Management Service. As a result of this arrangement, the role of the current site team leader has been enhanced into a primarily non-manual post - the new post of Site Co-ordinator. The Site Co-ordinators will deal with issues such as abandoned cars or problems with grounds maintenance and will have a wide responsibility for issues relating to the physical environment around the site.
- It has also been agreed that caretakers in future will assist with recycling subject to this service being commissioned through the Waste & Streetscene service.

10.3 Other proposals which were put forward during the consultation ie: caretakers to provide personal support for customers, caretakers undertaking repairs and security patrols were reviewed in the report to the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission when it was confirmed that it was not

considered that these options were operationally viable.

10.4 The Trade Unions, in their proposal, have proposed extending the caretaker's role to include providing customer services to the same level as customer services advisors in the Customer Service Centre/Customer Service Points. This however is not considered a viable proposal and is beyond the scope of the caretaking service. CSC/CSP staff have significant resources and systems in place to be able to undertake their role and be kept up to date about changes in services. It is impractical to put this in place for caretakers and would lead to inconsistent customer services with poor or no recording of customer enquiries and a lack of focus on the core caretaking role. It would also require additional HRA and General Fund resources as this function could not be funded through the caretaking service charge paid by tenants.

10.5 Several meetings have been held with Trade Union Representatives to review the job design paperwork and a number of changes have been made to the paperwork to reflect the views expressed. We are not aware of any specific duties that the Trade Unions believe should be included within the role of the caretakers (other than set out above) that are not already incorporated.

10.6 On this basis the roles of the caretakers are appropriate to meet the future service needs. The grades for any posts will be determined through the Council's job evaluation process by a joint job evaluation panel.

11. Retaining the current residential community caretaker paperwork

11.1 The Trade Unions have requested that we retain the post of Resident Community Caretaker at BG5 by continuing to use the existing paperwork. This is not possible because in order to improve the service that we deliver, there is a need for job roles to change. The main changes that impact on community caretakers are:-

- Community Caretakers are currently graded to include the supervision of assistant community caretakers, whether they have one on their site or not, and even where there is a team leader who has the supervisory responsibility. This has created an unnecessary level of supervision which in reality rarely happens.

There are currently 43 community caretakers who are responsible for the supervision of 39 assistant community caretakers.

- The development of the site co-ordinator role to take on the management of sites including some tasks previously undertaken by the Estate Management Team has required some small adjustments to the role of the Community Caretakers.

12. Retention of the Mobile Caretaking Team

- 12.1 The Trade Unions have proposed that the Mobile Caretaking Team is retained. Currently the Caretaking Service employs specific staff to work on a mobile basis across the city. These staff provide support for sites where there are vacancies, undertake restorative cleaning, handle out of hours emergencies and open and close laundries. The research carried out as part of the review identified that in practice there were very few emergencies which required a mobile caretaker to be called out outside of normal working hours. Often any out of hours emergencies require the attendance of a contractor, eg for a fire or flood, and it is not considered necessary on this basis to also have a caretaking presence. This was confirmed by monitoring being carried out by mobile caretaking staff themselves.
- 12.2 By creating area teams of caretakers (rather than having block specific caretakers) the service will have the flexibility in future to deal with staffing gaps and to handle restorative cleaning. Some staff in future will provide services to dispersed sites and will travel between sites, however, the job requirements will be no different from those of other community caretakers. On this basis there is no service need to retain the Mobile Caretaking Team. Retention of the Mobile Caretaking Team would also significantly increase costs as additional staff would need to be employed.

13. Other Options Considered

Other options have been considered namely:-

13.1 Protecting tied accommodation benefits at average actual value

The difference between the notional value (£4,087) and the average actual value (£4,967) is £880 pa. This represents additional costs of £41,360 pa during any pay protection

period over using the notional value as set out in local agreement. This option was rejected on the basis that it overrides the local agreement and if applied would be a 'bettering' of the pay protection arrangements for a male dominated workgroup, which could lead to equal pay or sex discrimination claims from the female dominated former Sheltered Scheme Managers.

13.2 Residential Caretakers remaining in accommodation rent free for a period not exceeding three years

The value of rent free accommodation is approximately £8k over a three year period. However this option is rejected as Neighbourhoods do not have a mandate to offer accommodation outside Tied Accommodation policy 'rent free' as the employees would have to be placed under a tenancy agreement and therefore required to pay a fair rent.

13.3 Payment of a one off 'buy out' in lieu of the loss of employee benefits

Possible payment equivalent of eighteen months residential benefit based on notional value of benefit (£6,131) for employees losing residential status and the difference of notional value and value for new benefits (£1,453) for employees remaining residential but on reduced benefits. This would be paid up front in full and final settlement.

This option is rejected as a stand alone option because; i) as this is a deviation from BCC policy it would require all residential caretaking employees to individually sign up to this rather than have a collective agreement, ii) employees could take the money and there is no guarantee they will remain in the service, iii) risk of challenge by former Sheltered Scheme Managers under equality or sex discrimination legislation due to inequitable treatment between male and female dominated work groups.

13.4 Continue to pay bills for non residential staff for three years

These staff would no longer be residential and it would be inappropriate for the council to continue to pay bills for them. This is because the council would no longer be employing them to live within the property and there could be very weak or no links back to the caretaking service for example:

- staff who remain in Council employment could be employed in different services following NOPS or

potentially be made redundant if they are unable to find suitable alternative employment through NOPs.

- staff are no longer residential and therefore are no longer required to live in a Council property they may choose to be rehoused, into the private sector, to a housing association property, or another Council property (where rent levels and bills are different).
- it would be inappropriate for the Council to be paying bills for a non council property and if the member of staff moved to a different council property there could be issues of higher rent, water rates and council tax.

There would also be a risk of challenge by former Sheltered Scheme Managers under equality or sex discrimination legislation due to inequitable treatment between male and female dominated work groups. Therefore this option was rejected.

13.5 Maintain 'status quo' for three years

This would see all staff remaining as residential employees for a three year protection period. At the end of the three years those staff who were remaining in residential roles would revert to the benefits outlined in the Tied Accommodation policy without further compensation and those not retaining residential status would be given a tenancy and required to pick up all associated costs without further compensation.

This was rejected on the grounds that to keep 47 residential staff was impractical when trying to implement the new service. Legal advice was given that this protection would be seen as a 'betterment' on previous protection arrangements and could lead to equal pay/ sex discrimination claims.

14. Risk Assessment

- 14.1 Failure to confirm the application of pay protection for tied accommodation benefits is a variation of the Managing Change Policy could leave the way open for challenge that the terms regarding pay protection under the Managing Change Policy are applicable to all other contractual benefits.
- 14.2 The local agreement determined an agreed level for the notional non-cash benefits. It also recognises that due to the nature of the type of benefits there will be variations that

are influenced by a number of complex factors which are beyond the control of the parties concerned and agreed for increases to be applied in line with NJC annual pay awards. Neither party has looked to review or renegotiate this agreement over the last ten years.

- 14.3 This agreement has been signed by all Trade Unions, puts in place a mechanism to update the notional value and is applied equitably to all Housing Caretakers in tied accommodation. Therefore this is seen, from a legal perspective, as a justifiable means of calculating a benefit for pay protection purposes.
- 14.4 As the notional value set out by the local agreement has not kept pace with the increased costs of benefits, resident caretakers will see a real deduction in income through the difference between notional value of benefit and actual value of benefit, plus the increased tax and NI applied to pay protection payments (approx £1,200 pa during protection period). This financial impact could see current staff leaving from the service.
- 14.5 Application of a notional value that is believed to be 'unfair' by Trade Unions and employees, along with proposals within the caretaking review could lead to employee relations and morale issues.
- 14.6 If the local agreement is set aside there is a risk of creating a precedent that implies it is acceptable to ignore signed local agreements when one or other party find they are no longer advantageous.
- 14.7 The former Sheltered Scheme Managers operated on an identical local agreement and the notional value was used in calculating pay protection when tied accommodation was removed in April 2008 following a service review. As this workgroup is predominately female and the caretaking workgroup predominately male, then any deviation from this could lead to a challenge under equality or sex discrimination legislation.
- 14.8 Under the Caretaking review it is proposed that there will be a reduction in the number of posts replacing the current Residential Community Caretakers (BG 5) post. There is a proposed increase in the posts that will replace the Assistant Community Caretakers (BG4) post. Normal processes under Managing Change Policy will apply regarding the ring fencing and appointment of staff between posts. However,

as outlined in para 7.7, there is the probability that a number of staff may not be able to be offered suitable alternative posts within the service and would need to seek redeployment through the New Opportunities Scheme. If this was not successful they would be in a redundancy situation.

15. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

The workgroup is predominately male (74%). There is a mixture of ethnicity with white British being the largest single group (80%). Consideration will need to be given to ensure that any selection methods for both residential status and posts are fair and equitable. **A detailed EIA is as set out in Appendix C below.**

16. Legal and Resource Implications

Legal:

The Report has been written in conjunction with advice from Legal Services. The recommended options will ensure that there is no difference in treatment between the treatment of Residential Caretakers (who are a male dominated work group) and the former Residential Wardens (who are a female dominated work group). The requirement to confirm that this is a variation of the Managing Change Policy is necessary to ensure against setting a precedent for future challenges.

Newbold v Leicester City Council - I do not believe this case is relevant. The case itself relates to breach of contract based on the failure of the Council to honour an agreement. The case confirms a Council can operate a generous buy out scheme but does not require it to do so.

