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To: Cllr Ian Dunbar (Chairman)

Councillors: Sian Braun, David Cox, Jean Davies, Ron Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Ted Palmer, Mike Reece, Paul Shotton and David Wisinger

9 January 2018

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, 15th January, 2018 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 - 12)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings on 15 November and 20 December 2017.

4 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2018-19 (Pages 13 - 56)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise), Corporate Finance Manager - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: To consider the proposals for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2018-19.

5 **SARTH AUDIT REPORT** (Pages 57 - 72)

Report of Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) - Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing

Purpose: To share the outcomes of an audit report on the management of the housing register and allocation of council property.

6 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 73 - 78)

Report of Community and Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator -

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Robins', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **15 NOVEMBER 2017**

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, CH7 6NA on Wednesday, 15 November 2017.

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Dunbar (Chairman)

Councillors: Sian Braun, David Cox, Jean Davies, Ron Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Mared Eastwood, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Ted Palmer, Mike Reece, Paul Shotton and David Wisinger

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Christine Jones and Patrick Heesom

APOLOGIES: Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Rosetta Dolphin

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Derek Butler, Cabinet Member for Economic Development; Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise), Enterprise & Regeneration Manager, Benefits Manager, Housing Solutions and Commissioning Manager, Service Manager Housing Programmes, and Enterprise and Regeneration Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman referred to the sadness at the recent death of Carl Sargeant, Assembly Member, and asked Members and officers to take part in a minutes silence in tribute to his memory. The Chairman expressed his condolences and thoughts to his family and friends.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

28. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor David Wisinger nominated Councillor Ted Palmer as Vice-Chair of the Committee and this was duly seconded.

Councillor George Hardcastle nominated Councillor Rosetta Dolphin and this was seconded.

On being put to the vote Councillor Ted Palmer was appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ted Palmer be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

29. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

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

30. WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

The Benefits Manager introduced the report to provide an update on the impact Universal Credit 'Full Service' and other welfare reforms were having on Flintshire's residents and the work which was ongoing to mitigate and support households. She provided background information and gave a presentation on Welfare Reform in Flintshire which covered the following key points:

- Pre Universal Credit Reforms
 - Bedroom Tax
 - Benefit Cap
- Universal Credit
 - Issues and Impacts
- Support Work
 - Personal Budgeting support
 - Assisted Digital support
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
- Projected Welfare Reform impacts
- Data Analysis
- Future Welfare Reforms (from 2020)
 - LHA Restriction – scrapped for Social Housing Tenants
 - LHA Restriction – scrapped for supported Accommodation
 - Ring fenced funding for Emergency Accommodation

The Chairman thanked the Benefits Manager for a detailed and informative presentation and invited Members to raise questions.

Councillor Paul Shotton referred to the concerns he had raised previously around the impact of Universal Credit and commented on the issue of rent arrears. He expressed praise for the work of the Benefits Manager and her Team for the support and guidance provided to Flintshire residents, which had been recognised by the Welsh Government.

Councillor David Wisinger said he had received complaints from some residents that they had been unable to make payment for rent locally and had experienced difficulties when contacting the Authority by telephone to speak about Universal Credit. The Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) agreed to follow up the concerns expressed by Councillor Wisinger following the meeting.

During discussion the Housing Solutions and Commissioning Manager responded to the questions and concerns raised around homelessness and explained the impact of the Universal Credit full service and the resultant pressure on Flintshire's

homelessness budget. She advised that the Government was planning to introduce a change in legislation in the New Year to provide an alternative way for Local Authorities to recover some of the costs incurred when placing an individual or family in short term emergency accommodation.

Officers responded to the questions raised by Councillor George Hardcastle concerning provision of interim accommodation and use of bed and breakfast accommodation. Councillor Hardcastle also raised questions around the issue of tenants in rent arrears, and the difficulty experienced by tenants who wished to 'downsize' to a smaller property but were unable to do so due to a lack of suitable properties available. The Chief Officer gave an assurance that contact was made as soon as possible with residents who were in rent arrears to provide information and support around income and entitlement.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee continues to support the on-going work to manage the impacts that Welfare Reforms have and will have upon Flintshire's most vulnerable households.

31. STRATEGIC HOUSING AND REGENERATION PROGRAMME (SHARP)

The Service Manager Housing Programmes introduced a report to provide an update on the progress of the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP). He provided background information and reported on the individual schemes which were being undertaken or considered as part of the SHARP Programme going forward.

The Service Manager Housing Programmes also reported on the main points, as detailed in the report, around progress on future sites which would deliver a mixture of Council Affordable and Shared Equity properties, funding for social housing, the Welsh Government Affordable Housing Grant and Innovative Housing Programme, Flintshire House Standard, and performance and community benefits.

Referring to the Flintshire House Standard, the Service Manager explained that it was proposed to establish a project team consisting of tenants, Elected Members and officers, to review the Flintshire House Standard to ensure it continued to provide quality homes and value for money to the Council and NEW Homes. The Council would also use the opportunity to assess the Flintshire standard against the Welsh Government Technical Standards, making it eligible for the Affordable Housing Grant. He asked for volunteers from the Committee to form a project team.

Councillor Paul Shotton spoke in support of the SHARP Programme and expressed praise for both the new council and affordable homes which had been built to date. He asked if solar panels could be installed on new build properties in the future.

Councillor Ray Hughes expressed his thanks to the Service Manager Housing Programmes and his team for the housing schemes at the Maes y Meillion and Heol Y Goron sites in Leeswood. He asked that his thanks be passed to Wates for the work

they were undertaking and for engaging with him, as the local Member, and local residents in keep all informed.

Councillor George Hardcastle raised a number of concerns around the Gary Speed development at Aston, particularly the availability of affordable homes for single people and the road highway infrastructure. The Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise) agreed to follow up the concerns about the road. In response to a further query from Councillor George Hardcastle, the Service Manager advised that affordable homes/apartments were made available where possible to meet the needs of single people as well as families.

Councillor David Wisinger asked what provision was made for disabled residents. The Service Manager explained that the Service worked closely with the Specialist Housing Register to help those most in need and disabled people were consulted in the design of new build properties.

Councillor George Hardcastle expressed the need for Members to be involved in the design of infrastructure for housing developments within their Ward.

In response to the Chairman's request, the Chairman and Councillors David Wisinger, Ray Hughes, and Ted Palmer put their names forward to serve on the Flintshire House Standard Group.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the overall approach for the delivery of new Council and affordable homes through the Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP); and
- (b) That the following Members be nominated as representatives to the Council's Project Review Team of the Flintshire House Standard: Councillors Ian Dunbar, Ray Hughes, Ted Palmer and Dave Wisinger

32. COUNCIL PLAN 2017/18 – MID YEAR MONITORING

The Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) introduced the report to present the mid-year monitoring of progress for the Council Plan priorities 'Supportive Council' and 'Ambitious Council' relevant to the Committee. She provided background information and referred to the main considerations around monitoring of activities, performance and risks, as detailed in the report, and invited the Enterprise and Regeneration Manager, Benefits Manager, Service Manager Housing Programmes, and Housing Solutions and Commissioning Manager, to provide an update on progress in their service areas.

The Service Managers referred to the Council Plan 2017/18 Mid-Year Progress Reports – Supportive Council and Ambitious Council, which were appended to the report and reported on the sub-priorities and overall progress and outcomes of activities for their service areas.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson expressed his appreciation to Officers for their work and support in addressing the issue of unlawful encampment on Buckley Common.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

33. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Facilitator presented the Forward Work Programme for consideration. She advised Members that it had been agreed that a short briefing session to consider 'How the HRA works' would be held at 9.30 a.m. prior to the next meeting of the Committee on 20 December 2017. She also explained that it had been agreed that the meeting of the Committee to be held on 31 January 2018, be rescheduled to 15 January 2018.

The Facilitator drew attention to paragraph 1.03 of the report and advised that at the meeting of the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee held on 25 October 2017, it was resolved that each Committee should be canvassed for views on its meeting preference as part of their forward work programme. She referred to the options as detailed in the report and asked the Committee to express a preference for its meeting pattern. The outcome would be reported back to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee.

Councillor Paul Shotton proposed that the Committee retained its current arrangement to meet on a Wednesday morning at 10.00 a.m. and when put to the vote this was agreed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted; 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; and
- (c) That the Facilitator provides feedback to the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee that the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee supports meetings remaining at 10.00 a.m. on a Wednesday morning.

34. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.58 pm)

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Chairman

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COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
20 DECEMBER 2017

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 Wednesday, 20 December 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Dunbar (Chairman)

Councillors: David Cox, Jean Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, Ted Palmer, Mike Reece, Paul Shotton and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors: Rob Davies (for Sian Braun), Dave Hughes (for Ron Davies) and Rita Johnson (for Ray Hughes)

APOLOGY: Councillor George Hardcastle

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing; Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise); and Service Manager, Housing Programmes

Housing Asset Manager and Senior Sheltered Housing Officer (for minute number 38)

Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer (for minute number 39)

IN ATTENDANCE: Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

35. INFORMATION SESSION

Prior to the start of the meeting, Members of the Committee were given a presentation on the Housing Revenue Account by Steve Agger and Sian Jones.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 16 October and 15 November 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

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

38. SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION REVIEW

The Housing Asset Manager presented a report on the outcome of the review of sheltered accommodation across the county, comprising a total of 2,637 properties.

The review was undertaken as there was a perception that the Council had a challenge in letting sheltered accommodation and that vacancy rates were a concern.

Amongst the findings, it was noted that empty property rent loss was not an issue and was broadly in line with general needs housing. Many sheltered housing schemes were in high demand, and the main reasons for ending tenancies were because of death or tenants moving to residential care facilities. Bedsitters were less popular and some schemes in rural areas could be more difficult to let. Finally there were a small number of schemes where access could be a challenge for those with mobility issues. These could be addressed through scheme investment plans.

On occasion, sheltered housing was let to applicants with support needs and physical disabilities who were under the age designation for sheltered housing as it was the most appropriate accommodation available to meet their needs. Changing the descriptor of sheltered housing to 'sheltered and supported' accommodation would accurately reflect this practice.

Councillor Shotton spoke in support of the recommendations and commended the refurbishment of the Glan-y-Morfa scheme in Connah's Quay.

The Chief Officer (Community & Enterprise) said that the report demonstrated high demand for accommodation as well as options for improvement, for example, to address accessibility issues and increase take-up of bedsits and properties in remote areas.

Councillor Attridge spoke about options to encourage tenancies in bedsits and the potential for some accommodation to be re-classified to meet demand of other customer groups.

Councillor Johnson asked if it was possible for elderly residents awaiting wet room installations to be given access to alternative bathing facilities. The Chief Officer said that cases should be referred to officers and was aware of arrangements with some extra care schemes. She advised that Council tenants were able to apply for an Occupational Health assessment to see if they qualified for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

As identified in the report, Councillor Dolphin referred to the lack of local facilities for those living in sheltered accommodation in more remote areas. She also stressed the need for properties adapted to a high-standard for disabled tenants to be retained for that purpose. On issues arising from problem tenants, Councillor Attridge spoke about the approach to tackling this and the aim to achieve the right mix of individuals with different needs within a scheme.

In response to comments from Councillor Shotton, the Chief Officer was aware of ideas being worked up to establish the potential for a mobile shopping service to remote communities and would seek an update.

Councillor Cox spoke about positive engagement by elected Members in helping residents to deal with issues such as loneliness. The Chief Officer said that the contribution of wardens was important in encouraging tenants to involve themselves in their local communities.

Councillor Hughes asked about the percentage of accommodation refused on the basis of lack of local transport services. The Senior Sheltered Housing Officer advised that the main reason for refusal was accommodation type. Councillor Attridge suggested that the Committee receive feedback on actions arising from the review after a 12 month period. The Chief Officer agreed that this would involve a detailed analysis of the waiting list and reasons for refusal.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the outcomes of the review and next steps, and supports the principle of sheltered accommodation being known as 'sheltered and supported accommodation' to reflect the customer group it serves.

39. PROVISION FOR GYPSY & TRAVELLER TRANSIT SITES AND THE RIVERSIDE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

The Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer presented a report to seek support for a costed options appraisal to be undertaken for the development of a 6 pitch transit site in Flintshire, and for an update of the management agreement for the Council's only existing permanent site at Riverside Park.

The report highlighted the statutory duties placed upon councils in respect of gypsies and travellers, and the benefits in providing a transit site for temporary use by gypsies and travellers passing through the area.

The refresh of the management agreement for the permanent site at Riverside was necessary to meet changes in legal requirements following which an application could be made for grant funding from Welsh Government to refurbish the site.

On a question from the Chairman, the Officer explained that the Council had no responsibility for unauthorised encampments on privately owned land but that cases brought to attention were recorded.

Councillor Dolphin referred to a particular example in her ward involving a long-term unauthorised encampment. Councillor Attridge asked that any specific issues be raised with officers outside the meeting so that information could be treated confidentially. Whilst he understood the concerns, he explained that significant progress had been made to the process to deal with issues more efficiently. The Chief Officer gave a reminder of the Council's responsibility to assess the circumstances of each case to reach an appropriate decision.

Councillor Attridge advised that concerns about security arrangements at Greenfield Dock should be passed to colleagues in Countryside Services. During discussion on the location of the proposed transit site, it was explained that options for Council owned land were initially being explored before looking at private land availability. Members were encouraged to pass suggested locations to officers and Councillor Reece put forward information on behalf of a private landowner.

The officer provided clarification to Councillor Shotton on the grant funding and advised that this was subject to planning permission granted on the land identified.

Councillor Johnson asked about the approach to charges for the transit site. It was explained that learning would be taken from similar examples across the UK, although this would be the first transit site in Wales.

Councillor Wisinger pointed out that despite initial concerns about Riverside Park, there had been no significant issues. In response to queries, Councillor Attridge said there were no plans to extend the site.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee supports:

- (a) A costed options appraisal to be undertaken for the development of a 6 pitch transit site in Flintshire;
- (b) The review and implementation of new management arrangements at Riverside; and
- (c) A capital funding application to be made in the Summer of 2018 to Welsh Government to refurbish the Local Authority site at Riverside.

40. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

In presenting the current Forward Work Programme for consideration, the Facilitator advised that an additional item on the outcomes of the Audit report on the management of the housing register and allocations would be submitted to the next meeting in January 2018. No further changes to the Forward Work Programme were made.

