

Public Document Pack

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Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Cllr Ron Hampson (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox,
Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Glenys Diskin,
Rosetta Dolphin, Jim Falshaw, Alison Halford,
George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Brian Lloyd,
Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

15 March 2013

Sharon Thomas 01352 702324
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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **THURSDAY, 21ST MARCH, 2013** at **10.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 12)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 22 January and 21 February 2013 (copy enclosed).
- 4 **DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS 2013/14** (Pages 13 - 24)
Report of Director of Community Services and Head of Finance enclosed.

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 5 **SUPPORTING PEOPLE COMMISSIONING PLAN, HOUSING** (Pages 25 - 42)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 6 **QUARTER 3 SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORTS** (Pages 43 - 86)
Report of Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.
- 7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 87 - 92)
Report of Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 22 JANUARY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Tuesday, 22 January 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Rosetta Dolphin, Alison Halford, George Hardcastle, Brian Lloyd, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Haydn Bateman, Marion Bateman, Christine Jones, Richard Jones and Billy Mullin

CONTRIBUTORS: Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Housing, Chief Executive, Director of Community Services, Head of Finance, Head of Housing, Acting Finance & Accountancy Manager and Finance Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

39. BUDGET CONSULTATION FOR 2013/14

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Head of Finance explained that an overview of the budget would be provided for each Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the budget proposals for the specific area covered by each Committee detailed at the meetings. An information pack including background papers had been made available prior to the meeting. In addition, copies of the report on the Housing Revenue Account 2013/14 and Capital Programme 2013/14 received by Cabinet earlier in the day were circulated, together with a note of the revised recommendation agreed at that meeting.

The Director of Community Services and Head of Housing presented budget proposals and key service issues for the Housing - Council Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2013/14 respectively.

The main features of the presentation were:-

- National and Local Context
- Council Fund Budget Strategy
- Budget Process
- Ongoing Work
- Housing Budget
 - Council Fund
 - HRA Revenue and Capital Budget

- Key Service Issues
- Next Steps

The comments and questions which were raised by Members of the Committee on the presentations, together with the responses given, are detailed in Appendix 1 (attached).

During discussion, Members thanked officers for their work in presenting a positive set of proposals in the current difficult climate.

In response to a comment made by the Chairman, the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance referred to a Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) pilot project with some Councils to assess the impact of direct payment of Housing Benefit to a number of their tenants. He suggested that details on this and in particular the example at Wakefield Council, could be shared with Members. The Head of Housing agreed to bring this information to the meeting of the Committee scheduled for the following day.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted; and
- (b) That the Head of Housing provide information to the Committee on the DWP pilot project on the direct payment of Housing Benefit to tenants.

40. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.30 pm)

.....
Chairman

Appendix 1 to the Minutes of Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting 22/01/13

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

Housing Revenue Account - Initial Budget Proposals for Revenue and Capital 2013/14

Page 3

No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
1.0	<p><u>Housing Revenue Account (Revenue) - Comments / Issues</u></p>	
	<p><u>General Comments/Issues</u></p>	
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the Rent arrears team working properly, as the position is likely to get worse with the impact of Welfare reform ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, the team is working properly. There have been improvements in the level of rent arrears compared with the same point in 2011/12, but we can't be complacent and are looking for new ways of supporting our tenants.
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why have the increases in charges for communal heating been deferred ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is to ensure that the charges are based on the actual position at the end of the quarter as opposed to estimated costs. The increase is likely to be implemented in July.
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the impact of Flintshire having to pay a proportion of rent income to the Treasury ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual impact for 2013/14 is estimated at £6.1m. At a political level, Members are urged to lobby for this requirement to cease.
1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern was expressed at the proposed increases in garage rents. Will this result in garages being handed back with a resultant loss of income to the HRA ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the Council's garage sites are considered to be unfit for purpose. Garage rent levels have been much lower than our neighbouring authorities and the proposed increase will bring Flintshire into line with them. The proposal will generate an additional £0.100m of revenue.

Appendix 1 to the Minutes of Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting 22/01/13

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

Housing Revenue Account - Initial Budget Proposals for Revenue and Capital 2013/14

No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A suggestion was made that the age limit for provision of an assisted garden maintenance service be increased to age 70 and over. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is currently under consideration as part of garden services for the elderly.
2.0	<p><u>Housing Revenue Account (Capital) - Comments / Issues</u></p>	
2.1	<p><u>General Comments/Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the need for more houses, can we now start building more housing stock ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is currently underway to look into this, and it is hoped to bring more information to Members in due course.
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has it been possible to achieve such an increase in the provision of heating and kitchen improvements etc.? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current economic climate has resulted in tenders coming in lower than anticipated which will enable capital allocations to go further in terms of work to be delivered.

Appendix 1 to the Minutes of Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting 22/01/13

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

Housing Council Fund - Initial Budget Proposals 2013/14

No.	Comments and Questions:	Responses:
1.0	<u>Corporate Comments / Issues</u>	
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall picture given is too optimistic. Why does it appear to be so healthy in a time of reduced grant funding? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is encountering reduced grant levels in some areas which are being dealt with, but grant applications have been maximised in order to protect the Council's position as much as possible.
2.0	<u>Housing Council Fund Comments / Issues</u>	
2.1	<u>General Comments/Issues</u>	
2.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have we budgeted sufficiently for our Homelessness responsibilities, and is there also a potential for problems with private sector rents due to the impact of benefit reductions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequate provision has been made for potential increased demand on the Homelessness service as we recognise that this is an emerging pressure as a consequence of Welfare Reforms. There is a potential for problems with private sector rents and the Council will need to be flexible in dealing with both the public and private sector.
2.2	<u>Efficiencies</u>	
2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information was sought on the efficiency of £0.018m arising from the Service Review on the Resident Wardens service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal to delete one of the current vacant posts will leave sufficient resources for ongoing service delivery.

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HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
21 FEBRUARY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Thursday, 21 February 2013

PRESENT: **Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)**

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Jim Falshaw, Ray Hughes, Brian Lloyd, Mike Reece and Gareth Roberts

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors Ian Dunbar (for Glenys Diskin) and Paul Shotton (for Sharon Williams)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Patrick Heesom

APOLOGIES: Councillors: David Cox, Alison Halford and George Hardcastle

CONTRIBUTORS: Cabinet Member for Housing, Head of Housing, Supporting People Manager, Neighbourhood Housing Manager (North) and Housing Asset Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Member Engagement Manager, Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

50. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

Accuracy

Page 2, paragraph 5, During the period October to December 2012, 54 formal homeless applications had been made in contrast to 34 applications made in the period October to December 2012. The second reference to October to December 2012 should read 2011.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the above amendment, the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair congratulated Nikki Evans on his permanent appointment as Housing Asset Manager.

The Chair also congratulated Ceri Owen on her new appointment as the Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator.

52. RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

The Neighbourhood Housing Manager (North) introduced the report which provided the results of the Welsh Government's Assessment of the council's Customer Involvement Strategy (also known as the Local Tenant Participation Strategy). The assessment considered 12 points in relation to the strategy and action plan. Ten out of 12 points were rated as satisfactory or good.

A Customer Involvement Strategy Group had been established for many years and included representatives from Members, officers and tenants of the Council. They had considered the content of the assessment and formulated an action plan for the areas highlighted for improvement.

The Neighbourhood Housing Manager asked the Committee to consider what priorities should inform a revised strategy which would be considered by Scrutiny later in the year. She also asked Members to consider if the frequency of the Housing News publication should be reduced from four to two editions per year.

Councillor W.P. Shotton proposed that the Housing News publication be reduced to two editions per year with a spring edition to publicise the budget, changes to rents and summer play schemes, and a winter edition to publicise Christmas events, heating and winter arrangements. He added that hand delivery of the publications would allow environmental visual assessments to be made of tenants' gardens, pathways and general upkeep of the estates.

The Head of Housing said that various options for cost reductions in production and distribution of the publication had been explored. The latest edition had been hand delivered by officers and Members and it had taken just one morning to deliver 7,500 copies.

Councillor M.A. Reece asked if school pupils could help distribute the publication. The Head of Housing said that copies of the publication could be left in GP surgeries and schools.

Councillor H.G. Roberts commented on the organisation of some tenant associations and stressed the importance of having an elected and credible tenants' group. The Head of Housing in response said that in some cases a single person would be elected unopposed simply because no-one else had come forward. She said that the Council could not intervene unless there was a valid reason why a person was unfit to fulfil the duties. She said that the Council would do all it could to encourage participation.

Councillor P.J. Curtis pointed out that some residents on estates were now owner occupiers and that the Council should be mindful of disproportionate numbers of non tenants on tenant involvement groups. He agreed with Councillor Shotton that publication of the Housing News be reduced to two editions per year. Councillor Curtis also asked that anti-social behaviour in the Llywn Aled Sheltered Accommodation Area be monitored and that the Head of

Housing liaison with Inspector Dave Massey to address the issues causing distress to elderly residents.

Councillor A.M. Bragg asked how a tenant could get involved with a tenants' committee. The Head of Housing said that the formal tenants' associations had rules and a constitution. She added that people not wishing to participate in such a formal setting could help with surveys, fun days and service reviews.

The Cabinet Member for Housing said that it would be timely to review the membership of the Member and Tenant Working Group. The Committee agreed that Councillors P.J. Curtis, G. Hardcastle and R.G. Hampson serve on the group, along with the Deputy Leader and that Councillors A.M. Bragg and J.E. Falshaw be elected as substitute members of the group.

Councillor R. Hughes asked if the anti-social behaviour of neighbours would be addressed and cited the case of a tenant who had suffered with anti-social behaviour for a number of years.