Advice from Husinara Islam, Senior Practitioner Solicitor for Head of Legal Services

Financial:

(a) Revenue

The HRA positively contributes to this service charge to the value of over £800k in 2007/8. This review of the service provision is looking to reduce this positive contribution and review how the service is provided. The full extent of the savings will be included in the business case when this is reported to the Executive but it is hoped that this will be reduced by over £400k per annum in future years once pay

protection has finished. The maximum amount recommendation 2.1 would cost is £305k (total over 3 years) whereas recommendation 2.2 would cost up to £157k in total.

The estimated savings above may be affected by the gradings for Caretaking Staff, once the joint job evaluation panel has determined the new gradings.

Advice from Claire Burston Special Projects Finance Manager/Head of HRA Finance.

(b) Capital N/A

Land: N/A

Personnel: N/A

Appendices:

Appendix A - Local Agreement for emoluments

Appendix B - Caretaking Service Review Proposal - summary

Appendix C - Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix D - Variations in Pay Scenarios

Appendix E - Chronology of Consultation

Appendix F - Trade Union Comments

Appendix G - Residential Summary

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

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Emoluments payable to Housing Services Caretaking Staff - Joint Agreement

Workgroup Covered

Residential Community Caretakers

Site Team Leaders

Assistant Site Team Leaders

- where any of the above staff physically occupy accommodation provided by the City Council for the better performance of their duties.

Agreement

It is agreed that:

- (1) An emolument will be paid in respect of certain non-cash benefits which are provided by the City Council in connection with the requirement upon the defined workgroup physically to occupy accommodation which is provided for the better performance of their duties.

These non-cash benefits are:

- a. The accommodation being provided rent-free by the City Council.
- b. Payment by the City Council of water and sewerage charges which are applied to the accommodation provided.
- c. Payment by the City Council of 75% of the Council Tax assessed as payable on the accommodation provided.
- d. Payment by the City Council of those heating charges arising from the heating system basic to the accommodation provided.

- (2) With effect from 1 April 1998 the notional value assigned to these non-cash benefits, in respect of which an emolument will be paid, will be £3,025.
- (3) It is recognized that these matters have remained unresolved since March 1996. It is therefore agreed that, where the pension benefits payable to an individual upon retirement are consequent upon the annual amount of pensionable pay earned between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1998, then the City Council will pay a retrospective emolument for the appropriate period. The amount will be pro rata to the annual emolument described at (2).

Such retrospection will not apply where there is no consequent effect of the lower emolument on the pension benefits of an individual.

- (4) It is recognized that the actual fiscal equivalents of the non-cash benefits described at (1) will be likely to rise annually. It is also recognized that a varying combination of complex factors would determine the degree of uplift. It is therefore agreed that an equitable approach to annual review will be that the actual emolument be increased by a percentage corresponding to the percentage increase on actual pay determined as the NJC annual pay award.

It is agreed that this equitable approach be adopted in future years, that is from the outcome of the NJC annual pay award determination applicable from 1 April 1999, and from 1 April in subsequent years.

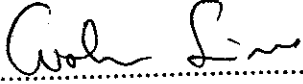
- (5) The emolument set each year will be applied to each individual in the workgroup, irrespective of the actual fiscal equivalent of each of the benefits detailed at (1) in individual cases.

That is, where - for example - the rent otherwise payable on two different properties occupied by two different staff is not the same, the emolument payable to each individual will be the same.


- (6) The Trades Unions undertake that they will not support any individual grievance or other complaint by an individual arising from the arrangements set out in this agreement.

- (7) It is recognized that there may be income tax or superannuation contribution consequences for individual staff arising from these arrangements, and that, of necessity, those staff have liability for these.

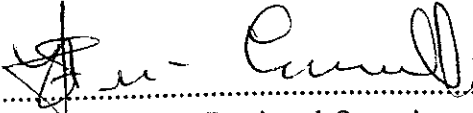
Agreed (signature and date):


.....
Graham Sims, Divisional Director (Management Services), Housing Services

17 July 1998
.....


.....
Ian Crawford, Regional Industrial Organiser, Transport and General Workers Union

10th July 1998
.....


.....
Jude McGuinness, Regional Organiser, General Municipal and Boilermakers Union

10th July 98
.....

Caretaking Service review Staffing Arrangement Proposal

This paper sets out the following and is intended to inform the decision to be taken on the Caretaking Service Review Proposals:-

- summary of service proposal
- proposed staff numbers
- methods of appointment
- new working arrangements

Summary of service proposals

1.0 The review of the Caretaking Service is proposing a number of changes to the way the service is delivered. The main changes are listed below by way of background information.

- Caretakers will work as part of a small area team to allow for flexible use of staff resources (under the present arrangement a caretaker is attached to a particular block.)
- There is a separation of duties with some staff focussed on cleaning and caretaking with others having a wider responsibility for site management and staff supervision.
- Most work will be carried out during Monday to Friday with weekend cover only where it is really needed.
- The service will take on responsibility for the site management of sheltered and elderly preferred housing sites as well as extending the service to many general needs sites that do not currently have a caretaking service.
- There will be a wider responsibility for the areas in and around blocks of flats, with some functions such as dealing with parking issues and monitoring grounds maintenance being taken over from the Estate Management Service.
- The residential element of the service will be changed to give greater clarity about the role of a residential caretaker and logic to the distribution of these staff

Staff numbers current

2.0 There are currently 108 permanent site based staff equating to 104.32 full time equivalent posts and 12 permanent office based staff equating

APPENDIX B

to 10.5 full time equivalent, broken down as follows:-

| Site based posts - current | No .posts | No.FTE |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Mobile Caretakers | 11 | 11 |
| Non Resident Site Team Leaders | 4 | 4 |
| Resident Site Team Leaders | 11 | 10.54 |
| Non Resident Community Caretakers | 7 | 7 |
| Resident Community Caretakers | 36 | 36 |
| Assistant Community Caretakers | 39 | 35.78 |
| Total | 108 | 104.32 |
| Office based posts - current | | |
| Housing Manager | 1 | 1 |
| Supervisors | 5 | 5 |
| Business Support Supervisor | 1 | 0.5 |
| Housing Advisor Level 4 | 2 | 1.5 |
| Housing Advisor Level 2 | 3 | 2.5 |
| Total | 12 | 10.5 |

In addition there are 19 temporary staff.

Staff numbers proposed

2.1 The proposed future numbers of staff are set out below and shown in an attached structure chart.

| Site based posts - proposed | No. posts - FTE |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Site Co ordinator | 15 |
| Senior Community Caretaker | 14 |
| Community Caretaker | 75 |
| Total | 104 |
| Office posts - proposed | |
| Service Manager | 1 |
| Area Managers | 4 |
| Staff development /training post | 1 |

APPENDIX B

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Housing Advisors | 1 |
| Total | 7 |

- 2.2 The need for Housing advisor support has been reduced because of a separate review of finance which will take away many of the functions currently undertaken by the Caretaking support team.
- 2.3 The staff development/training post will provide specialist training and support to staff as well as carrying out some Health and Safety responsibilities.

Weekend Work

- 3.0 Weekend cover for the sites that need it will be carried out by staff on a contractual overtime basis. Existing staff will be able to opt out of this contractual overtime at the outset. Weekend overtime will be carried out on a rota basis.
- 3.1 The frequency of the rota assuming all 89 caretakers and Senior Caretakers work will be 1 weekend in 6, however, this may increase depending on the number of existing staff who opt out of this arrangement. A minimum of 30 people working weekend overtime is needed to make it viable in terms of meeting the Working Time Directive. If there are less than this number, a contractor would need to be engaged for all or part of the weekend work.
- 3.2 Site Co ordinators will be expected to work a weekend every 7 weeks which will be paid as contractual overtime.
- 3.3 There is an expectation that staff will be required to work a number of Bank Holidays at the agreed overtime rates as per the Working Arrangements Policy.

Lunch breaks

- 4.0 Staff will no longer be expected to remain on site during their lunch break and therefore lunch breaks will be unpaid in line with other Council employees.
- 4.1 Out of hours emergencies will be dealt with by a contractor therefore there will no longer be a need for any staff to be on stand by.

Residential staff

- 5.0 Residential Caretakers will provide a service to a designated area. There will clear additional responsibilities for these staff over and above their normal duties which justifies the cost of 75% rent and 75% Council Tax to the tenants and Leaseholders who pay a Caretaking Service charge.
- 5.1 A resident caretaker would work to the same job description as caretaking colleagues who are on the same grade and job, and they would also be expected to carry out extra duties when they are at home outside of normal working hours. There would be no requirement or payment for standby. These duties are to provide a service to a specified area and are detailed in paragraph 10 above.
- 5.2 There are currently more residential caretakers than the 28 required in the new service. These posts will only be available to the current Residential Community Caretakers and people will be selected by interview.

Rehousing arrangements

- 6.0 Any existing residential staff who are no longer required to be resident will be offered a tenancy of their current accommodation if it is considered suitable or will be placed in band 1 of the Bristol Housing register and be able to bid for suitable properties.

Assessment of Impact on Employees

Directorate: Neighbourhoods

Section: Landlord Services

Person responsible for the assessment: Mike Cook
HR Adviser

Contact details: (0117 92) 23076

Service Area to be affected: Housing Caretaking Service

Service Review Manager: Cheryl Herrington

Based on the Service Review Plan, will the changes have a differential (positive or adverse) impact on any of the equalities groups an adverse effect on any of the equalities groups?

Will a particular work group be affected? If so, how?