RESOLVED:

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

41. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS 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 11.10pm)

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Chairman



COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 15 January 2018
Report Subject	Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2018/19 & 30 year business plan
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and 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 consideration the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2018/19, and the HRA 30 year Business Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Scrutiny Committee consider and review the HRA budget for 2018/19 and Business Plan as set out in the attached appendices.
2	That Scrutiny Committee consider the views and recommendations of the Cabinet Member and Council Leader on setting a rent increase of 3% (plus up to or minus £2), with target rents applied for new tenancies, as a more affordable increase than the Welsh Government Rent Policy formula which would set an increase of 4.5% (plus up to or minus £2).
3	That Scrutiny Committee support a garage rent increase of £1 per week and a garage plot rent increase of £0.20 per week.
4	That Scrutiny Committee support the proposed HRA Capital programme for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix D.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND TO THE DRAFT HRA BUDGET AND HRA BUSINESS PLAN
	Considerations
1.01	<p>The HRA is required to produce a 30 year business plan. This focuses on the prioritisation of a number of strategic priorities including, the achievement of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), building 200 new council homes, and meeting Choices Document promises.</p> <p>The Business plan shows a strong account with surplus income over expenditure needs. This presents opportunities to do more to improve service delivery.</p> <p>The strategic context for this year's HRA budget setting includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achieving WHQS by 2020 and providing adequate ongoing capital to maintain WHQS levels.• Following de pooling of rents a continued move towards efficient service charges and full cost recovery.• Ongoing transition of rents to Welsh Government targets.• Setting a balanced budget with a minimum of 3% surplus revenue over expenditure;• Maximisation of revenue efficiencies to minimise the borrowing required to meet WHQS by 2020.• Delivery of new build Council housing.
	Self-financing and Treasury assumptions
1.02	<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>The initial borrowing for Flintshire 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>Since the introduction of the debt cap new borrowing has been as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Borrowing to date on WHQS £13.1m*• Borrowing to date on new build £13.6m* <p>*estimated to 31/3/2018</p>

	<p>The current borrowing assumptions for 2018/19 are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borrowing for WHQS £5.1m • Borrowing for new build £11.8m <p>All borrowing is repaid at 2% per year in line with the HRA's minimum revenue provision.</p>
	<p>Rents</p>
<p>1.03</p>	<p>The Social Housing Rents policy was introduced by Welsh Government (WG) in April 2015 for local authorities and is in place for four years with 2018/19 the final year. The policy aims to achieve convergence between Council and Housing Association rents over time.</p> <p>The WG rent policy requires all service charges to be disaggregated from rents. The Council is in the process of completing this and proposals included in the business plan assume implementation of charges for all services on a phased basis.</p> <p>The WG policy allows 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 for existing stock at target to support tenant affordability. Rents for new builds have been set at 5% above target.</p> <p>The rent policy sets out the total target rent band for each landlord. 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 tenancy 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 2017 was 3% plus 1.5% giving rent inflation for 2018/19 of 4.5%. The council is concerned about the affordability of a significant increase in rents for tenants in the context of the need to introduce further charging for services and the roll out of Welfare Reforms and Universal Credit in particular, which is already having a significant impact on tenants.</p> <p>Therefore at the request of the Cabinet Member and Leader of the Council the service has prepared a draft business plan with an increase of CPI only (plus or minus £2).</p> <p>Welsh Government has confirmed that it will not penalise any council setting a lower increase, as the September CPI figure was higher than it has been for some time. Setting a lower increase reduces income by circa £300,000 in 18/19, and does not have a negative impact on the council's ability to meet the WHQS standard by 2020 nor its new build programme commitments.</p> <p>Increasing rents by the additional 1.5% increases expected income by an</p>

	<p>additional £0.304m in 2018/19 (£6m over the life of the plan).</p> <p>Rent increases and service charges are covered by Universal Credit and Housing Benefit for social tenants however, a proportion of tenants will only qualify for partial benefit and so may find it more difficult to make payments.</p> <p>A number of general needs tenants are also housed in properties which attract service charges. They may not receive help towards their rent and service charges from Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.</p>
	Garage Rents
1.04	Garage rents are currently charged at £6.57 per week and garage plots £1.20 per week. An increase of £1 per week is proposed for garages and £0.20 for garage plots.
	Capital programme
1.05	<p>£21m has been built into the WHQS and Asset investment programme for 2018/19. This includes provision for internal work streams, external enveloping works, environmental programmes, fire risk work and Disability Facility Grant (DFG) 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, £11.8m of prudential borrowing has been budgeted in 2018/19 for Council housing building schemes. Affordable Housing Grant of £1.9m and proposed use of commuted sums of £0.4m allow £14.2m in total for SHARP developments during 2018/19.</p> <p>No additional grant has been built into the plan at this stage.</p> <p>Attached to this report for Informal Cabinet consideration: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRA 30 year Business Plan – Appendix A(i) • 30 year HRA business plan summary option 1 – Appendix B(i) • 30 year HRA business plan summary option 2 - Appendix B(ii) • Capital programme for 2018/19 - Appendix C

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 2018.
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 (with the exception of SHARP properties). 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(i) HRA 30 year Business Plan – Appendix A(i) Appendix B(i) 30 year HRA business plan summary option 1 Appendix B(ii) 30 year HRA business plan summary option 2 Appendix C Capital programme for 2018/19

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	Financial Year: the period of 12 months commencing on 1 April 2018. 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.

Capital expenditure: money spent by the organisation on acquiring or maintaining fixed assets, such as land, buildings, and equipment.

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.

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.

Major Repairs Allowance: Welsh Government grant paid to local authorities in Wales who still manage and maintain their council housing.

Affordable Housing Grant: Welsh Government grant paid to local authorities to fund up to 58% of new build development costs.

**FLINTSHIRE
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT:
BUSINESS PLAN**

2018 – 2048

DRAFT

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FOREWORD

1 INTRODUCTION

This business plan sets out Flintshire County Council's annual review and our financial 30 year plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The plan provides an overview of our current position identifying our achievements, as well as setting out our action plan to deliver continuous improvements in our services, while achieving value for money through effective delivery, making efficiencies where appropriate, and delivering economies of scale. Whilst reviewing our significant achievements to date, the business plan also sets out our vision and ambitions for housing delivery over the next 30 years through our strategic priorities.

Our primary priority is to continue to grow our housing stock by 1,000 additional homes over the lifetime of the plan. This will be achieved through new build and strategic acquisitions, and will meet the emerging and changing needs of our population and the challenges we face through increased numbers on the housing register and a shrinking private sector rental market. The scale, type and tenure of housing delivery will be led and informed by the intelligence of demand and the profile of those on our housing register, SARTH, as well as importantly through the County's new Housing Strategy to be produced in 2018, which will consider all types of accommodation and identify the current and emerging needs.

Additionally, a further priority will be to maintain, sustain and build on the improvements delivered through the WHQS programme, particularly to improve the energy efficiency of our homes. We aim to continue to improve our asset base, while developing an understanding of the issues of our existing range of improvement offers and installation lifecycles. As part of this process we intend to refresh our housing stock survey to provide a clearer, more comprehensive understanding of our housing stock and enable us to prioritise activity.

The Council is committed to continuous improvement of performance, particularly in relation to service delivery, and while this business plan identifies some significant performance improvements, the longer term priority is to be in the top quartile for performance and quality of service delivery. To achieve this we recognise the need to ensure the intelligence is being gathered in a way it can be interrogated and analysed to inform methods of delivery and robust reporting and benchmarking.

2 FLINTSHIRE'S HOUSING SERVICE – THE CONTEXT

2.1 The HRA Business Plan 2018-2048

The HRA Business Plan sets out our approach to delivering and maintaining decent and safe homes to our residents over the period of the plan. There has been significant achievements over 2016/17 through the new build programme, WHQS improved turnaround time for voids and response to emergency and urgent repairs. The plan identifies the Council's ambitions to deliver more efficient and effective service and deliver further improvements in 2017/18 onwards.

2.2 The Council Plan (2017 – 2023) Strategic Priorities

Flintshire County Council has identified housing as a key strategic priority as set out in the Council Plan for 2017 - 2023, ensuring its residents have access to:

- Appropriate and affordable homes, through ensuring the supply of affordable and quality council housing of all tenures; and
- Modern, efficient and adapted homes, through ensuring the supply of affordable and quality housing of all tenures.

The Council's aim is to:

- Prevent homelessness
- Meet the diverse housing and accommodation needs of the local population
- Develop more opportunities for people to access affordable rent and low cost home ownership
- Build the maximum number of Council houses possible as part of the housing supply solution
- Meet the Welsh Government target for all social housing to be brought up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS).

In order to achieve the aims and priorities:

- Local Authorities need to be able to access grant funding to support new build affordable and social housing;
- There needs to be sufficient resources to fulfil the duties of the Wales Housing Act;
- Revised capital limits on borrowing for councils to build new houses;
- Maintaining of the funding of Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) so that the council can meet the WHQS by 2020; and
- Maintaining current rent policy so that the Council can achieve WHQS by 2020.

2.3 The Well-being for Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

The seven well-being goals identified in the Act can be considered as aspirations for housing delivery as identified in the More Better report by Dr Ed Green:

<i>A globally responsible Wales</i>	Setting higher standards – reduced carbon footprints and energy-positive communities
<i>A prosperous Wales</i>	Developing an integrated all-Wales supply chain using local resources and a sustainable economy
<i>A resilient Wales</i>	Future proofing with long term flexibility, adaptability, ecological value and climate resilience
<i>A healthier Wales</i>	Reduced pressure on the health service through homes that promote physical and mental wellbeing
<i>A more equal Wales</i>	Eliminating household poverty by delivering affordable housing for all
<i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i>	Stronger neighbourhoods that support co-housing, self-build and cohesive communities
<i>A Wales of thriving culture and language</i>	Promoting diversity through Wales' unique cultural heritage, context and landscape

2.4 Flintshire Local Development Plan 2015-2030

Flintshire is in the process of preparing its LDP and has produced its Preferred Strategy Consultation Document, which sets out the growth ambition for the County and its strategic policy for meeting housing needs through the planning system. The Preferred Strategy identifies a requirement for 7,645

new houses during the plan period, 2015 – 2030 and a percentage will be affordable homes of different tenures to meet the local demand.

2.5 Right to Buy

In 2016/17 Flintshire made a successful application to Welsh Government to suspend Right to Buy, enabling us to retain our stock to meet the increasing demand for social housing.

2.6 Welfare Reform

Welfare reform has meant that Universal Credit has been rolled out in Flintshire, resulting in a cap on income from benefit which families and individuals can receive; ending housing benefit and direct payment to landlords; and limiting the amount of housing benefit for working age tenants.

A significant risk to the Business Plan is the collection of rental income as the tenants income reduces or when they are expected to take ownership and manage budgets directly.

2.7 Flintshire Community Benefit Strategy

Flintshire has developed a Council wide Community Benefit Strategy which, once has been signed off by Cabinet, will enable community benefits against all procurement activity across the Council. The objectives of the strategy are:

- To provide a framework which ensures the inclusion of realistic and achievable community benefit via contractual clauses in all applicable Capital Programme contracts.
- To provide a joined up approach to identifying and monitoring of community benefits across Flintshire, ensuring maximum value for money of spend on the Capital programme.
- By working together, avoiding duplication of effort, share best practice, maximise opportunities for leveraging community benefits from suppliers and provide a more common and consistent experience for suppliers.
- To ensure compliance within legislative framework when incorporating community benefits into the contracts and agreements. The core procurement principles of transparency, proportionality, equality and non-discrimination.
- Through guidance and the application of agreed approaches, deliver real and lasting benefits to our stakeholders and assist the overall aim of the Capital Programme, to grow the Flintshire economy, including delivery of sustainable employment outcomes for residents.

2.8 Flintshire's Regeneration Priorities

The six North Wales Local Authorities are working collaboratively on a Growth Deal, with housing as a strategic priority. The proposal is to establish a regional Housing Enabler project that would accelerate the rate of house building and provide support for SME developers across North Wales. The proposed scheme provides support for SME house builders currently experiencing barriers to entering the market; increase the number of housing completions; provide more affordable housing; and increase the number of construction jobs. Outcomes from the project would include 250 affordable housing as part of 1,000 housing programme delivery.

3 FLINTSHIRE HOUSING SERVICES – DELIVERY

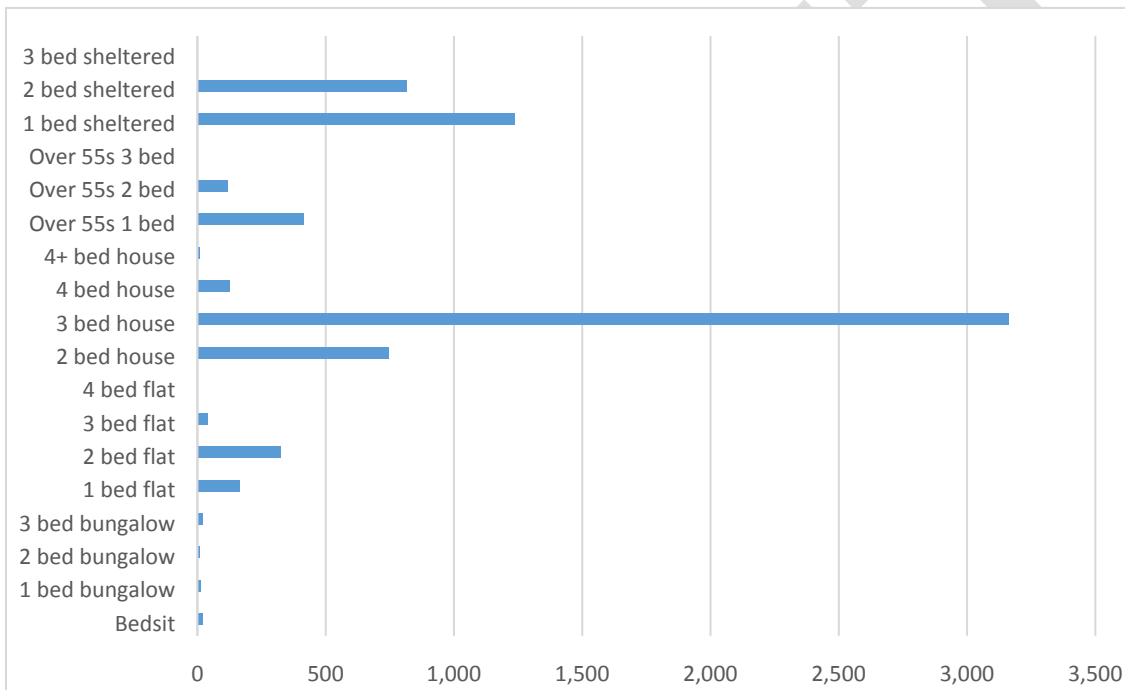
3.1 Overview

The Flintshire housing service aims to:

Ensure its residents have access to appropriate and affordable homes, through ensuring the supply of affordable and quality council housing of all types.

The service currently manages a portfolio of 7,233 properties (December 2017 Stock List), a breakdown is set out in the graph below.

Flintshire County Council Housing Stock (December 2017)



There has been significant achievements in 2017/18 through:

- The new build programme with 64 new homes transferred into the HRA;
- The WHQS programme continuing to deliver on time and on target in year – xx kitchens xx bathrooms completed;
- The implementation of a revised delivery structure for housing and neighbourhood management teams – 6 hubs created;
- The development of a Customer Involvement Strategy;
- Delivery of the repairs and maintenance improved;
- Voids inspections times reduced and void clearance subcontracted to local social enterprise providing local training and employment opportunities;

The Service continues to deliver its targets, and it recognises the need for continuous improvement to achieve excellent customer service and value for money in all that it does and underpinning this objective there are a series of priorities for the service to deliver in 2017/18.

3.2 Housing need and supply

The demand for housing comes from all sections of our society including the under 35s; the 'squeezed middle' who can't afford to buy but are not eligible for social rented properties; and also the older generation over 65 years. Changing demographics, economic growth and changes in Government policies, such as Welfare Reform, all have an impact on Flintshire and its housing market.

The design and location of some Council properties has resulted in low demand which, from a financial perspective, incurs costs for the council through rent loss, but with the demand for social housing nationally outstripping supply, there is minimal risk to the HRA of not having sufficient demand for its properties in general terms. However, the risk is availability of the right type of supply of housing to meet the needs of those on the housing waiting list, including the older population, single / small households impacted by Welfare Reform and supporting low income families to reduce fuel poverty.

Critically, going forward, up to date and accurate intelligence will help to inform how the supply can meet the demand and reduce the financial risk of rent loss. Initial analysis of the current waiting list, which has increased over the last 12 months, shows significant demand for smaller accommodation to meet the housing requirements of single and couple households.