Councillor Shotton said that Flintshire had an Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and that residents may not be aware of this. The Head of Housing said that the budget for an additional two Anti-Social Behaviour Officers had been approved from April 2013 onwards.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and that the Housing News publication be reduced from four editions to two editions per year;
- (b) That Councillors P.J. Curtis, G. Hardcastle and R.G. Hampson be nominated to serve on the Member and Tenant Working Group and that Councillors A.M. Bragg and J.E. Falshaw be nominated to serve as substitute members of the group; and
- (c) That it be noted that the Deputy Leader will be continuing as a member of the Member and Tenant Working Group.

53. SHELTERED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Supporting People Manager introduced a report to update the Committee about the introduction of a Community Based (Warden) Support Service. Focus had been concentrated so far on the setting up of Community hubs, the implementation of new working practices and the assessment of support needs for all tenants which was now complete. There were nine hubs, three of which were based in Council properties. The Supporting People Manager asked the Committee if they would consider changing the three hubs based in Council properties if suitable alternative office accommodation could be secured.

It was envisaged that the service could soon be rolled out to persons in owner occupied accommodation as the Supporting People Grant was tenure neutral. The Supporting People Manager said that a new staff structure would

come into operation from April 2014. It had been agreed that 70% of staff time would be dedicated to field work in line with the findings and needs of the support assessments.

Councillor A.I. Dunbar asked if any hubs would be amalgamated. The Supporting People Manager said that three hubs would be reviewed, including one at Mostyn where there was the possibility of sharing office space with another public service provider. Staff had felt it was important to maintain hubs in Caergwrle and Mostyn which support rural areas.

Councillor P.J. Curtis asked where the Holywell hub was located and asked if staff could work out of the Flintshire Connects Office. He asked if the reduction in staff could have a negative effect on the service, particularly if the service was extended. The Supporting People Manager said it was based in Panton Place. The Head of Housing said that the Flintshire Connects Office was an option and that some wardens already worked from there. Appendix 1 detailed that the proposed staffing levels included capacity for expansion. She added that if further funding was required, if demand grew, they could approach Supporting People for more funding.

Councillor W.P. Shotton thanked the Supporting People Manager for the report and asked how often residents needs were reviewed. The Supporting People Manager said that they were reviewed every six months and on demand should their needs change.

Councillor A.M. Bragg voiced concern at possible work overload for the staff and asked if there would be a cost element for those in owner occupied accommodation. The Supporting People Manager said that the 70% fieldwork element was set realistically and capacity had been built in for owner occupier uptake. Once the scheme was tenure neutral, a request for extra funding could be considered. The Head of Housing said that there were no proposals to charge clients.

Councillor R. Davies thanked the Supporting People Manager for an excellent report and asked if the local members were aware of the hubs. The Supporting People Manager said that she was happy to arrange visits for any member and would send hub location lists out.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the committee notes the progress of the Sheltered Housing Improvement Project;
- b) That the Committee agrees to the proposals to seek alternative accommodation for three hubs currently located at Council houses; and
- c) That the Committee notes the future expansion proposals being developed for private sector tenants and home owners to deliver a county wide, tenure neutral service to commence April 2013.

54. PDA AND CAPITA UPDATE

The Housing Asset Manager introduced a report to update Committee Members on the current status of mobile working in Housing Services.

To date, over 7000 jobs had been issued and completed using mobile devices. The PDA was now used by 35 repairs staff. There had been regular meetings between Corporate ICT and PDA software suppliers and phone suppliers to discuss any ongoing issues. The Housing Department was now looking at training 15 gas operatives in the technology over the next 15 weeks. The current PDAs were now two years old and the Housing Department were researching upgraded devices and software with Corporate ICT, Software and PDA suppliers. It was proposed that the next area to undertake mobile working would be the responsive repairs section.

Councillor W.P. Shotton thanked the Housing Asset Manager for the report and asked if the trials with the 3G device had been successful. The Head of Housing said that it had, but she was also confident that the right devices had been purchased initially - 3G had not been readily available when the original devices were bought. Where there had been issues with voice and data, separate mobiles for tradesmen had been purchased.

Councillor J.E. Falshaw asked if there would be any recompense from the suppliers in relation to all the issues that had been raised and whether other Councils had reported similar problems. He also asked if 4G would be suitable. The Head of Housing said that the device that was purchased met the specification set by Capita. The voice and data issue could not be resolved on the original device. The Head of Housing said that 4G could provide an improvement but there was not good 3G coverage yet in rural areas of Flintshire. Other services had experienced similar issues but had since purchased different devices.

Councillor M.A. Reece asked if a tradesperson had a laptop if it would take the job out of the system once completed. The Housing Asset Manager said that electricians had lap tops and were able to do specification on site and email certificates back to the office.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee support the action taken to resolve issues in order to take forward mobile working in Housing Services.

55. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

That the Forward Work Programme as submitted be approved with the inclusions outlined. The Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme.

At the next meeting on 21 March 2013, there would be an additional report on the Supporting People Commissioning Plan.

The meeting on 24 April 2013 would include an additional report on the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme as submitted be approved with the inclusions outlined above.

56. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.26 am)

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Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: THURSDAY, 21 MARCH 2013

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
HEAD OF FINANCE

SUBJECT: DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS 2013 / 2014

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The report seeks the consideration and discussion of Flintshire County Council's revised Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Policy for 2013/2014. The views of the Committee will be reported to Cabinet in April. The report was submitted to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny in February.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) provides extra funding to local authorities to provide all claimants with further financial assistance with their Housing costs.

2.02 Central Government's Welfare Reform Programme is changing how Benefits are claimed. The changes are designed to make the transition from Benefits into work much easier and also to give people greater control over their finances. However these changes potentially will have a negative financial impact on households and individuals.

2.03 DHP can be used to give people extra help and support with their Housing Costs. The DWP annual funding for DHP was £20m up to April 2011. To help local authorities manage the impact of the reforms DHP funding increased to £30m in 2011/2012 and to £60m for 2012/13 and for the remainder of the Spending Review.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 2013/14 will be challenging to many households and individuals as the changes to Welfare Benefits are implemented, changes include;

- Abolition of Second Adult Rebate within the new Council tax Reduction Scheme
- A restriction for people of working age "under occupying" their homes.
- A "Benefit Cap" being introduced which limits the total amount of "welfare benefits" that a working age person can receive to

£350 per week for a single and £500 per week per family.

- Personal Independence Payments will replace Disability Living Allowance for working age people starting from June 2013
- Introduction of Universal Credit
- Changes to Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans – introduction of a Local Assistance Scheme
- Changes to non-dependent deductions
- Changes to Local Housing Allowance

3.02 Examples where a DHP may help;

- Where a rent restriction has been applied
- Reductions in Housing Benefit entitlement following changes to Local Housing Allowance
- Non dependent deductions
- Income Tapers

3.03 The list is not exhaustive but it does not include:

- Ineligible service charges
- Increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears
- Certain sanctions and reductions in benefits

DHPs are available to meet housing costs across all tenure types i.e. Social Housing and Private rented sector

3.04 Where it is needed this funding is designed to help in the short term. This is a cash limited budget and each application for DHP is assessed on need and a decision will be made on a case by case basis.

3.05 In deciding upon an award FCC will consider the shortfall between a persons Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and their rent and:

- Steps taken by a person to reduce their liability
- Steps taken by the person to find cheaper alternative accommodation
- Reasons why a person cannot move to cheaper alternative accommodation
- Steps taken by a person to increase their income
- The financial circumstances of the person and their family
- Any exceptional circumstances
- Any proactive intervention and help given with regard to debt advice and budgeting.
- Funding available to Flintshire County Council
- The consequences of not awarding a DHP

3.06 As stated in 2.03 there has been an increased allocation of £60m DHP funding from the DWP available to local authorities. Councils generally will find that the potential pressure on this fund will intensify and that funding by DHP will not be able to provide adequate long term support for customers. *The purpose of DHP is to provide short*

term assistance and not to support customers with long term solutions.

- 3.07 DHP is a payment of last resort or in an emergency; it is hoped that with proactive intervention and help that other alternatives will be found to help customers in difficulty. This work will be undertaken by the Welfare Reform Operational team and other officers in Housing Benefits, Housing and Welfare Rights.
- 3.08 Each year the DWP allocate funding to Local Authorities, but allow the authority to pay above this amount. The authority is allowed to award up to 2.5 times the government allocation of DHP.
- 3.09 For the financial year 2013/14 Flintshire County has been allocated £242,119 by the Department of Works and Pensions. Flintshire County Council is able to spend a total of £605 297; the difference being able to be funded by the local authority. In 2013/2014 £167 526 was originally allocated to the DHP fund. At the 1st March Budget meeting it was announced that another £135 000 would be available for 2013/2014. The overall budget to support households for 2013 / 2014 in Flintshire is £544 645.
- 3.10 It should be noted that DHP cannot directly be used for help with Council Tax liability as the Council Tax Reduction Scheme is not classed as a Welfare Benefit and therefore outside the scope of the scheme although liability to pay Council Tax will be taken into consideration when looking at DHP eligibility for help with housing cost. If a Council Tax payer cannot meet their Council Tax liability then Flintshire County Council will consider individual circumstances under the Corporate Debt and Faire Debt Policy.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 The policy and report was submitted to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny on the 14th February 2013. Members raised concerns about the lack of cheaper alternative accommodation and that there were significant challenges for the Council. The report was noted .
- 4.02 That this report and the draft policy be discussed at Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny and Housing Overview and Scrutiny and the comments of the committees be reported to Cabinet in April 2013.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 Central Governments allocation to Flintshire County Council in 2013/2014 is £242 119. This means that the overall expenditure limit for DHP is £605 298. The 2013/2014 budget now contains a provision for Flintshire County Council to contribute £302 526; £167 526 was allocated to the budget and an additional £135 000 which will now provide a total available for DHP to be £544 645.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Wales has been argued to be the most deprived country in the UK. It has also been highlighted that the deprivation present in Wales is comparable to only parts in England, in which a similar “post industrial setting” is found. It may be regarded that Wales faces more significant impacts as a result of changes to the systems of welfare reform which begin in earnest next year.