Residential Caretaker and Site Team Leaders within the Landlord Service of Neighbourhoods. Agreed changes of benefit provision in Tied Accommodation policy (Jan 2007) and proposed changes to numbers of residential employees under service review.

What is the current diversity of the affected work group

Women & Men Baseline data:

current information shows that 27.1% of the workgroup are female, 72.9% are male. This is below BCC representation as at 30/09/08.

Racial Groups Baseline data:

current information shows that 20.8% of the workgroup are self declared from black and ethnic minority communities. This is above BCC representation as at 30/09/08.

Disabled Employees Baseline data:

current information shows that 6.25% of the workgroup are self declared as disabled. 93.75% of the workgroup are self declared as not disabled. This is above BCC representation as at 30/09/08.

Young People Baseline data:

None of the workgroup are in the 16-24 age group.

Older People Baseline data:

4.2% of the workgroup are in the 65+ age group. This is above BCC representation as at

30/9/08

LGB Groups Baseline data

Current information shows that 27% of the workgroup are self declared heterosexual. 4.2% are self declared LGB and 68.8% prefer not to declare. There is no comparative BCC figure due to the lack of available information.

Religion / Belief Baseline data:

Current information shows that 20.8% of the workgroup are self declared as Christian. 77.2% declare no religion / belief or prefer not to declare. There is no comparative BCC figure due to the lack of available information.

Will there be significant changes to residential status and how will it affect employees?

In order to bring workgroup in line with policy there will be a decrease in benefits. This will result in a considerable increase in expenditure for employees. The service review will also see a reduction in the number of employees required to be residential. This will further increase expenditure for those not retaining residential status.

Will any significant changes to the residential status have a differential impact on any of the equality groups? If 'yes' what impact is anticipated

Changes to benefits through Tied Accommodation Policy will achieve equity for residential staff in terms of benefit entitlement. The reduction of residential staff may have an impact depending on the outcome of a selection process carried out under the Managing Change process.

a) Identify the potential impact of the policy on men and women:

| Gender | Positive | Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low) | Neutral | Reason |
|--------|----------|--|---------|--|
| Women | | Low | | Reduction in number of residential posts could have a differential impact on the number of women in the workgroup. |
| Men | | | • | |

b) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different race groups:

| Race | Positive | Negative (please specify if | Neutral | Reason |
|------|----------|-----------------------------|---------|--------|
| | | | | |

| | | High, Medium or Low) | | |
|---|--|----------------------|---|--|
| Asian (including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Other Asian Background – please specify | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |
| Black (including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other black background – please specify | | Low | | Currently has high representation (16%) in workgroup than comparative BCC figure |
| White (including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Other white background – please specify | | | • | Effects will be dependant on appointment process |
| Mixed Dual heritage (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed background - please specify | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |
| Other (please specify) | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |

c) Identify the potential impact of the policy on disabled people:

| Disability | Positive | Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low) | Neutral | Reason |
|------------|----------|---|---------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | • | If current postholders appointed. |

d) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different age groups:

| Age Group (specify, for example younger, older etc) | Positive | Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low) | Neutral | Reason |
|--|----------|---|---------|---|
| Younger & Older people | | | • | Younger people not currently represented in workgroup. Older people - if existing postholders appointed. |

e) Identify the potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or

heterosexual people:

| Sexual Orientation | Positive | Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low) | Neutral | Reason |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---|----------------|---|
| Lesbian | | | | Information not provided in order to protect confidentiality of workgroup. In the first section, you have indicated 4.2% of the workgroup are LGB. As the figures are so small, could you summary LGB as one group? |
| Gay Men | | | | Information not provided in order to protect confidentiality of workgroup. |
| Bisexual | | | | Information not provided in order to protect confidentiality of workgroup. |
| Heterosexual | | | | |

f) Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups?

| Religious/Faith groups (specify) | Positive | Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low) | Neutral | Reason |
|---|-----------------|---|----------------|---|
| Buddhist | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |
| Christian | | | • | If existing postholder(s) are successfully appointed. |
| Hindu | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |
| Jewish | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |
| Muslim | | | • | If existing postholder(s) are successfully appointed. |
| Sikh | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |
| Other (please specify) | | | • | Not currently represented in workgroup. |

Will jobs be deleted? Will this lead to redundancies? If so, refer to Section 5.8 of *Managing Change* for HR Responsibilities.

There could be potential redundancies. There will be job reductions and also pay reduction, which may be substantial and render alternative employment opportunities as unsuitable for redeployment purposes. Subsequent to the review, the impact on the make up of the workgroup will be monitored.

If so, what is the diversity of the current post holders in these jobs

All Male - 60% White, 40% Black & Minority Ethnic

Will new jobs be created?

Alternative jobs will be available but suitability may be limited due to pay differential

Will the current staff group have the skills to fill the posts?

Yes

Will training be offered?

Yes

Has ring-fencing been implemented consistently across the work groups?

Yes.

Please list any consultations that you may have had about this report and its impact on employees

Consultation on services review has taken place with the workgroup and the recognised trades unions throughout 2008. Further consultation on protection of residential benefits being held with TUs week commencing 8th December 2008

What is the diversity of the new work group

Unknown at this stage. Will monitor during at regular intervals or during each stage of the process.

Variations in Pay Scenarios - revised

APPENDIX D

SITE TEAM LEADERS (11 res + 4 non res)

| Residential STL to Site Co-ordinator | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £16,941.00 | £18,882.00 | £18,882.00 |
| Weekend | £1,144.00 | £601.90 | £2,290.14 |
| Residency | £4,087.75 | | |
| Total | £22,172.75 | £19,483.90 | £21,172.14 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £2,688.85 | £1,000.61 |
| | | 12.13% | 4.51% |

| Residential STL to Caretaker without residential status | | | |
|--|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £16,941.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £1,144.00 | £194.50 | £588.04 |
| Residency | £4,087.75 | | |
| Total | £22,172.75 | £14,739.50 | £15,133.04 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £7,433.25 | £7,039.71 |
| | | 33.52% | 31.75% |

| Non-Residential STL to Site Co-ordinator | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £16,941.00 | £18,882.00 | £18,882.00 |
| Weekend | £1,144.00 | £601.90 | £2,290.14 |
| Total | £18,085.00 | £19,483.90 | £21,172.14 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | -£1,398.90 | -£3,087.14 |
| | | -7.74% | -17.07% |

| Non-Residential STL to Non-res Caretaker | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £16,941.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £1,144.00 | £583.50 | £1,764.12 |
| Total | £18,085.00 | £15,128.50 | £16,309.12 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £2,956.50 | £1,775.88 |
| | | 16.35% | 9.82% |

Variations in Pay Scenarios - revised

APPENDIX D

MOBILE CARETAKERS (11)

| Mobile Caretaker to Site Co-ordinator | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £16,941.00 | £18,882.00 | £18,882.00 |
| Weekend | £400.00 | £601.90 | £2,290.14 |
| Shift | £1,185.00 | | |
| Standby | £1,910.00 | | |
| Total | <u>£20,436.00</u> | <u>£19,483.90</u> | <u>£21,172.14</u> |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £952.10 | -£736.14 |
| | | 4.66% | -3.60% |

| Mobile Caretaker to Caretaker | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £16,941.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £400.00 | £583.50 | £1,764.12 |
| Shift | £1,185.00 | | |
| Standby | £1,910.00 | | |
| Total | <u>£20,436.00</u> | <u>£15,128.50</u> | <u>£16,309.12</u> |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £5,307.50 | £4,126.88 |
| | | 25.97% | 20.19% |

Variations in Pay Scenarios - revised

APPENDIX D

CURRENT COMMUNITY CARETAKERS (36 res + 7 non res)

| RCC to Snr Caretaker with Residential status | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £15,849.00 | £15,849.00 | £15,849.00 |
| Weekend | £1,070.00 | £635.82 | £1,922.25 |
| Residency | £4,087.75 | £3,225.07 | £3,225.07 |
| Total | £21,006.75 | £19,709.89 | £20,996.32 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £1,296.86 | £10.43 |
| | | 6.17% | 0.05% |

| RCC to Snr Caretaker without Residential status | | | |
|--|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £15,849.00 | £15,849.00 | £15,849.00 |
| Weekend | £1,070.00 | £635.80 | £1,922.25 |
| Residency | £4,087.75 | | |
| Total | £21,006.75 | £16,484.80 | £17,771.25 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £4,521.95 | £3,235.50 |
| | | 21.53% | 15.40% |

| RCC to Caretaker with Residential status | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £15,849.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £1,070.00 | £583.50 | £1,764.12 |
| Residency | £4,087.75 | £3,225.07 | £3,225.07 |
| Total | £21,006.75 | £18,353.57 | £19,534.19 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £2,653.18 | £1,472.56 |
| | | 12.63% | 7.01% |

| RCC to Caretaker without Residential status | | | |
|--|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £15,849.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £1,070.00 | £583.50 | £1,764.12 |
| Residency | £4,087.75 | | |
| Total | £21,006.75 | £15,128.50 | £16,309.12 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £5,878.25 | £4,697.63 |
| | | 27.98% | 22.36% |

| Non Resident Community Caretaker to Snr Caretaker | | | |
|--|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £15,849.00 | £15,849.00 | £15,849.00 |
| Weekend | £1,070.00 | £635.82 | £1,922.25 |
| Total | £16,919.00 | £16,484.82 | £17,771.25 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £434.18 | -£852.25 |
| | | 2.57% | -5.04% |

| Non Resident Community Caretaker to Caretaker | | | |
|--|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £15,849.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £1,070.00 | £583.50 | £1,764.12 |
| Total | £16,919.00 | £15,128.50 | £16,309.12 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £1,790.50 | £609.88 |
| | | 10.58% | 3.60% |

Variations in Pay Scenarios - revised

APPENDIX D

ASSISTANT COMMUNITY CARETAKER (39)

| ACC to Caretaker | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current | Proposed (min w/e) | Proposed (max w/e) |
| Salary | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 | £14,545.00 |
| Weekend | £982.00 | £583.50 | £1,764.12 |
| Total | £15,527.00 | £15,128.50 | £16,309.12 |
| | | Diff | |
| | | £398.50 | -£782.12 |
| | | 2.57% | -5.04% |

N.B.