Intelligence is a key factor to determining and projecting the ongoing need for housing supply across the area, including housing type and numbers, and while there are documents (below) which set out high level priorities and an evidence base for housing growth, they are a snap shot at a particular time and become out dated. The Council aims to be intelligence driven in the delivery of services and housing, which requires a comprehensive understanding of available data and systems to ensure the relevance and affordability of the homes being provided.

3.2.1 Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2014

The LHMA sets out the annual shortfall in affordable housing provision to meet the projected need of the population. The annual shortfall in all types of affordable housing in Flintshire is 246, and as a result of not meeting this requirement in full annually means the shortfall is carried forward year on year. The LHMA is due to be updated as part of the Local Development Plan process.

The affordable housing requirement is met through a range of sources including through planning conditions on market led sites and on 100% affordable housing sites delivered by the Housing Associations or the Council.

3.2.2 Housing Strategy

One of the key drivers for the increased provision of affordable homes is the 20,000 target set by the Welsh Government for this administrative term. As such the Welsh Government have also made available significant funding for RSLs and Local Authorities to enable different types of affordable housing for example health and housing, or in the way they are delivered by promoting innovation.

The Flintshire Housing Strategy 2012-2017 'A quality home for everyone', which will be updated for 2018, has three objectives:

- More housing choice – to increase the supply of affordable home by at least 740 new properties over the lifetime of the strategy;
- Improving homes and communities – through delivering and investing in homes through WHQS;
- Better services to improve lives – to collaborate and innovate to improve access to suitable housing.

3.2.3 Older persons – review of sheltered housing stock

A comprehensive review has been carried out on all of the council's sheltered housing stock. This included looking at void loss, demand, property size and location. There are issues with low demand and the rent loss across sheltered properties is disproportionate when compared with that of the wider housing stock with over half of the void rent loss attributable to sheltered housing. The review came to the following conclusions:

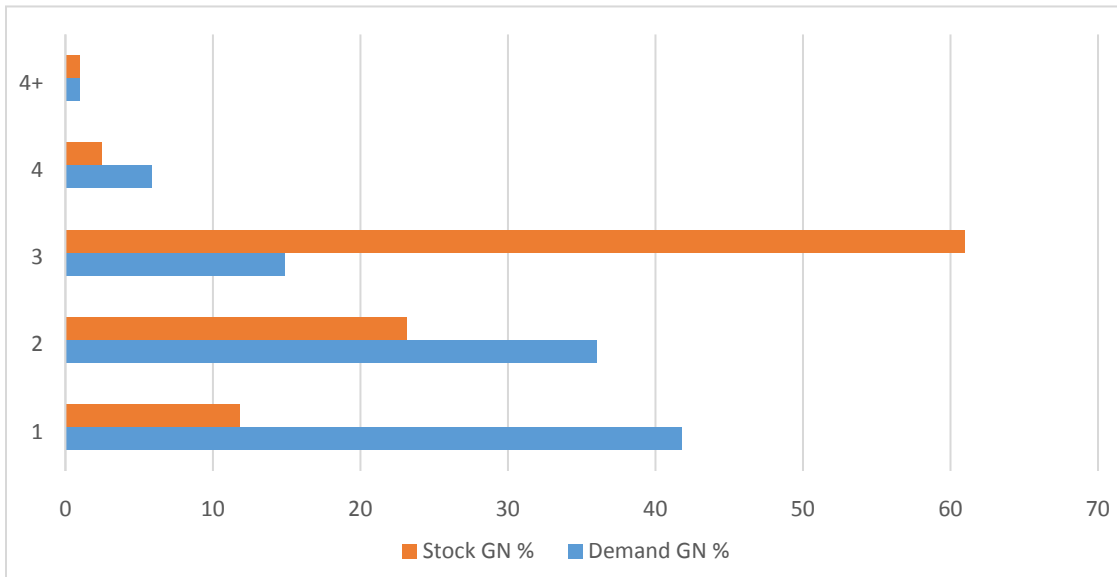
- Colleagues from social services have identified the need for 'specialist' accommodation with the suggestion of broadening the criteria from 'sheltered accommodation' to 'sheltered and support accommodation'. The suggested amendment is based on Social Services recognition that good housing is integral to the health and well-being of the people supported by the service.
- The adoption of 'Sheltered and Supported' accommodation formalises the current custom and practice (tenants accommodated who don't meet the age criteria but have a range of health or disability needs that can be met within this type of accommodation) NB: Current discussions are taking place looking at the potential development of refurbishing ex-warden property to meet the growing demand for intermediary accommodation i.e. released from hospital but not ready to return to their own home.
- The need for supported accommodation would enable the development of accommodation for individuals with a range of physical disabilities, mental health and Learning disabilities.
- A small number of schemes may require capital expenditure such as the installation of lifts to make them fit for purpose for the future.
- Bedsit accommodation requires further review to ensure that it can best meet changing housing demand and expectation

The review recommended a change of categorisation from 'Sheltered Accommodation' to 'Sheltered and Support Accommodation' to validate the existing custom and practice and facilitate further discussions with social services colleagues regarding future accommodation demand needs of their service users. The demand and how we are going to meet the needs of older people going forward will form a major plank of the new Housing Strategy, with the projected supply of accommodation being based on intelligence, including demographic changes and historic trends.

3.2.4 Supply and condition of stock

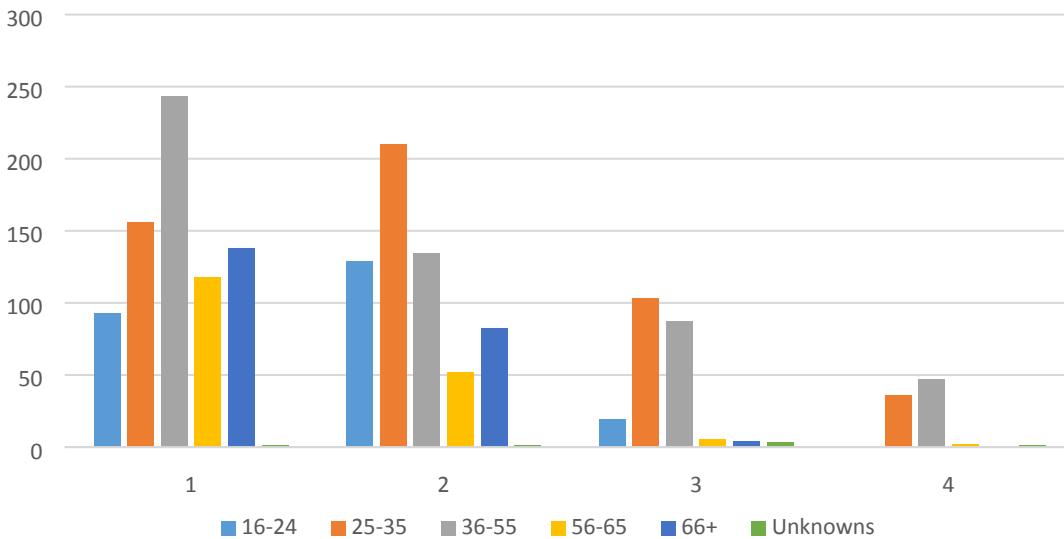
Analysis of our local housing register has provided some clear indications of where there is a mismatch of housing stock and demand. As at September 2017 the total number on the Housing Register was 1,686 of which almost half of the people on the register required a 1 bedroom property and around a third required 2 bedrooms. The graph below provides a snapshot of the current make up of the Council's general needs housing stock compared with the demand on the housing register by number of bedrooms. Although it is a relatively crude comparison it does provide evidence of the mismatch between stock and demand, with a clear demand for 1 and 2 bedroom properties.

General needs stock as a percentage against current demand



Further analysis of our housing register provides us with the age profile and interestingly the demand of the 36 – 55 year old requiring a 1 bedroom property. The analysis was undertaken to help the Council understand the potential impact of welfare reform.

Demand by number of bedrooms and by age group



The Council is aware that the current stock will not meet the demands of single/ couple households. Building on the sheltered housing review and the understanding of the short to medium term demand for general needs, the Council is taking a strategic approach to meeting the demand through a combination of new build; strategic acquisitions; suspension of Right to Buy; and realigning existing stock (i.e. sheltered accommodation).

3.3 New Build Programme – Strategic Housing and Regeneration Programme (SHARP)

3.3.1 Context

Following Cabinet approval in September 2014, the Council has made good progress to deliver upon its strategic objective of developing 500 new homes with Wates Residential as the Council's development partner. Of the total number to be built, 200 are to be Council owned (social rent) and the remaining affordable rent through the Council's housing company North East Wales (NEW) Homes. The first 12 Council houses were completed in December 2016 at Custom House, Connah's Quay, and further homes have been completed, or are due to be completed, as set out below.

3.3.2 Delivery

The following table provides an overview of the delivery of new Council homes to date in Flintshire.

Site	Property type	Number of units	Date of completion
Custom House, Connah's Quay	2 Bed House	8	December 2016
	3 Bed House	4	
Total units delivered 2016/17		12	
The Walks, Flint	1Bed Apartment	4	March 2018
	2 Bed Apartment	2	
	2 Bed House	18	
	3 Bed House	6	
Redhall, Connah's Quay	2 Bed House	5	October 2017
Maes y Meillion and Heol Y Goron, Leeswood	2 Bed apartments	4	March 2018
	2 Bed bungalows	4	
	2 Bed House	2	
	3 Bed House	3	
Ysgol Delyn, Mold	2 Bed House	10	March 2018
	3 Bed House	6	
Total units delivered 2017/18		64	
The Dairy site, Connah's Quay	2 Bed House	3	2018/19
	3 Bed House	3	
Former Melrose Centre, Aston	1Bed Apartment	2	
	2 Bed Apartment	2	
	2 Bed House	5	
Total planned units to be delivered 2018/19		15	

The Council is currently in the process of undertaking detailed site feasibility works on a number of additional sites for inclusion in the next tranche for development. These sites will be presented for Council approval in spring 2018. However, the ongoing development programme is subject to securing funding from the Council's Housing Revenue Account, which is close to the borrowing cap limit. The

Council has made representations to WG to increase the borrowing cap in order for the Council to continue to deliver much needed Council homes.

3.3.3 SHARP Flintshire House Standards

Properties and land associated with the scheme are designed to comply with the Council's 'Flintshire House Standard'. The Standard informs the design and specification of all the new housing delivered through the SHARP and forms a benchmark to ensure consistent, good quality of internal layout, and fixtures and fittings, high standards of energy efficiency and external appearance in keeping with local circumstance, low maintenance product specifications, adequate parking and a public realm designed to promote cohesive and inclusive communities. A working group, consisting of tenants, Elected Members and Officers, has been established to review the Flintshire House Standard to ensure it continues to provide quality homes which provide value for money to both the Council and NEW Homes. The council will also use this opportunity to assess the Flintshire standard against the Welsh Government Technical Standards, making it eligible for Affordable Housing Grant (AHG).

3.3.4 SHARP Community Benefits

The Community Benefits which have been delivered through the programme to date are set out in annex 2. The programme has delivered a number of apprentices both through FutureWorks Flintshire and CiTB, as well as a range of community engagement activities with local groups including schools and sports clubs.

3.4 WHQS

3.4.1 Context

The stock condition surveys were undertaken by Savills on 7,200 properties in Flintshire and this data formulated the basis from which to plan the workload to achieve the standard by 2020. The programme requires 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.

3.4.2 Delivery

Flintshire has a 6 year rolling programme of works, which commenced in 2015/16, and is let to selected contractors on various contracts. The work is arranged geographically, each district receiving a programme of works each year. The Council resources assigned to delivering WHQS are approximately 30 members of staff within the Capital Works Team, and other team members have been identified to help facilitate delivery, such as System Auditors, Tenant Liaison Officers, Contract Surveyors, Clerk of Works and Modern Apprentices.

Flintshire's WHQS Compliance Policy and Compliance Certificate forms the framework for delivery and quality standards of the programme. As set out in the compliance policy, the properties are assessed on the criteria Standard Assessment Checklist, which briefly includes:

- Is the building in a good state of repair?
- Is the building safe and secure?
- Is the building adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated?
- Does the building contain up-to-date kitchens and bathroom?
- Well managed (rented housing).
- Located in attractive and safe environments.
- Does the building as far as possible, suit the specific requirement of the household (e.g. specific disability)?

The programme internals includes kitchens, bathrooms and central heating, while the envelope works includes roofing, windows and doors. The following are the compliance guidance on installation:

- Electrical installations brought up to WHQS standards when renewed at the end of their economic life.
- Timber fascia's renewed with uPVC at the end of their economic life, unless forming part of wider project such as whole house approach.
- Timber doors renewed with uPVC at the end of their economic life, unless forming part of wider project such as whole house approach.
- Timber windows renewed with uPVC at the end of their economic life, unless forming part of wider project such as whole house approach.
- Kitchens that are over 15 years old are renewed as part of this approach. When renewed, kitchens will be upgraded to meet all requirements of the WHQS.
- Bathrooms without showers are upgraded when the current bathroom reaches the end of its economic life; or as part of a Capital Works Internal project; or 'Major Void' works.

3.4.3 Performance

The WHQS reporting mechanisms in place consist of:

- Monthly Project meetings with each contractor to ensure targets are being met.
- Monthly Financial meetings to ensure overall expenditure is on target.
- Monthly Board meetings with Leader / Deputy Leader / Lead member for Housing / Chief Officer to discuss progress to date.
- Quarterly financial reports to Welsh Government when requesting MRA funding.
- Quarterly meetings with the delivery team to ensure Team targets are being met.
- Bi Annual updates for the Tenants Federation and regular updates throughout the year as major changes occur.

Acceptable fails are kept to a minimum, however where the WHQS cannot practically be applied or implemented as intended, these are highlighted and their reason identified. Acceptable fails may only apply to one or a combination of the following elements:

- Cost of remedy
- Timing of remedy
- Resident's choice
- Physical constraint

The existing programme is 'refreshed' every other year to adjust and reflect any changes in 'Acceptable Fail' criteria, and the programme is then realigned to accommodate any changes.

Currently the Capital Works Team is nearing the end of the Internal Work Stream (Kitchens and Bathrooms) and as a result the remaining properties are proving to either be Tenant Refusals or No Access (Acceptable Fails). As at Q2 2017/18, the team have installed approximately 5,500 kitchens and 4,500 bathrooms, and those which still require WHQS work are either difficult to access or have previously refused the works. These properties have directly impacted on year 3 Capital Programme as they make up the Acceptable Fails from years 1, 2 and this current Year (Year 3); thus the number of WHQS completions so far is below our planned targets. Three Contractors have been instructed to reduce the number of openings per week to help facilitate the High Tenant Refusal numbers.

Table A: Performance targets

	Year	Internals Target	Envelope Target
1	2015/16	1,457	317
2	2016/17	1,398	209
3	2017/18	1,488	658
4	2018/19	389	860
5	2019/20	-	1,187
6	2020/21	-	969

To successfully deliver Year 4 of the Capital Works Programme, the Council is in the process of comparing various framework providers to ascertain which would be best suited for the individual work streams. We will be reviewing each of the Framework Provider's:

- costs;
- the contractors on their lists; and
- references for past projects.

From this exercise we will be able to tender and procure the best suited contractors to assist us to deliver this element of the Capital Programme with the aim of delivering efficiencies against costs and resource requirements.

3.4.4 Customer satisfaction

WHQS are currently achieving an average of 95% customer satisfaction. Each contractor is scored from 10 questions, which maps the tenant's journey through the upgrade works and scores key elements which allows us to identify any weaknesses or risks and to action accordingly. The tenant satisfaction survey is completed by the Council's Tenant Liaison Officers in a face-to-face informal interview, asking for honest feedback that can help the team and service to improve. Some tenants prefer to complete the survey in their own time and can return it via Free Post or can have it collected. This important part of the process enables the team to gather key performance data that is used to correctly measure the contractors' customer focus onsite.