6.02 The Welfare Reform Programme has recognised the need for proactive work and support to try and mitigate as much as possible the effects on vulnerable residents in Flintshire. Residents may be affected by changed to Welfare Benefits which are happening at the same time.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Currently resourced

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The policy will be circulated to members of the Flintshire Advice Management board

12.00 APPENDICES

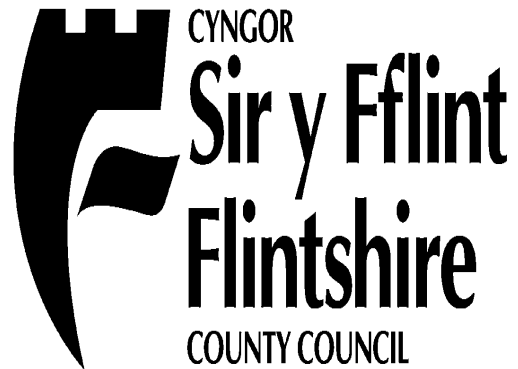
12.01 Appendix 1 – Draft Discretionary Housing Payments Policy 2013/2014

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI 2001 N1167)

Contact Officer: Jen Griffiths

Telephone: 01352 702929 Email: jen.griffiths@flintshire.gov.uk



Flintshire County Council

Discretionary Housing Payments

Policy April 2013

DRAFT

Introduction

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are discretionary sums payable by the Council to a person in receipt of Housing Benefit (HB) or Universal Credit (UC), where they still appear to require additional financial assistance with their Housing Costs.

DHPs are regulated by the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI 2001 No 1167) which are summarised in Appendix A at the end of this document, but within the regulations a Council is allowed much discretion. Flintshire County Council (FCC) will administer the scheme with reference and regard to the contents of this policy

Objectives

FCC has the following objectives for its DHP scheme;

- To encourage and help keep people in employment
- To prevent homelessness and aid people to retain sustainable tenancies
- To help people who are trying to help themselves
- To help keep families together
- To support vulnerable people in the community
- To help people through times in which they are stressed and vulnerable
- To help to alleviate poverty
- To assist people that are particularly disadvantaged by Welfare Reforms

In the pursuit of these objectives FCC undertakes to consider each case on its individual merits and to act fairly, reasonably and consistently.

Claiming a DHP

Claims should be made on FCC's DHP application form, but an application will be accepted if made in another format if it contains sufficient information on which a decision can be reached.

Awarding a DHP

The DHP award may be of any duration and will usually be paid from the Monday following the request being made. Upon representation consideration can be made for the DHP to be paid from an earlier date.

In deciding upon an award, FCC will consider the following factors as appropriate

- The shortfall between a person's Housing Benefit, or Universal Credit and their rent
- Steps taken by a person to reduce their rent liability
- Steps taken by the person to find cheaper alternative accommodation
- Reasons why a person cannot move to cheaper alternative accommodation
- Steps taken by a person to increase their income
- The financial circumstances of the person and their family, but Disability Living Allowance (Mobility Component) will not be considered as income
- Any relevant medical circumstances of the person and their family
- Any circumstances which may be considered as exceptional
- The level of funding available to FCC
- The consequences of not awarding a DHP

Payment and Notification

FCC will pay a DHP by BACS in the same way that Housing Benefit is paid. Notification of successful and unsuccessful awards will be accompanied by a statement explaining the reason for FCC's decision.

The statement of reasons will ensure that successful recipients know when to report relevant changes, and for unsuccessful applicants the reasons will provide an explanation against which a review could be requested.

Review of Decisions

Any representation regarding the refusal, rate or ending of a DHP payment may be subject to a review request from the affected person. The review will be dealt with by a senior officer to the original decision maker. In the event of an affected person still being dissatisfied, the Benefits Manager will make a final decision

Other forms of assistance with Housing Costs

If a Council Tax payer cannot meet their council tax liability, then FCC may consider writing off their debt in accordance with the Corporate Debt Policy.

Assistance with Rent Deposits is available from the FCC Bond Scheme.

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Appendix A) Overview of the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI 2001 / 1167)

Regulation 1 – Citation, Commencement and Interpretation.....	5
Regulation 2 – Discretionary Housing Payments	5
Regulation 3 – Circumstances in which Discretionary Housing Payments may be made	5
Regulation 4 – Limit on the amount of the DHP that may be paid.....	6
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Regulation 1 – Citation, Commencement and Interpretation

This regulation gives the scheme its name and commencement date

Regulation 2 – Discretionary Housing Payments

This regulation describes the payments as follows;

The Local Authority (LA) may make payments to persons who –

- Are entitled to HB
- Require further financial assistance with their housing costs (in addition to their HB)

The LA has total discretion as to whom they pay or don't pay, but housing costs incurred before 2 July 2001 cannot be considered. There is also a discretion regarding

- The amount of the payments, and
- The period for, or in respect of which, they are made

Regulation 3 – Circumstances in which Discretionary Housing Payments may be made

Payments may be made when a person has made a claim, and their need for financial assistance is not in respect of the following;

- A liability to meet ineligible service charges
- A liability to meet charges for water, sewerage or allied environmental services

- A liability for an increased weekly rent liability as a result of rent arrears
- Reductions in benefit due to the failure to co-operate in pursuit of child support maintenance or for failing to participate in a work – focussed interview
- Job Seekers Allowance being reduced or stopped due to the failure to attend an interview, or through the loss of employment either voluntarily or through misconduct
- The suspension of benefit payments
- The Loss of Benefit Provisions imposed for fraudulent claims
- The recovery of an overpayment by deductions to benefit

Regulation 4 – Limit on the amount of the DHP that may be paid

The amount of a DHP cannot exceed the following when calculated as a weekly sum;

- The weekly rent less ineligible service charges

Regulation 5 – Period for, or in respect of which, DHPs may be made

The LA may restrict the payments of DHPs to any period that it considers appropriate to the details of the case, but there must have been entitlement to HB for that period

Regulation 6 – Form, manner and procedure for claims

The LA may accept a DHP claim in any way it approves from;

- A person entitled to HB, or
- A person acting on behalf of a person entitled to HB where that is reasonable

The DHP can then be paid to either the person entitled to HB or some other person where that seems reasonable in that particular case

The LA must give written notice of any DHP decision or review together with the reasons for the decision to the applicant as soon as is reasonably practicable

Regulation 7 – Provision of information

A person claiming or receiving a DHP shall provide the LA with the following information;

- Particulars of the grounds of a claim, or for a review
- Changes in circumstances which may be relevant to the continuance of the DHP
- Such other information as the LA may specify in the time the LA considers appropriate

Regulation 8 – Reviews

An LA may review any decision about the making, cancellation or recovery of a DHP in such circumstances as it sees fit.

The LA may cancel a DHP and make a recovery where it has determined that;

- Any person has misrepresented or failed to declare a material fact (fraudulently or otherwise) and as a result of that a payment was made, or
- An error has been made that caused a payment to be made when otherwise it would not have been

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: WEDNESDAY, 21ST MARCH 2013

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT: SUPPORTING PEOPLE COMMISSIONING PLAN,
HOUSING

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Committee on the Supporting People Programme in Flintshire and seek approval for the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan and the Local Spend Plan.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Supporting People Programme in Flintshire now fits within regional governance arrangements. In 2012, Welsh Government merged the two Supporting People funding streams – Supporting People Grant (SPG) and Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG) into one Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG). The new SPPG also introduced a new governance framework for the programme with the establishment of a Supporting People National Advisory Board, chaired by the Minister, and the Regional Collaborative Committees (RCCs), with elected member and lead officer membership, to ensure high quality services are delivered effectively and efficiently across boundaries.

2.02 The Local Authority is required to develop a 3-year Commissioning Strategy that will inform the Regional Commissioning Strategy. Local Authorities in North Wales have developed 12-month Commissioning Strategies to cover the transition period and allow time for reviewing of existing services and the need for any additional/new services. Two year strategies will be developed from 2014/15.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Supporting People Strategy highlighted that Flintshire was expected to face significant reductions to the Supporting People Grant allocation. Flintshire received a reduction in funding for 2012/2013 of £296,221 and further reductions are as follows:-

2013/2014	-£284,374
2014/2015	-£341,249

- 3.02 The Local Commissioning Plan (LCP) details the strategic priorities for Flintshire from the Supporting People Strategy. Flintshire's Supporting People Team is focussing on ensuring that the programme funds the most appropriate housing related support services for the county, in order to maximise the outcomes achieved by service users. The LCP also covers a summary of the current need, existing supply and service gaps.
- 3.03 Consultation on the Supporting People Programme is an integral part of the work of the team. The LCP details good examples of partnership working and consultation. The LCP identifies the need to improve service user consultation and build on the work carried out by Us UnLtd in the county. This is included in the service developments in Section 6.
- 3.04 In order to make the best use of available funding, Flintshire plans to take forward a number of short term pilot projects during 2013/2014. These will be identified as 'off-the shelf' projects that can be implemented at short-notice in order to utilise non-recurring under spend. Supporting People will continue to work with partners to identify priority areas for one-off spend. In addition, the local Supporting People Planning Group will continue to work with providers, key stakeholders and service users over the next 12 months to identify efficiency savings and consider a range of innovative support approaches and options for collaboration that will enable as many vulnerable people as possible to receive much needed support within available resources.
- 3.05 The Local Commissioning Plan is included at Appendix 1. Many of the developments are cost neutral service improvements. Service developments which include changes to grant funding are detailed below.