All current salaries are based on top of grade. Substantive salaries at a lower spinal column point within grade will see percentages reduced.

max w/e = maximum weekends worked based on working 3 hrs Sat and 3hrs Sun every other weekend

min w/e = minimum weekends worked based on working 3 hrs Sat and 3hrs Sun every 6 weeks for Caretakers and every 7.5 weeks for Site Co-ordinato

weekend working is overtime:

Caretakers to work between 52 (min) - 156 (max) overtime hours per annum

Site Co-Ordinators to work between 41 (min) - 156 (max) overtime hours per annum

Chronology of Caretaking Service Review consultation

| Date | Meeting | Subject |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 28 Jan 2008 | Caretaking Sub JCC | Vision briefing |
| 30 Jan | Caretaking Supervisors and managers | Vision briefing |
| 3 March | Executive briefing | Presentation of Vision |
| 4 March | Caretaking Sub JCC | Overview of Vision for initial comment |
| 5 March | All caretaking staff | briefings re the Vision |
| 10 -17 March | Caretaking staff | Q&A following Vision briefing |
| 12 March | Housing Management Board | Caretaking Vision briefing |
| 25 March | Caretaking Service Users Group meeting | Caretaking Vision briefing |
| 25 March - 14 May | Tenant/leaseholder briefings | Caretaking Vision briefing |
| 2 April | Sub JCC | Discussion on Vision |
| 8 April | Tenant and leaseholder meeting | Discussion on Vision |
| 9 April | Caretaking Sub JCC | To receive TU comments on draft Vision |
| 14 April | Special Caretaking Service User Group meeting | Briefing about draft Vision Discussion about key points Comments received |
| 16-21 April | Estate Management | Briefings on the draft Vision |
| 8 May | N/A | Caretaking Vision leaflet sent to all tenants, leaseholders, councillors, MP's for comment |
| 13 May | Joint TU and Executive meeting | TU comments on draft Vision and future of the service |
| 23 May | Caretaking Service User Group | Comments received from group on draft Vision |

APPENDIX E

| | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| 18 June | Executive Briefing | Final Vision |
| 27 June | TU meeting | Consultation on final Vision |
| 10 July | Caretaking Service User Group Special meeting | Discussion about final Vision. Comments received. |
| 14 July | Quality of Life Scrutiny commission | Comment on final Vision paper |
| 21 July | TU meeting | Staff numbers, service proposals, pay protection |
| 31 July | TU meeting | Continuation of consultation |
| 8 Aug | TU Shop stewards | Discussion about Job paperwork/residential duties and area boundaries |
| 13 Aug | TU Shop stewards | Further discussion about job paperwork and area boundaries |
| 19 Aug | TU Shop stewards | Further discussion about job paperwork |
| 27 Aug | TU Shop stewards | Final comments re job paperwork |
| 29 Aug | | Job paperwork sent to all staff and TU's for comment |
| 11 September | TU meeting | Continuation of negotiations |
| 15 September | | comments on job paperwork due from TU's |
| 30 Sept | Meeting with GMB | To discuss job paperwork. |
| 10 Nov | GMB response to Community Caretaker role | Job paperwork |
| 11 Nov | Additional comments from GMB | Job paperwork |
| 18 Nov | Deadline for final union comments on job paperwork extended to 24 th Nov | Job paperwork |
| 29 Sept | All caretaking staff | Service review proposal |

APPENDIX E

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| 13 Oct | Service review plan sent to unions for comment. | Service Review Plan |
| 24 Oct | | Unite response to service review proposal received |
| 27 Oct | | GMB Response to service review proposal received. |
| 21 Nov | | Draft HR report sent to TU's |
| 9 Dec | TU meeting | Pay protections and HR implications for staff discussed |
| 16 Dec | | Alternative service proposals received from unions. |



CARETAKING SERVICE REVIEW PROPOSALS RESPONSE BY UNITE THE UNION

I submit the response, on behalf of the membership of Unite The Union within the affected areas, of the Caretaking Services Review Proposal.

We believe, that the Unite substantial response (The future for Bristol's Caretaking services) and as submitted to Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission earlier this year, more clearly addresses the changes highlighted within the Best Value Review and the more recent study. As this constitutes the 'core justification' for the Head of Housing Operations report proposals, Unite rejects their report as a cost cutting exercise only.

The report does nothing to enhance the role of Caretaking services, improve the living conditions or response needs of tenants, and will totally demoralise a work group that have served its clients and the community exceptionally well.

Management Response

Satisfaction levels with the service show that the service does not serve the community as well as they expect. Customer satisfaction is currently only 61% and is even lower in walk-up flats.

In her statement earlier this year, The Leader, Councillor Helen Holland in association with Cllr Price impressed upon the Council in an update on the Caretaking review,

- 1). The need to ensure residents receive the best possible services**
- There is no evidence offered in the proposals to demonstrate improvement, and concerns that service may suffer by diluting the attention and effectiveness of Caretaking services.

Management Response

The proposals will improve the service in a number of ways:-

- Site Coordinators with no cleaning duties of their own will provide a more focused site management and caretaking service. They will ensure that the best and fullest use is made of caretaking resources in the area, including the targeting of resources, and will closely monitor cleaning standards, which will have a positive effect on the quality of the service.
- The Site Coordinator will be able to directly deal with issues such as abandoned cars or problems with grounds maintenance, which will give a quicker response for customers.
- The area teams will be used in a flexible way, which means that the service can respond to different or changing needs of each site.
- The area teams will have an annual programme of work alongside daily or weekly tasks for example washing paintwork, cleaning windows, floor stripping and re sealing.

2). **This administration agrees with the Trade union representatives that caretaking provision in our city needs to be enhanced** - Again, the proposals will reduce significantly the numbers of resident caretakers, response times, service provision, and take away focus to clients without improvement.

Management Response

- The proposals do enhance the service by extending it to sites that don't currently receive it, by taking on site management for all sites with communal areas and by taking on the management of the cleaning contract for sheltered and elderly preferred sites. The Caretaking service is very patchy and without clearly defined responsibilities at the moment. There are currently 550 flats that do not currently have a caretaking service and which will have a service following this review.
- Although the number of resident caretakers will reduce, we believe that this represents an appropriate level of residential caretaking in response to the needs of customers.
- The roles provided by caretakers have been reviewed (jointly with trade union representatives) to ensure that the review enhances service provision for customers.

•*The service is generally not a response service, with work being carried out by staff without the need for tenants to make a request. Where an urgent response is needed during normal working hours the Site Coordinator will have a team of people at their disposal and will call on the closest available person to quickly respond. At the moment if the caretaker for a block is away there is not always another caretaker who can be called upon at short notice to provide a response.*

•*Although overall numbers of staff will reduce, the removal of the current shift arrangement means that there will be more staff on the ground for most of the week (all staff will be working Monday to Friday). Weekends will be covered by staff doing overtime equivalent to an additional 15 staff.*

3). The role of residential caretakers is highly valued by residents, particularly by older residents and those who live in blocks with particular challenges. Cabinet values the contribution caretakers make to our city and our neighbourhoods - The proposals will reduce the number of resident caretakers to 28, without scientific rationale for this number or allocation. The loss of salary to caretakers is staggering, and will see earnings drop by 40% of disposable income in certain cases, losses when linked to post pay protection, a drop in grade and loss of weekend/bank holiday working payments, as well as the loss of residential status runs into many thousands of pounds annually, and will effectively bankrupt staff and their families. Unite does not accept how slashing wages; cutting residential posts; significantly altering terms and conditions; altering responsibilities- thereby affecting choice, which in turn will impact upon effectiveness and service to tenants, how any of this, 'enhances the role of caretakers, or reflects on the high value residents place on their caretakers'. Further cabinet members might explain how these proposals reflect the value it places on the '**contribution caretakers make to our city and our neighbourhoods**'.

Management Response

There is no rationale for the distribution of the 49 residential staff under current arrangements. They do not carry out any specified duties in return for the benefit they receive in the form of free accommodation, council tax and payment of utilities bills, leading some tenants to believe that they are getting little or nothing for the money they pay in service charges.

Tenants of over 50% of blocks do not have any residential caretaking service at the moment despite paying for it. The proposal to have residential staff working for an area rather than just 1 block, means that more blocks will benefit in the future.

In response to the concerns raised by councillors, staff and some councillors, the proposals now include the retention of 28 residential caretakers, providing clearly defined 'additional' services for tenants within a defined area (whereas previously it had been proposed that there would be no residential caretakers). The option of retaining a smaller number of residential caretakers was supported by the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission and the tenants' Service User Group, when they considered a full range of options for the service, following the statement made by the Leader of the Council.

These proposals do have a rationale and will place residential caretakers where they can be of most benefit to customers. There is a list of duties that residential caretakers will be expected to carry out in future, making it clear to tenants what they are getting for their money and providing consistency that does not exist at the moment.

