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To: Cllr Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: David Cox, Paul Cunningham, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Hilary Isherwood, Sara Parker, Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and David Roney

plus one Conservative vacancy

17 January 2017

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee which will be held at 2.00 pm on Monday, 23rd January, 2017 in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA to consider the following items

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 MINUTES (Pages 3 - 8)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2016 (copy enclosed).

4 DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 2017/18 & CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 (Pages 9 - 38)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) and Corporate Finance Manager - Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: To enable the Committee to consider the draft 2017/18 Revenue Budget and Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

5 **HOUSING RENT ARREARS** (Pages 39 - 48)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) - Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: To consider the Rent Arrears Annual Report including information on the suggestion for WHQS improvements to be delayed for tenants with long term rent arrears.

6 **COMMUTED SUMS AND SHARED EQUITY REDEMPTION PAYMENTS POLICY** (Pages 49 - 56)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) - Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: To consider revisions to the Policy to allow more flexibility in certain circumstances in using to support SHARP / HRA New Build Programme.

7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 57 - 64)

Report of Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator - Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely



Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **15 DECEMBER 2016**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 15 December 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: David Cox, Paul Cunningham, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Ray Hughes, Gareth Roberts and David Roney

APOLOGIES: Councillor Jim Falshaw, George Hardcastle, Sara Parker and Mike Reece; and Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Helen Brown, Cabinet Member for Housing; Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise); Interim Senior Manager (Council Housing); Service Manager (Enterprise and Regeneration); Service Manager (Customer Support); and Capital Works Team Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and Committee Officer

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

32. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2016 were submitted.

In response to a query from Councillor Ron Davies on the Strategic Housing & Regeneration Project, it was explained that the proposed scheme for the Melrose Centre in Aston would be submitted for approval by Cabinet early in 2017, as stated in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

33. BUY BACK OF COUNCIL RIGHT TO BUY (RTB) PROPERTIES

The newly appointed Interim Senior Manager (Council Housing), Steve Agger, was introduced to the Committee. He presented a report seeking support on the implementation of a new policy setting out the Council's approach to the strategic acquisition of properties that become available on the open market. The new policy would include the option to purchase ex-Council properties sold under the Right to Buy scheme. The policy would help to clarify the process and criteria for purchases, ensuring value for money and opening up opportunities for acquiring additional housing stock.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin supported the introduction of the new policy, and this was endorsed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee supports the implementation of a Strategic Acquisition Policy (incorporating Right to Buy Buyback).

34. SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW

The Interim Senior Manager (Council Housing) presented a report to seek support for a review of sheltered housing across the county to potentially re-model and re-designate to enable best use of the current stock to meet future local housing need. This was one of the recommendations from Member workshops held over the summer period to discuss a review of low demand sheltered housing schemes in the south of the county.

The report detailed a number of reasons for varying demand for the county's 2,613 sheltered units and highlighted the increasing demand for smaller accommodation for the under 50 age group. Over the past year, around 25% of sheltered accommodation had been let to applicants not meeting the age criteria for that stock and was allocated on a case by case basis. A recent review identified that around 60% of the total void rent loss across the Council's housing stock was attributable to sheltered accommodation, which equated to an estimated loss of £35K per annum.

The Chief Officer referred to the range of sheltered accommodation, some of which was in high demand whilst others were difficult to let. She clarified that no specific changes were proposed at this stage and that there would be consultation with local Members on a scheme by scheme basis.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin spoke about the importance of achieving the right mix of people in housing schemes, citing an example in her ward which had worked well despite her initial reservations. She also pointed out that some housing stock could be better located nearer facilities.

Councillor Gareth Roberts commented on the availability of private accommodation for younger people in his ward and asked about forthcoming changes on the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) cap. The Chief Officer explained that this would be an issue at supported housing schemes where rents may be higher than the LHA. Whilst some funding would be available from the Welsh Government to help meet that shortfall, the level of funding was not yet known. Further information would be included in the update on Welfare Reforms to be brought to the Committee in the New Year.

Following a question from Councillor Ray Hughes on the new bungalows in Leeswood, it was confirmed that the design allowed for disabled access.

In response to comments from Councillor David Cox on the benefits of using local knowledge in allocating housing, the Chief Officer confirmed that officers do engage with Local Members. She went on to ask Members to encourage people to apply for social housing.

Councillor Ron Davies agreed that a careful approach was needed to allocations, referring to an example in his ward where a particular mix of residents was not working.

Councillor Paul Cunningham welcomed the opportunity for some sheltered stock to be made available to people under 50, which could help to prevent homelessness.

Councillor Dolphin indicated her support for the proposals on the basis that Recommendation 2 was 'in principle'. Councillor Helen Brown suggested that the words 'in consultation with Ward Members' be included but said that this would not apply to the actual letting of properties. The Chief Officer stated that no further action would be taken without Cabinet approval and consultation with stakeholders including the Tenants' Federation.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the work on the Sheltered Housing Review to date and notes that further work should take place to develop firm proposals for those schemes/ properties identified as appropriate for re-designation, re-modelling or alternative future use; and
- (b) That the Committee supports (in principle) de-commissioning of sheltered schemes which cannot be made fit for purpose, re-designating them for alternative client groups, or agreeing to redevelop the sites, subject to consultation with appropriate ward Members.

35. QUARTER 2 IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016/17 MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) introduced the regular update report to consider progress towards the delivery of the impacts set out in the 2016/17 Improvement Plan, focussing on the areas of under and good performance relevant to the Committee during Quarter 2.

Housing

Positive progress was reported on new schemes within the Strategic Housing & Regeneration Programme and the proactive approach to dealing with the increasing number of housing enquiries during the period. The repair/improvement of 40 private sector dwellings through the Capital Programme and Welsh Government (WG) national loan scheme was expected to be met by year end by allocating resources to processing loan applications. Despite positive performance, the completion of Disabled Facilities Grants for children and adults remained an area of focus and improvements to the process would help to further reduce timescales.

Progress on the Welsh Housing Quality Standard was mainly on target, with delays on roofing and windows as a result of unpredicted issues. When asked about the criteria for the work, the Capital Works Team Manager explained that a 'whole house' approach to work was taken where possible and that Members should report any specific issues of concern.

The team was congratulated by Councillor Gareth Roberts for positive tenant feedback on the scheme in the Holway.

Councillor David Roney commended the Custom House Lane development but questioned why solar panels had not been installed. He went on to refer to the recent announcement by the WG Environment Secretary on energy efficient measures in new homes. The Chief Officer confirmed that this had been considered and would be looked at for future schemes as the aim was to build high quality new homes with minimal running costs. However, decisions on solar panels were dependent on funding available.

Economy and Enterprise

The Service Manager (Enterprise & Regeneration) reported overall positive performance during the period including activities on supply chain events and the development of the Ambassadors programme.

Although the number of new jobs created had fallen during the quarter, there were positive announcements on job safeguarding and potential growth. Councillor Paul Cunningham welcomed opportunities for new business investment but raised concerns about the recent announcement of job losses by Convatek in Deeside.

On the regional economy, positive discussions were taking place with WG on devolved powers with the focus on strengthening regional working. As requested by the Chairman, the Chief Officer gave an update on progress with the Northern Gateway where initial work on the road infrastructure had started, to be followed by the first phase of housing developments and job creation.

Poverty

The Council's proactive approach was reflected in the amount of additional Social Security and Tax Credits paid to Flintshire residents which had exceeded the target. Another area highlighted was the number of individuals recording a positive outcome under the measure 'engaging in employment/ volunteering opportunities'.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin asked if there were plans to continue the 'LIFT' programme in Communities First areas which had proved successful in helping people back into work. The Service Manager (Enterprise & Regeneration) explained that the Council expected the LIFT and Communities 4 Work programmes to continue until March 2018 at least. The Council was carrying out contingency planning to try to safeguard the most important elements of the core Communities First programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee receives the Quarter 2 Improvement Plan Monitoring Reports.

36. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

In presenting the Forward Work Programme for consideration, the Democratic Services Manager suggested that the North East Wales (NEW) Homes Board update be moved to the February 2017 meeting due to the number of items scheduled for the January meeting.

Following remarks by Councillor Gareth Roberts on a review of business rates, the Chief Officer explained the requirement for the Council's Business Rate Policy to be approved annually. Potential changes in the sharing of redistributed rate income could form part of the national review.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be amended; and
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

37. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press and one member of the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10am and ended at 11.05am)

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Chairman

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COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday, 23 rd January 2017
Report Subject	Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2017/18 & Capital Programme 2017/18
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) Corporate Finance Manager
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present for support the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2017/18, and HRA Business Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Scrutiny support the HRA budget for 2017/18 as set out in the Business plan.
2	That Scrutiny support a rent increase of 2.5% (plus up to or minus £2) as set out in the business plan with target rents applied for new tenancies.
3	That Scrutiny support a garage rent increase of £1 per week and a garage plot rent increase of £0.20 per week.
4	That Members support the proposed HRA Capital programme for 2017/18 as set out in Appendix D.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE DRAFT HRA BUDGET AND HRA BUSINESS PLAN
1.01	Considerations
	<p>The HRA is required to produce a 30 year business plan. The first four years focuses on the achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), Choices document promises kept, ongoing efficiencies made and 200 new council homes built. The longer term picture shows a strong account with surplus income over expenditure needs. This presents opportunities to do more to improve service delivery; provides reassurance that once achieved, the WHQS standard can be maintained, and could provide further capital funding for new build.</p> <p>The strategic context for this year's HRA budget setting includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The need to ensure the treasury management strategy continues to meet the Councils new and ongoing borrowing requirements;• Delivering a prudent plan for income maximisation;• Setting a balanced budget with 3% surplus revenue over expenditure;• Continued drive to ensure all service costs are efficient and that value for money can be achieved;• Maximisation of revenue efficiencies to minimise the borrowing required to meet WHQS by 2020;• Delivery of new build Council housing.
1.02	Self financing
	<p>Self-financing was introduced in April 2015 and is contained within the Housing Wales Act 2014. This policy change brings more self-determination for local council's longer term. As part of introducing self-financing the Act contained a duty for the 11 Councils affected to make a one-off settlement payment of £920m, and it set the all wales limit of indebtedness for those individual local authorities. Flintshire's borrowing cap is £144m.</p> <p>In summary, Flintshire's borrowing requirements and/or limits for borrowing are (approximately) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing HRA borrowing £25.7m• Borrowing to achieve settlement £79.2m• Total Borrowing for WHQS £15.3m• Total Borrowing for new build £24.8m <p>The initial borrowing of c£79.2m for buy-out resulted in a basket of loans of varying lengths in accordance with the Councils Treasury Management Strategy. External advice was sought and the recommendation was for the Council to continue to operate a single debt pool approach, providing maximum flexibility.</p>