3.4.5 WHQS Community Benefits

The WHQS programme has implemented the Value Wales Measurement Toolkit and provide data to Welsh Government on its contracts and the Measurement Toolkit provides data on the major WHQS work streams.

The Council have committed to provide 200 local jobs and 20 apprenticeship schemes through their commitment of spending circa £100 million over all the streams of work to help achieve WHQS. In addition to Core Targets, contractors are required to supply Non-Core Community Benefits within this contract. The reporting process for capturing the community benefit outputs are being developed for 2018/19.

3.5 Housing and Neighbourhood Management

3.5.1 Context

The service provides a strategic and important link to addressing tenants' vulnerability through a proactive approach with other internal teams such as the Income Team and Supporting People; as well as with key partners including RSLs. This ensures a joined up approach with maximum impact, whilst delivering an effective approach efficiently. As part of the approach to addressing vulnerability, the Council has produced a policy to focus the approach with the following objectives:

- To identify tenants who require support in the management of their tenancy.
- To encourage and promote partnerships and multi-agency working with both internal and external agencies in assessing and meeting the support needs of tenants.
- To enable tenants to reduce instances of breached tenancies and subsequent court actions.
- To provide practical assistance and financial advice to tenants who need this service.
- To attempt to prevent tenancy failure and resulting homelessness.

By having an approach that recognises the needs of vulnerable people and provides the necessary levels of support, will enable tenants to be more able to meet their obligations to being a responsible tenant. As a result, tenancies will be more stable and long term and the instances of anti-social behaviour will be reduced. All tenancies are managed and operated within the framework of the Council's Tenancy Management Policy.

3.5.2 Service delivery

Over the last 12 months the Housing Management Service has been the subject of a review, resulting with a restructure of the delivery teams. The new structure aims to transform service delivery by making it more efficient, effective and better value for money by re-focusing on the following areas:

- Lettings homes - getting it right at the start by matching a person's housing need to the right property.
- Tenancy enforcement – dealing effectively with anti-social behavior, community safety and tenancy related issues.
- Neighbourhoods – maintaining and managing the places we work, helping to protect our asset and create sustainable communities.
- Tenancy sustainment – supporting independent living by helping people gain the skills and confidence to manage their home by promoting financial awareness, employment and skills opportunities and health and well-being.
- Customer engagement – involving, empowering, consulting and working in partnership with tenants to help improve services, resolve issues, improve their neighbourhood and create opportunities for community cohesion.

The service will now be delivered through 4 teams: Neighbourhood team; New Customer team; Community Safety team; and Customer Engagement team, whose roles are set out below. The teams will be fully operational by June 2018, with the 6 hubs established and the local action plans in place.

(i) Neighbourhood Team

The proposal includes the addition of a new post focused on tenancy sustainment and inclusion. There are 7 Neighbourhood Housing Officers within the structure and, to support the further integration of housing and asset management, it is proposed that the designated neighbourhood areas are aligned to the 6 New District areas of:

- Buckley (1003)
- Connahs Quay and Shotton (1276)
- Deeside and Saltney (1191)
- Flint (1041)
- Holywell (1473)
- Mold (1212)

Each Officer will be designated to one of the new 6 district areas, with the 7th Neighbourhood Officer being used to provide additional support in areas that require intensive management intervention and support. They will also be used to provide flexibility and cover to help build the resilience of the team.

The designated neighbourhood areas are an increase from the current Neighbourhood Officers patch size, however this is a reflection of the change in the functions and the creation of a new customer team who will be responsible for the allocations and lettings. The role of the Neighbourhood Officer will be more focused on providing a visible and accessible tenancy and estate management service. This includes dealing with low level ASB cases with the specialist community safety team taking responsibility for high level and complex ASB cases.

Neighbourhood Officers will be expected to work agile providing a responsive and mobile service, which is visible and accessible to customers. This will include regular estate walkabouts, tenancy profile visits, new tenants visits along with other initiatives to develop a more detailed knowledge of the portfolio of homes including stock profile, resident's needs and wider community issues. Neighbourhood Officers will then use this customer insight and data to tailor services and develop effective neighbourhood plans to target resources and drive forward improvements.

The Caretaker/ Janitor role has been reviewed creating a handyperson service. This role will be used to support some of the Council more vulnerable customers, helping them to maintain their tenancy. The handyperson's service will also help support local community initiatives and projects helping to maintain clean, green and safe neighbourhoods.

(ii) New Customer Team

There are 4 New Customer Housing Officers within the team who will each be designated to one of the 1.5 of the new district areas and they will be responsible for covering each other's areas. Discussion will need to take place to ensure an even distribution of voids across the Officers. There are approximately 700 voids per year across the stock, which equates to 175 voids per annum per new Customer Housing Officer. When broken down further this would be approximately 14 voids per month/ 3 per week.

The new customer team will be responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient allocation for the letting of void properties and ensuring that pre-tenancy assessment are carried out and support identified to help minimise tenancy failures. They will work closely with Housing Solutions and the Voids team to ensure a seamless delivery of the service working to ensure that empty properties are re-let in the most efficient and effective way. This will include adopting innovative and dynamic approaches to marketing and allocating vacant homes. The new customer team will also lead on marketing the Council 'available to let' homes on the website.

A new Tenancy Sustainment Officer is to be appointed to provide initial support to more vulnerable customer to help support them set up their new home and sustain their tenancy. This support will be for an initial period, during which time referrals will be made to the relevant support services. It is anticipated that by offering a seamless transition of support it will help to reduce the number of tenancy failures.

(iii) Community Safety Team

The 3 Community Housing Officers will each be designated to 2 of the 6 new district areas and will be responsible for dealing with high level and complex ASB cases including any legal action. They will be responsible for overseeing the management of cases via REACT and assisting with performance reporting. As well as being responsible for using a wide range of tools to prevent and tackle ASB including adopting a multiagency approach. The team will be the lead contacts for MARAC and other Community Safety Partnership Meetings.

(iv) Customer Engagement Team

This team includes the addition of a new customer Inclusion post which will focus on financial and digital inclusion as well as supporting and promoting employment related initiatives.

3.5.3 Performance

The Housing Service has a range of KPIs to achieve and these are outlined in annex 1.

3.6 Repairs and Maintenance

3.6.1 Context

The service delivers all responsive repairs and maintenance, with a team of 110 operatives, across the Council's stock. The service provided includes:

- Gas servicing, including for NEW Homes;
- Electrical checks in line with legislative requirements;
- Cyclical maintenance including monthly lighting checks and fire alarm testing;
- Emergency 24 hours call out service;
- All capital repairs.

The priorities for the service are:

- to improve the efficiency of the service through improved resource management;
- to support other areas of the service to become more efficient (i.e. void turn arounds); and
- to become more effective through new ways of working.

3.6.2 Service delivery

The service has recently undertaken a value for money review, identifying and subsequently achieving efficiencies, and will continue to work within a VFM framework, embedding the principles of economy, effectiveness and efficiency, whilst maintaining a good quality of service. The review included an appraisal of contractors spend resulting in reduced costs and contractors being used for one off works or major works only.

One of the priorities identified is the implementation of a new IT based compliance tool Sky360, which will enable the service to manage, review and report on the regulatory landlord compliance [service areas] including interrogating the system to produce a delivery dashboard as well as 'diary' checks of operatives to maximise efficiency.

As a result of wider market influences the service has faced some recruitment challenges particularly for skilled workers which is compounded by the national skill shortage in the construction sector, thereby putting pressure on the limited resources, which is an issue out of the control of the Council. The service, however, has been proactive in reducing sickness absence from 14% to 2% in 2016/17, which has had a positive impact on the delivery of the service.

There have been a number of improvements across a range of areas of the service including:

- reducing the void period and speeding up the turn around, resulting in reduced rent loss for the service. This is achieved through operatives reporting any issues prior to the property becoming empty and completing any external work once the tenants have moved in.
- In addition, the service provides a repairs and maintenance service for NEW Homes and the Council's private rented temporary accommodation through an SLA.
- Successful delivery of the in-house gas service team, which received a positive audit inspection in 2017.

Looking forward, the team is proactively planning for the legislative changes such as the new regulations for electrical installations and checks, and installation of carbon monoxide monitors, with the aim of positively managing any potential impact on the service.

3.6.3 Performance and standards

The breakdown of service performance is set out in annex 1, however the headline response times for repairs are being exceeded as set out below:

Repair	Target	Performance achieved
Emergency	24 hours	2 hours
Urgent	7 days	4 days
Routine	28 days	14 days

The team is currently considering the implementation of a recharge policy, which would mean that the tenancy agreement would set out the respective responsibilities for landlord and tenant in relation to the maintenance of the property. The organisation authority may recharge the tenant for any repairs that it has to carry out, which fall within the scope of the tenant’s responsibilities. These types of repairs are usually as a result of tenant misuse, abuse, neglect, wilful damage or carelessness, caused by the tenant themselves, family or visitors to their home. Where these repairs cannot be attributed to normal wear and tear or component failure we expect tenants to pay for these repairs in full or, alternatively, the tenant may carry out the repair themselves.

The delivery of the wider service will be proactive in working to negate any issues at an early stage through regular estate ‘walk abouts’ by the management team; and the localisation of housing staff in the hubs and the development of positive relationships in the neighbourhoods.

3.7 Voids

3.7.1 Delivery of voids

During the year the Void Service has undergone a performance review with each element of the delivery process being appraised and assessed with the aim of improving performance and efficiency.

(i) Void inspections

The voids inspection service was reviewed to refocus of the resource utilisation and the time it took for the inspection, ensuring a quicker inspection turn around. Subsequently, two skilled / trades employees were seconded to solely undertake the void inspections, significantly improving the performance of the service.

(ii) Void clearance

The clearance will be sub-contracted to a social enterprise ‘Flintshire Refurbs’, who employs 2 of the Council’s tenants for a year, providing employability skills and basic skills training and assisting them into further employment at the end of the contract. The contract commences in April 2018 with a contracted performance target to complete the clearance within 5 days, reducing the period for rent loss.

(iii) Major and minor works

The existing contractor framework for major works on voids is currently under a value for money review looking at overall and comparative costs, and as a consequence of significant increase in the costs and the quality of the work, the team is to retender for framework contractors.

All of the minor works and some of the major is completed by the in-house team, including bathrooms and kitchens, where this is deemed to be efficient.

3.7.2 Standards and performance

The Council has set out what standards a tenant can expect when they move into their new home, which covers all aspects of a home including the structure, kitchens, bathrooms, heating, external and internal decoration etc. This aims to manage tenants expectations and have a clear understanding of where the responsibility of the Council ends and the tenants starts.

Performance is set out in annex 1.

3.8 Aids and adaptations

The Council is in the process of developing an Aids and Adaptations Policy which is a cross service policy and aims to align delivery across the Council. The purpose of the policy is to: 'support council tenants to be supported to obtain the best solutions for themselves and their carers as quickly as possible ensuring a fair and timely system for all. This may involve carrying out adaptations or being supported to look at alternative solutions to meet people's needs'.

The Council will consider and adapt to the principles of the:

- Housing and Regeneration Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014
- Enable adaptations scheme 2016

whilst meeting its financial and overarching duties to all its citizens.

The Council has a dedicated annual budget for aids and adaptations of £1m, which funds minor adaptations up to £1k (which is under review) and major adaptations up to £36k as per Welsh Government guidelines. The adaptations are delivered by a dedicated team of skilled trades people and an in-house Surveyor. Where the work is specialised or major then contractors are used to expedite speedy delivery.

In addition, the Council works in partnership with its RSL partners and Social Services to capture and address the demand for specialist housing through the Specialist Housing Group, which is deemed as good practice by Welsh Government. The demand is met through either existing stock and the necessary DFG; an acquisition of a property which can be adapted by our partner RSLs; or through a specifically designed and built property as part of the new build programme. This approach has resulted in people being housed in suitably adapted property over the last 12 months.

4 CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT AND SATISFACTION

4.1 Customer Involvement

The Council has recently developed a Customer Involvement Strategy and Action Plan to underpin the delivery of the housing service and ensuring full customer involvement in all that it delivers, as such:

The aim of the strategy and action plan (2018-2021) is to support the involvement of our customers in the development of effective, efficient and quality housing services.

The strategy sets out our commitment to involving our customers in a meaningful and effective way and identifies its key aims as to:

- Ensure that customers are provided with a range of involvement opportunities.
- Provide customers with training and development opportunities to support their involvement.
- Ensure that customer involvement is considered a mainstream feature in all our service delivery activities.
- Encourage mutual trust, respect and partnership between customers and Flintshire County Council's Housing Service to ensure we have effective customer feedback.
- Work in partnership with other agencies and organisations to improve the communities of our customers.

Underpinning these aims we are focusing on engaging and supporting (through training and information) our tenants by;

- Providing more opportunities for tenants to engage particularly through the development of local arrangements.
- Helping tenants to resolve issues that affect them and help us ensure that tenants retain satisfaction in the quality of our services.
- Improving and extending the range of communication options to ensure our tenants are informed, engaged and have the opportunity to challenge.
- Developing training programmes which encourage participation and encourages their involvement in the development of resilient communities.

The action plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to ask if we have achieved what we said we would do and what impact those actions are having. A review of progress will be published in our quarterly housing news and published on our website, and the Council will produce an annual impact assessment report which sets out how customers and clients have changed, shaped and influenced the way we work across Flintshire.

4.2 Customer satisfaction

The overall service performance as set out in annex 1, identifies areas of positive service delivery as well as areas for improvement, including capturing customer feedback, compliments and complaints, particularly in relation to the allocation and move in element of the service. This is an urgent action for the coming year and will include a number of solutions however we envisage IT to be an important factor in the ongoing delivery:

- Sourcing an independent company to undertake follow-up satisfaction surveys based on service delivered through regular surveys;
- Joining up the IT and delivering a digital solution using apps to capture feedback – this may require some up front work with tenants to ensure they use the service but it aligns with the Council's digitalisation strategy going forward;

- Reviewing resource management and ensuring ***we get it right first time***;
- Undertake the STAR annual survey to benchmark customer satisfaction; and
- Use Housemark to benchmark our performance and levels of customer satisfaction.

5 DRIVING EFFICIENCIES

Through all of the reviews of the service delivery detailed in this business plan, a key driver is to achieve value for money and improve service efficiency.

5.1 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 our 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 cost of void security by only using physical security on “higher risk” voids.
- Contracted a local social enterprise to deliver void clearance services, employing Flintshire tenants and creating further job opportunities, by April 2017.
- Upgraded base systems such as Open Housing – modular development on an IT platform for more detailed regulatory landlord compliance requirements.
- Development of local hubs, integrating the Housing Officer and the Accommodation Support Officer’s roles.

5.2 Stores

The Council has secured a new contract with Travis Perkins to provide stock through bulk supply. The contract enables the Council to ensure best value for the top 500 stock items through a transparent process where the Council can benchmark and challenge prices through reviewing the high spend and high volume products and go out to the market.

5.3 Fleet Review

A new corporate contract to supply fleet is being secured through EFS, the service required has been established together with targeted efficiencies including mileage and fuel. The vehicles will be tracked and reports produced for team leaders on mileage, fuel consumption and driving behaviours, providing a ‘demand plan’ for the usage of the vehicles and, through constant review, will enable management of the impact of the costs of the fleet.

6 RESOURCE AND FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT

6.1 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.

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 exception being new build rents which are set at 5% above the Welsh Government target.