The value placed on residential caretakers by some elderly residents is one of the factors that influenced the proposal to include 28 residential caretakers in the structure.

4). The caretaking review should look to ensure the protection of the role of resident caretakers and retain appropriate residential provision.

The proposals seek to reduce, without reasoned explanation, the number of resident caretakers from 49 currently, down to 28. Which residents lose? Who retain the services of a resident caretaker? what will be the measures used?

Management Response

We believe that 28 residential caretakers is an appropriate number following extensive discussions with the trade union representatives, customer representatives and staff. No contrary proposal has been made by the trade unions and it was understood that there was a consensus that the level of residential provision was appropriate. The Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission supported an option to retain a reduced number of residential caretakers.

The proposed number of residential caretakers has taken account of the number of properties in each area and the physical size of the area. There has been discussion with staff representatives and the Caretaking Service User Group about the approach we will take in deciding which blocks to base the residential caretakers in. This will be a combination of location and proximity to their blocks along with any particular issues in an area such as anti social behaviour. The services of the residential caretaker will not only be available to tenants living in the block where the caretakers live, but to customers living in nearby blocks. A copy of the duties to be undertaken by residential staff are set out in paragraph 7.12 of the service review.

5). Notes that many caretakers take on roles above and beyond the call of duty to help residents.

The reduction in status of caretakers, artificially setting their roles and responsibilities at a lower level, in a cynical move to downgrade them, will in many cases, impact on their ability to provide additional support and aid to tenants '**above and beyond the call of duty**'. Therefore, reducing service provision to tenants.

Management Response

Some, but not all caretakers do choose to go above and beyond the call of duty now, but it is exactly that, "above and beyond" their job role. Nothing in the new role changes the way caretakers interact with tenants. In the case of residential caretakers there will be a clear list of responsibilities which means that all tenants can expect to get the same service, rather than it depending on an individual caretakers willingness .

The new community caretaker role is very similar to that undertaken by the existing 39 Assistant Community Caretaker. (ACC).

The job still includes acting as a first point of contact with customers and requires staff to report any problems that they see on site.

Resident Community Caretakers are currently graded to include supervision of ACC's, whether they have one on their site or not, even where there is team leader who also has supervision responsibility. This created an unnecessary level of supervision which in reality rarely happened. This has been removed from the caretaking job because it is not required.

Extending the caretakers role to include care or support for customers was discounted because it is a highly specialist role, which even if caretakers were trained to do would not attract Supporting People funding. This issue was fully considered by the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission.

6). Cabinet recognises the enhanced roles that a number of caretakers have taken on. Again, by narrowing the service options caretakers may offer tenants, these proposals will drive down service provision, in a cynical move to drive down wages, which in turn will impact on the generally high quality of service tenants currently enjoy, and graciously acknowledge.

These proposals will also destroy staff moral, effectively force caretakers and their families into debt, and possibly even drive some out of their current employment in a measured cynical way.

Management Response

No individual caretakers have an enhanced role so this really refers again to the things that some caretakers choose to do over and above their job. In the future there will be a Senior Community Caretaker role with extra duties and this post will be a career progression opportunity for caretakers in the future.

The service as a whole is taking on a wider responsibility for site management and the new Site Coordinator role to deal with these new responsibilities gives some existing staff a real opportunity to develop their career in a non manual environment.

We recognise that the changes for some staff will be significant and that low morale is an issue that we will need to respond to and manage.

7). Therefore, the cabinet will be working closely with staff their representatives and residents, to explore ways in which to the roles of caretakers can be ‘strengthened and expanded’. Specifically, the cabinet will look to find a solution that:

a. Local target of customer satisfaction with the caretaking service of 80% by 2010/11 Ensures

b. Delivers value for money for all tenants.

This has not been our experience during discussions.

Management Response

There have been extensive meetings with trade union representatives following the statement made at Full Council earlier in the year.

The service has been strengthened and expanded in the following ways:-

- by increasing the responsibilities of the service around our flatted estates to include all land management issues (some of this was previously carried out by Estate Management which was disjointed and confusing for staff and customers)*
- by taking on the responsibility for managing the cleaning contract for older persons accommodation*
- by expanding the service to sites that do not currently have a caretaking service (additional 550 flats).*

At an individual level, staff will have a clearer job focus which will improve quality and productivity.

Customers will see an improvement to caretaking standards as a result of this and we will work with the Service Users Group to monitor that this is happening.

The proposals will achieve a reduction in costs which will enable us to introduce a service charging policy for customers to reflect the different levels of service provided. Many customers as a result will pay reduced charges.

There will be a saving to the HRA of approximately £475,000 in addition to a £360,000 surplus, which will be returned to tenants through reduced service charges. With an expected improvement in service standard plus clear extra responsibilities for residential staff this represents better value for money for all tenants.

8). We welcome the decision by Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission to review the consultation and recommendations, and we commit ourselves to reporting back to council upon completion of this work.

Management Response

A full report was presented to the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission on 14th July 2008. The report set out the draft Vision for the caretaking service which had been subject to considerable consultation with all stakeholders. The report detailed the consultation undertaken, and the views expressed, and the contentious issues. In response to the consultation, the report to the Commission set out a range of options for the future of the service, including the potential areas where the caretakers' role could be enhanced. The Commission gave a considerable amount of time to considering the review and heard statements and comments from the trade unions.

The Commission supported the option which has subsequently been pursued through negotiations with the trade unions. The final outcome of the review will be advised to all members.

Nothing about these proposals will strengthen or expand the role of caretakers, indeed they positively seek to diminish the role, and narrow service to tenants. This in turn, inevitably, is bound to reduce customer satisfaction.

Management Response

Service to tenants has not been diminished and some caretakers within the service will have a better defined role which will improve the way we manage the sites, as set out earlier in this paper.

Resident caretakers provide a vital link between and on behalf of residents. They are the eyes and ears of their communities in many cases, and in addition assist the Police and other emergency services in their vital roles. They provide a very high level of service and care to tenants, which 'appears' reflected in the comments made by Cllrs Holland and Price.

Management Response

The service will still do this.

In short, Caretakers are infinitely more than just cleaners. They are often at the very heart of resident's lives and communities.

Management Response

The roles set out for the 3 different posts proposed for role based work have been developed following extensive consultation. The revised jobs ensure that the service provided to customers will improve, will be more

cost effective and will retain the caretaking service as a front line point of contact for customers.

Re-enforcing Unite's previous substantial response, we believe, in line with the views expressed by Councillors and committed to Cabinet, that the role should be expanded to improve standards city wide, enhanced to improve customer satisfaction, and developed for the good of tenants staff and the service overall. These proposals will achieve none of the objectives identified by councillors.

Unite is committed to working with the council to achieve the objectives referred to in its response to the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission decision. Unite is mindful of all elements, including delivery of value for money for tenants, against an improved standardised level of service to customers.

However, Unite will solidly support its membership, and their colleagues within the GMB Union, in collective opposition to these proposals, by any and all means necessary.

Steve Preddy
Regional Industrial Organiser
Unite the Union

APPENDIX F2

Our ref: RH/JKP

27 October 2008

Mark Hughes
Head of Housing Operations
Bristol City Council

Dear Mark

Caretaking Service Review Proposal

Please find below the comments from the GMB in response to the Committee Report relating to the Caretaking Service Review Proposals.

Consultation

We have attended a number of meetings and explored the main concerns both affecting our members and the service provision. However, we cannot share the confidence that these proposals will improve overall the service.

Proposal

We have put forward a proposal to continue with community caretakers paid at BG5. This is not something the GMB dreamt up but based upon existing JD, JEQ and employee specification. We have met with management and given suggested changes to the paperwork to reflect the minor changes in the job duties and responsibilities which would enable a flexible and responsive workforce but there appears a reluctance by the management to acknowledge these changes.

Management Response

There have been several meetings between a working group of

shop stewards and the project team to discuss the content of the job paperwork. We have incorporated the majority of comments made by shop stewards but did not agree that the site coordinator should be carrying out formal one to ones. We maintain that this will be done by the Area Managers.

Following these meetings, job paperwork was issued to all staff and Trade Unions for comment by the 15th September. No comments were received.

We extended the deadline to the 10th November and received comments from your union. Your comments were specific to the Community Caretaker role and we have incorporated/clarified some of the points that you have raised.

With regards to your proposal for community caretakers to remain at BG5, the formal job evaluation process will determine the correct grade for this job and the others.

Currently, resident community caretakers are graded to include supervision of ACC's, whether they have one on their site or not, even where there is team leader who also has supervision responsibility. This has created an unnecessary level of supervision that in reality rarely happened. This has been removed from the caretaking job because it is not required.

Secondly, if this was agreed, the difference for residential community caretakers would be identified within their tied accommodation emoluments Whilst the GMB is definitely not against any significant increase in salary we are very concerned that management is pursuing a potential increase for a very small section of this work group (site co-ordinator) which could effectively preclude our members within community caretaking from applying, based upon the existing managing change policy. Obviously, if the job warrants a higher grade then it must be reflected but if that is the case why are the community caretakers having their salaries reduced?

Management Response

A list of duties that residential staff should carry out in return for

75% rent, council tax and service charges as per the Tied Accommodation review was written and agreed with shop stewards.

All appointments to future posts will be made in accordance with the councils managing change policy. Ring fencing arrangements will be determined following grading of the future jobs.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The GMB would like to draw members' attention to the way in which the customer satisfaction has been reported, as we see this as the way in which we see the survey results are shown below:-

The Customer Satisfaction Survey 2007 showed that only 17.7% of tenants were dissatisfied with the service. Further to that 87.1% had never had to make a complaint about the standard of the cleaning and 87.4% had never had to complain about the service.