	<p>The current borrowing assumptions for 2017/18 are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borrowing for WHQS £4.1m • Borrowing for new build £7.7m <p>This will take borrowing levels up to £125m once the minimum revenue provision has been deducted.</p>
1.03	<p><u>Rents</u></p>
	<p>The Social Housing Rents policy was introduced by Welsh Government (WG) in April 2015 for local authorities and is in place for five years. The policy aims to achieve rent convergence between Council and Housing Association rents over time.</p> <p>Welsh social rent policy is devolved from the U.K government. There has been pressure however, to follow the UK Government requirement for social landlords in England to reduce social rents by 1% for each of the next four years. WG sought evidence from social landlords across Wales on the impact this change would make to business plans and has decided to retain the current rent policy for 2017/18.</p> <p>In a written statement on the 21st November 2016, the Department of Works & Pensions (DWP) Secretary for State announced that the Government proposes that the local housing allowance (LHA) cap for tenants living in general needs social housing will be applied from April 2019. When this proposal is implemented, rents for many 1 bedroom properties in Flintshire will reach the cap quite quickly. This could have negative impacts on the HRA business plan and the viability of some new housing developments.</p> <p>The WG rent policy requires all service charges to be disaggregated from rents. The Council is in the process of completing this.</p> <p>There is flexibility for each landlord to set the rent band at either target rent, 5% below or 5% above. The Council agreed to set Flintshire rents at target to support tenant affordability.</p> <p>The rent policy sets out the total target rent band for each landlord. The Councils target rent for 2017/18 is £91.69. Currently the Councils average rent is £85.87. Where a landlord's weekly rent is lower than the target rent band, transitional protection applies to tenants. In any year a landlord is not permitted to increase the rent for any individual tenant by more than £2 per week in addition to the agreed average annual rate of rent increase for the sector as a whole. The inflation indices used for uplifting rents each year are based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) at the previous September and a real increase percentage of 1.5.</p> <p>CPI for September 2016 was 1% plus 1.5% giving rent inflation for 2017/18 of 2.5%.</p>
1.04	<p><u>Garage Rents</u></p>
	<p>Garage rents are currently charged at £5.61 per week and garage plots £1 per week. An increase of £1 per week is proposed for garages and £0.20 for garage plots.</p>

1.05	Capital programme
	<p>£20m has been built into the WHQS and Asset investment programme for 2017/18. This includes provision for internal work streams, external enveloping works, environmental programmes, fire risks and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) works, Asbestos, off gas and energy efficiency works. Cabinet has approved the Asset investment plan to achieve the WHQS by 2020 and the budget set will ensure that the council is still on track to meet its commitment to achieve the standard.</p> <p>In addition, £7.704m of prudential borrowing has been budgeted in 2017/18 for Council housing building schemes.</p> <p>Attached to this report for Cabinet approval: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft HRA Business Plan – Appendix A • Draft 30 year HRA business plan summary - Appendix B • Draft HRA business efficiency & investment proposals - Appendix C • Draft capital programme for 2017/18 - Appendix D

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The HRA is a ring fenced budget. This HRA budget and Business Plan demonstrates that the council can achieve the WHQS by 2020, can meet service improvement plans and commitments and with prudential borrowing can continue its Council house building programme in 2017.
2.02	Additional staff have been appointed to deliver an accelerated WHQS programme. The funding for these posts is provided for in the WHQS programme.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The draft budget will be discussed with the Tenants Federation at their February meeting.
3.02	Detailed consultation has been undertaken with tenants and elected members to inform the preparation of the WHQS investment programme.
3.03	Full local consultation is carried out for each new build scheme.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The Council has agreed a Rent Policy which will see rents at benchmark levels, rather than taking the opportunity to set at 5% per cent above the benchmark. This decision was taken to safeguard affordability for tenants.
4.02	Stock investment delivery plans will enhance the appearance of the environment and will contribute toward the Council's CO2 reduction targets.

4.03	All households will benefit from the Councils WHQS programme. The impact of the investment planning and efficiencies is being modelled for various customer groups to ensure that there is no disproportionate impact on any groups with protected characteristics.
4.04	The Business Plan assumes a confirmation of Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) for the full 30 year life of the Business Plan.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix A - Draft HRA Business Plan Appendix B - Draft 30 year HRA Business Plan Summary Appendix C - Draft HRA business efficiency and investment proposals Appendix D - Draft capital programme

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None Contact Officer: Clare Budden, Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) Telephone: 01352 703800 E-mail: clare.budden@flintshire.gov.uk

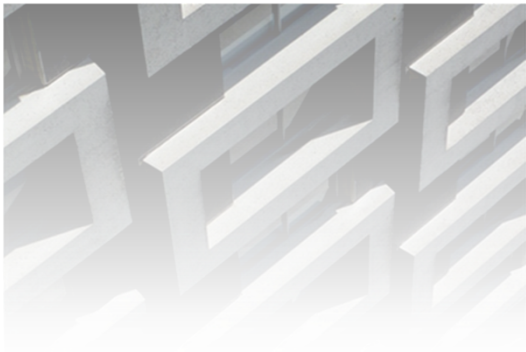
7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Financial Year: the period of 12 months commencing on 1 April 2017.</p> <p>Revenue: a term used to describe the day to day costs of running Council services and income deriving from those services. It also includes charges for the repayment of debt, including interest, and may include direct financing of capital expenditure.</p> <p>Capital expenditure: money spent by the organisation on acquiring or maintaining fixed assets, such as land, buildings, and equipment.</p> <p>Budget: a statement expressing the Council's policies and service levels in financial terms for a particular financial year. In its broadest sense it includes both the revenue budget and capital programme and any authorised amendments to them.</p> <p>Treasury Management: The Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants (CIPFA) Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice. Treasury Management is conducted in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statement and Treasury Management Practices which are both reviewed annually. All borrowing and long term financing is made in accordance with CIPFA's Prudential Code.</p> <p>Major Repairs Allowance: is a Welsh Government grant paid to local authorities in Wales who still manage and maintain their council housing.</p>

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FLINTSHIRE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT:

DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN



2017 - 2047

INTRODUCTION

The HRA funds the landlord function of the council for 7,189 homes. This includes repairs and maintenance, including upgrading properties and environmental improvements, neighbourhood management including resolving anti-social behaviour and estate caretaking, income collection and customer involvement.

BACKGROUND

The budget was set in 2016 for the thirty year period 2016/2046. Value for money principles were adopted to maximise resources for stock investment, service improvement and new build. It did, as with any business plan, make some financial assumptions, and therefore any aspects which were adopted will need to be kept under review to ensure that assumptions reflect actual costs, performance and risks on an annual basis.

This report will highlight how we actually performed during 2016/17 and report any changes to the financial assumptions agreed in 2016/17 based on new information.

2012 HOUSING BALLOT – CHOICES DOCUMENT

In 2012, the council balloted its tenants on the option for 'stock transfer'. This process involved making commitments to tenants on service quality and performance, should tenants opt to stay with the council or move to an alternative landlord. 71% of tenants used their vote, with 88% choosing Flintshire County Council to remain as their landlord.

This plan and budget proposals once approved will provide sufficient resources to ensure that all promises made to tenants in the Choices document can be delivered. At the time of the ballot a 5 year stock improvement programme was promised which would provide full kitchen and heating replacement schemes with limited work streams for other property fixtures. At this stage the full WHQS standard could not be delivered until 2038.

Since that time, following detailed cost and investment analysis work, robust efficiency plans and improved performance (coupled with relatively low levels of borrowing), the investment programme has been accelerated and full achievement of the standard can be delivered by 2020.

RESOURCES FOR 2017/18

Rents

The Social Housing rents policy was introduced by Welsh Government in April 2015 for local authorities. This policy was aimed at achieving rent convergence between council and housing association rents over time.

Welsh social rent policy is devolved from the U.K government. There is pressure however, to follow the UK Government requirement for social landlords in England to reduce social rents by 1% for each of the next four years. Welsh Government sought evidence from social landlords

across Wales on the impact this change would make to business plans and has decided to retain the current rent policy.

In a written statement on the 21st November 2016, the DWP Secretary for State announced that the government proposes that the local housing allowance (LHA) cap for tenants living in general needs social housing will be applied from April 2019. Should this proposal be implemented rents for many 1 bedroom properties in Flintshire would reach the cap quite quickly. This could have negative impacts on the HRA business plan and the viability of some new housing developments.

The WG rent policy required all service charges to be disaggregated from rents by April 2016. There is flexibility for each landlord to set the rent band at either target rent, 5% below or 5% above. Cabinet decided to set Flintshire rents at target to support tenant affordability.

The rent policy sets out the total target rent band for each landlord. The councils target rent band for 2017/18 is £91.69. Currently the Councils average rent is £85.87. Where a landlord's weekly rent is lower than the target rent band, transitional protection will apply to tenants. In any year a landlord will not be permitted to increase the rent for any individual tenant by more than £2 per week in addition to the agreed average annual rate of rent increases for the sector as a whole.

The inflation indices to be used for uplifting rents each year will be based on CPI at the previous September and a real increase percentage of 1.5% will be applied to the inflation indices. CPI for Sept 2016 is 1% plus 1.5% giving rent inflation for 2017/18 of 2.5%. Anticipated Rental (including voids rent loss) and other income for the three year period 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 are shown in the table below:

Garage Rents

Garage rents are currently charged at £5.61 per week. We are proposing an increase of £1 per week. Garage plots are currently a £1 per week. We are proposing a .20p per plot per week increase.

Anticipated Rental (including voids rent loss) and other income for the three year period 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 are shown in the table below:

Year	Net Rental Income	Other Income	Total Income
2017 – 2018	£30,850,000	£ 1,292,000	£ 32,142,000
2018 – 2019	£32,032,000	£ 1,664,000	£ 33,696,000
2019 – 2020	£33,916,000	£ 1,735,000	£ 35,651,000

Rent Charges		2017/18				
		£'s			No.	
		Target Rent	Average Transitional Rent	Variance	Equal to / above Target Rent	Below Target Rent
Property Type	No. of Properties					
G1Bedsit	21	65.71	65.78	0.07	21	0
G1bungalow	12	81.71	85.06	3.35	3	9
G1Flat	163	76.42	76.27	-0.16	150	13
G1House	1	81.71	72.84	-8.86	0	1
G2Bungalow	3	90.78	83.83	-6.96	0	3
G2Flat	293	84.64	82.33	-2.31	78	215
G2House	710	90.78	85.56	-5.22	190	520
G2Maisonette	9	82.14	82.14	0.00	9	0
G3Bungalow	4	99.86	99.02	-0.84	3	1
G3Flat	41	92.85	88.61	-4.24	11	30
G3Maisonette	1	90.35	90.35	0.00	1	0
G3House	3,147	99.86	91.26	-8.60	335	2,812
G4House	126	108.94	98.12	-10.82	13	113
G5House	5	118.02	106.24	-11.78	1	4
G6House	5	118.02	110.62	-7.40	2	3
M1Mini Group Bungalow	299	81.71	77.60	-4.10	97	202
M1Mini Group Flat	116	76.42	76.47	0.04	114	2
M2Mini Group Bungalow	94	90.78	86.07	-4.72	29	65
M2Mini Group Flat	23	84.64	83.68	-0.96	2	21
M3Mini Group Bungalow	1	99.86	99.86	0.00	1	0
S1Sheltered Bedsit	63	65.71	66.01	0.30	63	0
S1Sheltered Bungalow	851	81.71	78.09	-3.61	218	633
S1Sheltered Flat	321	76.42	76.39	-0.04	314	7
S1Sheltered House	1	81.71	78.96	-2.74	0	1
S2Sheltered Bungalow	508	90.78	83.74	-7.05	64	444
S2Sheltered Flat	306	84.64	84.44	-0.20	236	70
S2Sheltered House	1	90.78	81.94	-8.84	0	1
S2Wardens Bungalow	2	90.78	90.78	0.00	2	0
S2Wardens Flat	5	84.64	84.64	0.00	5	0
S2Wardens House	1	90.78	86.55	-4.23	0	1
S3Sheltered Bungalow	4	99.86	94.93	-4.94	2	2
S3Wardens Bungalow	16	99.86	97.78	-2.08	6	10
S3Wardens Flat	1	92.85	91.52	-1.33	0	1
S3Wardens House	20	99.86	93.25	-6.62	3	17
SO3Shared ownership houses	15	99.86	90.81	-9.05	2	13
	7,189	91.69	85.87	-5.82	1,975	5,214

Note

G = General Need

S = Sheltered

M = Mini Group (over 55s with no warden service)

The number equates to the number of bedrooms the property has for example a G3house is a general need 3 bed house.