The rent policy sets out the total target rent band for each landlord. The council's target rent for 2018/19 is £96.51. On 1st April 2018 the Councils average rent will be £90.45. 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 2017 was 3% plus 1.5% giving rent inflation for 2018/19 of 4.5%.

The council is concerned about the affordability of a significant increase in rents for tenants and has modelled an increase of CPI only (plus or minus £2). Welsh Government has confirmed that it will not penalise any council setting a lower increase, as the September CPI figure was higher than it has been for some time. Setting a lower increase reduces income by circa £300,000 in 18/19, and does not have a negative impact on the council's ability to meet the WHQS standard by 2020 nor its new build programme commitments.

Anticipated Rental (including voids rent loss) and other income for the three year period 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 are shown in the table below:

Year	Net Rental Income	Other Income	Total Income
2018 – 2019	£33.043m	£ 1.334m	£ 34.376m
2019 – 2020	£35.514m	£ 1.465m	£ 36.979m
2020 – 2021	£36.328m	£ 1.590m	£ 37.918m

Rent Charges		2018/19				
		£'s			No.	
		Target Rent	Average Transitional Rent	Variance	Equal to / above Target Rent	Below Target Rent
Property Type	No. of Properties					
G1Bedsit	22	69.50	69.95	0.45	22	0
G1bungalow	13	86.42	82.33	-4.09	1	12
G1Flat	161	78.19	78.12	-0.07	157	4
G1House	1	86.42	77.03	-9.39	0	1
G2Bungalow	3	96.02	88.34	-7.68	0	3
G2Flat	305	86.87	85.83	-1.04	205	100
G2House	703	96.02	90.48	-5.54	1	702
G2Maisonette	9	84.37	85.87	1.50	9	0
G3Bungalow	4	105.62	104.00	-1.62	0	4
G3Flat	37	95.56	92.88	-2.68	17	20
G3Maisonette	1	93.06	93.06	0.00	1	0
G3House	3,114	105.62	96.31	-9.31	3	3,111
G4House	128	115.22	103.28	-11.94	0	128
G5House	5	124.82	111.42	-13.40	0	5
G6House	5	124.82	115.64	-9.18	1	4
GNB1Apartment	4	82.10	82.10	0.00	0	4
GNB2Apartment	6	91.22	91.22	0.00	0	6
GNB2House	44	100.82	99.02	-1.80	0	44
GNB3House	18	110.90	108.57	-2.33	0	18
GNB2Bungalow	4	100.82	100.18	-0.64	0	4
M1Mini Group Bungalow	298	86.42	82.30	-4.12	0	298
M1Mini Group Flat	116	78.19	78.24	0.05	114	2
M2Mini Group Bungalow	95	96.02	91.01	-5.01	0	95
M2Mini Group Flat	23	86.87	86.87	0.00	23	0
M3Mini Group Bungalow	1	105.62	104.86	-0.76	0	1
S1Sheltered Bedsit	64	69.50	69.69	0.19	64	0
S1Sheltered Bungalow	851	86.42	82.85	-3.57	3	848
S1Sheltered Flat	321	78.19	78.21	0.02	321	0
S1Sheltered House	1	86.42	86.15	-0.26	0	1
S2Sheltered Bungalow	509	96.02	88.83	-7.19	3	506
S2Sheltered Flat	306	86.87	86.85	-0.03	301	5
S2Sheltered House	1	96.02	86.40	-9.62	0	1
S2Wardens Bungalow	2	96.02	95.51	-0.51	0	2
S2Wardens Flat	4	86.87	86.87	0.00	4	0
S2Wardens House	1	96.02	91.14	-4.87	0	1
S3Sheltered Bungalow	2	105.62	103.13	-2.49	0	2
S3Wardens Bungalow	16	105.62	103.06	-2.56	0	16
S3Wardens Flat	1	95.56	95.56	0.00	1	0
S3Wardens House	20	105.62	98.04	-7.58	0	20
S4Wardens Flat	1	104.25	106.94	2.69	1	0
SO3Shared ownership houses	13	105.62	97.73	-7.89	1	13
Total	7,233	96.51	90.45	-6.06	1,253	5,981

Note

G = General Need

S = Sheltered

SO = Shared Ownership

GNB = General Needs New Build

M = Mini Group (over 55s with care/welfare 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 2018/19 and how they compare to target rents. The average rent chargeable for 2018/19 is £90.45 some £6.06 below the weekly target rent under the new policy. On 1st April 2018 17% of tenancies will be at target rent.

6.2 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.

6.3 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. Since April 2015 all new tenants have paid for services. A tenant consultation is currently under way to review services and discuss implementation of revised charges from April 2018.

With the exception of services provided for the benefit of individuals, the service charges outlined above are all currently 'housing benefit eligible'.

6.4 Garage Rents

Garage rents are currently charged at £6.61 per week. We are proposing an increase of £1 per week. Garage plots are currently a £1.20 per week. We are proposing a 20p increase per week.

6.5 Expenditure Proposed financial changes to the 2018/19 business plan

HRA Business Planning

Revenue Efficiencies/Use of one off funding

No	Section	Description	2017/18 £	Notes
1	Repairs & Maintenance Support	Deletion of 0.8 FTE Finance Assistant (vacant post)	(15,450)	
2	Repairs & Maintenance Support	Reduction in grade	(15,148)	
3	Responsive Repairs	Deletion of 2 x Builder (vacant posts)	(61,390)	
4	Void Repairs	Deletion of 1 x Plasterer and 1 x Floor Layer (vacant posts)	(59,004)	
5	Tenancy Management	Deletion of 1 x Tenancy Sustainment Officer (vacant post)	(33,324)	
6	Responsive Repairs	Reduction to subcontractor Budget	(83,891)	
7	Housing Programmes	Deletion of 0.2 FTE Programme Manager Welfare Reform 18/19 only	(12,002)	Non recurring. Substantive post holder seconded to Welsh Gov
8	Rents	Reduction of 0.65% in the budgeted contribution to the Bad Debt Provision	(200,000)	Approx. figure (will change depending on rent increase applied)
9	Estate Management	Removal of tenant incentive (downsizing) budget	(15,300)	May need to be reviewed in future years.
10	Responsive Repairs	Remove increase to R&M budget for additional SHARP properties	(80,360)	Non recurring. To be reviewed during 2019/20 budget setting process.
11	Housing Programmes	Realignment of staffing costs (Council Fund & NEW Homes)	(30,643)	
		Total HRA	(606,512)	

Revenue Investment Decisions/Cost Pressures

No	Section	Description	2017/18 £m	Notes
1	Income	Service Charges	287,000	Reduction in income in line with phased introduction of Service Charges
2	Staff Costs	Pay Award	83,844	Increase in the expected pay award for 2018/19
		Total HRA	370,844	
		Grand Total HRA	(235,668)	

6.6 Staff and associated costs

The business plan includes 218.84 established Positions (FTE) within the Housing Revenue Account in 2017/18.

6.7 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 164.2. The revenue budget for 2017/18 is £8.296m (£1,147 per tenancy).

6.8 Estate Management

Estate Management includes Rents, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenant participation and Tenancy management services. Total FTE's assumed in the plan are 33.36. The planned budget is £1.654m.

6.9 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 7.5. The planned budget is £1.342m.

6.10 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 13.78. The planned budget is £2.165m.

6.11 Capital Financing

Financial Year	New Build Programme	WHQS	Mid Year	Total Costs	Closing HRA Debt	Limit on indebtedness	Borrowing Capacity
2018.19	£11.800m	£5.122m	£134.111m	£8.573m	£141.303m	£143.934m	£2.631m
2019.20	£2.000m	£2.300m	£142.040m	£9.218m	£142.777m	£143.934m	£1.158m
2020.21	£3.000m		£142.848m	£9.284m	£142.921m	£143.934m	£1.013m

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 HRA debt balance and borrowing cap. The level of borrowing remains within the cap.

The capital programme for 2018/19 is £36.496m of which £21m is allocated to achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, £1m to DFGs and £14m to new builds.

7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Risk management plans have been developed for the WHQS programme and the SHARP new build programme, which are regularly monitored by the Housing and Regeneration programme board; the Scrutiny committee and the Council's Cabinet.

The risk register below for the overall HRA is updated and monitored monthly at the Housing and Regeneration Programme Board.

Ref	Description/Issue	Risk	Mitigation Act (MA) / Response Plan (RP)
1	MRA funding certainty - MRA is included within the HRA 30 year Business Plan at £5.0m per annum	MRA funding is only guaranteed year on year MRA funding not received	Ensure delivery of WHQS programme 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	Annual programme not delivered to targets	Effective contractor management Appoint sufficient resource in

	increased investment programme	Major supplier issues Contractor performance or contractor viability issues Loss of key staff Recruitment to delivery team Significant stock condition issues Tenant satisfaction	delivery team Develop a revised delivery team structure Appoint additional Tenant Liaison Officers Post inspection of completed work Stock Condition Survey in place Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
3	Delivering the New Build programme by 2020	Mobilisation Phase of the Programme does not achieve the completion of the first phase of development in Flint by April 2016 Unsuitable sites selected for development and / or planning permission not granted Reputational risk through poor communication of Programme objectives progress and outcomes	Integration of the Programme with the development of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and the housing strategy 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 Monitor and review at HRA Programme Board
4	Introduction of charging for services	Quality and cost of services delivered Recovery of income Tenant satisfaction	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 income particularly in light of ongoing Welfare Reforms	Poverty issues Increase in rent arrears Tenancy sustainment issues	Effective tenancy management 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	Efficiency targets not met Detrimental impact on service delivery Tenant satisfaction	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	Impact on HRA Business Plan Ability to deliver WHQS Ability to deliver New Build programme Impact on HRA services and sustainability	Ensure dialogue with Welsh Government Ensure representation on relevant National boards Modelling and risk management Monitor and review at HRA

			Programme Board
8	Gas to be phased out over the next 15yrs.	This will have an impact on the 30yrs Business Plan, due to costs for replacement of cookers/boilers etc	To be determined

8 KEY ACTIONS FOR 2018/19

The following are a summary of the key priorities for the next operational year:

- (i) To deliver WHQS targets within year and within budget by 2020;
- (ii) Deliver cyclical and responsive maintenance in an effective and efficient manor;
- (iii) To ensure 100% sustainable tenancies through effective pre-tenancy checks;
- (iv) To implement the new hub structure and develop local action plans across the County;
- (v) To deliver 50 new homes per annum to meet the demand of the social housing register;
- (vi) To undertake strategic acquisitions to support local regeneration or other local priorities including meeting short/medium term demand;
- (vii) To implement the Customer Involvement Strategy and Action Plan.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: KPIs TARGETS FOR 2018/19

Area	Target
New build - SHARP	
Numbers built (completed) in 2017//18	50
Numbers to be built - complete 2018/19	50
Residents satisfaction of new homes	100%
WHQS	
Kitchens completed – intervention rate	100%
Bathrooms completed – intervention rate	100%
Central heating completed – intervention rate	100%
Roofing / windows / doors completed – intervention rate	100%
Customer satisfaction	90%
Jobs created	38pa
Housing Management	
New lettings	
Percentage accepting first offer– started to record October 2017	80%
Average days re-let	33
Average letting days	7
Rent lost as a percentage of rent debit	1.4%
Pre-tenancy assessments	100%
Voids	
Average clearance – number of days	5 days
Average time spent in maintenance (days)	
- Major	45
- Standard	20
Adaptations	
Spend against budget	£1m
Repairs and Maintenance	
Emergency repairs	Within 24 hours
Urgent repairs	Within 7 days
Non-urgent repairs	Within 28 days
Percentage of properties with a valid CP12 gas safety certificate	100%
Anti-Social Behaviour	
Percentage of ASB actions completed in target time	95%
Customer services	
Number of seconds is the average time for the customer services team to answer a call	30 seconds
Percentage of calls answered within target time	80%
Percentage of calls abandoned	10%
Percentage of complaints responded to in target time	90%

ANNEX 2: COMMUNITY BENEFITS

New Build - SHARP

KPI	Target 16/17	Performance up to Oct 2017	Notes
Local (Flintshire) SME spend: Locality Radius	25%	23%	Spend locally is projected to increase as the SHARP rolls out across the County.
Local (Flintshire) Labour Usage	50%	51%	This exceeds the target figure agreed with the Council. Wherever possible, the Council will look to maximize opportunities for local labour.
Percentage of Supply Chain Opportunities Advertised	100%	100%	A number of "Meet the Buyer" events have been held with Wates Residential to maximize the supply chain opportunities for Flintshire-based businesses.
Performance against CITB Client Based Approach Performance Levels	100%	Yearend target	Exceeded apprenticeship target of 6, anticipate 11 apprentices recruited by the end of the year. Wates Residential are actively working with Communities First and have so far placed 3 employees within the construction sector.

SHARP Community Investment Performance	
Employment and Training	
471	Local people have benefited from Employment & Training Initiatives on this project
6,040	Training/employment weeks have been created for local people
41,733	Hours have been invested to support these people by Wates staff
£2,230,374	Value of investment into training local people
Investing in the local economy	
£4,470,309	Has been spent with local small businesses on this project
£7,286,604	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	
£4,463	have been invested into volunteering in the community
£244,851	Has been invested into local charities / community causes

£9,782,377	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).	

ANNEX 3: ACTION PLAN

The following actions will support the delivery of the priorities set out in this business plan:

1. Grow the housing stock by 1,000 over the lifetime of the plan;
2. Maintain, sustain and build on the improvements delivered through WHQS investment;
3. To be in the top quartile for performance and quality of service delivery.

Strategic and Operational				
	Action	Detail	Timeframe	Responsible / lead team
1	Improved IT capability for reporting including Open Housing and KPIs	Update the servers to enable the productivity module to be opened in Open Housing so individual work output can be monitored.		
		Join up the IT and deliver a digital solution using apps to capture customer feedback – this may require some up front work with tenants to ensure they use the service but it aligns with the Council’s digitalisation strategy going forward.		
2	Preventative work with vulnerable tenants to address rent arrears in conjunction with the Income Team	Working across internal teams including the Income Team, Benefit Team; Housing Solutions; Housing Options and Housing Management, develop appropriate actions around the following areas: 1. Lettings arrangements and tenancy allocation to vulnerable tenants. 2. Early identification of arrears. 3. Initial contact to tenants experiencing financial difficulties. 4. Direct contact with tenants. 5. Arrangements in place to support tenants experiencing financial difficulties.		
3	Proactive Neighbourhood Management	Regular meetings with other landlords and key partners, including the Police, as part of the implementation of a proactive Neighbourhood Management plan.		
4	Improved understanding of asset base	Undertake/ update the stock condition survey		
		Review and assess the potential to realign existing housing stock to meet changing demands on the stock		
5	Develop a robust and intelligence led strategic framework to delivery of new build, acquisitions and services.	Inform and influence the wider Council’s housing strategy development.		

		To undertake strategic acquisitions to support local regeneration or other local priorities including meeting short/medium term demand;		
6	Improved understanding of customer satisfaction and involvement	To implement the Customer Involvement Strategy and Action Plan.		
		Source an independent company to undertake follow-up satisfaction surveys based on service delivered through regular surveys		
		Review resource management with the aim of ensuring we get it right first time, particularly in relation to the call centre.		
		Undertake the STAR annual survey to benchmark customer satisfaction		
		Use Housemark to benchmark our performance and levels of customer satisfaction.		

