

COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 14 th December 2022
Report Subject	Flintshire Housing Need Prospectus
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Last year the Welsh Government (WG) required that each Local Authority (LA) develop a Housing Needs prospectus to be updated on an annual basis.

The prospectus has been reviewed and an updated draft developed for approval. The format and content has not changed significantly to alter the direction of travel set out in out in the first iteration. The changes identified in the report reflect the increasing demand for Social housing from the Housing register and homelessness duties.

The report seeks to provide Community, Housing & Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the annual update on the Council Housing Needs prospectus in order to ensure, that as part of the WG Grant framework, the LA identifies their priorities for Social Housing Grant, in addition to providing a clear and concise summary of the housing need and demand.

The Prospectus will be used by the WG to approve the Programme Delivery Plan (PDP) and to ensure that schemes are meeting the identified need and priorities including progress towards meeting the priorities set out in the Local Housing Strategy 2019-24.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Community, Housing & Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee to note the content of the Flintshire Housing Need Prospectus and provide any feedback or comments for consideration.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE HOUSING NEED PROSPECTUS
1.01	Welsh Government (WG) requires that each Local Authority (LA) updates their Housing Need prospectus annually
1.02	The aim of the prospectus is to inform affordable housing delivery and shape the Social Housing Grant (SHG) programme by setting out what the LA priorities are and provide a guide about what type of housing is needed and in what locations.
1.03	For 2022/ 23, WG has advised that the Flintshire County Council (FCC) allocation was £13,352,142.
1.04	WG is currently setting budgets for the next three years. The allocation for year 2 is £14,687,357 and for year 3 is £14,019,749.
1.05	To access SHG, housing providers (e.g. Registered Social Landlords/ FCC) apply to FCC's Housing Strategy team and WG to request support for funding.
1.06	It is intended that housing providers will refer to the prospectus when they are progressing new affordable housing development sites so they can plan to deliver schemes that better meet the LA priorities and the housing need for the area.
1.07	WG will refer to the Prospectus when they are scrutinising SHG applications.
1.08	The draft Flintshire Housing Need Prospectus has been written in collaboration with Social Services, the Homelessness team and Planning and reflects the Council's current demands on services and the ambitions set out in the Flintshire Housing Strategy 2019-24.
1.09	It is intended the prospectus will be refreshed annually and will be an evolving document that can flex as the Council's housing priorities and needs change.
1.10	The FCC Housing Prospectus (appendix 1) has been updated to explain how the LA's priorities have been determined. Responsible Officers have been consulted.
1.11	The Prospectus will be presented annually to COT and Cabinet and Housing Association partners via the RSL Strategic Housing Group. Next year WG seek the Prospectus by April 2023. It is intended to update this document for approval in March 2023.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Revenue: the FCC Housing Prospectus is a strategic guidance document. There are no implications for the approved revenue budget for the current financial year but there may be future financial implications relating to Extra Care provision and out of county learning disability placements.</p> <p>Capital: the FCC Housing Needs Prospectus is a strategic document, there are no implications for the approved capital programme relating to the Strategy or Action Plan.</p> <p>Human Resources: The Housing Strategy team is operating with limited resources.</p>

3.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The requirement for LA's to develop a Housing Need Prospectus has been instigated by WG. If the LA fails to submit an updated Housing Need Prospectus, future affordable housing schemes that receive SHG support may not meet LA priorities or housing need.
3.02	The impact of Covid-19 and the possibility of a combined Covid/Influenza outbreak continues to pose a risk to delivering the Local Housing Strategy actions in line with the Prospectus. This is likely to continue for the remainder of 2022/23. It is difficult to mitigate this risk due to the level of uncertainty coupled with the interdependency on third parties such as developers and contractors. However it is to be hoped that the current immunisation programme will help to mitigate this risk.
3.03	Post Covid cost of living pressures, the economic impact of global shipping disruption and the impacts of the war in Ukraine are seeing significant cost and availability pressures placed on labour and materials. Many of the identified priorities will require funding to progress and therefore should funding be unavailable this will impact deliverability.
3.04	Environmental impacts of phosphates on drainage systems is impacting in development viability and delaying the planning process. A phosphate mitigation strategy is being developed.
3.05	The current cost of living "crisis" combined with economic and political instability is impacting on costs and confidence leading to instability in the housing market. There is a risk this may lead to a reduction in house prices.
3.06	There is a potential risk of increased demand on Homeless prevention services if repossessions should start to rise which may also result in increased demand for social and affordable homes.

3.07	Scheme viability may be impacted by rising costs. This may be mitigated by use of fluctuation clauses within build contracts.	
3.08	There are challenges relating to recruitment and retention of staff. Partnership options will be explored to manage development processes.	
3.09	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	Positive - more affordable homes will be provided in the right location.
	Prevention	Preventing - preventing people becoming homeless by developing accommodation to meet Local Authority priorities.
	Integration	Positive – the delivery of a range of affordable homes will contribute to integration within communities
	Collaboration	Positive – the SHG programme is delivered in partnership with RSLs and WG.
	Involvement	Positive - the SHG programme involves a range of stakeholders to enable its delivery.
	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive - ensuring the right homes are built and in the right places.
	Resilient Wales	Positive - new homes are built to a good quality and built to high environmental standards as required by WG as part of the SHG process.
	Healthier Wales	Positive - Ensuring homes meet the needs of all people in our society including those who are most vulnerable supporting their well-being.
	More equal Wales	Positive - Providing good quality and decent homes for vulnerable people including homeless accommodation, single household, specially adapted homes etc.
	Cohesive Wales	Positive - Contributing to attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities through promoting good design and collaborative delivery.

	Vibrant Wales	Positive - Ensuring our communities are diverse by developing a range of property types and tenures based on housing need and LA priorities.
	Globally responsible Wales	Positive – The prospectus will inform newbuild developments that will contribute to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The prospectus will be circulated within the Council as advised in 1.08.
4.02	The report is to be presented to the Community, Housing and Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Proposed Flintshire Housing Need Prospectus.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Marj Cooper, Housing Strategy Manager Telephone: 01352 70 3721 E-mail: : marj.cooper@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Social Housing Grant – Welsh Government funding that may be available to Housing associations and developing Local Authorities. It is to help fund new affordable housing e.g. for social rent. To qualify for grant homes must comply with <u>Welsh Government Development Quality Requirements (WDQR) and complete the current Grant application form and ensure that any scheme meets the WG standard viability tests.</u>