However, there are significant differences in levels of satisfaction between different types of sites. In multi-storey blocks 70.4% of customers were satisfied with the service received but in walk up blocks only 46.3% were satisfied.

In conclusion, the GMB therefore considers the results shown above demonstrate how positively caretaking services are already working.

Management Response

The Customer Satisfaction survey did indeed highlight the difference in satisfaction levels between walk up blocks (46.3%) and multi storey blocks (70.4%).

The way we interpret and report satisfaction levels is consistent across the council. The caretaking satisfaction survey shows that only 61% of our customers were satisfied with the service they receive. However, the remaining 39% of customers were either dissatisfied or neither satisfied or dissatisfied, therefore we maintain that only 61% are actually satisfied.

Our target is to increase customer satisfaction to 80% by

2010/2011.

Caretakers currently have responsibility for cleaning and for other site management related issues. The GMB considers that it has never been established that the Caretakers ability to achieve a good standard of cleaning is affected detrimentally because of the need to respond to other site management issues often on a reactive basis. Results from the recent Performance indicators show that over 80% of sites achieve the required standard of cleaning.

Management Response

Anecdotal evidence from caretakers tells us that they are regularly interrupted from their normal cleaning work to deal with site management related issues. We appreciate that interruptions occur but this is not recorded. Separating cleaning and site management into two distinct areas will allow for better focus on both areas of work and will improve the level of service that customers receive.

The Caretaking User Group and other tenants have questioned the current site inspection scoring system and feel that inspection standards are being set too low, therefore there is a need to improve in order to increase customer satisfaction. As a result of this, we will be reviewing they way site inspections are scored.

It has been established that there are wide staff resource variations between sites across the city. On multi-storey blocks the property to caretaker ratio ranges from 46 to 102 and for walk up blocks the range is 49 to 111. The average number of properties that a caretaker is responsible for is 71. The Chartered Institute of Housing suggests that a reasonable ratio would be between 120 and 150 properties per caretaker.

Management Response

The service review proposal will address the issue of staff resource variations across the city by ensuring each of the proposed areas has the appropriate numbers of staff allocated to it. We have used CIH guidelines to determine resource levels but

have deliberately made sure that staff resource levels are set with a view to improve service delivery. Our proposals show the average number of properties to caretaker is 99.

Working Patterns

Caretakers work alternate weekends to provide a seven day a week service. They take 2 days off during the week to make up for this and in addition they are paid at time and a half for the weekend work. This arrangement means that for two thirds of the week that average number of properties a caretaker covers doubles with the mean average now being 142. Even allowing for this good results are being achieved due to closer monitoring by Management and the Performance Improvement Team. Any short falls in staffing levels due to holidays and sickness are covered by the Mobile Caretaking team, Although some walk up sites would not suffer any detriment if they did not receive a seven day a week service. Multi-storey blocks need a basic level service at weekend, for example, changing the bins, cleaning lifts, entrance foyers, checking chute and stairs for rubbish, human waste or spillages.

Management Response

The current and future ratio of properties to caretakers is calculated on full time equivalent numbers of staff divided by the number of properties in the area and does not take in to account staff who are off work because they have to work a weekend.

You rightly point out that when staff are not at work, the average properties to caretaker increases. This review will address this by having a Monday to Friday work pattern which will provide a more consistent level of service..

We accept that some blocks will require weekend cover in the future. We have identified that these blocks will mainly be multi storey blocks where bins need to be changed. To cover weekend work, contractual overtime will be offered to staff.

The allocation of staff to a small site makes it difficult to use staff

resources flexibly or efficiently and there is often resistance from staff or tenants if they are moved to meet service needs elsewhere even on a temporary basis. However on large sites e.g. Barton Hill staff are flexible and tenants are used to seeing different faces providing their service. Many sites no longer have a resident caretaker and there are no criteria in place which determine why these have been lost. In recent years a number of residential posts have been replaced with non-residential posts as vacancies occur. These decisions have been made in an ad hoc way in the past and result in illogical and inconsistent arrangements and have left many tenants unhappy at the withdrawal of this post.

Management Response

Under the service proposal, caretakers will not be responsible for just one block but will work as part of a team resource for a small area. Team sizes will range from 6 to 11, depending on the number of flats within the area. This will provide greater flexibility to service delivery.

The way that the team at Barton Hill work now is closer in approach to our proposals than at most other sites in the city, and as you say it is flexible which is why it is being proposed as the new way of working.

Following this review, we expected the numbers of residential staff to reduce. Therefore, as a way of protecting existing staff, we have not filled vacant residential posts with resident staff but have filled them with temporary non residential staff.

Currently, there is no rationale to where resident caretakers are located. Proposals for the number of residential caretakers have been established following full analysis of operational arrangements for the new service including team size, geographical areas to covered by each team and any particular issues in the area such as anti social behaviour. Service users and Trades Unions have been involved in this process.

An out of hours and emergency service is currently provided by a

mobile caretaking team who respond to caretaking related emergencies any time outside normal working hours. Instances of caretaking emergencies are low, as most calls are directed to contractors rather than the 'in house' service. The cost of the standby payments and shift allowances to provide these out of hours services costs over £34,000 a year (2008/09). There are also transport and other overhead costs on top of this, but the transport is used by the mobile teams in the day as well. The type of issues that they are called out to deal with mainly fall into 3 categories: cleaning, flooding and access issues. Communal laundries are locked by the Mobile Caretaking Team at night to prevent misuse of them. Again a team of three with two vans carry this out making this seem an expensive way to lock laundries, but contractors would charge nearly £40,000 to lock less, laundries making this the cheaper option.

Management Response

Our records show that the number of call outs that the Mobile Caretaking Team need to respond to are low .During March 07 to May 07, the mobile team were asked to keep a record of emergency call outs to check that this information was sound. This confirmed that instances of call outs were low.

During the same period, Repairs and Maintenance provided us with records of emergency call outs which they passed to a contractor. These were also low. Therefore we do not accept emergency calls to the mobile team are low because they are passed on to a contractor.

We do however acknowledge that a number emergency call outs are directed to a contractor to resolve rather than using the Mobile Service. This is because a contractor can usually resolve an emergency to conclusion e.g. mop up floodwater, clear WC and drain and flush the drain. If the mobile service were called out, a contractor would usually be required to complete the job. We do not feel this is an efficient use of resources nor a good service to customers.

The estimated costs for locking laundries in the future is less than the figure quoted above.

The GMB considers it is important to maintain -

A residential presence in areas that need one. Weekend cover needs to be maintained for all Multi-storey blocks. The use of the mobile team needs to be expanded to meet the increased tenancies covered. It makes sense to use an 'in-house' service rather than contractors.

Management Response

Proposals for the number of residential caretakers have been established following full analysis of operational arrangements for the new service including team size, geographical areas to covered by each team and any particular issues in the area such as anti social behaviour. The services of the residential caretaker will not only be available to tenants living in the block where the caretakers live, but also to customers living in nearby blocks. Service users and Trades Unions have been involved in this process.

We accept that a weekend service will be required to some blocks in the future. These blocks will mainly be multi storey blocks that need bins changing over. Weekend work will be offered to staff as contractual overtime.

The additional 550 flats that need a caretaking service in the future will receive a caretaking service from the in-house service, not from a contractor as stated above. In fact some existing flats currently cleaned by an external contractor will also be brought back in house.

Emoluments

At a recent meeting we asked for due consideration to be taken in relation to the protection of actual cost of emoluments for those residential caretakers who would cease their residency. Whilst we acknowledge the changes to the tied accommodation policy approved by HR committee, we are seeking to ensure that our members, some of the lowest paid within the Authority do not suffer severe detriment. Management have indicated it is not their desire to attack our members in this way but we still have not

been able to resolve this very important outstanding issue and would urge both management and Councillors to work with us to ensure our members do not face severe financial hardship.

Over one third of Caretakers are residential staff who live in accommodation provided for them. The amounts payable will reduce to 75% of rent and council tax following a recent review. In 2006 the requirement to work on standby was removed for residential staff. They are no longer required to work outside of their normal working day but because they still live on site, they are sometimes approached by customers while they are off duty to deal with a caretaking matter, despite there being an alternative arrangement in place for this.

Management Response

Due consideration has been given to the request made by Trades Unions and a report detailing tied accommodation protection proposals will be taken to HR Committee on 8 January 2009.

A list of duties that residential staff should carry out in return for 75% rent, council tax and service charges as per the Tied Accommodation review was written and agreed with shop stewards.

Service users informed the project team that although there was a perceived sense of security from the caretakers presence outside normal working hours. Resident Caretakers often become a focal point in their block, provide information to tenants, other parts of the Council and the Police. They often deal with problems 'on the spot' which then do not need to be escalated to other areas of the Council, thus saving their time and resolving problems faster than if they had gone down another route.

Management Response

It is recognised that some residential caretakers are the focal point for blocks and offer a perceived sense of security. On this basis, an appropriate number of residential posts will be retained in the future.

We will still require staff to be the first point of contact for customers, providing basic advice to customers such as how to

report a repair. The site coordinator will deal with site related issues such as reporting anti social behaviour or car parking issues

In conclusion, the GMB needs to focus on the Leaders statement around enhancing the service provided not shrinking what we have.

We need to look at the financial effect on staff in greater depth, which is why the GMB will be presenting its own 'Vision' at the forthcoming HR committee.