The new commitments include:

- A contribution to the Flintshire Nightstop Service. This will provide a safe alternative to B&B accommodation for 16-18 year olds.
- The Service User Engagement Project which will enable Supporting People to improve the participation of service users across all aspects of planning and service delivery.
- The Co-ordination of Supporting People Services which will ensure that best use is made of resources including better matching of service users to projects, reduction in vacant places, improved turnover in projects and reduced risk of people with complex needs falling between gaps in services.
- Resettlement Officer for Llys Jasmine Extra Care Housing will provide short term funding for a number of weeks to Wales and West Housing Association to provide additional support for people to move and settle in.

The Realignment actions include:

- The development of an 'Activities Coordinator' at Llys Jasmine Extra Care. This secures funding for Flintshire County Council that was deemed ineligible.
- Investment in the Council's new Community Based Accommodation Support Service. This secures funding to an eligible strategically relevant service.

The reductions in funding include:

- A reduction of £280,000 for Social Services for Adults from services which are not eligible to be funded by Supporting People Programme Grant.
- A reduction of £35,000 created by joining two domestic abuse services together to create a unified service and releasing efficiency savings.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Committee supports the Flintshire Supporting People Local Commissioning and spend plan

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The Supporting People Grant is a specific grant for funding housing related support services. For 2013-2014 Flintshire County Council have been informed of a reduction to the grant of £284,374, with further reductions expected in the following years as a result of redistribution.

5.02 The LCP highlights new services for priority development. However, services will only be developed according to available funding.

5.03 The LCP has identified a need to reduce funding to some services which are deemed ineligible for Supporting People funding. This will have an impact on Adult Social Services and as such Adult Social Services have planned for and managed this reduction.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 There are no specific anti-poverty implications within this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no specific environmental implications within this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 The Supporting People Programme was established to provide low-

level accommodation support services to people with an assessed need for support. Access to these support services should be available to all people who need them.

- 8.02 At present, some services are delivered as part of Social Services core services. Releasing SPG funding from these 'core' services will provide the opportunity to develop services in the community. This will enable equality of access to accommodation support services amongst those in our communities who have a need for such support.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 N/A

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 A joint Supporting People and Homeless Forum which includes a range of stakeholders will be held in April to consult on the Flintshire Homeless Prevention Strategy and the Supporting People Commissioning Strategy. The commissioning Strategy will be presented to the Regional Collaborative Committee. The Supporting People Team will meet all providers individually to discuss their projects and explore opportunities to make best use of resources.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 Flintshire Supporting People have had a three year commissioning strategy in place which was developed in partnership with stakeholders and providers. Flintshire Supporting People Team hold a provider forum annually to keep providers informed about local, regional and national developments and consult on changes within the annual plans.
- 11.02 Information on need, supply and gaps is collected through information provided from service users, providers and wider stakeholders through the needs mapping exercise, the annual supply return, quarterly monitoring meetings and formal reviews.

12.00 APPENDICES

- 12.01 Appendix 1: Flintshire Local Commissioning Plan
Appendix 2: Flintshire Spend Plan 2013/14

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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Flintshire County Council

Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan

2013-2014

Awaiting Approval



Contents:

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1. Introduction

Supporting People is required to submit an annual Commissioning Plan to the Welsh Government. In 2010, following wide consultation with stakeholders, Flintshire County Council implemented its' 3 year strategy for Supporting People services. This strategy set out a vision for the Supporting People programme in Flintshire.

In 2012, Welsh Government merged the two Supporting People funding streams – Supporting People Grant (SPG) and Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG) into one Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG). The new SPPG also introduced a new governance framework for the programme with the establishment of a Supporting People National Advisory Board, chaired by the Minister, and the Regional Collaborative Committees (RCCs), to ensure high quality services are delivered effectively and efficiently across boundaries.

In addition to these governance changes, Flintshire has received a reduction in funding for 2012/2013 of £296,221 and further reductions as follows:-

2013/2014	-£284,374
2014/2015	-£341,249

Supporting People across Wales is currently working in a 12 month transition period, giving time to allow the new governance and funding procedures to be implemented.

Given the implications of all of the recent changes, Flintshire has produced the Local Commissioning Plan for 2013/2014 in line the existing vision of the 3 year strategy implemented in 2010.

2. Strategic Priorities

Flintshire Supporting People Team continues to ensure that the programme funds the most appropriate housing related support services for the county, in order to maximise the outcomes achieved by service users.

The 2010 Supporting People strategy identified a series of overarching key commissioning priorities . These priorities are applied to all services commissioned by Flintshire Supporting People:-

- Provide a range of support and accommodation models across all vulnerable groups
- Ensure existing services are high quality and delivering positive outcomes
- Link with the Social Housing Grant (SHG) programme to facilitate new development

- Improve access to services, to ensure that services are flexible and able to respond to a wider range of needs, are tenure neutral and where appropriate – cross authority
- Provide a mix of generic and more targeted services; and
- Develop an outcomes framework for all services.

The actions identified within this plan have been developed in conjunction with Flintshire's Homeless Prevention Strategy 2013 and will form an integrated part of the action plan.

3. Need, supply and service gaps

3.1 Need

North Wales Supporting People Teams have developed a regional Needs Mapping Database, which is hosted by Denbighshire County Council. This system has been in operation since April 2012 and a detailed analysis of the information will be available from April 2013.

In 2012, Flintshire undertook a Housing First Pilot Project. The findings of this project identified the need to provide accommodation with a tailored package of support in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people within the county. The Coordinator role within the Supporting People Team will build on this work and carry forward the Housing First approach.

Welfare Reform changes are beginning to have an impact both on the number of people presenting as homeless and also the number of people requesting support to sustain their current accommodation. Supporting People needs to ensure that reductions to the grant funding are implemented whilst also continuing to provide a range of quality, effective services to meet the needs of vulnerable people.

3.2 Supply

The current supply for Flintshire is summarised below into client groups, this corresponds with the spend plan information recently submitted to the North Wales Regional Collaborative Committee.

Client Group	Number of Units
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse	54
Men experiencing Domestic Abuse	0
People with Learning Disabilities	122
People with Mental Health Issues	56
People with Alcohol Issues	0
People with Substance Misuse Issues	46
People with Criminal Offending History	40
People with Refugee Status	0
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	37
People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)	0
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	3
Young People who are Care Leavers	0
Young People with Support Needs (16 to 24)	137
Single Parent Families with Support Needs	0
Families with Support Needs	71
Single People with Support Needs not listed above (25 to 64)	0
People with 55 years of age with Support Needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services)	2851
Generic/Floating Support/Peripatetic (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs)	169
Alarm Services (including in sheltered/extra care)	268
Total	3854

A full breakdown of the types of support provided, either accommodation based or floating support, can be viewed in Appendix 2 (Spend Plan for 2013/14).

3.3 Gaps

Building on the work undertaken by DCLG, around the Positive Pathway Approach for young people, Flintshire believes these principles can also be applied to other vulnerable groups and will use them to guide the housing solutions and services it provides to deliver the Homeless Prevention Strategy and the Supporting People, Local Commissioning Plan. The principles are:-

- Integrated whole system actions to prevent homelessness, support, where necessary, an individual's planned moves along a positive pathway to independence
- An ethos which places individuals and their families at the heart of planning and delivery – significant, supportive relationships with one or two skilled professionals often the key to success
- Invest in early intervention rather than just reacting to crisis
- Seamless, joined up and coordinated, easy to use services, making the best use of resources, pooling budgets of all agencies, local knowledge, community assets and voluntary effort, whenever it is effective to do so
- Information and advice at all stages of the pathway, not only about housing, but on other aspects of individuals lives where they may need support
- Progress to independence for each individual, through having a range of accommodation options to meet different needs
- Service users involved in how services are shaped and delivered leads to excellence in provision and gives individuals important learning opportunities for the future

We have and will continue to assess our current provision against these principles alongside wider needs information and stakeholder feedback to identify gaps.

4. Consultation evidence

4.1 Stakeholder Involvement

Flintshire Supporting People have had a three year commissioning strategy in place which was developed in partnership with stakeholders and providers. Flintshire Supporting People Team hold a provider forum annually to keep providers informed about local, regional and national developments and consult on changes within the annual plans.

Information on need, supply and gaps is collected through information provided from service users, providers and wider stakeholders through the needs mapping exercise, the annual supply return, quarterly monitoring meetings and formal reviews.

A joint Supporting People and Homeless Forum which includes a range of stakeholders will be held in April to consult on the Flintshire Homeless Prevention Strategy and the Supporting People Commissioning Strategy.

The Commissioning Strategy will be presented to the Regional Collaborative Committee and to Flintshire County Council Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Supporting People Team will meet all providers individually to discuss their projects and explore opportunities to make best use of resources.

4.2 Working in Partnership

Supporting People has worked closely with Housing Options, Neighbourhood Housing Services, Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Service Providers, Housing Associations, Probation, Youth Justice and the Health Board on a couple of pilot projects. The Targeting Floating Support and Housing First Pilots aim to deliver findings that will inform future commissioning of services. Partnership working on these pilots produces valuable information on our partner's priorities and gaps in provision.