New Build Programme – SHARP				
	Action	Detail	Timeframe	Responsible / lead team
1	To deliver 50 new homes per annum up to 2020 to meet the demand of the social housing register	Ensure the delivery of new build adds value through addressing the pressures for certain housing types by basing development plans on intelligence.		
		Undertake a review and update of the Flintshire House Standards		

WHQS				
	Action	Detail	Timeframe	Responsible / lead team
1	To deliver WHQS targets within year and within budget by 2020	Undertake a review of contractors to deliver the fourth year of the programme to achieve efficiencies against costs and resource requirements		
2	To deliver community benefits as part of the WHQS programme	To develop a framework to identify and agree the community benefits to be delivered		
		To establish a process, in line with the Council wide strategy, to measure and capture community benefits.		

Housing and Neighbourhood Management				
	Action	Detail	Timeframe	Responsible /

				lead team
1	To implement the new hub structure	Develop local action plans across the County	by June 2018	
2	Lettings homes - getting it right at the start by matching a person's housing need to the right property.	To ensure 100% sustainable tenancies through effective pre-tenancy checks		
3	Tenancy enforcement	Dealing effectively with anti-social behavior, community safety and tenancy related issues through a multi agency approach		
	Neighbourhoods – maintaining and managing the places we work, helping to protect our asset and create sustainable communities.			
	Customer engagement	Working in partnership with tenants to help improve services, resolve issues, improve their neighbourhood and create opportunities for community cohesion.		

Housing Assets				
	Action	Detail	Timeframe	Responsible / lead team
	Reduce void periods	Increase reporting of issues prior to property becoming empty		
	Improve efficiencies on major and minor works	Undertake a value for money review on the comparative costs and retender		
	Aids and Adaptations Policy	Develop and consult on the policy to provide a framework for undertaking aids and adaptations to Council stock		
		Working with Housing Options develop a register of stock that has existing aids and adaptations which can be identified at re-let for most appropriate letting, to achieve better efficiency of existing stock.		

Flintshire County Council - HRA Base Model Business Plan Assumptions

Yr	Financial Year	Income			Expenditure						Net Operating Balance					Available Capital Funding							Capital Programme				
		Net Rent Income	Other Income	Total Income	Estate Mgmt	Landlord Services	Repairs & Maint	Mgmt & Support	Debt Charges	Total Expenses	Net Operating Expenditure	Balance B/F	CERA	Balance C/F	3% of expenditure	CERA	MRA	Prudential Borrowing	Affordable Housing Grant	Shared Ownership Receipts	Commuted Sums	Total Capital Funding	WHQS Capital Programme	DFG	SHARP Replacement	SHARP Developments	Total Capital Programme
		£'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
	2017.18	(30,850)	(1,282)	(32,132)	1,653	1,311	8,601	2,319	7,643	21,526	(10,606)	(1,117)	10,540	(1,183)	(962)	10,540	5,065	14,767		335		30,707	20,010	1,030	0	9,667	30,707
1	2018.19	(33,043)	(1,334)	(34,376)	1,654	1,342	8,296	2,165	8,619	22,076	(12,300)	(1,183)	12,170	(1,313)	(1,027)	12,170	5,065	16,922	1,900		439	36,496	21,215	1,051	0	14,230	36,496
2	2019.20	(35,514)	(1,465)	(36,979)	1,704	1,371	8,664	2,224	9,262	23,225	(13,755)	(1,313)	13,382	(1,686)	(1,098)	13,382	5,065	4,300	1,243			23,990	21,048	1,072	0	1,870	23,990
3	2020.21	(36,328)	(1,590)	(37,918)	1,724	1,397	8,803	2,263	9,328	23,515	(14,403)	(1,686)	14,903	(1,186)	(1,153)	14,903	5,065	3,000				22,968	17,374	1,093	0	4,500	22,968
4	2021.22	(37,609)	(1,610)	(39,218)	1,746	1,422	8,961	2,303	9,326	23,758	(15,460)	(1,186)	15,447	(1,199)	(1,176)	15,447	5,065	2,500				23,012	15,147	1,115	0	6,750	23,012
5	2022.23	(38,639)	(1,630)	(40,268)	1,767	1,448	9,138	2,531	9,313	24,197	(16,071)	(1,199)	16,023	(1,248)	(1,207)	16,023	5,065	3,000				24,088	15,450	1,137	0	7,500	24,088
6	2023.24	(39,819)	(1,650)	(41,469)	1,802	1,477	9,184	2,581	9,323	24,367	(17,102)	(1,248)	16,922	(1,428)	(1,239)	16,922	5,065	3,000				24,987	14,527	1,160	0	9,300	24,987
7	2024.25	(41,096)	(1,670)	(42,766)	1,838	1,507	9,236	2,633	9,320	24,535	(18,232)	(1,428)	18,336	(1,323)	(1,286)	18,336	5,065	2,500				25,901	14,818	1,183	0	9,900	25,901
8	2025.26	(43,181)	(1,703)	(44,884)	1,875	1,537	9,292	2,686	9,308	24,697	(20,187)	(1,323)	20,056	(1,454)	(1,343)	20,056	5,065	3,000				28,121	15,114	1,207	0	11,800	28,121
9	2026.27	(43,656)	(1,713)	(45,369)	1,913	1,568	9,356	2,739	9,317	24,893	(20,476)	(1,454)	20,484	(1,446)	(1,361)	20,484	5,065	3,000				28,549	15,416	1,231	2	11,900	28,549
10	2027.28	(44,954)	(1,735)	(46,689)	1,951	1,599	9,420	2,794	9,327	25,091	(21,598)	(1,446)	21,429	(1,615)	(1,396)	21,429	5,065	3,000				29,494	15,724	1,256	14	12,500	29,494
11	2028.29	(46,292)	(1,757)	(48,049)	1,990	1,631	9,486	2,850	9,324	25,281	(22,768)	(1,615)	22,428	(1,955)	(1,431)	22,428	5,065	2,500				29,993	14,681	1,281	31	14,000	29,993
12	2029.30	(47,679)	(1,780)	(49,459)	2,030	1,664	9,558	2,907	9,312	25,470	(23,989)	(1,955)	24,250	(1,694)	(1,492)	24,250	5,065	3,000				32,315	14,975	1,307	33	16,000	32,315
13	2030.31	(49,132)	(1,803)	(50,936)	2,070	1,697	9,639	2,965	9,321	25,692	(25,243)	(1,694)	25,081	(1,856)	(1,523)	25,081	5,065	3,000				33,146	15,275	1,333	39	16,500	33,146
14	2031.32	(51,604)	(1,840)	(53,444)	2,112	1,731	9,720	3,025	9,319	25,907	(27,537)	(1,856)	27,511	(1,883)	(1,603)	27,511	5,065	2,500				35,076	16,663	1,359	53	17,000	35,076
15	2032.33	(52,172)	(1,851)	(54,023)	2,154	1,765	9,803	3,085	9,307	26,114	(27,909)	(1,883)	27,820	(1,971)	(1,618)	27,820	5,065	3,000				35,885	16,996	1,387	103	17,400	35,885
16	2033.34	(53,762)	(1,876)	(55,639)	2,197	1,801	9,886	3,147	9,317	26,347	(29,292)	(1,971)	29,052	(2,211)	(1,662)	29,052	5,065	3,000				37,117	17,336	1,414	167	18,200	37,117
17	2034.35	(55,410)	(1,901)	(57,311)	2,241	1,837	9,971	3,210	9,315	26,573	(30,738)	(2,211)	30,747	(2,202)	(1,720)	30,747	5,065	2,500				38,312	17,683	1,443	187	19,000	38,312
18	2035.36	(57,125)	(1,927)	(59,052)	2,286	1,873	10,058	3,274	9,303	26,793	(32,259)	(2,202)	32,162	(2,299)	(1,769)	32,162	5,065	3,000				40,227	18,037	1,471	219	20,500	40,227
19	2036.37	(58,936)	(1,953)	(60,890)	2,331	1,911	10,150	3,339	9,312	27,044	(33,846)	(2,299)	34,133	(2,012)	(1,835)	34,133	5,065	3,000				42,198	17,431	1,501	267	23,000	42,198
20	2037.38	(62,019)	(1,995)	(64,014)	2,378	1,949	10,251	3,406	9,322	27,306	(36,708)	(2,012)	36,299	(2,421)	(1,908)	36,299	5,065	3,000				44,364	17,779	1,531	354	24,700	44,364
21	2038.39	(62,822)	(2,007)	(64,830)	2,426	1,988	10,357	3,474	9,320	27,565	(37,264)	(2,421)	37,094	(2,592)	(1,940)	37,094	5,065	2,500				44,659	18,135	1,561	462	24,500	44,659
22	2039.40	(64,863)	(2,035)	(66,898)	2,474	2,028	10,461	3,544	9,308	27,815	(39,083)	(2,592)	39,053	(2,623)	(2,006)	39,053	5,065	3,000				47,118	18,498	1,593	527	26,500	47,118
23	2040.41	(66,994)	(2,063)	(69,058)	2,524	2,068	10,571	3,615	9,317	28,095	(40,963)	(2,623)	40,788	(2,798)	(2,066)	40,788	5,065	3,000				48,853	18,867	1,625	611	27,750	48,853
24	2041.42	(69,215)	(2,092)	(71,307)	2,574	2,110	10,684	3,687	9,316	28,370	(42,937)	(2,798)	42,917	(2,818)	(2,139)	42,917	5,065	2,500				50,482	18,616	1,657	709	29,500	50,482
25	2042.43	(71,533)	(2,122)	(73,655)	2,626	2,152	10,801	3,761	9,304	28,643	(45,012)	(2,818)	44,692	(3,138)	(2,200)	44,692	5,065	3,000				52,757	18,989	1,690	828	31,250	52,757
26	2043.44	(75,405)	(2,169)	(77,574)	2,678	2,195	10,923	3,836	9,314	28,946	(48,628)	(3,138)	48,994	(2,772)	(2,338)	48,994	5,065	3,000				57,059	19,368	1,724	967	35,000	57,059
27	2044.45	(76,523)	(2,183)	(78,706)	2,732	2,239	11,057	3,913	9,312	29,252	(49,454)	(2,772)	49,045	(3,181)	(2,349)	49,045	5,065	2,500				56,610	19,756	1,758	1,095	34,000	56,610
28	2045.46	(79,139)	(2,214)	(81,353)	2,786	2,284	11,185	3,991	9,301	29,546	(51,807)	(3,181)	51,742	(3,246)	(2,439)	51,742	5,065	3,000				59,807	20,173	1,794	1,241	36,600	59,807
29	2046.47	(81,877)	(2,246)	(84,123)	2,842	2,329	11,319	4,071	9,311	29,872	(54,251)	(3,246)	54,239	(3,257)	(2,523)	54,239	5,065	3,000				62,304	20,576	1,829	1,398	38,500	62,304
30	2046.47	(84,729)	(2,279)	(87,008)	2,899	2,376	11,458	4,152	9,320	30,205	(56,802)	(3,257)	56,853	(3,207)	(2,612)	56,853	5,065	3,000				64,918	20,988	1,866	1,564	40,500	64,918

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Flintshire County Council - HRA Base Model Business Plan Assumptions

Yr	Financial Year	Income			Expenditure						Net Operating Balance					Available Capital Funding							Capital Programme				
		Net Rent Income	Other Income	Total Income	Estate Mgmt	Landlord Services	Repairs & Maint	Mgmt & Support	Debt Charges	Total Expenses	Net Operating Expenditure	Balance B/F	CERA	Balance C/F	3% of expenditure	CERA	MRA	Prudential Borrowing	Affordable Housing Grant	Shared Ownership Receipts	Commutated Sums	Total Capital Funding	WHQS Capital Programme	DFG	SHARP Replacement	SHARP Development s	Total Capital Programme
		£'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
	2017.18	(30,850)	(1,282)	(32,132)	1,653	1,311	8,601	2,319	7,643	21,526	(10,606)	(1,117)	10,540	(1,183)	(962)	10,540	5,065	14,767	1,900	335	439	30,707	20,010	1,030	0	9,667	30,707
1	2018.19	(33,375)	(1,334)	(34,709)	1,654	1,342	8,296	2,165	8,619	22,076	(12,632)	(1,183)	12,170	(1,645)	(1,027)	12,170	5,065	16,922	1,900			36,496	21,215	1,051	0	14,230	36,496
2	2019.20	(35,745)	(1,465)	(37,211)	1,704	1,371	8,586	2,224	9,262	23,147	(14,064)	(1,645)	14,462	(1,247)	(1,128)	14,462	5,065	4,300	1,243			25,070	21,048	1,072	0	2,950	25,070
3	2020.21	(36,548)	(1,590)	(38,138)	1,724	1,397	8,730	2,263	9,328	23,442	(14,696)	(1,247)	14,403	(1,540)	(1,135)	14,403	5,065	3,000				22,468	17,374	1,093	0	4,000	22,468
4	2021.22	(37,782)	(1,610)	(39,391)	1,746	1,422	8,883	2,303	9,326	23,680	(15,711)	(1,540)	15,697	(1,554)	(1,181)	15,697	5,065	2,500				23,262	15,147	1,115	0	7,000	23,262
5	2022.23	(38,771)	(1,630)	(40,400)	1,767	1,448	9,058	2,531	9,313	24,118	(16,233)	(1,554)	16,523	(1,314)	(1,219)	16,523	5,065	3,000				24,588	15,450	1,137	0	8,000	24,588
6	2023.24	(39,982)	(1,650)	(41,631)	1,802	1,477	9,104	2,581	9,323	24,288	(17,344)	(1,314)	17,122	(1,536)	(1,242)	17,122	5,065	3,000				25,187	14,527	1,160	0	9,500	25,187
7	2024.25	(41,208)	(1,670)	(42,878)	1,838	1,507	9,158	2,633	9,320	24,457	(18,422)	(1,536)	18,436	(1,522)	(1,287)	18,436	5,065	2,500				26,001	14,818	1,183	0	10,000	26,001
8	2025.26	(43,270)	(1,703)	(44,973)	1,875	1,537	9,214	2,686	9,308	24,620	(20,354)	(1,522)	20,256	(1,619)	(1,346)	20,256	5,065	3,000				28,321	15,114	1,207	0	12,000	28,321
9	2026.27	(43,727)	(1,713)	(45,440)	1,913	1,568	9,280	2,739	9,317	24,817	(20,623)	(1,619)	20,584	(1,658)	(1,362)	20,584	5,065	3,000				28,649	15,416	1,231	2	12,000	28,649
10	2027.28	(45,019)	(1,735)	(46,754)	1,951	1,599	9,344	2,794	9,327	25,014	(21,740)	(1,658)	21,929	(1,469)	(1,408)	21,929	5,065	3,000				29,994	15,724	1,256	14	13,000	29,994
11	2028.29	(46,354)	(1,757)	(48,111)	1,990	1,631	9,412	2,850	9,324	25,207	(22,904)	(1,469)	22,428	(1,945)	(1,429)	22,428	5,065	2,500				29,993	14,681	1,281	31	14,000	29,993
12	2029.30	(47,742)	(1,780)	(49,523)	2,030	1,664	9,484	2,907	9,312	25,397	(24,126)	(1,945)	24,251	(1,820)	(1,489)	24,251	5,065	3,000				32,316	14,975	1,307	34	16,000	32,316
13	2030.31	(49,205)	(1,803)	(51,008)	2,070	1,697	9,565	2,965	9,321	25,619	(25,389)	(1,820)	25,582	(1,628)	(1,536)	25,582	5,065	3,000				33,647	15,275	1,333	39	17,000	33,647
14	2031.32	(51,687)	(1,840)	(53,528)	2,112	1,731	9,649	3,025	9,319	25,836	(27,692)	(1,628)	27,511	(1,809)	(1,600)	27,511	5,065	2,500				35,076	16,663	1,359	54	17,000	35,076
15	2032.33	(52,259)	(1,851)	(54,110)	2,154	1,765	9,732	3,085	9,307	26,043	(28,066)	(1,809)	28,021	(1,854)	(1,622)	28,021	5,065	3,000				36,086	16,996	1,387	103	17,600	36,086
16	2033.34	(53,860)	(1,876)	(55,737)	2,197	1,801	9,816	3,147	9,317	26,277	(29,460)	(1,854)	29,453	(1,862)	(1,672)	29,453	5,065	3,000				37,518	17,336	1,414	167	18,600	37,518
17	2034.35	(55,516)	(1,901)	(57,417)	2,241	1,837	9,903	3,210	9,315	26,504	(30,913)	(1,862)	30,751	(2,023)	(1,718)	30,751	5,065	2,500				38,316	17,683	1,443	191	19,000	38,316
18	2035.36	(57,242)	(1,927)	(59,169)	2,286	1,873	9,990	3,274	9,303	26,725	(32,443)	(2,023)	32,664	(1,803)	(1,782)	32,664	5,065	3,000				40,729	18,037	1,471	221	21,000	40,729
19	2036.37	(59,057)	(1,953)	(61,010)	2,331	1,911	10,084	3,339	9,312	26,978	(34,032)	(1,803)	33,736	(2,099)	(1,821)	33,736	5,065	3,000				41,801	17,431	1,501	269	22,600	41,801
20	2037.38	(62,142)	(1,995)	(64,137)	2,378	1,949	10,183	3,406	9,322	27,238	(36,899)	(2,099)	36,602	(2,396)	(1,915)	36,602	5,065	3,000				44,667	17,779	1,531	357	25,000	44,667
21	2038.39	(62,959)	(2,007)	(64,966)	2,426	1,988	10,291	3,474	9,320	27,499	(37,467)	(2,396)	37,598	(2,266)	(1,953)	37,598	5,065	2,500				45,163	18,135	1,561	466	25,000	45,163
22	2039.40	(65,010)	(2,035)	(67,045)	2,474	2,028	10,397	3,544	9,308	27,750	(39,295)	(2,266)	39,060	(2,500)	(2,004)	39,060	5,065	3,000				47,125	18,498	1,593	535	26,500	47,125
23	2040.41	(67,148)	(2,063)	(69,212)	2,524	2,068	10,506	3,615	9,317	28,031	(41,181)	(2,500)	41,045	(2,637)	(2,072)	41,045	5,065	3,000				49,110	18,867	1,625	618	28,000	49,110
24	2041.42	(69,383)	(2,092)	(71,476)	2,574	2,110	10,620	3,687	9,316	28,307	(43,169)	(2,637)	43,424	(2,382)	(2,152)	43,424	5,065	2,500				50,989	18,616	1,657	716	30,000	50,989
25	2042.43	(71,717)	(2,122)	(73,839)	2,626	2,152	10,740	3,761	9,304	28,582	(45,257)	(2,382)	44,951	(2,687)	(2,206)	44,951	5,065	3,000				53,016	18,989	1,690	838	31,500	53,016
26	2043.44	(75,597)	(2,169)	(77,766)	2,678	2,195	10,863	3,836	9,314	28,886	(48,880)	(2,687)	48,805	(2,763)	(2,331)	48,805	5,065	3,000				56,870	19,368	1,724	977	34,800	56,870
27	2044.45	(76,721)	(2,183)	(78,903)	2,732	2,239	10,996	3,913	9,312	29,191	(49,712)	(2,763)	49,557	(2,917)	(2,362)	49,557	5,065	2,500				57,122	19,756	1,758	1,108	34,500	57,122
28	2045.46	(79,355)	(2,214)	(81,569)	2,786	2,284	11,126	3,991	9,301	29,487	(52,082)	(2,917)	52,157	(2,841)	(2,449)	52,157	5,065	3,000				60,222	20,173	1,794	1,256	37,000	60,222
29	2046.47	(82,103)	(2,246)	(84,349)	2,842	2,329	11,262	4,071	9,311	29,814	(54,535)	(2,841)	54,254	(3,122)	(2,522)	54,254	5,065	3,000				62,319	20,576	1,829	1,414	38,500	62,319
30	2046.47	(84,960)	(2,279)	(87,239)	2,899	2,376	11,401	4,152	9,320	30,148	(57,091)	(3,122)	56,871	(3,341)	(2,611)	56,871	5,065	3,000				64,936	20,988	1,866	1,583	40,500	64,936