The above chart shows the transitional rents chargeable to Flintshire tenants under the new rents policy from 2017/18 and how they compare to target rents. The average rent chargeable for 2017/18 is £85.87 some £5.82 below the weekly target rent under the new policy. There are currently 1,975 (27%) tenancies at target rent.

Empty Properties

Void rent loss is currently at 1.41 % of rental income. The business plan continues to assume this level of void rent loss.

Service Charges

By April 2016, the Welsh Government expected all social landlords to separate services from rents and introduce charges, to recover the cost of services in addition to rent. Prior to this the cost of these services were spread across all tenancies. Through the separation of service charges from rents, tenants are able to see how much they pay for the rent of their home and how much they pay for any additional services that they receive e.g. aerials, laundry services, window cleaning and communal cleaning.

The introduction of service charges aims to achieve greater transparency and fairness for tenants, providing greater accountability whilst helping to improve both the efficiency and quality of services being delivered.

The Council is currently working in collaboration and sharing best practice with three other North Wales stock retaining Councils. These being Wrexham, Denbighshire and Isle of Anglesey.

Flintshire is implementing service charges on a phased basis for existing/ongoing tenancies. From April 2015 all new tenants pay for services. A tenant consultation exercise will commence in June 2017 to discuss service disaggregation (such as individual gardening).

With the exception of services provided for the benefit of individuals, the service charges outlined above are all currently 'housing benefit eligible'. Currently, 67% of all Council Housing tenants were in receipt of full or partial housing benefit.

Expenditure

Proposed financial changes to the 2017/18 business plan

HRA Business Planning

Efficiencies

No	Section	Description	Type	2017/18 £m	Notes
1	Various	Price Inflation	Service Efficiency	(71,182)	During the 2016/17 business planning process, we had built in an element of price inflation. We have removed this price inflation to help fund some of the pressures the HRA is facing.
2	Estate Management	Estate Caretaker	Structural Review	(18,667)	Removal of vacant position
3	Management & Support	Handy Person	Structural Review	(38,488)	This vacant position is being removed from the budget as the estate caretakers are completing this work.
4	Various	Employee Travel	Service Efficiency	(11,091)	A result of the review of essential car users and rates.
5	Management & Support	Conference/Seminars	Service Efficiency	(13,544)	A reduction in the conference budget.
6	Estate Management	Supplies & Services	Service Efficiency	(4,165)	A review of supplies and services budgets.
7	Housing Asset Management	Fleet Costs (Disabled Adaptations)	Service Efficiency	(40,000)	We are able to capitalise the cost of vehicles used for the capital works on adapted properties.
8	Estate Management	Neighbourhood Housing Assistant	Structural Review	(19,310)	Removal of vacant position.
		Total HRA		(216,447)	

Investment Decisions/Cost Pressures

No	Section	Description	Type	2017/18 £m	Notes
1	Income	Reduction in income arising from phased implementation of service charges	Income Pressure	311,428	Reduction in income in line with phased introduction of Service Charges
2	Housing Programmes	SHARP - Site Investigation Fees/Other Costs	Service Improvement	79,000	Revenue budget to support the cost of the SHARP which cannot be capitalised (e.g. legal fees, land valuations)
3	Estate Management	Gardens	Service Pressure	55,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
4	Estate Management	Laundry	Service Pressure	14,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
5	Estate Management	Aerials	Service Pressure	20,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
6	Estate Management	Window Cleaning	Service Pressure	10,500	Reflective of increased contract costs
7	Estate Management	Communal Cleaning		9,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
8	Housing Asset Mgmt	Waste Removal	Service Pressure	20,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
9	Housing Asset Mgmt	Electrical Qualifying Officer	Service Improvement	40,226	Additional position introduced to cover Health & Safety requirements
10	Management & Support	Insurance	Historic Budget Flaw	78,000	To correct a budget flaw
11	Estate Management	Revenues Manager	Service Pressure	16,772	To reflect a charge of 25% to the HRA for work on rent collection.
12	Management & Support	Apprentice Levy	Service Pressure (national policy)	37,129	New national policy (0.5% of payroll)
13	Landlord Services	Servicing & Adhoc Call Outs	Service Pressure	40,000	(e.g. smoke alarm testing, lift maintenance).
		Total HRA		731,055	
		Grand Total HRA		514,608	

Staff and associated costs

The business plan includes 231.53 established Positions (FTE) within the Housing Revenue Account in 2017/18.

Housing Asset Management

Housing Asset Management (HAM) includes Responsive repairs, voids, WHQS and cyclical works and Disabled adaptations. Total FTE's for HAM assumed in the plan are 175. The revenue budget for 2017/18 is £8.457m.

Estate Management

Estate Management includes Rents, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenant participation and Tenancy management services. Total FTE's assumed in the plan are 33.8. The planned budget is £1.647m.

Landlord Services

Landlord Services includes all costs associated with service charges and landlord costs for communal buildings. Total FTE's assumed in the plan for Landlord Services are 8.0. The planned budget is £1.318m.

Management & Support Services

Management & Support Services include Finance and cash collection, I.T, member services, HR and Training, Legal, Insurance, Buildings, admin and corporate management costs. The FTE's assumed on the plan for Management & Support Services are 14.68. The planned budget is £2.320m.

Capital Financing

Financial Year	New Loans	New Loans	Mid Year	Total Costs	Closing HRA Debt	Limit on indebtedness	Borrowing Capacity
	Build Programme	WHQS					
2017.18	£7,704,000	£4,100,000	£119,983,027	£7,500,531	£124,732,693	£143,934,209	£19,201,956
2018.19	£5,378,667	£3,500,000	£127,924,700	£7,956,858	£131,116,706	£143,934,209	£12,817,503
2019.20	£5,166,667	£1,400,000	£133,088,872	£8,268,822	£135,061,039	£143,934,209	£8,873,170

As per the self-financing agreement introduced in April 2015, the borrowing limits agreed for the council were £15m for new build, £25m for WHQS and £107.2m for the buy-out. This new borrowing in addition to existing borrowing gave us a debt cap of £143.9m (limit on indebtedness above).

The above table shows the planned new borrowing for WHQS and new build alongside the closing HR debt balance and borrowing cap. The level of borrowing remains within the cap. The capital programme for 2017/18 is £20.040m of which the majority is allocated to achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) - Council House Build Programme

Following Cabinet approval in September 2014 Flintshire has made good progress to deliver upon its strategic vision of developing 500 new (200 council, 300 affordable) at a range of sites across the county over the next five years. Wates Residential were appointed as the Council's development partner in June 2015, and in addition to the council's ambitious house-building programme, a range of linked regeneration and community benefit initiatives are also being delivered. These include;

- Environmental protection and improvements;
- Development of sub-contracting and supply chain opportunities including transparency of opportunities and award procedures including advertisement through Sell2Wales;
- Increased social return on investment through engagement and consultation with the community;
- Workforce and training initiatives.

SHARP Tranche 1

Tranche 1 of the SHARP is underway, delivering 42 new Council homes on The Walks, Flint and at Custom House School, Connah's Quay. The breakdown of property types is shown below:

Property Type	The Walks, Flint	Custom House School, Connah's Quay
1Bed Apartment	4	-
2 Bed Apartment	2	-
2 Bed House	18	8
3 Bed House	6	4
Sub Total	30	12
Total	42	

Custom House School, Connah's Quay

Custom House, Connah's Quay is the first completed scheme to be delivered through the SHARP, with tenants moving into the new properties at the beginning of December 2016, 2 months ahead of schedule. A Local Lettings Policy has been developed to ensure local people are prioritised for the scheme.

There has been a number of consultation events where Councillors, members of the local community and future tenants have visited the site. This has been well received and has raised the profile of the SHARP Council housing building programme.

The Walks, Flint

The build for the scheme commenced March 2016, with a projected completion of March 2018. In addition to the 30 Council properties, 62 affordable units will also be delivered on the site. These properties will be managed by the Council's NEW Homes Housing Company which was set up in April 2014 to assist those families living in Flintshire who do not qualify for Council properties due to their income being too high, but do not have sufficient income levels to access the private rented or low cost home ownership markets.

The Council and NEW Homes are developing joint estate management and maintenance policies to ensure all tenants living on the scheme receive an equitable, high quality service from both landlords. Similarity to the Custom House scheme, a Local Lettings Policy will be implemented, which will be consulted upon early in 2017 in preparation for allocations.

In addition to addressing housing need from the Council's Housing Register, the scheme will also assist applicants from its Specialist Housing Register who are in need of adapted and specialist accommodation.

SHARP Tranche 2

Sites for tranche 2 have been agreed, planning approved and pre-development work is underway. Consultation has taken place for each scheme with the local Member and communities. The site location and mix is outlined in the table below.

Site location	1 Bed Apart	2 Bed Apart	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	2 Bed Bung.	Total
Maes y Meillion and Heol Y Goron, Leeswood		4	3	2	4	13
Redhall, Connah's Quay			5			5
Dairy Site, Connah's Quay			3	3		6
Ysgol Delyn, Mold			10	6		16
Melrose Centre, Aston	2		2	2		6
The Police Station, Flint						tbc
Total						46

SHARP Tranche 3

The Council is currently in the process of undertaking detailed site feasibility works on a number of additional sites for inclusion in Tranche 3. These sites will be presented for Council approval in spring 2017. A projected £15.5M from the Council's Housing Revenue Account Borrowing Cap is proposed for the Council's House Building Programme.

Social and Economic Return on Investment

The following table provides a summary of the Social and Economic return on investment to date for the tranche 1 schemes at Custom House, Connah's Quay and The Walks, Flint. Going forward this will be measured and recorded for both the SHARP and WHQS programmes.

Employment & Training

Table 1. SHARP Community Investment Performance Batch 1 Sites	
Benefit	Narrative
Employment and Training	
194	Local people have benefited from Employment & Training Initiatives on this project
653	Training/employment weeks have been created for local people
3640	Hours have been invested to support these people by Wates staff
£195,090	Is the value of investment into training local people
Investing in the local economy	
£1,497,241	Has been spent with local small businesses on this project
£2,440,503	Economic Benefit has been generated for the local community as a result of this spend
£19,460	Has been invested into Social Enterprises on this project
Investing in the Community	
229 Hours	have been invested into volunteering in the community
£21,781	Has been invested into local charities / community causes
£2,676,834	Worth of Economic, Environmental and Social Value has been generated on this project
*According to FSB, 63 pence of every £1 spent locally with an SME is reinvested into the local economy for the Batch 1 sites (Custom House and The Walks).	

Flintshire Apprenticeship Academy

In October last year, the Council started working with Futureworks Flintshire to set an Apprentice Academy in the county. The academy is helping to maximise the creation of skilled local people through apprenticeships, which are needed for the Council's SHARP housing construction and WHQS refurbishment programmes over the next five years.

Council construction contracts always place a requirement on the contractor to provide apprentice opportunities and to recruit local labour, however it is often difficult to complete the apprenticeships owing to the nature of the contracts. The creation of this academy will ensure that full apprenticeships can be made and delivered.