The Local Supporting People Planning Group includes representation from Probation, BCUHB, Social Services and Housing. This group has overseen the Supporting People Programme through 2012 and is currently under review in light of the changes at a regional level and the launch of the Regional Collaborative Committee.

4.3 Service User Involvement

Flintshire is committed to involving service users and is aware that this needs to go beyond consultation events to incorporate meaningful participation and engagement. Flintshire wants to be sure that service user involvement delivers these key outcomes:-

- Increases the influence of service users on how Homelessness and Supporting People and other related services are commissioned and delivered in Flintshire
- To involve and inspire those who have been homeless or are receiving housing related support and give them the confidence to provide constructive feedback on all areas of service planning, delivery, policy and review.

In order to improve service user involvement in Flintshire and deliver these outcomes, the team has developed an SLA with a service user led Social Enterprise which will deliver on the following areas:-

- Delivering opportunities for people who have been Homeless or who are receiving support including volunteering opportunities, involvement in street football and peer mentoring and reviewing opportunities.

- Work with people who've experienced homelessness, supported housing and other forms of social exclusion; to consult, learn and listen; so that they can influence the improvement of services. The organisation will be able to seek views from a more neutral perspective than the Local Authority or service provider.
- When decisions are made it can only be good practice to consult with those who will feel a direct impact. The organisation will build on the peer reviewing programme to train and develop a group of service users / ex- service users who can be called upon to provide advice on policy or service developments and participate as a key stakeholder in development groups and forums.
- The organisation will offer the services of users to undertake questionnaires and interviews in relation to the effectiveness of existing services.

4.4 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out in March 2013 on this plan and is available on request.

5. Priorities for development

In order to make the best use of available funding and minimise the need to decommission services, Flintshire plans to take forward a number of short term pilot projects during 2013/2014. These will be identified as 'off-the shelf' projects that can be implemented at short-notice in order to utilise non-recurring under spend.

The local Supporting People Planning Group will continue to work with providers, key stakeholders and service users over the next 12 months to identify efficiency savings and consider a range of innovative support approaches and options for collaboration that will enable as many vulnerable people as possible to receive much needed support within available resources.

In addition, Flintshire will continue to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities as a member of the North Wales Regional Collaborative Committee. Regional work completed to date includes the development of a regional contract providing service provision for people suffering from HIV/AIDS, a Regional Information Sharing Protocol, a Regional Domestic Abuse Policy and Working Group and the devising of a Regional Supply Map. In addition a Regional Needs Mapping system was introduced in April 2012.

Flintshire are currently leading on the Regional Work Programme to review the provision of housing related support for young people. This has involved seeking opportunities to provide emergency accommodation for young people as an alternative to Bed & Breakfast, and has led to a sub-regional partnership with Denbighshire County Council to develop a Nightstop service.

6. Service Development

Timescale	Client Group	Action	Remodel / New Service/ Decommission / Service Improvement / One-Off Project	Financial Cost (+, -, neutral)	Development Priority (Low, Medium, High, On-going)	Expected Outcome
2013/2014	Young People	Develop a regional Supported Lodgings Contract with an additional Nightstop Service	Remodel/New Service	+£7,500 (Supporting People) Housing & Children's Services have also contributed £7,500 per service area	High	Additional options for supported lodgings placements across 2 counties. Provide emergency accommodation for young people aged 16-25 as an alternative to B&B
	Older People	Realignment of funding from Older People to provide an Activities Coordinator at the new Extra Care project at Llys Jasmine	New Service	£30,000	High	Reduce levels of social isolation and increase independence
	Older People	Contribute to the Telecare Improvement Project	Service Improvement	Neutral	Medium	Improving accessibility and providing a more equitable service
	Older People	Cost based investment in the Sheltered Housing Service, to ensure that the service can operate within appropriate funding levels	Service Improvement	£50,000	High	Facilitate the expansion into a community based service
	Older People	Reduction to the ineligible funding provided to Social Services for Adults – Older People Services	Remodel	-£80,000	High	Additional funding released to minimise the impact of cuts for 2013/14

	Older People	Resettlement Officer for Extra Care	One-Off Project	£30,000	Med	To assist older people with the impact of moving from their current residence to the new extra care scheme in Mold
	Domestic Abuse	Remodel the floating support provision	Remodel	-£35000	High	Cost Saving against SPPG spend to meet the reductions to the grant for 13/14 Unified service for those requiring support in their own homes
	Service User Engagement	Develop an effective consultation approach with users of SP and Homelessness services	New Service	£45,000	High	Improved service design and delivery as a result of service user input
Page 38	Homeless and Homeless Prevention	Develop a single access referral route for all referrals for housing related support	New Service	£40,000	High	Improved allocation of support services. Reduction to waiting lists Coordination of complex needs cases
	Homeless and Homeless Prevention	Continue to seek affordable supported housing options	Service Improvement	Neutral	Med	Increase in the number of people receiving support who are able to access E.T.E
	Homeless and Homeless Prevention	Strategic review of Supporting People services to ensure quality, value for money services are delivered	Service Improvement	Neutral	High	To provide quality services for vulnerable people across the County
	Homeless and Homeless Prevention	Ensure appropriate emergency accommodation is available	Service Improvement	Neutral	Med	Provide appropriate accommodation for those not in 'priority need'.

	Chronic Illness	Continuation of the regional project delivering support to people with HIV/Aids	Service Improvement	Neutral	High	Access to Housing Related Support for people with chronic illnesses who feel excluded from accessing generic services.
	Learning Disabilities	Reduction to the ineligible funding provided to Social Services for Adults – Learning Disabilities Services	Remodel	-£200,000	High	Additional funding released to minimise the impact of cuts for 2013/14
	Learning Disabilities	Undertake joint work to develop and collect meaningful outcome information	Service Improvement	Neutral	Med	Evidence the impact of SPPG funding
Page 39	Generic	Continue to work with partners on the North Wales Regional Collaborative Committee in order to identify projects that could be delivered on a regional or sub-regional basis	Service Improvement/Re-model	Neutral	Med	Improved services for vulnerable people Improved support for providers of SP services
	Generic	Assist to improve the life chances of vulnerable people by supporting access to education, employment and training	Service Improvement	Neutral	Med	Increase skills for SP service users

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Appendix A - Flintshire Supporting People - Local Commissioning Plan

Local Authority Spend Plan Pro-Forma 2013-14

The Total SPPG must not exceed the Annual Allocation

Regional Collaborative Committee:	North Wales
Local Authority:	Flintshire
SPPG Annual Allocation:	6,824,935.01

Client Spend Category (The category to which the service is primarily focused)	Service Type												Total	Local Authority Contribution	Proposed (Reserved) Service Plans		
	Fixed Site (Accommodation Based)						Floating (Community Based)								Client Units	Cost	Comments
	Client Units	Less than 6 Months	Client Units	6 to 24 Months	Client Units	24 Months plus	Client Units	Less than 6 Months	Client Units	6 to 24 Months	Client Units	24 Months plus					
Numbers	£	Numbers	£	Numbers	£	Numbers	£	Numbers	£	Numbers	£	£	£	Numbers	£		
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse	17	345,388	10	110,866					20	80,000			536,254				
Men experiencing Domestic Abuse													0				
People with Learning Disabilities					86	£1,793,351.00			36	161,137			1,954,488				
People with Mental Health Issues			56	240,130									240,130				
People with Alcohol Issues													0				
People with Substance Misuse Issues			6	54,593			20	10,050	20	82,719			147,362.21				
People with Criminal Offending History							40	60,846					60,846.08				
People with Refugee Status													0				
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities					5	7,370	11055		32	75,225			82,595				
People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)													0				
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV,Aids)									3	10,000			10,000				
Young People who are Care Leavers													0				
Young People with Support Needs (16 to 24)	3	7500	47	673,575			40	62,235	35	75,150			818,460.08	15000			
Single Parent Families with Support Needs													0				
Families with Support Needs	15	149,306	19	342,708.5			37	109,645					601,659.75				
Single People with Support Needs not listed above (25 to 54)													0				
People over 55 years of age with Support Needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services)					2846	1,478,606	55	140,642					1,619,248				
Generic/Floating Support/Peripatetic (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs)	5	109,013	10	178,107			94	219,414	60	92,831			599,364.98				
Alarm Services (including in sheltered/extra care)					166	20,699					51	3,607	24,306				
TOTALS	40	611,207.31	148	1,599,979.65	3103	3,300,026	11341	602,832.87	206	577,061.64	51	3607	669,4714.47	15000			

Team Costs £109,400
 Total Allocation £6,804,114
 Unallocated Grant £20,821

Please read this guidance prior to completion of the workbook.

Please do not alter the format of this document.

Deviations from the prescribed format will not be accepted.

When inserting funding amounts into the workbook sheets, please insert only in round thousands, i.e.

* if the client category funding figure is £62,050.29, please insert 62,050

* if the client category funding figure is £1,050,620.54, please insert 1,050,620

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 21 MARCH 2013

REPORT BY: HOUSING & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR

SUBJECT: QUARTER 3 SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORTS

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To note and consider the 2012/13 Quarter 3 service performance reports produced at the Head of Service/Divisional level under the adopted business model of the Council. The reports cover the Quarter 3 period (October to December 2012).
- 1.02 To note the position of the Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC) contained within the performance reports.
- 1.03 To note the progress made against the Improvement Targets contained within the performance reports.