GMB Response

Supported by Unite

The GMB's paper sets out the proposals for the future Caretaking Service, highlighting staffing and HR issues.

It uses the Managements 'Caretaking Service Review Proposal' as its basis.

The proposals will seek to:

- present a sound business case
- propose new operational arrangements
- to satisfy Tenants' concerns and meet their needs
- lead to improved levels of satisfaction
- minimise the impact on staff
- deliver savings to the Service
- establish a service that will be a blueprint to other authorities

Review drivers

The management document focuses on the following drivers

- Improve the quality of the service and customer satisfaction with it.
- Deal with the inconsistencies of the present arrangements.
- Improve the equality of treatment of customers
- Ensure customers receive a cost efficient service

Improve the quality of the service and customer satisfaction with it

It is important to remember when referring to the 'Customer satisfaction survey' that it was undertaken soon after the service as centralised. It would therefore be safe to say that the results are more of a reflection on the previous service rather than the new one.

Deal with the inconsistencies of the present arrangements

There is no logic in the way the service is organised at the moment. It has developed over many years in an ad hoc way, must likely because the service was for sometime was run by the individual area offices. Also the level of service varies considerably between sites due to inconsistent levels of resources.

Improve the equality of treatment of customers

Each group of tenants, Multistorey (enclosed), Multistorey (open). Walk ups, should expect the same standard of service. The specifications and frequency may alter between Multistories (all) and walk ups, but the same standard of cleanliness and the same level of service should be received by all.

Ensure customers receive a cost efficient service

It is important that an equitable charging system should be introduced, where service charges meet those costs which are attributable to the service charge.

However it is important to remember that the service charge has never covered the cost of the service, as it was not initially set at the right level. The GMB agree that a balance has to be achieved between charges that can be applied to the HRA, and those that are covered by the service charge. However the GMB does not agree that management have been given a mandate to return money to tenants

Consultation

The key areas of consultation for the proposals were:

- The Managements 'Caretaking Service Review Proposal'
- Meetings and ongoing discussions with staff and tenants
- Views of Caretaking Service Users Group
- Discussions with all four Political parties
- Leader of the Council Helen Holland's statement

Considerations

The following were carefully considered and the pros and cons balanced before we put forward our recommendations

- The desires and needs of the tenants
- The ability to meet required standards of cleanliness, safety and tenant satisfaction
- The views of the Political Parties
- The need for a cost effective service
- The need for a robust service that can meet the demands of ever

- changing customer base
- The need to set up a joint mechanism that will review the service every three years
- The need for an agreed, cohesive strategy that i.e. not open to ad hoc tinkering
- The needs and aspirations of the staff

Staff Numbers

There are currently 108 permanent site based staff equating to 104.32 full time equivalent posts, 17 temporary staff with 13.5 FTE's and 12 permanent office based staff equating to 10.5 full time equivalent, broken down as follows:-

| Site based posts | No.posts | No.FTE |
|--------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Mobile Caretakers | 11 | 11 |
| Non Resident Site Team Leaders | 3 | 3 |
| Resident Site Team Leaders | 12 | 11.54 |
| Non Resi Community Caretakers | 6 | 6 |
| Resident Community Caretakers | 37 | 37 |
| Assistant Community Caretakers | 39 | 35.78 |
| Temporary ACC's | 19 | 15.5 |
| Total | 127 | 119.82 |

Management proposal

| Site based posts | No. posts - FTE |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Site Co ordinator | 15 |
| Senior Community Caretaker | 14 |
| Community Caretaker | 75 |
| Total | 104 |
| Office posts | |
| Service Manager | 1 |
| Area Managers | 4 |
| Staff development /training post | 1 |
| Housing Advisors | Subject to separate review |
| Total | 6 plus Housing Advisors |

GMB option

| Site based posts | No. posts - FTE |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Site Co ordinator | 10 |
| Senior Community Caretaker | 14 |
| Community Caretaker | 86 |
| Total | 110 |
| Office posts | |
| Service Manager | 1 |
| Area Managers | 3 |
| Housing Advisors | Subject to separate review |
| Total | 4 plus Housing Advisors |

Grading

The management propose 28 residents and suggest the following grades

Site Co ordinator BG 7
 Senior BG 5
 Caretakers BG4

These grades and the drop in the number of residents will mean that the majority of staff will take a pay cut. Some STL's, Mobiles and RCC's who lose their residency, will face a substantial pay cut and may be made redundant, The GMB proposes 37 residents and suggests the following grades

Site Co ordinator BG 7
 Senior BG 6
 Caretakers BG5

We appreciate that there is still a drop in the number of residents but with some STL's becoming Site Coordinators and with some perceived retirements, we feel that this figure is realistic.

Raising Senior and caretakers grades will not only minimise the financial impact on staff but will vastly reduce the number of possible redundancies.

Ring Fencing

Under Management proposals the ring fencing will be as follows:-

STL's and mobiles for the BG7 Site Coordinators role (26 staff 15 jobs)
 Existing BG5's for the BG5 Senior role (44 Staff 14 jobs)
 RCCs for the residents positions (37 staff 28 positions)

Those unsuccessful at getting a new role will be placed in the 'job pool'. Any one in the job pool will only be eligible to be considered for a position in Caretaking once the job selection has taken place. However due to the pay difference for STL's, Mobiles and RCC's there is a chance that people will be made redundant as the offer of a job as non resident BG4 will not be suitable as it will only attract 3 years pay protection.

Under the GMB proposals the ring fencing will be as follows:-

STL's and mobiles for the BG7 Site Coordinators role and senior roles (26 staff 24 jobs)

Resident STL's and RCCs for the residents positions (47 staff 38 positions*)

Existing BG5's and BG4's will automatically be slotted into the BG5 caretakers role

*STL's who become Coordinators will be non resident.

It is anticipated that due to retirement/natural wastage the effects on staff regarding job losses will be minimal.

Methodology

Using the Management proposals as a base we will structure the city into 10 sites. The Henbury, Shire and Blaise sites will be restored to two sites. Withywood and Hartcliffe will become one site, the two dispersed teams will be joined together and the positions of Sheltered site coordinators will be deleted.

The sheltered sites will be distributed equitably looking at area size and density between the 10 remaining coordinators.

There will be 14 seniors will be split between the 11 sites with 1 additional senior in Bedminster/Clifton, Kingsdown/St. Pauls and the dispersed team.

There will be an additional community caretaker for each site which will provide a balance for sickness and holidays.

The role of the Community Caretaker will be enhanced. As the first point of contact for many tenants we foresee that their level of knowledge of Council services and procedures need to be increased to a level equal to that of an advisor in the CSC. This along with other suggestions would more than likely result in this position being graded at BG5.

Rationale

At present there are approximately 120 staff in 'hands on' positions across

the City.

In the new service the 12 site coordinators will not undertake cleaning or will the 12 mobiles team members directly.

The 14 senior Caretakers and 86 Community caretakers will undertake the 'hands on' role. We feel that a reduction from 120 to 100, still a loss of a sixth of the workforce would be a far more sustainable option than the loss of 31 or a quarter of the work force as proposed by management.

Community caretakers will have a greater knowledge of council services and be able to signpost tenants to the right department/agency, hand out leaflets or forms where required. This in turn will lead to a reduction of work for other areas of the council allowing them to concentrate on more important activities.

This would tie in with the Estate Management review.

Site coordinators would have a close relationship with the SHA's and ASB officers who cover their areas. This would lead to a greater flow of information and lead to a quicker resolution of any problems. With greater involvement some cases may be dealt with before they need to go to a case conference.

Caretaking staff would have full control of the laundries. At present caretakers look after laundry rotas and deal with any 'squabbles' that occur. However it is Estate Management who would take ultimate responsibility for laundry. It makes more sense for one service to deal with all aspects of the running of the laundry and as the caretaking service is site based, it is the obvious choice.

The same argument would hold true for community rooms. As caretakers would be responsible for the opening and closing of these rooms it would be sensible for them to handle the bookings as well. This responsibility would pass from T.A.s as well as EM, to ensure a unified approach.

There should be no exceptions from the above points regarding laundries and community rooms.

Financial considerations

It is important to remember the following points

- tenants are happy with the charge that they pay. In the survey they ranked the charge they pay 10th out of 12 in importance. There has never been a move from tenants for banded charging or a rebate.
- Councillors have never given an undertaking to refund any money to tenants. Although the draft review was agreed by the QOL committee,

the focus of the debate was around the number of resident caretakers. The body of the review was not and should not be deemed as agreed by default.

- The service charge should only cover additional services NOT those the tenant may be deemed as having paid for through their Council tax or their rent. It should be possible for additional funding to come from the HRA and the General fund.

Funding the Service

Management states that

*Depending on the outcome of the Job Evaluation process these proposals will achieve a saving to the Housing Revenue Account of approximately £475,000 and a surplus of income over expenditure of £360,000 making a total reduction in the cost of the service of **£835,000**. This saving will be realised at the end of year 3 after implementation of this review.*

The surplus of £360,000 would be returned to tenants.....

Part of this £360,000 will fund the additional 11 community caretakers we have proposed

Additional funding is available as follows-

- HRA funding (£120k) for deleted Area Manager and site coordinators posts will be used to fund the increase in grades

CONCLUSION

We feel that these proposals will :-

- modernise the service
- increase productivity
- address customer concerns
- increase customer satisfaction
- resolve most potential HR issues
- deliver savings to the service

Mobile Team Review

GMB response

Objectives

This paper sets out the proposals for the future Caretaking Service. It uses the Managements 'Caretaking Service Review Proposal' as its basis.