Futureworks Flintshire is a community interest company which has the relevant experience, the right culture and values to be a close partner to the Council and working with a third party reduces significantly the cost of scheme administration for the Council.

Currently four apprentices are working with council-appointed contractors three with Wates Residential and one with Keepmoat.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF RECENT SERVICE CHANGES / EFFICIENCIES ALREADY ESTABLISHED

Delivering the Choices Document promises

Since the positive ballot result for the future ownership of the council housing stock, the council has focussed on delivering the promises made to tenants in the Choices document. These included both service improvements and stock investment. A number of the successes are detailed below;

- Increased the number of Tenant Liaison Officers from 3 to 5 full time, this has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of customer phone enquires in relation to the improvement programme.
- Restructured Capital Works team, investing in clerk of works and system support staff, to ensure continued smooth delivery of the WHQS programme up to 2020
- Remodelled the caretaking function to provide Handy person services to our most vulnerable customers without increasing costs, service will be reviewed in 17/18 to assess options around income generation.
- Implemented the Flintshire “lettable standard” for all empty properties after extensive consultation with customers which should increase satisfaction with new tenancy and reduce customer enquiries

Supporting customers in their homes through Adaptations

As from the start of the current financial year we have operated two categories of work for Disabled Facility Grants. Major and Minor adaptations. Minor consists of small works up to the value of a thousand pounds. Major adaptations consist of large value works which can be at a value of between £5k up to £30k.

Up to the end of quarter three we have logged 278 jobs for major adaptations with a committed value of £ 438,473 and ongoing/complete work for minors at 467 jobs with a committed value of £54,867.35. The overall budget for DFG work is £1m.

Service Transformation

Service reviews on all areas of the business have continued during the year, staff and customers have been involved in ensuring that key services are providing value for money, meet customer expectations and increase productivity. Some of the achievements in 2016/17 are:

- Restructure of Housing Management teams to allow a clear focus on new customers and existing customers through introducing dedicated teams for both. This will ensure the right people are allocated the right property making tenancies more sustainable.
- Upgraded the IT systems used to manage ASB which will allow for improved monitoring of performance, customer satisfaction and case management.
- Implemented new “self-serve” procedure for customer decorating materials, allows customer to order on line and reduces management and administration costs
- Reduced void security costs by £110 k by only using physical security on “higher risk” voids
- In advanced discussions with a local Social Enterprise to deliver void clearance services, employing Flintshire tenants and creating further job opportunities, by April 2017

Welsh Housing Quality Standards

WHQS – The Journey So Far

The Delivery programme continues to operate on a geographical split by using distinct “districts” to package WHQS work into manageable contracts. Customer consultation continues to take place in order to capture customer feedback ensure that the programme meets customer expectations, any lessons learnt are turned into actions for service improvement. Methods for systematically measuring individual customer satisfaction are currently being developed and will be implemented in 2017/18.

Work Streams are packaged in the following way:

WHQS – Work Streams

- The Internal Works will comprise of Kitchens, Bathroom and Heating Upgrades.
- The Envelope Works will consist of the following elements; Roofing, Chimney Repairs, Rain Water Goods, Rendering/ Pointing, Windows/ Doors etc.
- The External Works will consist of Footpaths and Fencing etc. within the curtilage of the properties.
- The Environmental Work Stream is set to target issues that affect the community such as parking and communal walk ways and ensuring best use of garages and associated land.

In addition to the main work streams listed above, the Capital Works team have also concentrated on the two clusters of non-traditional housing to increase fuel efficiency in those properties. The Easiform properties in the Holway estate are being treated presently and will be finished this financial year providing much needed improvements to the estate.

The three Tower blocks at Flint have now been renovated and provide excellent facilities for the occupants. The Towers have benefited from new internal heating pipework fitted following the demolition of the surrounding Maisonettes, the pipework was not fit for purpose and was renewed to increase efficiency in heating the blocks and to reduce the demand for future repair and maintenance. To improve fire safety a Sprinkler system was fitted retrospectively to provide additional protection and reassurance to the occupants of the blocks.

The environmental work stream has taken advantage of additional Vibrant and Viable funding, providing a new lease of life to the flats located at Pen Y Lan Courts in Connahs Quay. The complex now provides a much more aesthetically pleasing landscape and provides additional security measures to the blocks.

Delivery figures for 2016-2017

YEAR 2 2016-2017	WORK STREAM	DISTRICT	PROPERTIES	TOTALS	
	<i>Internal Works</i>	WHOLE HOUSE (K&B&H)	Deeside & Saltney	275	581
			Mold	306	
		Kitchens & Bathrooms	Holywell Flint	276 173	449
	Bathrooms & Heating	C'Quay & Shotton	368	368	
	<i>Envelope Works</i>	WHOLE HOUSE	Flint	209	209
		Gutter Line & Above Works	-	-	-
		Gutter Line & Below Works	-	-	-

WHQS Programme Out-turns

2014-15	Planned	Delivered
Heating Upgrades	600	966
Kitchen Replacements	922	1,023
Smoke Detectors	475	439
Bathroom Replacements	120	127

2015-16	Planned	Delivered
Heating Upgrades	334	192
Kitchen Replacements	1,129	1,393
Smoke Detectors	500	508
Bathroom Replacements	1,507	1,688
Roofs	317	112
Windows Doors	317	112

The Heating Upgrades are slightly behind as some customers have shown a reluctance to switch from oil / solid fuel due to low oil prices, staff continue to work closely with these customers to sell the benefits of upgrade, plus oil prices are now on the increase which should have an impact.

The Envelope work stream (Roofs, windows and Doors) was also behind programme for the year, factors influencing this were the contract being the last major tender to procure which resulted a later start on site.

Another contributing factor to this particular programme has been the renewal of Scottish Power cables on the Holway Estate.

I.T system- Anti- Social Behaviour Case Management

The upgrade of the current ReACT System to the latest version will further enhance the ability to effectively manage the Tenancy Management and Enforcement element of the service – there will be an enhanced ability to monitor costs of cases to be tracked to ensure value for money as well as helping improve performance by enabling effective case and performance management. This has been enhanced further with the introduction of a customer satisfaction survey from Quarter 2 of 2015/16 in relation to ASB case management with 66.7% recorded satisfaction.

During the first 2 quarters of 2016/17 there have been:

- 5 Postponed Possession Orders obtained
- 3 Mediation referral
- 1 Injunction
- 13 Referrals to Police and relevant support services

During the period there has been further development of effective partnerships with a wide range of agencies including Police, mental health, drug and alcohol services and tenancy support due to the complexity of the ASB cases. This has led to an increased focus on early intervention and support alongside legal enforcement action.

There is to be a revision of the current ASB procedure to ensure compliance with current legislation and best practice which will further enable the team to take consistent, effective and appropriate action when dealing with Anti-social Behaviour on the estates.

New proposals for efficiencies and service improvement

This plan provides additional efficiencies of c£0.216m. The principles underpinning the efficiencies are as follows:

- Procurement and contract management
- Realising and releasing capacity
- Improved performance
- Increased customer satisfaction

FUTURE FORECASTING & DEMAND

The demand for social housing is nationally outstripping supply, so there is minimal risk to the HRA not having sufficient demand for its properties in general terms. However, the design and location of some properties has resulted in low demand which incurs costs for the council through rent loss.

Discussions have started with colleagues in Social Services to explore further options, for best use of sheltered accommodation, which fit in with their longer term strategic plans.

WHQS must be achieved by 2020/2021 requiring an investment of £107m (stock condition survey figure pre inflation) however it can be assumed that this additional investment will have a positive impact on the demand for repairs, and the scale of investment needed post 2020/21. Completion of the works will gradually (from April 2015), release capacity for the DLO workforce to undertake capital work streams.

WHAT THE FUTURE SERVICE WILL LOOK LIKE AND WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE:

- Review of Asset Management Strategy to ensure all stock is fit for both current needs and emerging needs, particularly those residents affected by Welfare Reform;
- Implement a revised Performance Management Framework across all services and continue to make best use of business intelligence from IT system;
- Housing Management and Housing Asset Management working together to implement estate wide improvements. and protect council property assets ;
- Introduction of more customer self-serve options to reduce transaction cost and promote channel choice;
- Following implementation of housing management restructure provide a more proactive management and maintenance service that will improve tenancy sustainability, enforce tenancy conditions and ultimately protect WHQS investment;
- Develop IT system to enable “Right First Time” response to repairs and other customer enquiries to be performance managed;
- All repairs undertaken through appointment and scheduling system;
- More automated workflows through Civica and Capita System;
- Implement revised Customer Involvement Strategy that will enable performance to be challenged at a local neighbourhood level and ensure methods of involvement and feedback are in line with customer preferences;
- Improve methods of collecting and analysing customer satisfaction across all key service areas;
- Deliver the new ‘handypersons’ service in line with service objectives and review potential to charge.
-

RISK MANAGEMENT

A risk management plan has been developed for the WHQS programme and this is regularly monitored by both scrutiny committee and the Cabinet. Reports have also been considered on progress of the Choices Document promises by Scrutiny Committee and by regular reporting to tenant’s conferences and the Tenants Federation. The risk register below is updated and monitored monthly at the HRA Programme Board.

Ref	Description/Issue	Risk	Mitigation Act (MA) / Response Plan (RP)
1	MRA funding certainty - MRA is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRA funding is only guaranteed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure delivery of WHQS programme

Ref	Description/Issue	Risk	Mitigation Act (MA) / Response Plan (RP)
	included within the HRA 30 year Business Plan at £5.0m per annum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • year on year • MRA funding not received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully complete Welsh Government MRA returns on a quarterly basis • Lobby Welsh Government on need for MRA to continue to invest in the Housing stock • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
2	Meeting the WHQS by 2020 - Delivering a significantly increased investment programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Programme not delivered to targets • Major supplier issues • Contractor performance or contractor viability issues • Loss of key staff • Recruitment to delivery team • Significant stock condition issues • Tenant satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective contractor management • Appoint sufficient resource in delivery team • Develop a revised delivery team structure • Appoint additional Tenant Liaison Officers • Post inspection of completed work • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
3	Delivering the New Build Programme by 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient or unsuitable land and /or complex ownership issues, • not maximizing commercial opportunities • Expensive scheme costs • Poor quality product leading to poor customer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of the Programme with the development of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and the housing strategy • KPI's in place including quality standards • Specialist software identified to support financial viability assessments of potential schemes

Ref	Description/Issue	Risk	Mitigation Act (MA) / Response Plan (RP)
		satisfaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to deliver within budget • Inadequate internal capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Communications Plan • Design Procurement process to meet commissioning objectives • More intensive site visits to be conducted on potential development sites • Early feasibility investigations to be undertaken in respect of sites identified • Concurrent work stream to liaise with highways; planning and street scene officers • Experienced Housing Programme and Design and Consultancy teams in place • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
4	Introduction of charging for services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and cost of services delivered • Recovery of income • Tenant satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive tenant consultation • Effective debt management arrangements • Review of standard and cost of services delivered • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
5	Maximising rental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective tenancy

Ref	Description/Issue	Risk	Mitigation Act (MA) / Response Plan (RP)
	income particularly in light of full roll out of Universal Credit from Spring 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in rent arrears • Tenancy sustainment issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management and support • Creative use of DHP • Consideration to resource for tenancy sustainment • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
6	Meeting Annual Efficiency targets - Delivering the HRA efficiency plan ensuring savings targets are achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency targets not met • Detrimental impact on service delivery • Tenant satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress through Council Housing Service Senior Management Team • Service Plans and 1:1's • Financial management and monitoring • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
7	Proposed Rent review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on HRA Business Plan • Ability to deliver WHQS • Ability to deliver New Build programme • Impact on HRA services and sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure dialogue with Welsh Government • Ensure representation on relevant National boards • Modelling and risk management • Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board

CONCLUSION

This plan is written at a time of significant change for council housing finance across Wales. There are positive opportunities ahead to provide good quality housing services; local homes maintained to a high standard and new council homes built to meet local housing need.