2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 The quarterly performance reports seek to provide the reader with the 'narrative' of quarterly performance, which gives the context for overall performance. These reports are a quarterly review of service plans.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 Copies of the detailed Quarter 3 (October to December 2012) performance reports are attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.02 **Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges**
Each quarterly performance report contains an update of each of the relevant strategic risks and challenges. This update has been provided by each of the lead responsible officers and is available for comment and review.
- 3.03 A draft revised SARC summary position of the present Red (high risk), Amber (medium risk) and Green (low risk) status for all of the reported strategic risks and challenges is provided at Appendix 2.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee consider the 2012/13 Quarter 3 performance reports produced by the Heads of Service, highlight and monitor poor performance and feedback details of any challenge to Corporate Resources O&S Committee who are responsible for the overview and monitoring of improvement targets.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Not applicable.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Not applicable.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Housing Quarter 3 performance report.
Appendix 2 – SARC

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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Quarterly Performance Report – Housing Services

Report Author Head of Housing Services
Report Date 5 February 2013
Report Period Quarter 3: 1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012

Introduction

The report is produced on a quarterly basis and provided to Executive members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The report provides managerial assessment as an overview of the key messages within the report and then provides evidence and data to inform that assessment from the following sources:

- Performance Targets
- Monitoring of Key Actions from the Service Plan
- Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
- Internal and External regulatory reports
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Awards and accreditations
- Resource Management (HR, ICT, Finance, Assets)

Key Notes



The use of key note boxes is to highlight areas of interest or to respond specifically to enquiries from previous reports.

Record of Amendments

Date	Amendment	Amended by
25/01/13	Draft report for review by Head of Service.	Simon Abbott
05/01/13	Revised draft for approval by Head of Service	Simon Abbott
20/03/13	Changes to foreword to show which improvement targets are meeting green.	Simon Abbott
24/02/2013	Changes requested by PPU to show differentiate indicators.	Simon Abbott

Document Contents

The report contains the following sections:

Foreword & Summary Sections

- 1 Foreword** This section contains an executive summary of key information for the Housing Service.
- This foreword will also highlight (where relevant) emerging risks that need to be considered as new SARCs and signpost readers to supporting commentary where necessary within the detailed sections for the service areas.
- 2 Summaries** This section presents a summary progress for each of the following:
- Improvement Plan
 - Performance and Outcome Indicators
 - Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARCs)
 - Service Plan

Detail Sections

- 3-9 Service Area Information** A section for each area will be provided for service areas where the summary shows items off-track. Sections may also be included for those areas to report progress and risks on items not included in the summary.

Appendices

- Appendix A Performance Graphs** Performance graphs for main indicators are shown in this appendix. Only performance graphs showing a red or amber status will be included in the detail sections where explanation of issues affecting performance can be detailed.
- Appendix B Supplementary Data** Supplementary data such as demand profiles will be contained in this section when required.

1 Foreword

Report highlights for this quarter are the following items:

Performance	It is pleasing to see many of the key performance indicators are green this quarter showing that they have achieved or exceeded the targets. Only three out of the thirteen indicators are showing as red this quarter and two of these have seen improvement since the last quarter.
Supporting People	This report welcomes the Supporting People team who following the restructure in Development & Resources have joined Housing Services in Community Support Services. You can find an introduction to the team later in this report.
Rent Collection & Arrears	<p>Despite the continuing economic climate, it is pleasing to note that the income team has exceeded rental collection target of 95% (HLS/006a) this quarter with an outturn of 97.42% close to the end of year target of 97.5%.</p> <p>Current Tenant Arrears have improved between Q2 and Q3, and are lower than for the same quarter last year. However the target that was set for this quarter has not been met. The number of accounts with arrears under £1k has increased. It is therefore necessary to further develop the approach around early intervention and to act quickly before arrears build up.</p>
Void Turnaround Times	Void turnaround times although improved this quarter have still not met the 42 day target. Improvement in voids and allocations remains a priority for the service and is subject to continuous review.
Income Lost Due Empty Properties	A steady and sustainable quarter on quarter improvement on the percentage of income lost due to empty properties (HLS/013) has this month seen it achieve an all time low of 1.96% against a 2% target.
Repairs	It is extremely pleasing to see that for the first time, all responsive repairs targets have been exceeded. Of particular note is the average for non-urgent repairs which has almost halved this quarter from 43.63 days to 24.22 days against a target of 35 days.
Empty Homes	It is extremely pleasing to see that in the first three quarters of this year we have exceeded the target of bringing 3% of the county's empty homes back into use through direct action. To date 29 properties of 554

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suspected of being empty have been brought back into use. This equates to 5.23% of the total.

CBASS (Warden Service)

The rollout of the new warden service is now complete with nine hubs open. The service is currently delivering services to general need tenants. The modernisation of the service has created the foundation for expanding coverage to a wider client base during 2013/14.

Homelessness

During this quarter, the Housing Options Service provided specialist advice and support to 207 households who had approached the Council due to a risk of homelessness.

It is pleasing to report that due to effective preventative measures the service prevented 153 households from becoming homeless; however fifty-four households had to submit formal homeless applications. This represents a 58% increase in such applications, as compared to the same quarter in 2011. Evidence, perhaps of the negative impacts that the ongoing welfare reforms and the current economic climate are having upon members of our communities.

Welfare Reform & Rental Income

Initiatives to mitigate the effects on residents of Flintshire have widened from the private sector (who bore the brunt of the first round of changes) to FCC tenants who will be affected with the next round of changes coming into effect. Housing officers and support staff visited over 1000 affected household to assist tenants in understanding and planning for the changes.

Financial Awareness Pilot




A pilot scheme is in development which will see council tenants receiving a notice of possession for rent arrears, being invited to a Financial Awareness Workshop. The workshops will run in February and March and aim to communicate the importance of money management to tenants and signpost them to sources of help and advice to improve their ability to sustain their tenancies.













2 Summaries

2.1 Improvement Plan

The following summarises progress in the areas of the authority's improvement plan undertaken by Housing Services. Commentary will be provided for any areas showing a Red or Amber status in the detail sections.




RAG Status for Improvement Plans

RAG	Progress	Outcome
	Limited Progress - delay in scheduled activity; not on track	Low - lower level of confidence in the achievement of outcome(s)
	Satisfactory Progress - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track	Medium - uncertain level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
	Good Progress - activities completed on schedule, on track	High - full confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)






Council Priority	Target Date	Progress RAG	Outcome Confidence	Commentary
7. To promote independent, healthy and fulfilled living in the community with the highest quality personalised and supportive social and health care services				
7.6 Modernise the warden service	March 2012			Completed.
8 To meet housing need in the County and to work with partners to ensure a sufficient supply of quality and affordable homes and housing services in the social, mixed tenure and private sector housing markets				
8.1 Lead the Deeside Housing Renewal Area programme (also 5)	March 2021			
8.2 Further improve the Council's housing management and housing repairs service	On-going			
8.3 Increase the supply of affordable housing for first time buyers and people with special needs as a priority	March 2021			Toolkit in this area is working well but progress needs to be documented.
8.4 Extend the range of options in private sector housing	TBC			
8.5 Develop a regional housing register and common allocations policy	April 2013			Participation in the regional project is continuing.









2.2 Performance and Outcome Indicators

The status of the indicators are summarised for this quarter below:

RAG	Description	This Quarter
	Target missed	3
	Target missed but with in acceptable range	2
	Target achieved or exceeded	8




Graphs and commentary will be offered in the relevant detail section for only those indicators shown with a RAG status of either Amber or Red. Graphs for all indicators are included in Appendix A – Performance Graphs. An asterisk (*) indicates that the indicator is an *improvement* target.

Community Support Services						
Indicator	Annual Target	Q2 Outturn	Q3 Target	Q3 Outturn	RAG	Change
HHA/002 Timelessness of discharging homelessness duty	215 days	55.36 days	215 days	152.2 days		Downturn
HHA/008 Homelessness presentations decided within 33 days.	90%	96.97%	90%	95.35%		Downturn
HHA/016 Average number of days families with children spent in B&B	7 days	34 days	7 days	26.25 days		Improved see page 23
HHA/017A Average number of days all homeless households spent in B&B	25 days	30.81 days	25 days	16 days		Improved
HHA/017B Average number of days all homeless households spent in other temporary accommodation	280 days	252.60 days	280 days	421 days		Downturn See page 24

Housing Neighbourhood Management (these indicators relate to section 8.2 of the Improvement Plan)						
Indicator	Annual Target	Q2 Outturn	Q3 Target	Q3 Outturn	RAG	Change
HLS/006aL* Rent Collection, Permanent Accommodation	97.50%	96.38%	95.00%	97.42%		Improved
HLS/012aL Current tenant rent arrears	3.00%	4.20%	3.5%	3.92%		Improved see page 17
HLS/013L* Percentage rent loss due to empty property	2.00%	2.08%	2.00%	1.96%		Improved
HLS/014L* Letting Times	42.00 days	50.29 days	42.00 days	46.25 days		Improved see page 19
Housing Asset Management (these indicators relate to section 8.2 of the Improvement Plan)						
Indicator	Annual Target	Q2 Outturn	Q3 Target	Q3 Outturn	RAG	Change
HLS/10aL Emergency repairs	0.50 days	0.56 days	0.50 days	0.45 days		Improved
HLS/10bL Urgent Repairs	8.50 days	8.08 days	8.50 days	7.99 days		Improved
HLS/10cL* Non-urgent repairs	35.00 days	43.63 days	35.00 days	24.22 days		Improved
HPMM8L Percentage of gas installations with a valid safety certificate	99.00%	98.80%	99.00%	99.72%		Maintained see page 21











2.3 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARCs)

The table below summarises the position of SARCs at the end of the reporting period.

