



## AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

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| <b>Report Title</b> | <b>PROPERTY MAINTENANCE INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT – Electrical Services Overtime Update Report</b> |
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**AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC**

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| <b>Audit Committee Meeting Date:</b> | 17 <sup>th</sup> February 2009 |
| <b>Policy Document:</b>              |                                |
| <b>Directorate:</b>                  | Housing                        |
| <b>Accountable Cabinet Member:</b>   | Cllr S. Beardsworth            |

### 1. Purpose

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To update the committee on the progress of recommendations by Audit in respect of 07\_08 NBC21 - Electrical Services overtime review.

### 2. Recommendations

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To note the progress made in respect of this Audit report by Housing Property Maintenance.

### 3. Issues and Choices

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#### 3.1 Report Background

At the last Audit Committee held on 2.12.08, a verbal update was received in respect of this Audit report.

An Electrical Audit report was produced in July 2008 as part of a review of several areas of service within Property Maintenance raised by the Interim Head of Service. This report highlighted several areas of concern and made a number of recommendations, which can be seen in appendix 5.1.

#### 3.2 Issues

The recommendations have all now been appropriately dealt with, implemented and updated on Team Central with the exception of a recommendation highlighting inappropriate working arrangements.

In dealing with all the recommendations, Property Maintenance have introduced strict internal pre and post approval processes, which are now carried out by three different individuals, thus ensuring a strict segregation of duties. Each of these individuals is an authorised signatory and all records are now held within the newly established Business Support Team records, within Property Maintenance.

With regard to inappropriate working arrangements, the Audit report recommended examining alternative arrangements for dealing with out of hours type work. It was suggested that this may be carried out through either a shift system, or, extended working hours. To date this recommendation interfaces with the Audit report on call out. Call out is currently an item, which will be discussed with the Trades Unions as part of the 2009 Pay and Productivity deal for all trades.

Extended hours are currently being explored, to the extent that the tenants' sounding board have been consulted on tenants' desire to extend the working day for repairs. This consultation resulted in a very high percentage of support for extending the working day. However, this aspect, along with call out generally, is still under discussion with the appropriate Trades Unions. It not anticipated that this element of the agreement will be concluded prior to March 2009.

### **3.3 Choices (Options)**

The options open to the Council form part of the ongoing negotiations with the appropriate Trades Unions in respect of the Trades Pay and Productivity Agreement for 2009. These particular aspects of dealing with out of hours work have yet to be discussed in detail in the negotiations, and will also form part of the Property Maintenance response to the review on call out. Any such agreement will have to be authorised by both the Council and the Trades Unions.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

### **4.1 Policy**

There are implications under the European Working Time Directive that need to be considered and these will form part of the above-mentioned negotiations.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

In implementing the recommendations of the Audit report there has been a reduction in the amount of overtime hours worked, and processes are now appropriately established. Specific risks identified would be failing to come to an agreement with the appropriate Trades Unions with regard to the future of call out, however, this would not have a direct impact on tenant's needs.

### **4.3 Legal**

There are no specific legal implications in this report.

### **4.4 Equality**

There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

#### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

The head of Human Resources will provide guidance on any change in delivering the service with regard to either extended hours, or, changes in call out. It will also require consultation with the appropriate Trades Unions.

#### **4.6 Other Implications**

Not applicable

#### **5. Background Papers**

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July 2008 Audit report

**Report Author:**