* 2016/17 based on period 8 projections

(0.0308)

Yr	Year	Income			Expenditure						Net Operating Balance						Available Capital Funding					Capital Programme					
		Net Rent Income	Other Income	Total Income	Estate Mgmt	Landlord Services	Housing Asset Mgmt	Mgmt & Support	Debt Charges	Total Expenses	Net Operating Expenditure	Balance B/F	CERA	Balance C/F	3% of expenditure	Check Balance	CERA	MRA	Prudential Borrowing	Capital Receipts	Total Capital Funding	WHQS Capital Programme	DFG	SOLAR PV	SHARP	Total Capital Programme	Shortfall / (Surplus)
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
0	2016.17	(30,228)	(383)	(30,611)	1,499	1,206	8,124	2,271	7,098	20,198	(10,413)	(1,178)	10,531	(1,060)	(945)	Ok	10,531	5,050	12,817	-	28,398	20,870	1,010	0	6,518	28,398	0
1	2017.18	(30,850)	(1,292)	(32,142)	1,647	1,318	8,457	2,320	7,545	21,287	(10,855)	(1,060)	10,890	(1,025)	(998)	Ok	10,890	5,050	11,804	-	27,744	19,010	1,030	0	7,704	27,744	0
2	2018.19	(32,032)	(1,664)	(33,696)	1,663	1,319	8,541	2,369	8,002	21,894	(11,802)	(1,025)	11,733	(1,094)	(1,041)	Ok	11,733	5,100	8,879	-	25,712	19,282	1,051	0	5,379	25,712	0
3	2019.20	(33,916)	(1,735)	(35,651)	1,679	1,333	8,626	2,392	8,313	22,343	(13,307)	(1,094)	13,253	(1,149)	(1,099)	Ok	13,253	5,100	6,567	-	24,919	18,681	1,072	0	5,167	24,919	0
4	2020.21	(34,526)	(1,799)	(36,325)	1,642	1,346	8,712	2,416	8,364	22,480	(13,844)	(1,149)	13,322	(1,671)	(1,099)	Ok	13,322	5,100	-	-	18,422	14,745	1,093	0	2,583	18,422	0
5	2021.22	(35,439)	(1,811)	(37,250)	1,664	1,348	8,799	2,440	8,160	22,411	(14,839)	(1,671)	15,302	(1,208)	(1,154)	Ok	15,302	5,100	-	-	20,402	13,487	1,115	0	5,800	20,402	0
6	2022.23	(35,653)	(1,823)	(37,476)	1,680	1,362	8,887	2,465	7,987	22,381	(15,095)	(1,208)	14,794	(1,509)	(1,138)	Ok	14,794	5,100	-	-	19,894	13,757	1,137	0	5,000	19,894	0
7	2023.24	(36,366)	(1,835)	(38,201)	1,697	1,375	8,975	2,490	7,796	22,334	(15,867)	(1,509)	16,092	(1,284)	(1,175)	Ok	16,092	5,100	-	-	21,192	14,032	1,160	0	6,000	21,192	0
8	2024.25	(37,093)	(1,848)	(38,941)	1,714	1,389	9,065	2,514	7,584	22,267	(16,674)	(1,284)	16,396	(1,563)	(1,183)	Ok	16,396	5,100	-	-	21,496	14,312	1,183	0	6,000	21,496	0
9	2025.26	(38,562)	(1,874)	(40,436)	1,731	1,403	9,156	2,540	7,395	22,225	(18,212)	(1,563)	18,206	(1,569)	(1,236)	Ok	18,206	5,100	-	-	23,306	14,599	1,207	0	7,500	23,306	0
10	2026.27	(38,592)	(1,874)	(40,466)	1,749	1,417	9,247	2,565	7,221	22,199	(18,267)	(1,569)	18,522	(1,314)	(1,244)	Ok	18,522	5,100	-	-	23,622	14,891	1,231	0	7,500	23,622	0
11	2027.28	(39,363)	(1,888)	(41,251)	1,766	1,431	9,340	2,591	7,012	22,139	(19,112)	(1,314)	18,844	(1,581)	(1,252)	Ok	18,844	5,100	-	-	23,944	15,188	1,256	0	7,500	23,944	0
12	2028.29	(40,151)	(1,901)	(42,052)	1,784	1,445	9,433	2,617	6,809	22,088	(19,964)	(1,581)	19,673	(1,872)	(1,275)	Ok	19,673	5,100	-	-	24,773	15,492	1,281	0	8,000	24,773	0
13	2029.30	(40,954)	(1,915)	(42,869)	1,802	1,460	9,528	2,643	6,616	22,048	(20,821)	(1,872)	21,009	(1,685)	(1,314)	Ok	21,009	5,100	-	-	26,109	15,802	1,307	0	9,000	26,109	0
14	2030.31	(41,773)	(1,930)	(43,702)	1,820	1,474	9,623	2,669	6,429	22,015	(21,687)	(1,685)	21,851	(1,522)	(1,339)	Ok	21,851	5,100	-	-	26,951	16,118	1,333	0	9,500	26,951	0
15	2031.32	(43,428)	(1,958)	(45,386)	1,838	1,489	9,719	2,696	6,248	21,990	(23,396)	(1,522)	23,200	(1,718)	(1,378)	Ok	23,200	5,100	-	-	28,300	16,440	1,359	0	10,500	28,300	0
16	2032.33	(43,460)	(1,959)	(45,419)	1,856	1,504	9,816	2,723	6,035	21,935	(23,485)	(1,718)	23,556	(1,647)	(1,387)	Ok	23,556	5,100	-	-	28,656	16,769	1,387	0	10,500	28,656	0
17	2033.34	(44,330)	(1,974)	(46,304)	1,875	1,519	9,914	2,750	5,834	21,892	(24,412)	(1,647)	24,419	(1,640)	(1,412)	Ok	24,419	5,100	-	-	29,519	17,105	1,414	0	11,000	29,519	0
18	2034.35	(45,216)	(1,990)	(47,206)	1,894	1,534	10,014	2,778	5,500	21,719	(25,486)	(1,640)	25,289	(1,837)	(1,433)	Ok	25,289	5,100	-	-	30,389	17,447	1,443	0	11,500	30,389	0
19	2035.36	(46,121)	(2,005)	(48,126)	1,913	1,550	10,114	2,805	5,140	21,521	(26,605)	(1,837)	26,667	(1,775)	(1,468)	Ok	26,667	5,100	-	-	31,767	17,796	1,471	0	12,500	31,767	0
20	2036.37	(47,043)	(2,022)	(49,064)	1,932	1,565	10,215	2,833	4,834	21,379	(27,685)	(1,775)	27,552	(1,908)	(1,491)	Ok	27,552	5,100	-	-	32,652	18,152	1,501	0	13,000	32,652	0
21	2037.38	(48,907)	(2,054)	(50,961)	1,951	1,581	10,317	2,862	4,576	21,287	(29,674)	(1,908)	29,945	(1,637)	(1,560)	Ok	29,945	5,100	-	-	35,045	18,515	1,531	0	15,000	35,045	0
22	2038.39	(48,943)	(2,055)	(50,998)	1,970	1,597	10,420	2,890	4,321	21,198	(29,800)	(1,637)	29,846	(1,590)	(1,554)	Ok	29,846	5,100	-	-	34,946	18,885	1,561	0	14,500	34,946	0
23	2039.40	(49,922)	(2,072)	(51,994)	1,990	1,613	10,524	2,919	4,094	21,141	(30,853)	(1,590)	30,755	(1,688)	(1,580)	Ok	30,755	5,100	-	-	35,855	19,263	1,593	0	15,000	35,855	0
24	2040.41	(50,921)	(2,089)	(53,010)	2,010	1,629	10,630	2,948	3,954	21,170	(31,839)	(1,688)	31,672	(1,855)	(1,608)	Ok	31,672	5,100	-	-	36,772	19,648	1,625	0	15,500	36,772	0
25	2041.42	(51,939)	(2,107)	(54,046)	2,030	1,645	10,736	2,978	3,817	21,206	(32,840)	(1,855)	32,598	(2,098)	(1,637)	Ok	32,598	5,100	-	-	37,698	20,041	1,657	0	16,000	37,698	0
26	2042.43	(52,978)	(2,125)	(55,103)	2,050	1,661	10,843	3,008	3,785	21,347	(33,756)	(2,098)	34,032	(1,822)	(1,684)	Ok	34,032	5,100	-	-	39,132	20,442	1,690	0	17,000	39,132	0
27	2043.44	(55,077)	(2,162)	(57,238)	2,071	1,678	10,952	3,038	3,755	21,493	(35,745)	(1,822)	35,474	(2,093)	(1,732)	Ok	35,474	5,100	-	-	40,574	20,850	1,724	0	18,000	40,574	0
28	2044.45	(55,118)	(2,162)	(57,281)	2,092	1,695	11,061	3,068	3,727	21,643	(35,638)	(2,093)	35,926	(1,805)	(1,750)	Ok	35,926	5,100	-	-	41,026	21,267	1,758	0	18,000	41,026	0
29	2045.46	(56,221)	(2,182)	(58,402)	2,113	1,712	11,172	3,099	3,703	21,798	(36,604)	(1,805)	36,386	(2,023)	(1,768)	Ok	36,386	5,100	-	-	41,486	21,693	1,794	0	18,000	41,486	0
30	2046.47	(57,345)	(2,201)	(59,546)	2,134	1,729	11,284	3,130	3,682	21,957	(37,589)	(2,023)	37,356	(2,255)	(1,802)	Ok	37,356	5,100	-	-	42,456	22,127	1,829	0	18,500	42,456	0

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HRA Business Planning

Efficiencies

No	Section	Description	Type	2017/18 £m	Notes
1	Various	Price Inflation	Service Efficiency	(71,182)	Price inflation has been removed.
2	Estate Management	Estate Caretaker	Structural Review	(18,667)	Removal of vacant position
3	Management & Support	Handy Person	Structural Review	(38,488)	This vacant position is being removed from the budget as the estate caretakers are completing this work.
4	Various	Employee Travel	Service Efficiency	(11,091)	A result of the review of essential car users and rates.
5	Management & Support	Conference/Seminars	Service Efficiency	(13,544)	A reduction in the conference budget.
6	Estate Management	Supplies & Services	Service Efficiency	(4,165)	A review of supplies and services budgets.
7	Housing Asset Management	Fleet Costs (Disabled Adaptations)	Service Efficiency	(40,000)	Capitalisation of the cost of vehicles used for the capital works on adapted properties.
8	Estate Management	Neighbourhood Housing Assistant	Structural Review	(19,310)	Removal of vacant position.
		Total HRA		(216,447)	

