



**BELFAST CITY COUNCIL**

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	<b>Changes to Property Maintenance Unit Structure</b>
Date:	22 November 2013
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects, Ext: 6217
Contact Officer:	George Wright – Head of Facilities Management, Ext: 5206)

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will be aware that the Property Maintenance Unit delivers planned and reactive maintenance to all council properties, using a mix of in-house and externally-contracted resources.
1.2	Members may also be aware that the scope of statutory duties affecting council properties continues to increase across a wide range of disciplines, most notably legionella monitoring & remedial works, management of asbestos, disability-access provisions, fixed wiring, emergency lighting and portable appliance testing etc.
1.3	This increased statutory regulation is in addition to the provisions of the Corporate Manslaughter Act 2007, which members will be aware has already been used to prosecute councils which have failed to meet statutory standards.
1.4	The council's responsibilities in relation to statutory compliance continue to grow as projects come to completion under the Investment Programme and other capital initiatives (and of course there is the potential for a significant increase in properties transferred under the Local Government Reform process).
1.5	In addition, the whole area of property maintenance is an inherently risky environment and the management of health & safety on-site is an increasing concern. Many of the projects carried out by the unit will, because of their scale and scope, trigger the provisions of the updated Construction Design & Management Regulations 2007 (CDM) in terms of site-specific health & safety plans, and of course the development of detailed, site-specific risk assessments is increasingly necessary, not least to protect the organization against personal injury and/or employers' liability litigation.
1.6	Currently a single post-holder is responsible for the planning and management of the inspection and remedial works regime for all compliance-related work, while the CDM and other health& safety aspects are delivered on a scheme by scheme basis by project managers so far as possible. It is felt that this situation must now be rationalised and improved through the introduction of 2 new dedicated posts to the unit's structure. The creation of these posts has been endorsed at CMT but the current Scheme of Delegation requires that Committee approval be obtained as they are new posts.

1.7	The first proposed post is that of <b>Maintenance Officer (Safety)</b> ; this post-holder's role will be to manage and co-ordinate all CDM, risk assessments and other health & safety work across the unit. The second post is that of <b>Maintenance Assistant (Compliance)</b> , and the post-holder's role will be to assist the Maintenance Officer (Compliance) to manage the increasing compliance workload in order to minimise risk to the council.
1.8	In terms of management of these posts it is proposed to make changes to the current management reporting lines within the unit. Given the synergies and similarities between many of the compliance and health & safety elements of the work, it is proposed that both of the new posts will report to the Maintenance Officer (Compliance) and that this post be re-named <b>Compliance &amp; Safety Officer</b> . In addition, it is proposed that the post of <b>Technical Assistant</b> which currently reports to the Property Officer (Building & Procurement) be amended to report to the Compliance & Safety Officer. These changes are illustrated in Appendix 1.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	These new posts and structural changes will, in effect, produce a dedicated sub-unit dealing with statutory compliance and building-related health & safety issues and will provide a number of benefits, most notably increased resources to deal with both compliance and health & safety issues, reducing physical, reputational and legal risks to the council and freeing up project managers to concentrate on delivering important maintenance projects.
2.2	The new posts will also contribute to the council's employment targets under the Investment Programme. It should, however, be noted that a fuller re-structuring of the Property Maintenance Unit will be necessary in 2014, once the full extent of central and local government property transfers to BCC under the LGR process is known.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p>The notional grades for the 2 new posts (subject to formal job evaluation) are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance Officer (Safety) – PO1, <i>and</i></li> <li>• Maintenance Assistant (Compliance) – Sc6</li> </ul> <p>In total this would require an additional <b>£60,317</b>, and this amount has been provided for within the unit's revenue budget. There may also be a financial implication for the post of Safety &amp; Compliance officer in terms of the increased responsibilities taken on, which would be quantified by a job evaluation exercise if approved.</p>

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
	There are no direct equality or good relations implications arising from this report.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	It is recommended that the Committee approves the establishment of the 2 new posts set out above, and also the revised reporting lines as set out in Appendix 1.

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	None.

# Facilities Management Section

## Property Maintenance unit

(revised structure following Compliance/H&S review)