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Draft HRA Capital Programme 2018/19

HRA Capital Programme	
WHQS	£'m
CATCH UP REPAIRS / MAJOR WORKS	
Urgent Capital Works	0.529
IMPROVEMENTS / COMMUNAL WORKS	
Fire Risk Assessments Work	0.510
General DDA Work	0.051
IMPROVEMENTS / ACCELERATED WORKS	
Asbestos Survey and Removal (Ongoing Programme)	0.612
Off Gas Programme	0.357
Welfare Reform / Adaptations	0.102
PROGRAMMED WORK STREAMS	
Internal Works	4.136
Envelope Works	10.542
External Works, Paths, Fences	0.485
Environmental Works - General	0.969
Capitalised Salaries	1.158
WHQS Acceptable Fails	1.000
Empty Properties	0.765
Total WHQS	21.215
Non WHQS	
Disabled Facility Grants (DFG) - Mandatory/ Minor Adaps	1.051
Solar PV	-
Total Non - WHQS	1.051
SHARP Programme	
Batch 3	14.230
Total SHARP Programme	14.230
Total Capital Spend	36.496

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COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 15 January 2018
Report Subject	Audit Report – Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH)
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer (Community and Enterprise)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An audit of SARTH (Single Access Route to Housing) was undertaken during September 2017 (final report November 2017) as part of the approved Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18. This was a follow up to an audit report on Housing Allocations in September 2016.

The audit focused on the new processes arising from the introduction of SARTH and has examined a number of County Council allocations for compliance with these procedures.

The audit has highlighted a number of recommendations for improvement, two being flagged as red. Immediate action has been taken in response to implement a revised process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny Committee is asked to review this report and be reassured that all high risks actions have been fully implemented. All remaining actions are either also complete or currently in progress.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	AUDIT OF SINGLE ACCESS ROUTE TO HOUSING
1.01	<p>An audit of Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) was undertaken during September 2017 as part of the approved Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18. This was a follow up to an audit on Housing Allocations undertaken in 2016/17.</p>
1.02	<p>Of the original audit report recommendations, 75% have been completed in full, with 3 actions partially completed and 1 action outstanding. The outstanding action is in relation to the password security to the Portal. This is the gateway system that partner RSL's use to enable them to make allocations for their properties from the shared waiting list. This was classified as a (green) low risk action, as each user is required to log on via a secure system with a complex password before access to the housing system is enabled. Housing Services are actively engaging with the ICT service to progress the implementation of the security code and this work will be included in a suite of actions which will be closely monitored against timescales. This is part of an on-going ICT support development plan which will be included on the Housing Services risk register and will be regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Two of the three partially completed actions relate to procedural updates. This work was delayed as it was agreed by the SARTH Regional Steering Group to complete the policy review before undertaking an update of procedures. The SARTH Regional Steering Group consists of Senior Officers from all SARTH partners who collectively oversee the collaboration and are responsible for policy decisions. The policy review was only completed and agreed by the Regional Steering Group in September 2017 and the new policy document has now been drafted and is with partners for sign off.</p> <p>The third partially completed action relates to the allocation override of applicants who have been bypassed for a property on the Capita system (please see 1.07). A comprehensive monthly review is now carried out by the Team Leader which will result in all overrides being monitored.</p>
1.03	<p>The most recent audit report has highlighted a number of areas that demonstrate compliance with new procedures that have been introduced following the first audit, however, new actions have been identified as control weaknesses within the current processes. Of the 13 actions identified, 10 of these are issues which have not previously been highlighted.</p>
1.04	<p>Out of the 13 actions, 9 have been fully implemented and 2 relate to the procedures. The procedures are currently being reviewed and updated by the Regional SARTH group with a view to being fully implemented by June 2018. Many of the actions are being carried out operationally, it is the formal documentation which requires updating and agreed by all partners.</p>

	<p>The remaining 2 are in progress and the details are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic reviews not completed within timescales (amber). While it is accepted that not all reviews have been undertaken within the agreed timescale the level of risk of an incorrect allocation is low. All applicants have a pre tenancy assessment by the potential landlord before being allocated a property and any change of circumstances would be picked up by the allocating officer at this time. The purpose of the review is to ensure applications are up to date and accurate to help speed the pre tenancy assessment up and enable the letting process to progress quickly. The Housing Contact Centre and The Housing Solutions Contact Centre are due to merge into one single contact centre and it is here that Housing Register calls will be answered. Once fully set up the call centre staff will be trained to complete reviews of housing applications with applicants when they call to make enquiries/changes to their application. This will reduce the number of scheduled reviews that need to be completed and will also reduce duplication for those customers where recent contact has been made. Enquiries have been made with the IT System supplier about introducing more automation to reduce the need for manual interventions for this process which will ensure applications are amended and cancelled where necessary within the agreed timescales. • Timescales for the cancellation of applications due to non-receipt of evidence are not always adhered to (green). While it is accepted that not all applications have been fully cancelled within the agreed timescale the level of risk is low as these applications are suspended on the system and would not therefore show on a shortlist. There is therefore no risk that an applicant that should be cancelled could be allocated a property. It is for this reason that the service deemed this a low risk area and focussed resources available on higher risk parts of the service.
1.05	<p>Although two actions have been identified as being red, where action is imperative to ensure that the objectives of the area under review are met, it was noted that actions from the team following the review have been prompt in implementing control measures to mitigate the risks identified. As part of the final report discussions further evidence was submitted to audit who have confirmed the evidence received demonstrates full compliance with the recommended actions.</p>
1.06	<p>The first red action relates to errors which have been identified relating to the application date and banding allocation date within the Capita system. This does potentially pose a risk that an applicant's position within the short-list may not be accurate. However, an exception report was in place to identify any applications where the banding allocation date was different to the application date to allow these to be reviewed and corrected if necessary. The audit found that this report was ran periodically but was not scheduled to be run frequently enough to mitigate the risk of an error. However, there is on average a 10 month wait for a 3 bed property and longer for 1 and 2 bed properties, therefore the risk of an applicant not</p>

	<p>being correctly placed is low. Following the audit recommendation this is now scheduled to be monitored weekly.</p>
1.07	<p>In the original audit, it was highlighted that incorrect override codes were being used. This has been addressed, as has the functionality for Housing Officers to create a direct let. However, the latest audit has highlighted that a potential risk remains for an inappropriate allocation as there was no formal review of housing allocation overrides.</p> <p>Having received the audit report, a series of measures have been introduced to mitigate the risks, these being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since October 2017, a monthly override report is run which details every override and the Housing Officer responsible. This is checked by the Team Leader to ensure the applicant has been bypassed in line with procedures. • This report will be included in the suite of performance measures for Housing Services as a key performance indicator and submitted to CEMT and the Housing and Regeneration Programme Board for monitoring purposes. • Housing Services are engaging with ICT regarding the development of the Openhousing system to allow for more effective filtering on property types and performance management of manual overrides <p>It is recognised that there is a need for some applicants to be bypassed, for example, when a property has been substantially adapted as it is important that a suitable applicant is matched. Also, where a sensitive let is required with regards to activity of organised crime groups or the needs of an applicant's individual circumstances. The Management team is currently reviewing all overrides to ensure compliance however this may be reviewed in time to a sample 50% of allocations for each Housing Officer. It is pleasing to note that of all overrides checked, 98% have been in compliance and no concerns have been raised regarding an inappropriate allocation. Of the remaining 2%, correct override codes have been used however, full details on the reason why has not been recorded and this has been addressed with the individual member of staff.</p>
1.08	<p><u>Demand for SARTH</u></p> <p>The demand for social housing has significantly increased with 2016/17 recording more than double the number of applications previously received and managed by the service (please see appendix 2). The number of referrals quoted refers only to the number of referrals made directly to SARTH. There are additional referrals that are made from the Housing Options Team following a homelessness assessment. If a duty is accepted by this service the case will be forwarded onto the Housing Register as the applicant will qualify for social housing.</p> <p>During the period April 2016 to March 2017, the Housing Options Team received 1,232 referrals from triage for households who were homeless or at risk of homelessness within 56 days. Many of these would have been directed to the Housing Register as part of their personal housing plan to help secure accommodation.</p>

	<p>The Housing Register waiting list has increased from 973 in April 2016 to over 1600 in April 2017. This increase in demand has placed the service under pressure and has impacted on the service's ability to meet the agreed SLA's as referred to in the audit report.</p> <p>The service does not have the capacity to continue to manage current demand levels with existing resources. The service plans to address this in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System Integration and Enhanced Automation The current process for administrating applications is manual and extremely labour intensive. Work is currently underway to integrate initial triage applications directly onto the Housing System reducing the need for re-keying. The specification for this work has now been finalised and passed to the supplier so that indicative costs and timescales can be agreed. Workflow and more enhanced automation is also being investigated with the supplier, which will streamline processes and allow the limited resources available to focus on the more critical aspects of the service. This is a high priority action for the service and full implementation will require agreed prioritisation of ICT resources across services. • Better utilisation of wider services within portfolio The Housing Contact Centre and The Housing Solutions Contact Centre are due to merge into one single contact centre and it is here that Housing Register calls will be answered. Once fully set up the call centre staff will be trained to complete reviews of housing applications with applicants when they call to make enquiries/changes to their application. This will reduce the number of scheduled reviews (<i>please see 1.04</i>) that the Housing Register Team will need to be complete and will also reduce duplication for those customers we have already had recent contact with. This again will allow resources to focus on the more critical aspects of the service. • Increase the digital offer There are currently no self-service or online functions for an applicant to manage their application. As part of The Council's Customer Services and Digital Strategies, work has begun on developing a Customer Portal that will enable customers to log in to their own account and check their application details/status. The vision for this service is it will be interactive giving customers the ability to both view and update their details and as a result the number of scheduled reviews and outgoing contact will reduce.
1.09	<p>As a result of the actions implemented, Housing Services are confident that any area of high risk (red) identified in this audit now have the appropriate control measures put in place. The service intends to invite audit back to review these areas ahead of any planned schedule.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Any further increase in demand would exceed the resources currently available within the service.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Consultation with Regional SARTH Partners on all policy and procedure matters.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Allocation actions arising from the audit report will be kept under active consideration as part of Housing Service's Risk Register along with ICT action plan and reviewed as a service.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Audit action updates and comments Appendix 2 –SARTH Action Plan

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Audit report: September 2016 on Housing Allocations Contact Officer: Steve Agger / Katie Clubb Telephone: 01352 701658 / 01352 703518 Email: steve.agger@flintshire.gov.uk / katie.clubb@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>SARTH – Single Access Route To Housing A single housing register held and managed by Flintshire County Council for all major social housing providers in Flintshire (Clwyd Alyn Housing Association, Wales & West Housing Association and Grwp Cynefin). All SARTH partners are committed to a common allocation policy.</p> <p>Regional Steering Group The SARTH Regional Steering Group consists of Senior Officers from all SARTH partners who collectively oversee the collaboration and are responsible for policy decisions.</p>