RAG	Description
	High Risk
	Medium Risk
	Low Risk

Commentary will be offered in the relevant detail section for only those SARCS that:

- Are showing a Red RAG status
- Where the RAG status has changed since the last reporting period
- Where the Green Predictive Date has changed since the last reporting period
- Where there has been considerable change or additions of secondary risks and activity

SARC	Previous Status	Current Status	Change	Green Predictive
CD08 Connah's Quay, Shotton And Queensferry Housing Renewal Area			↔	March 2020
CD12b Housing Management			↔	TBC
CD12c Housing Repairs And Maintenance Services			↔	April 2013
CD12e Sheltered Housing			↔	November 2013
CD38 Welfare Reform (This is a corporate risk. Whilst work is progressing against the SARC and the Welfare Reform Strategy the certainty of the risk and forecasted severity of its impact dictates that this will continue to be shown as red for foreseeable future.)			↔	TBC

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Please note that following that some of the SARC's have been omitted from the table above due to the change risks since their original draft. These are as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| CL04
Affordable Housing | The overall risk in this area remains consistent however the issues around the SARC have considerably changed since its original draft. A refreshed SARC has been provided for consideration to both DMT and CMT and if approved will be introduced for the Q4 report. |
| CD12a
Housing Strategy | The original overall risk for this area pre-dated the formation of the Housing Strategy Team which has now been firmly embedded. More pertinent risks now exist and will be subject to a new SARC. A new SARC has been provided for consideration to both DMT and CMT and if approved will be introduced for the Q4 report. |
| CD12d
Homelessness | This SARC needs to be reconsidered in light with the risks posed by the current economic climate and welfare reform. It is recommended that this SARC is now deleted as it is adequately catered for by CD38 – Welfare Reform. |

2.4 Service Plan

Progress has been made in all areas of the service plan. The following table shows which areas have incurred slippage or have been subject to a revised timetable and references the page number of commentary where applicable:

Improvement Area	On Track	Commentary
Service Wide		
1a Staff Management	✓	
1b Customer Focussed Service	x	See page 20
Neighbourhood Housing Management		
2a Quality of Life in Neighbourhoods	x	See page 20
2b Maximisation of Rental Income	x	See page 20
2c Best use of Housing Stock	✓	
2d Regional Housing Register	✓	
2e Customer Involvement in Neighbourhood Management	✓	
Housing Asset Maintenance		
3a Implement Staff Restructure	✓	
3b Improve Reputation and Performance of Repairs Service	✓	
3c Develop Information on Our Housing Stock	✓	
3d Improve the Quality of Our Housing Stock	✓	
3e Customer Involvement in Housing Asset Management	✓	
Community Support Services		
4a Expanding Community Based Support Services	x	See page 27
4b Homelessness & Advice Services	✓	
4c Service Review	✓	
4d Customer Involvement in Community Support Services	✓	

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Housing Renewal		
5a Empty Homes	✓	
5b Private Sector Housing Strategy	x	See page 32
5c Develop the Capacity for Renewal Services	x	See page 32
5d Customer Involvement in Housing Renewal	✓	
Housing Strategy		
6a Local Housing Strategy	✓	
6b Affordable Housing	✓	
6c Performance Support	✓	
6d Business Systems	✓	
6e Customer Involvement in Housing Strategy	✓	

3 People & Customer Indicators

3.1 Sickness & Absence

Overall absence for Housing Services has increased from 5.85% in Q2 to 7.22% giving an average 4.12 FTE (full time employee) days lost in comparison to 3.33 days in Q2. This is however an improvement on the same quarter last year of 8.60% which equated to 4.86 FTE days.

Human Resources are currently working on improving IT systems to provide a split between long term and short term sickness to inform future reports.

The following table gives a breakdown by service area comparing Q3 2012/13 to Q3 2011/12:

Service Area	Q3 2011/12		Q3 2012/13		Change
	%	Days	%	Days	
Community Support Services	6.41%	6.88	4.76%	2.71	Improved
Housing Management	5.85%	3.20	7.95%	4.53	Declined
Housing Asset Management	5.49%	5.02	8.80%	5.02	Declined
Housing Renewal	1.30%	0.69	1.86%	1.06	Declined
Housing Strategy	0.00%	0.00	1.46%	0.83	Declined

The analysis of each service area is as follows:

Community Support Services

Again this quarter the figures have continued to decrease and there has been a significant improvement from the same quarter last year. The management team have continued to have a strong focus on the Attendance at Work policy supporting employees on long term absence back to work, particularly within the Wardens Services.

Housing Asset Management

The figures have increased again this quarter despite management successfully supporting the return of one employee on long term sick. The figures are also higher compared to the same quarter last year. There have been a number of employees on long term sick in the last quarter where those employees have had hospital admissions and are now undertaking long recovery times following surgery. Analysis of sickness for this areas shows long term absence (over 28 days) is running at 5.77% for this area, leaving a short term absence rate of 3.03%.

Management have continued to conduct all aspects of the Attendance at Work policy and Stage 1 Capability Hearings and Attendance Reviews have been ongoing. The number of employees hitting the absence triggers has remained static.

The issue in this team continues to be long term absence and earlier intervention and a more robust approach is required to resolve the long term absence issues as effectively as possible at the earliest opportunity. A coaching session has been arranged with new managers in the service area to ensure they understand their responsibilities in managing attendance within their team.

Housing Renewal

Is still within target.

Housing Strategy

The figures have increased this quarter and compared to the same quarter last year, with employees hitting the absence triggers for the first time during December. (Simon what action are we taking?)

Housing Management

This quarter has seen an increase in sickness and absence figures when compared to this quarter last year. These apply to both long term and short term absence; however there have been a number of employees returning from long term absence early in the New Year. There is also an increase in employees hitting the absence triggers compared to previous quarters. Attendance Reviews are being arranged within the department but to date no escalations to Stage 1 Capability meetings which will be addressed this quarter.

Conclusion

Overall, there has been a further increase in absence figures this quarter; however the figures have decreased compared to the same quarter last year.

If this pattern continues within Housing Services, then the forecast is that the FTE Days lost will exceed 13 FTE Days by the end of the Quarter 4 (March 2013), which exceeds the Council's target of 9.8 FTE Days Lost.

Managers across the service are continuing to follow the Attendance at Work policy and are being more pro-active in dealing with long term absences.

Training & Appraisals

Training

For the first 9 months of 2012/13 Housing Services staff undertook 813.5 days of training (compared to 475 days for the same period 2011/12.)

The increase in time allocated to qualifications has increased, (254 days in comparison to 100 days for the same period in 2011/12.) This is due to the uptake of multi-skilling through the trade operatives.

There has been a focus on health and safety with asbestos training for Housing Asset Management and housing management law updates for the Neighbourhood Housing Teams.

The following qualifications are currently being undertaken:

- 1x FdSc Applied Computing
- 2 x BA (Hons) Advice Studied (Distance Learning)
- 8x NVQ Level 2 - Customer Service
- 1 x FdSc Housing Studies
- 1 x NVQ Level 3 - Management
- 1 x QCF Level 4 - Customer Service
- 2 x BSc (Hons) Housing Studies
- 2 x NVQ Level 3 - Business Administration
- 1 x FdSc Supported Housing
- 16x Multi-tasking Maintenance Technical Certificate Level 2

Appraisals

The increased focus on appraisals for this quarter and shows a small improvement on the 73% reported in quarter 2 with many of the teams showing that 100% of staff due appraisals have received them.

The breakdown for each team is as follows:

Service Area	Complete	Due	Q2 %	Q3 %	
Senior Management Team	7	7	100%	100%	
NHM East	9	9	100%	100%	
NHM North	11	11	82%	100%	↑
NHM South	12	13	100%	92%	↓
Housing Asset Management	79	145	54%	54%	
Income Team	7	7	100%	100%	
Community Support Services	19	19	100%	100%	
CBASS (Warden Service)	44	44	100%	100%	

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Supporting People	7	9	n/a	78%	
Housing Renewal	13	16	81%	81%	
Housing Strategy	2	2	67%	100%	↑
Total	210	282	73%	74%	↓

Housing Asset Management have rescheduled their appraisal programme in line with their restructure to help support staff into their new posts and ensure their training needs and objectives are aligned with the requirements of their new job descriptions. The first round of appraisals in this area will be seen in March 2013.

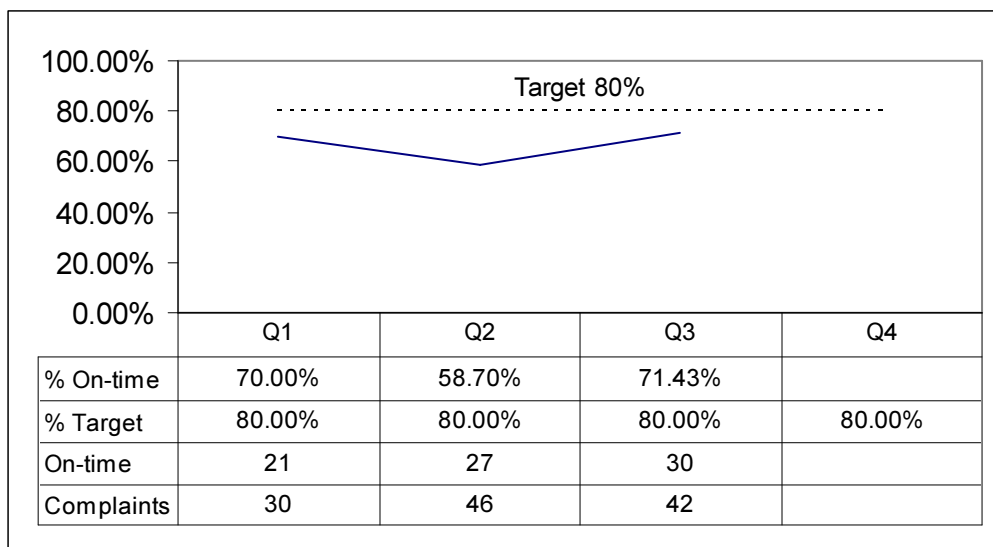
3.2 Customer involvement

Customer involvement in shaping our services remains a priority. All teams across the service now have their own customer involvement plan .