Investment Decisions/Cost Pressures

No	Section	Description	Type	2017/18 £m	Notes
1	Income	Service Charges	Income Pressure	311,428	Reduction in income in line with phased introduction of Service Charges
2	Housing Programmes	SHARP - Site Investigation Fees/Other Costs	Service Improvement	79,000	Revenue budget to support the cost of the SHARP which cannot be capitalised (e.g. legal fees, land valuations)
3	Estate Management	Gardens	Service Pressure	55,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
4	Estate Management	Laundry	Service Pressure	14,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
5	Estate Management	Aerials	Service Pressure	20,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
6	Estate Management	Window Cleaning	Service Pressure	10,500	Reflective of increased contract costs
7	Estate Management	Communal Cleaning		9,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
8	Housing Asset Mgmt	Waste Removal	Service Pressure	20,000	Reflective of increased contract costs
9	Housing Asset Mgmt	Electrical Qualifying Officer	Service Improvement	40,226	Additional position introduced to cover Health & Safety requirements
10	Management & Support	Insurance	Historic Budget Flaw	78,000	To correct a budget flaw
11	Estate Management	Revenues Manager	Service Pressure	16,772	To reflect a charge of 25% to the HRA for work on rent collection.
12	Management & Support	Apprentice Levy	Service Pressure (national policy)	37,129	New national policy (0.5% of paybill)
13	Landlord Services	Servicing & Adhoc Call Outs	Service Pressure	40,000	(e.g. smoke alarm testing, lift maintenance).
		Total HRA		731,055	
		Grand Total HRA		514,608	

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Draft HRA Capital Programme 2017/18

HRA Capital Programme	2017/18
WHQS	£'m
CATCH UP REPAIRS / MAJOR WORKS	
Urgent Capital Works 3% on £95m	0.522
IMPROVEMENTS / COMMUNAL WORKS	
Fire Risk Assessments Work	0.150
General DDA Work	0.050
IMPROVEMENTS / ACCELERATED WORKS	
Asbestos Survey and Removal (Ongoing Programme)	0.350
Off Gas Programme	0.500
Welfare Reform / Adaptations	0.100
PROGRAMMED WORK STREAMS	
Internal Works	9.856
Envelope Works	4.231
External Works, Paths, Fences	0.475
Environmental Works - General	0.950
Capitalised Salaries 6% on £90m	1.076
Vacant Properties	0.750
Total WHQS	19.010
Non WHQS	
Disabled Facility Grants (DFG) - Mandatory/ Minor Adaps	1.030
Total Non - WHQS	1.030
SHARP Programme	
Batch 1	2.018
Batch 2	3.103
Batch 3	2.583
Total SHARP Programme	7.704
Total Capital Spend	27.744

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Community and Enterprise Overview Scrutiny

Date of Meeting	Monday, 23 rd January 2017
Report Subject	Housing Rent Arrears
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides scrutiny members with an operational update on income collection in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It also explains the financial impact to date of the welfare reform programme and identifies key risks to the HRA as Universal Credit is rolled out in full from April 2017.

Despite the emerging impact of welfare reform and the individual impacts on households affected, maximisation of rent collection remains a key priority to protect essential income streams for the HRA.

Last year, Scrutiny Committee asked for consideration to be given to the potential of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) work being deferred for tenants in serious rent arrears. This report makes recommendations not to implement any changes to the WHQS programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Note the latest projections on rent arrears for the year ending 2016-17.
2	Endorse the measures being taken to support tenants and to deliver sustainable tenancies.
3	Support the robust steps taken to recover arrears from tenants who, despite all preventative measures, make little or no effort to pay.
4	Endorse the recommendation not to link rent arrears with the rollout of the WHQS Programme and to continue to deal with rent arrears using existing procedures and protocols.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CONTEXT AND PROJECTED POSITION ON RENT ARREARS																																			
1.01	The Council manages 7,197 housing tenancies with an in-year rent yield of approximately £34.3m per annum in 2016-17.																																			
1.02	<p>Latest projections* indicate total rent arrears will be £1.19m by week 52 (31st March 2017). This represents total arrears of 3.5% as a percentage of the annual rent yield, compared to an outturn figure of 3.6% in 2015-16.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Financial Year</th> <th>Gross Rent Yield</th> <th>Year End Rent Arrears</th> <th>Movement (£)</th> <th>Rent Arrears as % of Rent Yield</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2016/17</td> <td>34,293,000</td> <td>1,196,030*</td> <td>23,000</td> <td>3.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015/16</td> <td>32,857,000</td> <td>1,173,030</td> <td>143,956</td> <td>3.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014/15</td> <td>31,452,000</td> <td>1,029,074</td> <td>33,326</td> <td>3.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>30,859,000</td> <td>995,749</td> <td>8,381</td> <td>3.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012/13</td> <td>29,222,000</td> <td>987,368</td> <td>-69,017</td> <td>3.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011/12</td> <td>28,097,000</td> <td>1,056,385</td> <td></td> <td>3.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Financial Year	Gross Rent Yield	Year End Rent Arrears	Movement (£)	Rent Arrears as % of Rent Yield	2016/17	34,293,000	1,196,030*	23,000	3.5%	2015/16	32,857,000	1,173,030	143,956	3.6%	2014/15	31,452,000	1,029,074	33,326	3.3%	2013/14	30,859,000	995,749	8,381	3.2%	2012/13	29,222,000	987,368	-69,017	3.4%	2011/12	28,097,000	1,056,385		3.8%
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1.03	The UK led welfare reform programme results in social landlords now operating in an increasingly challenging financial environment as many of the reforms are having an impact upon household incomes and reduced entitlement to housing benefit. In many cases, tenants are no longer entitled to full housing benefit and must make up the financial shortfall in rent.																																			
1.04	This report also details the underlying factors impacting on rent arrears, highlights council initiatives to help mitigate the effect of welfare reform and the steps taken when, despite all the interventions, tenants do not make efforts to pay or refuse to engage with the Council.																																			
1.05	The process of managing rent arrears is undoubtedly presenting an increasing challenge for all social landlords, especially in the context of the increasing number of welfare reform changes that directly impact on the ability of some tenants to make payment of rent.																																			
1.06	For example, the restriction on the amount of benefit that can be received (otherwise known as the Benefit Cap) means some households are now receiving less in housing benefit but needing to make up the shortfall in rent. There are currently around 47 council tenants impacted by the Benefit Cap of which 19 (or 40%) are in rent arrears over £300.																																			
1.07	The total financial impact of the Benefit Cap on tenants in weekly terms is around £2,600 and annually this will equate £132,000. This means that with no increase in household income, each tenant affected has to find an extra £56 per week (or £2,800 per year) to pay towards their rent.																																			

1.08	As an example, an introductory tenant had Housing Benefit reduced from £100 to just £0.50p per week and has then built up rent arrears of £1,800 as the tenant struggled to make up the shortfall. Several agencies are currently engaged to support the tenant and four dependent children from becoming homeless.																											
1.09	<p>Rent arrears in these cases amount to £20.5k, as shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="533 454 1142 851"> <thead> <tr> <th>Banded Arrears (£)</th> <th>No of Tenancies</th> <th>Value (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-300</td> <td>20</td> <td>2,966</td> </tr> <tr> <td>300-600</td> <td>9</td> <td>3,959</td> </tr> <tr> <td>600-1000</td> <td>6</td> <td>4,234</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1000-2000</td> <td>3</td> <td>4,502</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-3000</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3000-4000</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4000+</td> <td>1</td> <td>4,904</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>39</td> <td>20,565</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Banded Arrears (£)	No of Tenancies	Value (£)	0-300	20	2,966	300-600	9	3,959	600-1000	6	4,234	1000-2000	3	4,502	2000-3000	0	0	3000-4000	0	0	4000+	1	4,904	Total	39	20,565
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1.10	Other households are impacted by welfare reforms such as the Spare Room Subsidy (otherwise known as the Bedroom Tax) which places a restriction on the amount of housing benefit that can be paid to households that are deemed to have one or more spare bedrooms. In many cases, tenants are not easily able to move to smaller properties, or do not wish to move, so they need to make up the shortfall between their restricted housing benefit entitlement and the amount of rent charged.																											
1.11	<p>There are currently around 720 council tenants impacted by the Spare Room Subsidy of which 181 (or 25%) are in rent arrears over £300. Officers continue to work with these households and provide as much intervention and support as far as is practicable, but ensuring rent is also paid in line with the law. This is illustrated in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="552 1406 1123 1798"> <thead> <tr> <th>Banded Arrears (£)</th> <th>No of Tenancies</th> <th>Value (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-300</td> <td>369</td> <td>29,122</td> </tr> <tr> <td>300-600</td> <td>84</td> <td>35,850</td> </tr> <tr> <td>600-1000</td> <td>54</td> <td>40,330</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1000-2000</td> <td>32</td> <td>47,493</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-3000</td> <td>7</td> <td>17,087</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3000-4000</td> <td>2</td> <td>6,968</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4000+</td> <td>2</td> <td>10,280</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>550</td> <td>187,130</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Banded Arrears (£)	No of Tenancies	Value (£)	0-300	369	29,122	300-600	84	35,850	600-1000	54	40,330	1000-2000	32	47,493	2000-3000	7	17,087	3000-4000	2	6,968	4000+	2	10,280	Total	550	187,130
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1.12	The financial impact of the Spare Room Subsidy on tenants in weekly terms totals around £12,000 and over the 2016-17 financial year this equates to around £600,000. This means that with no increase in household income, each tenant affected has to find an extra £16.60 per week (or £830 per year) to pay towards their rent.																											

1.13	Despite the increasing difficulties to keep arrears under control, the Council continues to develop ways of addressing rent arrears at an early stage, encouraging tenants to engage with tenancy support services, signposting tenants to advice agencies and taking action quickly to prevent arrears building up to unacceptable levels where tenants are unable to meet their ongoing payment obligations.
1.14	To assist with rent collection and to mitigate for welfare reform, the organisational structure for the Rent Income service changed in late 2015-16 and the Housing Rent Income service now forms part of the Councils Revenue and Benefit services. These changes now help to ensure that all debt owed to the Council is co-ordinated and prioritised, especially for those tenants who have other debts owing to the Council, for example Council Tax and other Sundry Debts.
1.15	The structure and line management changes have taken time to bed in and the Rent Income service also operated with 20% less 'front line' resources for a period of nearly 12 months until staffing levels were finalised in September 2016. The service is now operating with sufficient resources to manage rent arrears effectively, including the additional pressures resulting from welfare reform. The new structure and close alignment to the Benefit service will also help to support the wider efforts to control rent arrears during 2017-18.
1.16	The Council also has a responsibility to support tenants and to avoid homelessness. It is widely recognised that homelessness generates significant negative impacts upon a person's health; well-being; education and employment. Therefore, the Welsh Government (WG), supported by the Council has had a longstanding commitment to implement strategies that aim to prevent homelessness. A commitment that WG significantly strengthened through the introduction of a new statutory prevention duty within Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
1.17	The duty requires local authorities to try to prevent homelessness amongst 'all' households who are at risk of losing their accommodation within the next 56 days through the delivery of prevention services that are person centred, proactive and aligned to the needs of a household. Importantly, households have a legal right to challenge the Council, if we do not take all reasonable steps to try to prevent their homelessness. This ensures that we undertake comprehensive and meaningful homelessness prevention activities with all households and do not target their efforts and resources upon households, whom the authority will have a statutory duty to accommodate, should their homelessness not be prevented, i.e. households with a priority need status.
1.18	Running alongside the measures to support tenants and prevent homelessness, the service also continues to address levels of arrears by way of early intervention and taking recovery action at an early stage to avoid cases escalating into more serious level of arrears. Although court action and evictions are always undertaken as a last resort, we are now adopting a more commercial approach to the collection of rent arrears, taking a more targeted approach to those tenants who fail to pay and refuse to engage with the Council.