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
1 (R)	<p>Errors have been identified relating to the application date and category allocation date within the Capita system. This poses a risk that the applicant's position within the short-list is not accurate.</p>	<p>An exception report was in place to identify any applications where the category allocation date was different to the application date allow these to be reviewed and corrected if necessary.</p> <p>This report was ran periodically but was not scheduled to be ran frequently to mitigate the risk of an error.</p>	<p>Exception report is now automatically scheduled to run weekly. Evidence of this has been supplied to Audit and confirmation has been given that this fully completes this action.</p>	<p>Implemented in August 2017</p>
2 (R)	<p>There is not enough evidence to support the allocation overrides on the capita system. Although each allocation agent is required to apply an override code, the sample reviewed identified incorrect override codes were being utilised and insufficient documentation was available to support the override. This poses a risk that in the event of an inquiry from the ombudsman, the Council is unable to support its reasons why an applicant has been overridden for a property.</p> <p>Additionally, there is no formal review of housing allocation overrides by management to identify overall volumes, process improvements or training requirements.</p>	<p>An override report to be run monthly on all applicants who have been bypassed for a property and a sample check to be conducted to ensure the reason for the override is adequate and the override code utilised is correct and evidenced. Any issues identified through review to be fed-back and application errors rectified.</p>	<p>Since October 2017, an override report is run and all overrides are checked by the Team Leader to ensure the applicant has been bypassed in line with procedure. It is recognised that there is a need for some applicants to be bypassed, for example, when a property has been substantially adapted or a sensitive let is required. It was felt important that all overrides are checked to ensure compliance however this may be reviewed in time to sample 50% of allocations for each Housing Officer. It is pleasing to note that of all overrides checked, 100% have been in line with procedure and no concerns raised.</p> <p>The override report will be included in Housing Services performance framework and submitted to CEMT and</p>	<p>Implemented in October 2017</p>

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
			Housing & Regeneration Programme Board for monitoring purposes. Also included on Housing risk register to be reviewed.	
3 (A)	The appeal procedure does not detail the time frames set out for dealing and resolving appeals. Additionally, there is no reporting on the volume, reasons and outcomes of appeals to identify process improvements or training opportunities.	<p>The policy is a regional policy and all amendments have to be agreed by all SARTH Partners.</p> <p>The revised final draft of the policy is now in with all partners to be formally agreed.</p> <p>Please note the revised policy cannot be formally published until all partners have agreed the content and any delays on this are outside of Flintshire County Council's control.</p>	<p>The procedure for appeals has now been included in the policy and details the timescales for dealing with and resolving appeals.</p> <p>In addition to this the Housing Register is recording all appeals and outcomes to ensure that appeals are dealt with in timescales given and also to enable improvements to the process through monitoring of lessons learnt.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>Implemented July 2017</p>
4 (A)	Band 1 applications are not always being pre-checked as required by the SARTH procedures. Completion of the verification form and landlord references are a key control to demonstrating the highest priority banding has been correctly assigned.	Pre-tenancy assessment and landlord references to be completed for all Band 1 applications as required by SARTH and evidence retained within the Capita system for audit purposes. A procedure to be defined to advise what action should be taken in the event of non-receipt of landlord references.	Pre-tenancy Assessments are being carried out for all applicants. This is now also included in performance suite for Housing Services as a KPI. Procedure for non-receipt of landlord references is currently being developed however, will not impact on an allocation of a property.	By 31 January 2018
5 (A)	Allocation offer letters are not always available to support the offer of properties to applicants. This poses a risk that individuals may contest their application being cancelled due to two	Allocation offer letters will be retained within the housing system Capita for audit trail purposes.	All offers are supported by written letter and this is scanned on to application.	Implemented December 2017

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
6 (A)	<p>unreasonable refusals.</p> <p>Periodic reviews of applicants' details and personal circumstances are not being conducted in line with agreed timescales. This poses a risk that applicant information and circumstances are not up to date to reflect their priority on the housing allocation list and to comply with the Data Protection act 1998. The Connects Manager has advised they are currently behind on their periodic reviews as they have had some resource challenges and seen an increase in the demand for the service. As such, she has prioritised activities to be completed by the team based on impact to applicant and risk to service.</p>	<p>While it is accepted that not all reviews have been undertaken within the agreed timescale the level of risk of an incorrect allocation is low. All applicants have a pre tenancy assessment by the potential landlord before being allocated a property and any change of circumstances would be picked up by the allocating officer at this time.</p> <p>The purpose of the review is to ensure applications are up to date and accurate to help speed the pre tenancy assessment up and enable the letting process to progress quickly.</p> <p>The Housing Contact Centre and The Housing Solutions Contact Centre are due to merge into one single contact centre and it is here that Housing Register calls will be answered. Once fully set up the call centre staff will be trained to complete reviews housing applications with applicants when they call to make enquiries/changes to their application. This will reduce the number of scheduled reviews that need to be completed and will also reduce duplication for those customers we have already had</p>	<p>Monitoring of reviews has now commenced to better understand the value of this process. The Housing Register Team are monitoring all reviews sent out vs the number of review forms returned and out of these how many applicants have had changes in circumstances.</p> <p>Single Housing Contact Centre to start completing reviews with applicants via the telephone as a standard practice following set up early January and completion of system training.</p>	<p>By March 2018</p> <p>By February 2017</p>

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
		<p>recent contact with.</p> <p>Enquiries have been made with supplier about introducing more automation to reduce the need for manual interventions for this process.</p>	<p>Awaiting feedback from Supplier regarding possible enhancements and costs. Work will then need to be scheduled with FCC ICT Teams.</p>	<p>TBC</p>
7 (A)	<p>Management oversight of the housing allocations process is not adequate. A quality assurance process has been recently introduced but the methodology for the review has not been defined and agreed.</p>	<p>A risk based quality assurance process will be devised and documented to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sampling methodology • number of reviews to be completed per new housing allocations officer • timescales for review and feedback • reporting on issues identified/trend analysis 	<p>A sampling methodology has been agreed and implemented – 50% of allocations per New Customer Housing team. Any concerns found are raised immediately with the relevant officer and on-going review at monthly staff 1:1's to monitor. Quality assurance to be included in Housing Services performance suite as a KPI.</p>	<p>By December 2017</p>
8 (A)	<p>Both the Housing Solutions Team, who assign a band to the housing applicant, as well as the new customer team members have the facility to make changes to an application which could impact an individual's position on the housing allocation list. This poses a risk that data may be intentionally manipulated to expedite certain individuals within the housing allocation list. This issue was raised in the last review.</p>	<p>This issue was raised on the last audit and it was agreed at that point in time that separation of these duties were not required or in the best interests of the service. It was agreed that fully restricting access would cause unnecessary duplication and reduce the ability for officers to offer resolution at first point of contact. Management felt that senior officers should be able to work with a degree of trust and that as long as there was adequate monitoring of the service, i.e</p>	<p>Access to maintain/edit an application has now been restricted to Housing Register and Contact Centre Teams only.</p>	<p>Implemented December 2017</p>

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
		<p>random allocation checks, that this could be managed effectively.</p> <p>Since the original SARTH audit there has been significant changes to the Housing Management and Housing Register Team Structures and on review of this action following these changes along with the planned provision of a single contact centre that will deal with all initial enquiries it is now felt that separation of duties has been naturally introduced. Therefore restricting the access on the systems would no longer cause any operational issues or unnecessary duplication.</p>		
9 (G)	Staff are unaware of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy as well as the Fraud Response plan. This poses a risk that in the event of fraud, they are unaware of what action should be taken.	<p>Following the original audit recommendations all relevant staff were issued with the appropriate parts of the Code Of Conduct. These were signed as read and understood by staff and copies retained on staff files.</p> <p>This action refers to a different policy that was not previously highlighted.</p>	All relevant staff have now been issued with the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy along with the Fraud Response Plan.	Implemented December 2017
10 (G)	Timescales for the cancellation of applications due to non-receipt of evidence are not always adhered to. Testing identified a number of occasions where the 28 day SLA's had not been adhered to.	While it is accepted that not all applications have been fully cancelled within the agreed timescale the level of risk is low as these applications are suspended on the system	Enquiries are being made with the Supplier to identify if this part of the process can be automated and therefore remove the need for manual	By June 2018

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
		<p>and would not therefore show on a shortlist. There is therefore no risk that an applicants that should be cancelled could be allocated a property. It is for this reason that the service deemed this a low risk area and focussed resources available on more critical parts of the service.</p> <p>This is a manual process that requires an officer to manually access each suspended application and complete the cancellation. Automation of this process is being investigated with the supplier to reduce the requirement for this to be done manually.</p>	intervention.	
11 (G)	There is currently no definition of the terms 'Unreasonable Refusal' or 'Withdrawn' to assist Housing officers with the consistent application of the process. This poses a risk that there is a lack of consistency on how individuals on the housing list are treated.	<p>All SARTH procedures and guidance is currently being reviewed regionally.</p> <p>It was agreed by all partners to commence the review of the procedures and guidance after the policy review was completed to enable the new versions to reflect any changes made in the policy.</p>	<p>The draft policy was agreed in principle in November 2017 and work has since commenced to review/update all procedures and associated guidance.</p> <p>REGIONAL GROUP WORK</p>	By June 2018
12 (G)	A procedure is currently not in place to assist the Housing Officers with the allocation of Direct Lets properties.	A procedure to be drafted to provide guidance on the allocation of Direct Lets properties. Evidence to be retained in Housing V.12 for audit purposes.	Direct Let functionality restricted to Team Leaders and Manager. Procedure and guidance is currently being drafted for staff.	By February 2018

No.	Findings and Implications	Service Comments	Action Taken/Progress	Complete
13 (G)	A user can have an unlimited number of attempts to log into the RSL portal without the account being locked. There is also a requirement for password changes every 30 days. Both these issues are not in line with the National Cyber Security Centre Password Guidance.	This was investigated following the original SARTH audit and was agreed low ICT priority as low risk due to the requirement for all staff to log in via a complex password/secure checks before being able to access the Housing system.	Currently being tested and planned for Implementation into live system January 2018.	By November 2018

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No.	Issue/Desired Action	Priority	Individual Actions To be Completed	Owner	Outcome/Progress	Target Completion	Completed Date	
1	To be able to filter shortlists to enable applicants requirements to be identified and matched to property facilities. This will reduce the number of overrides used when allocating as only applicants that require those facilities will be shortlisted. This will also enable better analysis of demand for future build programmes.	Medium	1.1	Additional attributes to be added to system to allow accurate recording of an applicants specific requirements e.g. stairlift, wetroom, level access	SP/JG	JG to confirm list of applicant attributes required and LP will test on OH and Portal	Jan-18	
			1.2	Review of all existing applications and update to add relevant attributes to existing applications	JG			
			1.3	Training and amend procedures to reflect new way of recording applicant information	JG			
			1.4	Identify property attributes required to enable direct match to applicant requirements	SP/DK			
			1.5	Identify responsibility for property data capture and input into system	SA			
			1.6	Update procedures/train relevant staff to enable more streamlined shortlisting process	DK			
2	Automated integration of triage application from CRM into V14 system. This will eliminate the need for manual rekeying allowing the resources within the team to focus on service delivery.	High	2.1	Complete specification of information required to import direct into V14	JG	Scoping of work has commenced and CRM changes identified to match data. JG to send this to JS for further investigation and scoping of timescales. LP has drafted spec and JG to provide feedback so can be sent to Capita for costs/timescales	Jan-18	
			2.2	Submit specification to supplier for indicative costs and timescales	SP			
			2.3	Agree works to be carried out and timescale for implementation	JG/SA/SP			
			2.4	Test system changes, staff training	JG/SP			
			2.5	Fully implement integration between CRM and Capita V14	SP			
3	Application date and category status not automatically being the same	High	3.1	Process to be reviewed and correct method of recording to be agreed	JG	At the moment these two fields have to be entered manually/separately. JG to raise with Regional Panel for clarification of desired process.	Jan-18	
			3.2	Submit specification to supplier for indicative costs and timescales	SP			
			3.3	System testing	SP			
			3.4	Training and amend procedures to reflect new way of recording applicant information where required	JG			
			3.5	Fully implement automation of date match as agreed	SP			
4	System has the functionality to auto suspend an application after two unreasonable refusals - this is not currently working	High	4.1	Raise fault with supplier	SP	LP to complete some testing to see if issue can be identified/resolved. Links into wider cust band work	Feb-18	
5	Portal users need to be able to upload documents relating to the application and potential offers, e.g. Pre Tenancy Assessment, Offer refusals	Medium	5.1	Submit specification to supplier for indicative costs and timescales	SP	LP to raise with Capita - will be chargeable development work	Jan-18	
			5.2	Agree works to be carried out and timescale for implementation	SP/JG			
			5.3	Test system changes, staff training and update of procedures	JG			
			5.4	Fully implement	SP			
6	Capita V14 system has the functionality to auto suspend when an application does not have eligible attributes selected - this is currently not working	Medium	6.1	Raise fault with supplier	SP	Various fixes have been implemented but have not resolved the issue. LP to re-raise with Capita	Feb-18	
7	When an applicant is linked to a previous homeless app it pulls through all applicants on the previous application	Medium	7.1	Raise issue with supplier	SP	Linked to previous use of homelessness module. Historical data needs to be preserved for audit reasons. LP to raise with Capita for solution	Feb-18	
8	Password complexity needs changing in line with audit reports	High	8.1	Amend password complexity to ensure compliance	SP	Planned implementation for Jan 18	Jan-18	
9	Requirement for more automation and work flow to reduce the need for manual intervention for SARTH process	High	9.1	Complete specification of information required to import direct into V14	JG	To be scoped after integration work completed. Need to co-ordinate with workflow for allocations.		
			9.2	Submit specification to supplier for indicative costs and timescales	SP			
			9.3	Agree works to be carried out and timescale for implementation	JG/SA/SP			
			9.4	Test system changes, staff training	JG/SP			
			9.5	Fully implement automated services	JG			
10	Glitch in system - live applicants are not showing on shortlists due to still being under offer when they are not	High	10.1	Raise issue with supplier	SP	Capita provided a fix for known examples and these have been rectified. LP to build report to identify if any other applications are affected.	Jan-18	
11	System thinks users are still completing an action and they get a "Transaction still running" Users then have to log out and back in	Low	11.1	Raise fault with supplier	SP		Jan-18	

12	Resolution of portal error following upgrade to V14	Medium	12.1	Raise fault with supplier	SP	Raised with Capita - LP awaiting fix from Supplier	Jan-18	
13	Portal not showing correct override reason against correct application	High	13.1	Raise fault with supplier	SP	Appears to be linked to using commas' in text. Logged with Capita as major issue. LP chasing target date for fix. Email to be sent to all other RSL's to inform to not use comma's if fix is a while away.	TBC by Capita	

SP	Steve Poole
SA	Steve Agger
JG	Jenni Griffiths
DK	Dawn Kent
LP	Lindsay Piper



COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 15 th January, 2018
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme
Cabinet Member	Not Applicable
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
Wednesday 14 th March 2018 10.00 am Page 77	Supporting People Commissioning Plan Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme Markets Review	To consider the proposed Commissioning Plan for 2018/19 To consider the Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme To consider the outcome of the Markets review prior to consideration at Cabinet	Consultation Consultation Consultation	Customer Support Manager Service Manager – Enterprise and Regeneration Service Manager – Enterprise and Regeneration	
Wednesday 16 th May 2018 10.00 am	New Homes Board	To receive an update on the work of the New Homes Board	Assurance/Monitoring	Housing Strategy Manager	
Wednesday 27 th June 2018 10.00 am					

Items to be scheduled to a date

- Work to address economic inactivity and support entrepreneurship
- Update on private sector housing renewal strategy
- Food poverty – as suggested during the 20th September meeting
- Update report on stairwell at Castle Heights Flint – as suggested during the 20th September meeting
- Smart Metres – as suggested during the 16th October meeting.

REGULAR ITEMS

Frequency	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	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)