The proposals will seek to:

- present a sound business case
- propose new operational arrangements
- to satisfy Tenants' concerns and meet their needs
- lead to improved levels of satisfaction
- minimise the impact on staff
- deliver savings to the Service
- establish a service that will be a blueprint to other authorities

Background

This document is in response to the proposals outlined in Managements 'Caretaking Service Review Proposal'. It is recognized that the service as a whole needs to be modernized and that working practices need to be changed to meet the challenge of changing demographics.

The GMB believe that rather than looking at what other authorities are doing now, it is important to develop a plan for the future. This review has to be bold, so that we do not end up reviewing the service gain in a few years time.

The Mobile team 11 staff and provides cover at various levels for 7,700 properties, including out of hours and are also responsible for locking laundries around the City.

Staff work in teams on a shift system.

Review drivers

The management document focuses on the following drivers

- Improve the quality of the service and customer satisfaction with it.
- Deal with the inconsistencies of the present arrangements.
- Improve the equality of treatment of customers

- Ensure customers receive a cost efficient service

Improve the quality of the service and customer satisfaction with it

It is important to remember when referring to the 'Customer satisfaction survey' that it was undertaken soon after the service as centralized. It would therefore be safe to say that the results are more of a reflection on the previous service rather than the new one.

Deal with the inconsistencies of the present arrangements

There is no logic in the way the service is organised at the moment. It has developed over many years in an ad hoc way, must likely because the service was for sometime was run by the individual area offices. Service levels vary - as mentioned above. Also the level of service varies considerably between sites due to inconsistent levels of resources. There are some flats receive no service at all

Improve the equality of treatment of customers. group of tenants, Multistorey (enclosed), Multistorey (open). Walk ups, should expect the same standard of service. The specifications and frequency may alter between Multistories (all) and walk ups, but the same standard of cleanliness and the same level of service should be received by all.

Ensure customers receive a cost efficient service

In respect of those costs that are recovered through service charges and the level of those charges. The cost of the service was not a major concern to the vast majority of tenants. It is important that an equitable charging system should be introduced, where service charges meet those costs which are attributable to the service charge.

It is important to remember that the service charge has never covered the cost of the service, as it was not initially set at the right level. The GMB agree that a balance has to be achieved between charges that can be applied to the HRA, and those that are covered by the service charge. However the GMB does not agree that management have been given a mandate to return money to tenants

Human Resources Implications

The service currently employs 11 permanent staff, all of whose jobs are being deleted.

Work currently undertaken

The 11 members of the Mobile team cover staff shortages or undertake remedial or 'blitz' cleaning during the day.

An out of hours and emergency service is currently provided by a mobile caretaking team who respond to caretaking related emergencies any time outside normal working hours.

Instances of caretaking emergencies are low, as most calls are directed to contractors rather than the 'in house' service.

The Mobile team also lock the communal laundries around the city from 8pm onwards to prevent misuse of them.

The cost of the standby payments and shift allowances to provide these out of hours services costs over £34,000 a year (2008/09).

The other costs associated with this 24 hour service are transport and accommodation.

Consultation

The key areas of consultation for the proposals were:

- The Managements 'Caretaking Service Review Proposal'
- Meetings and ongoing discussions with staff and tenants
- Views of CSUG
- Discussions with all four Political parties

Views of Caretaking service user group

Salient points

- The service from the mobile team needs to be improved
- Consider expanding the role of the caretaker to include minor repairs
- Weekend cover needed on some sites
- Area teams must have built in capacity to cover absences e.g. holidays, sickness

Considerations

The following were carefully considered and the pros and cons balanced

before we put forward our recommendations

- The desires and needs of the tenants
- The ability to meet required standards of cleanliness, safety and tenant satisfaction
- The views of the Political Parties
- The need for a cost effective service
- The need for a robust service that can meet the demands of ever changing customer base
- The need to set up a joint mechanism that will review the service every three years
- The need for an agreed, cohesive strategy that i.e. not open to ad hoc tinkering
- The needs and aspirations of the staff

The New Mobile Service

OUT OF HOURS

An out of hours and emergency service will still be provided by a mobile caretaking team who will respond to caretaking related emergencies any time outside normal working hours.

Recently instances of caretaking emergencies are low, at between five and eight call outs a month. It is envisaged that with the correct routing of emergencies, an 15% increase in the number of tenancies covered and responsibility being taken for a large number of sheltered schemes this service will become viable once the correct charging is in place.

It has been calculated that the cost of the standby payments and shift allowances to provide these out of hours services costs over £34,000 a year (2008/09).

However to replace this team a figure of £39,000 to just lock 36 laundries has been quoted plus contractors will have to be employed to cover emergencies. As we have said with the correct charging this team will be more than viable and still have the capacity to undertake other work.

There will be four teams of three mobiles who will work nights on a four weekly rota.

When working days the following options could be considered

- each members works for a specific area as a member of that site

based team

- each team of three works on specific projects e.g. restorative cleaning
- members cover for holidays and sickness as required and remainder of team undertake restorative work

However our preferred option would be :-

- the work of the Mobile Team is enhanced
- restore the bulky waste collection and increase to include new premises to be covered by the service
- undertake flat clearances
- internal window cleaning
- change communal light bulbs
- undertake tasks to ensure that sheltered schemes reach H & S standards (these will be identified by site coordinators)
- weed spraying/removal

Out of hours service

As mentioned above, with an increase in the number of sites managed the number of out of hours emergencies that the Caretaking service deal with would increase. Also better understanding by EC staff should result in work being correctly placed with the Mobile team.

There will be no need for the out of hours service to be provided by an external contractor. Other work may be transferred from external contractors to this 'in house' team enhancing it's cost effectiveness. With correct charging and work being kept 'in house' the Mobile team could become revenue producing rather than being subsidised by the HRA.

Staff numbers

12 in 4 teams of 3.

Financial considerations

It is important to remember the following points

- tenants are happy with the charge that they pay. In the survey they ranked the charge they pay 10th out of 12 in importance. There has never been a move from tenants for banded charging or a rebate.
- Councillors have never given an undertaking to refund any money to tenants. Although the draft review was agreed by the QOL committee,

the focus of the debate was around the number of resident caretakers. The body of the review was not and should not be deemed as agreed by default.

- The service charge should only cover additional services NOT those the tenant may be deemed as having paid for through their Council tax or their rent. It should be possible for additional funding to come from the HRA and the General fund.

Funding the Service

1. The Service charge should be banded as mention previously. With no reduction in this charge in line with our *Banded Charging* proposals and the addition of an extra 1000 properties charges raised should increase be approximately 12% initially and then by a further 6% above that through our proposed *Banded Charging*.

2. Management states that

Depending on the outcome of the Job Evaluation process these proposals will achieve a saving to the Housing Revenue Account of approximately £475,000 and a surplus of income over expenditure of £360,000 making a total reduction in the cost of the service of £835,000. This saving will be realised at the end of year 3 after implementation of this review.

The surplus of £360,000 would be returned to tenants.....

There will be no surplus over expenditure as this will be used to pay for additional staff but still a saving to the HRA of £475,000.

This £360,000 will fund the additional 11 community caretakers we have proposed and go in some way to support the Mobile Team.

Additional funding is available as follows-

- additional funding should be negotiated for this work from the HRA and General fund to cover the additional duties taken on by the mobile team
- charge for clearing empty flats for EM
- resuming the Bulky waste collection would attract back the £100k+ paid to Sita, plus increased funding to cover additional sites
- locking the laundries would free up the approximate £39k that would

- be need to pay a private contractor
- the window cleaning contract is valued at £50k
- charge for light bulb replacement, weed killing/spraying, flat clearances

CONCLUSION

We feel that these proposals will :-

- modernise the service
- increase productivity
- address customer concerns
- increase customer satisfaction
- resolve most potential HR issues
- deliver savings to the service

APPENDIX G

Area Summary - Based on 28 residential posts (15 SC, 14 SCC and 75 CC)

| AREA NAME | Current no.flats | Additional flats | Total no. flats | Site Co ordinators | Snr Community Caretakers | Community Caretakers | Overall numbers | No. resident posts within this | Future ratio of flats to caretaker | Intial ratio flats to caretaker |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Shire | 355 | 170 | 525 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 105 | 71 |
| 2. Henbury | 544 | 162 | 706 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 101 | 78 |
| 3. Blaise | 655 | 0 | 655 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 109 | 109 |
| 4. St Pauls/K'down | 743 | 0 | 743 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 106 | 106 |
| 5. St Judes | 571 | 0 | 571 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 95 | 95 |
| 6. Easton | 806 | 0 | 806 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 11 | 3 | 81 | 81 |
| 7. Barton Hill | 754 | 0 | 754 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 94 | 94 |
| 8. Redcliffe | 754 | 0 | 754 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 84 | 84 |
| 9. B'minster/Clifton | 1065 | 0 | 1065 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 4 | 118 | 118 |
| 10. Withywood | 449 | 159 | 608 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 122 | 90 |
| 11. Hartcliffe | 505 | 209 | 714 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 102 | 72 |
| 12a. Dispersed Sites North | 197 | 273 | 470 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 94 | |
| 12b. Dispersed Sites South | 459 | 0 | 459 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 92 | 92 |
| 13a. SC for sheltered North | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 13b. SC for sheltered South | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 7857 | 973 | 8830 | 15 | 14 | 75 | 104 | 28 | 99 | 88 |