1.19	Court proceedings are a necessary tool to secure payment from tenants who refuse to engage with the Council. In most cases, the judicial process usually results in the vast majority of tenants making payment or receiving an order from the court to pay rather than being evicted.																								
1.20	In 2016-17, 14 evictions have taken place up to Q3 against those tenants who fail to pay or work with the Council. This compares to a total 22 evictions in 2015-16 and also 22 in 2014-15. Although we may see a reduction in numbers of evictions this year, this is a positive outcome to ensure sustainable tenancies and is primarily due to earlier intervention and engagement with tenants to make reasonable repayment arrangements.																								
1.21	In addition to this, there are 262 tenants currently subject to court action for non-payment of rent but in the vast majority of cases payment is now being made to remedy the arrears and to ensure tenants meet their payment obligations.																								
1.22	The table below provides an analysis of the current position for the level of arrears at court stage: <table border="1" data-bbox="427 891 1246 1330" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: yellow;">Court Stage</th> <th style="background-color: yellow;">Number of Tenancies</th> <th style="background-color: yellow;">Value (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Applying to Court for a Warrant</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8,655</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Waiting Eviction Date from Court</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2,708</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eviction Date Granted</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5,369</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adjourned at court</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5,793</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Possession Orders</td> <td style="text-align: center;">29</td> <td style="text-align: right;">51,829</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Suspended Order on payment terms</td> <td style="text-align: center;">218</td> <td style="text-align: right;">354,191</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: center;">262</td> <td style="text-align: right;">428,545</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Court Stage	Number of Tenancies	Value (£)	Applying to Court for a Warrant	3	8,655	Waiting Eviction Date from Court	1	2,708	Eviction Date Granted	2	5,369	Adjourned at court	9	5,793	Possession Orders	29	51,829	Suspended Order on payment terms	218	354,191	TOTAL	262	428,545
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Suspended Order on payment terms	218	354,191																							
TOTAL	262	428,545																							
1.23	By way of anecdotal examples, in a recent arrears case, the tenant failed to pay or engage and recovery action was taken through the courts. Three days before the eviction was due to take place, the tenant made the full payment of £2,400 including all court costs. This was the sixth time the tenant had built up large arrears and then cleared the arrears in full when faced with the prospect of eviction.																								
1.24	In another case, arrears of £3,100 were cleared in full on the day of eviction. The tenant had been subject to a previous warrant which was suspended on condition of paying rent plus £25 towards arrears. This tenant is now making regular weekly payments and no longer falling into arrears.																								
1.25	Not all cases result in full payment being made prior to eviction. For example, in another recent case, the tenant had failed to engage throughout arrears recovery procedures until an eviction date was granted. At court the day before the eviction, the eviction was suspended by the court, with an order to pay normal rent plus £3.70 a week towards the arrears of £2,300. Although the Council attempted to secure full payment, the court made an order to accept payment of the arrears over a 12 year																								

	period. Rent Income officers continue to closely monitor these type of cases to ensure tenants meet the conditions of the court order and fulfil their payment responsibilities.
1.26	In a more complex case, recovery of rent arrears remains a significant challenge even after all recovery action has been taken to remedy the debt. In this recent case, the tenant has had six eviction dates over the last four years. Each one has been suspended by the court and every time the tenant has failed to keep to the terms of the suspended order and the Council has needed to apply for a further eviction date. At a recent hearing the eviction was suspended yet again on condition of the tenant paying rent plus £10 a week off the arrears of £4,900. Even if the tenant maintains payment of the court order, this will take nine and a half years to repay the current arrears. Ultimately, the Council is always governed by the decision of the courts.
1.27	These examples help to demonstrate that in many cases there are no quick wins and repayment terms can extend over many years. Using these examples also illustrates the need to ensure that recovery strategies centre on early intervention, signposting tenants to tenancy support services but taking quick and decisive action with rent arrears cases to avoid arrears escalation.
1.28	The collection of an in-year gross rent yield of £34.3m during 2016-17 remains the highest priority for the Rent Income service, as well as making in-roads into tackling rent arrears from previous years. Tackling rent arrears cannot be achieved in isolation from offering support and the service will continue to work other advice and support agencies to support vulnerable tenants, especially those impacted by welfare reforms to prevent homelessness and ensure sustainable tenancies going forward.
1.29	POTENTIAL DEFERRAL OF WHQS WORKS AND REPAIRS FOR TENANTS WITH RENT ARREARS
1.30	At a previous Scrutiny meeting in September 2015, as a practical way of tackling rent arrears, committee members asked for consideration to be given to the deferment of WHQS works for those tenants in serious rent arrears or causing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
1.31	As a landlord, the Council has no legal power to deny property improvements, which are enshrined in legislation and further endorsed through WHQS (part one – ‘in good state of repair’).
1.32	The Council provides three tiers of repairs under its statutory obligations, these include, emergency, urgent (referred to as qualifying repairs), through to non-urgent repairs (non-qualifying repairs). Non urgent repairs are those repairs provided to maintain the fabric of the property and for the Council to maintain the quality of its assets thereby reducing the need for detailed and costly improvements.
1.33	The WHQS capital programme is providing a range of internal and external component elements often linked to non-urgent repairs. Delivery of the WHQS programme is in line with WG guidance which provides clarity on what the government deems to be an acceptable minimum.

	In the delivery of the WHQS programme, reporting arrangements require notification of acceptable fails (i.e. where the Council have not completed installation). There is no reference in the guidance associated to delaying works because of rent arrears.
1.34	Officers have given this careful consideration having due regard to the legal position, the logistics and complexities of delaying works at an individual address until the end of the WHQS Programme, together with the overall fairness and equality of adopting such a stance.
1.35	<p>Having considered the proposal, it is recommended that WHQS works are not linked to rent arrears or ASB for the following reasons :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a landlord, the Council has no legal power to deny property improvements • There is no provision within WHQS guidance to delay works for rent arrears. • Notwithstanding the legal position, it would be highly complex to develop such a scheme which is fair, and equitable. For example, making a subjective assessment of those tenants who are in serious levels of arrears but making efforts to pay or those tenants affected by welfare reform and struggling to pay make this proposal impractical to implement. • Tenants can fall into arrears often due to vulnerability issues, either with the tenant or other members of the household. • Such a scheme could be open to legal challenge from tenants on the grounds of discrimination, • Delaying improvements to the Councils housing assets due to rent arrears would implicitly not accord with other policies adopted by the Council • WHQS is really about the Council protecting and investing in its assets and delivering quality housing rather than an incentive scheme to reward tenants who are up to date with their rent. <p>WHQS costs would be incurred as a result of the deferment of isolated cases in rent arrears in an area that is otherwise undergoing large scale refurbishment, especially having to undertake at a later date isolated works at additional costs to the Council.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The ongoing welfare reforms will continue to generate additional financial pressures for tenants. Many of these households will require appropriate advice and support to help them manage the difficulties in the reduction in their household income or in the case of UC, tenants being in receipt of housing costs that needs to be paid to the Council.
2.02	To manage the increased demand, the Council will need to re-develop work procedures and review staffing levels in order to respond to the needs of residents. This may also result in the need to divert existing people resources into responding to welfare reform to meet demand.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	We are starting to see an increase in rent arrears and greater financial risk for the HRA as a direct consequence of the welfare reform programme, especially as a result of the spare room subsidy, benefit cap and other reforms.
4.02	From April 2017 Universal Credit will roll out in Flintshire, this poses significant risk to rent payments to the council as the tenants will face a whole new culture of managing their money. For example tenants entitled to help with their rent (HB) have always had this directly credited to their rent account, however, under Universal Credit payments will be made directly to the tenant into their own bank account and they will have to budget for their rent out of their payments.
4.03	To mitigate this against these risks, an operational board has been created with a key focus on support for affected households, work procedures are being redeveloped to identify and support affected tenants at an early stage.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None</p> <p>Housing Act 2014 Welfare Reform Act The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)</p> <p>Contact Officer: David Barnes, Revenues Manager Telephone: 01352 703652 E-mail: david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Welfare reform: these are changes being introduced to a range of social security benefits and tax credits which aim to ensure that the United Kingdom has an affordable benefits system.
7.02	Benefit cap: is a limit imposed by central government on the total amount

	of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can get. People of pension age are exempt. The Benefit Cap depends on family situations and circumstances and when all benefits are calculated, housing benefit must be reduced so that the total benefits being received by a tenant don't go above the benefit cap limit.
7.03	Spare Room Subsidy: a change to Housing Benefit was introduced in 2013 by central government (often referred to as the 'Bedroom Tax') which means tenants might receive less in housing benefit in they live in a property that is deemed to have one or more spare bedrooms. Having one spare bedroom usually results in the loss of 14% of housing benefit entitlement and having two or more spare bedrooms results in the loss of 25% of housing benefit entitlement.
7.04	Universal Credit: is an integrated means-tested benefit for people of working age whose income is below a specified minimum amount. UC can be claimed by working age people who become unemployed.
7.05	Housing Revenue Account (HRA): The Council is required to keep a HRA to records all expenditure and income relating to the provision of local authority social housing. All rental income must be held within a ring fenced HRA account. This means the income can only be used for council housing purposes and not for the other general council expenditure. This also allows the rental income to be invested locally to help improve existing council owned homes and build new council homes.
7.06	Wales Housing Quality Standard (WHQS): is a set of standards that all council and housing association homes in Wales must meet by 2020. The standards, set by Welsh Government, ensure that all homes are brought up to an acceptable level to provide social housing tenants with the opportunity to live in good quality homes, which are adequately heated, fuel efficient and equipped with up to date kitchens and bathrooms.

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Community and Enterprise Overview Scrutiny

Date of Meeting	Monday, 23 rd January 2017
Report Subject	Commuted Sums and Shared Equity Redemption Payments Policy
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer Community and Enterprise
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Previously a report to consider the use of commuted sums derived for the purposes of affordable housing, was taken to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2014 and approved by the Cabinet in June 2015. The report recommended:

- That Members support the process for the acceptance, calculation and use of commuted sums as outlined in Local Planning Guidance Note No.9; and
- That a further review of the Policy should be undertaken in April 2015.

This report reviews the use of commuted sums and provides updated recommendations in the context of recent Section 106 agreements and the Council's commitment and priority to building affordable homes across Flintshire through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP).

This paper also provides an overview of the Shared Equity redemption payments and how it could be used to deliver affordable housing across Flintshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	<p>Commuted sums- It is recommended that Members support that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Where a commuted sum is paid to the Council in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision, these monies must be prioritised for the relevant Community Council area; ii. Where a commuted sum is received and on site affordable housing has been provided as part of the Section 106 agreement, the monies can be utilised as part of the Council's priority for developing affordable homes across Flintshire through SHARP.
2	<p>Shared Equity - It is recommended that Members support the approach to the Shared Equity redemption payments, as set out below.</p>
3	<p>Management of process - It is recommended that Scrutiny receives an annual monitoring report on the Commuted Sums and Shared Equity redemption payments:</p>

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	<p>EXPLAINING THE COMMUTED SUMS AND SHARED EQUITY REDEMPTION PAYMENTS</p>
1.01	<p>Commuted sums - current approach to agreeing commuted sums</p> <p>In relation to delivering affordable homes through market led schemes and where the threshold for affordable housing provision is triggered (25 units or more / one hectare), the Developer is expected to provide 30% affordable units on site. However, in exceptional circumstances, where on site provision is not feasible the developer can provide off site provision, and where this is not possible and subject to approval, the developer can provide a commuted sum to the value of the 30% on site provision.</p> <p>Planning Policy Technical Advice 2 Planning and Affordable Housing states: The strong presumption is that affordable housing will be provided on the application site so that it contributes to the development of socially mixed communities.</p> <p>However, on some of the larger sites, the preferred approach is that the developer provides a mix of shared equity units, affordable rent and a commuted sum. The rationale for this approach is to ensure a mix of affordable tenures, including social rented properties delivered through the SHARP.</p>
1.02	<p>Update of commuted sums already received</p> <p>The table below outlines the commuted sums received to date.</p>

Area of development	Balance as per journal as at November 2016	Area of use / Restrictions as per S106	Comments
Ewloe	£88,781	Flintshire	Subject to Community Council agreement, looking to use towards an adapted property to house someone on the Specialist Housing Register.
Northop	£116,950	Flintshire	To consult with Community Council on spend.
Penyffordd/ Penymynydd	£262,107	Flintshire	Working with local Members to introduce Homebuy for local residents.
Hawarden	£58,656	Hawarden CC area	To consult with Community Council on spend.
Broughton	£210,000	Broughton CC area	Working with local Member on potential scheme to be delivered through the SHARP.
Total	£736,494		

Although the majority of S106 pertaining to affordable housing provision state the use as Flintshire wide, currently there is an expectation that the monies are spent in the same Community Council area where the monies were generated. This was put in place when a commuted sum was paid in place of the provision of affordable homes in a community and as such it is justified to seek alternative sites or mechanism for the delivery of the properties for local people. However, in more recent instances the commuted sum has been provided on sites where there is on site affordable provision (shared equity / affordable rent), and as such the commuted sum would not necessarily be needed in that particular community as local need will be met.

1.03

Proposed use of commuted sums going forward

The Council has agreed that commuted sums are used in a number of ways and require flexibility to do so, and this approach is reflected in the Section 106 agreement. Further to this it is proposed that:

- i. Where the Council is in receipt of a commuted sum in lieu of any affordable housing being provided on site then the money should be prioritised to be spent in the Community Council area of the development. Affordable housing provision could be delivered through models such as Homebuy or contribute to a wider affordable housing scheme being delivered in the area through the Council's Strategic Housing And Regeneration Programme (SHARP) or a partner Housing Association. The options for provision must align with those set out in Flintshire's Local Planning Guidance Note (LPGN) No.9.
- ii. Where the commuted sum forms part of a combination of on-site provision (e.g. shared equity and affordable rent) and a commuted sum for off-site provision, then it is justifiable for the commuted sum to contribute towards the Council's wider affordable housing

programme SHARP.

The rationale for this approach to commuted sums would:

- provide the most efficient use of the funding as it would enable the Council to maximise the SHARP funding;
- ensure affordable housing is delivered in areas of greatest need; and
- deliver homes in areas that are less attractive for market led development and as such unlikely to have affordable housing in their area, or on sites which are harder to develop (such as brownfield sites owned by the Council).

1.04

Shared Equity redemption payments

As part of the planning process (LPGN No.9) a developer can provide on-site affordable housing provision through a Shared Equity model, with the eligible person from the Affordable Housing Register purchasing 70% of the market value and the council retaining 30% equity in the property by way of legal charge. ***The conditions for the delivery of shared equity properties and any redemption payments received, are set out in a Marketing Strategy, which forms part of the legal agreement (Section 106).***

If the purchaser/individual owner pays back the equity loan in full at any time, including upon subsequent disposal, the purchaser/individual owner is entitled (in perpetuity) to sell or otherwise dispose of the unit on the open market free from restriction as to sale price or purchaser.

On redemption of the equity loan the council receives a payment to the value of 30% of the open market value of the property at point of sale (less reasonable charges). As set out in the Marketing Strategy, such funds are to be used towards the future provision of affordable housing including:

- Match funding schemes being delivered either through the Council's Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) or the Social Housing Grant programme (RSLs);
- Purchasing existing property for applicants on the Specialist Housing Register;
- Acquiring and refurbishing empty homes.

The following table outlines the amounts received to date by the Council in relation to shared equity redemption payments. These amounts could be used to contribute towards the delivery of NEW Homes Schemes, or Housing Revenue Account Schemes (none of which currently receive any Welsh Government subsidy)

Shared equity redemption payments from individuals where 100% of property purchased	£218,869
Shared equity redemption payments from Developers	£457,738

1.05

Management and monitoring process

	<p>The Housing Programmes Team is consulted on all of the planning applications in relation to housing need, tenure and mix, and in negotiation with the Developer and the Planning Officer, makes a recommendation in relation to the on-site affordable housing requirement. The Housing Strategy Officer monitors the numbers, in particular the units provided for NEW Homes (affordable rent).</p> <p>Where there is a commuted sum the Planning Enforcement team is responsible for monitoring any triggers for payment and notifying Finance and Housing Programmes when a payment is due.</p> <p>Where a commuted sum is to be spent within a particular Community Council area, it is the role of Housing Programmes to liaise with the local Members and, if necessary, the Community Council to identify the most appropriate and efficient use of the commuted sum monies in the area.</p> <p>In terms of Shared Equity, the Legal Team and Housing Programmes work closely with Flintshire Council's 'nominated agent' Grwp Cynefin Housing Association, to nominate people to the properties. On receipt of any redemption funding the Legal Team notifies Housing Programmes and the Finance Team who keep records of finance received.</p> <p>It is proposed that oversight and monitoring of the expenditure of both the Commuted Sums and Shared Equity redemption monies is done through the Housing and Regeneration Programme Board, with an annual report on expenditure and outcomes to the Scrutiny Committee.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The council is in receipt of financial contributions for affordable housing arising through S.106 obligations. The council currently holds £736,494 of commuted sums and £676,607 of shared equity redemption payments which are held separately from council funds.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	No consultations have been undertaken.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	<p>The key risks are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Not spending the commuted sums and shared equity redemption payments income on affordable housing – The income is used for the provision of affordable housing giving access to a home for those who may not otherwise be in a position to afford one. The Housing Programmes Team is responsible for monitoring and managing this process and the recommended process will mitigate this risk. ii. Not meeting local affordable housing need - The provision of

	<p>affordable housing ensures that all of the county’s residents have a greater opportunity access their own home. If we do not meet this need, homelessness will increase impacting on the Council’s budget.</p> <p>iii. Not maximising the impact of the income in addressing the affordable housing shortage in Flintshire – The Council has its own delivery mechanism (SHARP) to ensure efficient delivery of affordable housing in areas of greatest need, providing both social rent and intermediate rent. By using the income through the SHARP delivery vehicle we are maximising the impact of the income and therefore providing better value.</p> <p>iv. The environmental impact - This is considered and mitigated during the construction phase. All affordable homes built meet modern standards for energy efficiency and the Flintshire Housing Standards.</p>
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5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Lesley Bassett, Housing Strategy Officer Telephone: 01352 701433 E-mail: Lesley.Bassett@Flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Section 106 – a legal agreement setting out a planning obligation i.e. the provision of affordable homes.</p> <p>Commuted Sums – In exceptional circumstances, where the provision of affordable housing is not feasible on site the developer can provide off site provision, and where this is not possible and subject to approval, the developer can provide a commuted sum to the value of the 30% on site provision.</p> <p>Affordable Housing – a range of different tenures (set out below) for housing available to people who are unable to meet their own housing needs.</p> <p>Shared Equity – the purchase can buy 70% of the property and 30% is owned by the Council by means of a legal charge. When the 30% is paid to the Council this is the redemption payment.</p> <p>Social Rent – Below market and affordable rent charged on houses provided through the Council or Housing Associations.</p>

Affordable rent (also known as Intermediate Rent) – around 80%-90% of market rent charged on properties provided through NEW Homes or on some Housing Association properties.

Housing Associations – organisations that build, rent and manage social and affordable homes. In Flintshire the 4 Housing Associations are: First Choice; Grwp Cynefin; Pennaf/Clwyd Alyn; and Wales and West.

Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP) – Flintshire County Council House Building Programme which will build 500 new homes, of which 200 are to be Council (Social Rent) and 300 are to be affordable rent (also known as Intermediate Rent) through NEW Homes.

North East Wales Homes, (NEW Homes) - is a Housing company based in Flintshire and owned by Flintshire County Council. NEW Homes owns, leases and manages properties across Flintshire. The company was established to increase the quantity and quality of affordable housing available across the county; increasing housing choice for those who may not qualify for social housing but for whom market housing is unaffordable or difficult to access.

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COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 23 rd January, 2017
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme
Cabinet Member	N / A
Report Author	Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work programme of the Committee of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?
2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.
3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Publication of this report constitutes consultation.
4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None as a result of this report.
5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Current Forward Work Programme
6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Ceri Shotton Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 702305</p> <p>E-mail: ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Improvement Plan: the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to set Improvement Objectives and publish an Improvement Plan.

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CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Report Author	Submission Deadline
1 February, 2017 Meeting to held at Council Offices, Flint with a tour of The Walks to follow Page 61	Housing Renewal Policy Customer Services Strategy Update SARTH	To advise Members of the finding from the 2016 private sector housing stock condition survey and the subsequent recommended amendments to the Council Renewal Policy. To update on the Customer Services Strategy. To update the Committee on the local project and progress with the Denbighshire Partnership	Consultation Assurance/Monitoring Assurance/Monitoring	Service Manager, Enterprise and Regeneration Service Manager, Customer Support Service Manager, Customer Support	
8 March, 2017	Quarter 3 Improvement Plan Monitoring Report Welfare Reform Update Update on North East Wales (NEW) Homes Board	To enable Members to fulfil their role in relation to performance monitoring. To update on the impact of Welfare Reform on Flintshire residents. To update the Committee on the work of the North East Wales (NEW) Homes Board.	Assurance/Monitoring Assurance/Monitoring Assurance/Monitoring	Community & Enterprise Facilitator Service Manager, Customer Support Service Manager, Housing Programmes	1 March 2017

14 June, 2017	Review of Fair Debt Policy	To enable Members to review the Fair Debt Policy.	Assurance/Monitoring	Income Manager	7 June 2017
	Quarter 4/Year End Improvement Plan Monitoring Report	To enable Members to fulfil their role in relation to performance monitoring.	Assurance/Monitoring	Community & Enterprise Facilitator	
19 July, 2017	Welfare Rights Collaboration Update	To update on the collaboration, outcomes and performance		Service Manager, Customer Support	12 July 2017

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Items to be scheduled

- Work of the Economic Ambition Board
- Local Lettings Policy, Flint – to be submitted nearer the completion of the housing development in Flint
- Update on the commissioning of CAB for Welfare Rights following its implementation

Suggested Workshops

- The work of the Economy and Enterprise Team – to be arranged following the May 2016 Local Government Elections.

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly / Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
Six monthly	HRA Business Plan & WHQS	To update Members on progress made in meeting the WHQS and HRA business plan budget efficiencies	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
Six monthly	Welfare Reform Update – including Universal Credit	To update Members on the impact of Welfare Reform and the cost to the Council.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
Six monthly	Update on North East Wales Homes & Property Management	To update Members on the work of the North East Wales Homes & Property Management	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
	HRA Efficiencies	To enable the Committee to monitor progress in meeting proposed HRA Efficiencies.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
	HRA Subsidy Risk Register	To enable the Committee to monitor ongoing risks following the introduction of self-financing for the HRA.	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)

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