October saw our Autumn Tenants Conference which unlike previous conferences was split across two sessions, one in the afternoon and one in the evening to encourage a wider range of our tenants to attend. A further conference was also scheduled for January. As usual the conferences took the opportunity to update tenants on progress on promises and gain feedback on their priorities for service improvements.

Housing Renewal is currently preparing evidence for their pre-assessment for the Customer Service Excellence Award scheduled for early February. The work so far has produced some excellent examples of how the service is engaging with clients in this service area.

3.3 Complaints





Q3 has seen an improvement in response times but is still below target. The Head of Service is continuing to raise this as a priority area for improvement.

4 Neighbourhood Management

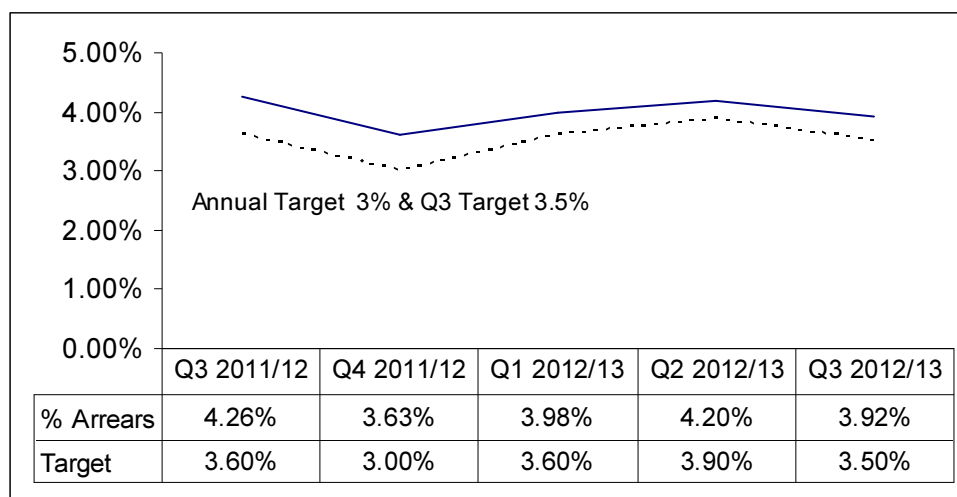
4.1 Performance Commentary

The targets (with the exception of HLS/006a) were not met for the following indicators for Neighbourhood Management:

-  **HLS/012a**
Current tenant rent arrears
-  **HLS/014**
Letting Times

Supporting information for these indicators is provided below:

HLS/012aL Current tenant rent arrears



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

It is disappointing to see that whilst current rent arrears have seen a considerable improvement from last quarter (reducing from 4.20% to 3.92%) we have not achieved the challenging target this quarter. However when compared to the comparable quarter last year (2011/12 Q3 4.26%) we can see a significant improvement. This shows that the new income team and processes, despite the current economic climate, is having a positive effect on this cyclic indicator.

The banded table below shows the Week 40 position.

Arrears band £'s	Accounts in Arrears Q2 (Wk40) 11/12	Accounts in Arrears Q2 (Wk40) 12/13	Total Outstanding Q2 (Wk40) 11/12	Total Outstanding Q2 (Wk40) 12/13
0-300	2983	2,966	£235,156.97	£247,081.72
300-600	415	469	£178,813.05	£204,089.30
600-1000	251	276	£194,598.79	£213,455.66
1000-2000	239	221	£332,583.10	£305,277.97

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2000-3000	75	77	£185,657.83	£188,376.05
3000-4000	23	14	£78,360.40	£45,957.82
4000-5000	8	8	£34,773.26	£36,037.65
5000-6000	3	2	£16,040.19	£10,424.31
6000-7000	2		£12,571.58	
Grand Total	3999	4033	£1,268,555	£1,250,700

The overall banding table shows that:

- The number of accounts under £1,000 has increased from 3649 to 3711 (62 accounts)
- The number of accounts over £1,000 has reduced from 350 to 322 (reduction of 28 accounts)
- Overall rent arrears has reduced by £17,854

The Income Team are continuing to concentrate on two particular areas during 2012/13:

- Continuing work in tackling low level rent arrears cases;
- Reducing the number of arrears cases owing over £1k.

Current initiatives and work in this area to improve performance include:

Debt collection of former tenant arrears

Following the lean review on former tenant arrears the Income Team are taking forward recommendation to use a debt collection agency to pursue arrears owed by former tenants.

Mitigating the impact of Welfare Reform on rental collection

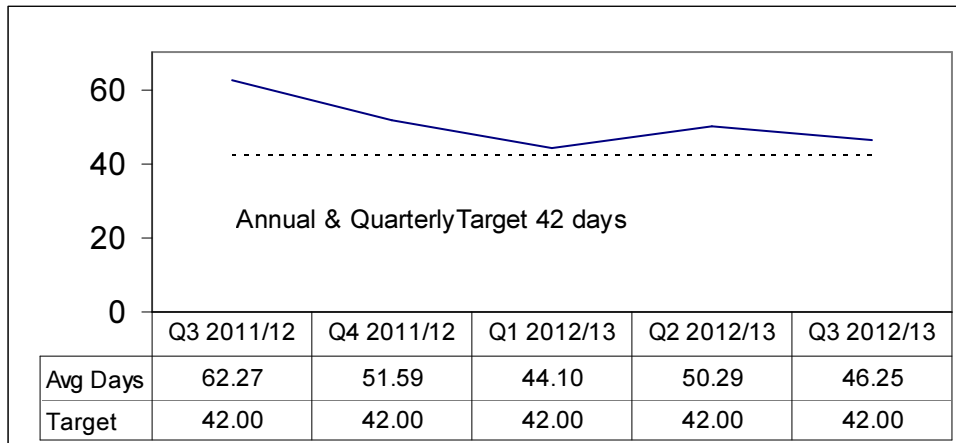
A service wide group was established in November to plan a co-ordinated approach to mitigating the impact of Welfare Reform on both our tenants and their ability to pay their rent.

Approximately one thousand tenants (those who are receiving housing benefit) were visited to discuss and identify the potential effect of Welfare Reform on their household and to discuss options to mitigating those effects. During this exercise data was collected to inform us of the potential impact on our tenant base. This data is currently being analysed and will be used to inform further initiatives for the Housing Service to assist affected tenants.

Financial awareness pilot project for arrears cases

A pilot project will also take place in February and March which requests tenants receiving a notice for rent arrears to attend a "Financial Awareness Workshop." The workshop is aimed at helping tenants sustain their tenancies and reduce their arrears through better money management and will provide an overview of support services available, household budgeting and other information. The outcomes of the pilot will be analysed and reported to ascertain if the workshops should be extended beyond the pilot period.

HLS/014L Letting Times



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

It is pleasing to see that this indicator has improved from the Q2 and shows a significant improvement from Q3 of last year. The table below shows the average number of days (rounded) for each stage of the letting process:

Period	Average Waiting Days	Average Work Days	Average Letting Days
Q4 2010/11	24	32	22
Q1 2011/12	30	30	15
Q2 2011/12	37	31	16
Q3 2011/12	25	26	11
Q4 2011/12	18	22	11
Q1 2012/13	15	21	7
Q2 2012/13	14	21	10
Q3 2012/13	11	24	9
Waiting Days	Average time from repairs receiving the keys to starting works		
Work Days	Average time between the start and completion of works		
Letting Days	Average time between the completion of works and the start of the new tenancy		

Whilst we have seen a 3 day improvement in the waiting time and 1 day in letting time this quarter it is disappointing to see that there has been increase in the work days. All three stages remain a priority for improvement and are under continuous review.



This processes and IT systems for this area will be formally assessed with a new lean review to take into account the new staff structure and the formation of a new in-house team to deliver Disabled Facility Grants, along with requirements to facilitate benchmarking with other authorities and RSL's.

4.2 Service Plan Updates

Progress is being made in line with the service plan in this area with the exception of the following:

Develop methods of gaining tenant feedback

The service is looking to undertake the HouseMark STAR survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents). This item has now been deferred to the Service Plan for 2013/14.

Expand the tenant participation team to three officers as per the commitment in the Choices Document.

The Choices Document commits the Council to increasing the number of officers responsible for tenant participation (from 1 to 3). Job descriptions have been designed for the following:

- Customer Involvement Assistant (engagement of young people)
- Customer Liaison Officer (capital programme)

The recruitment of is taking longer than anticipated due to the high demands on the Job Evaluation Panel. It is anticipated that the new posts will be filled by June 2013.

Implement recommendations from the allocations review

Some of the recommendations from the allocations review have been put on hold pending a review on voids works.

Improve ASB service by implementing new procedures and IT system.

A new system is under procurement and ASB procedures are currently under review by the new Neighbourhood Manager responsible for this area of the service.





4.3 Internal and External Regulatory Reports

No reports for this section.

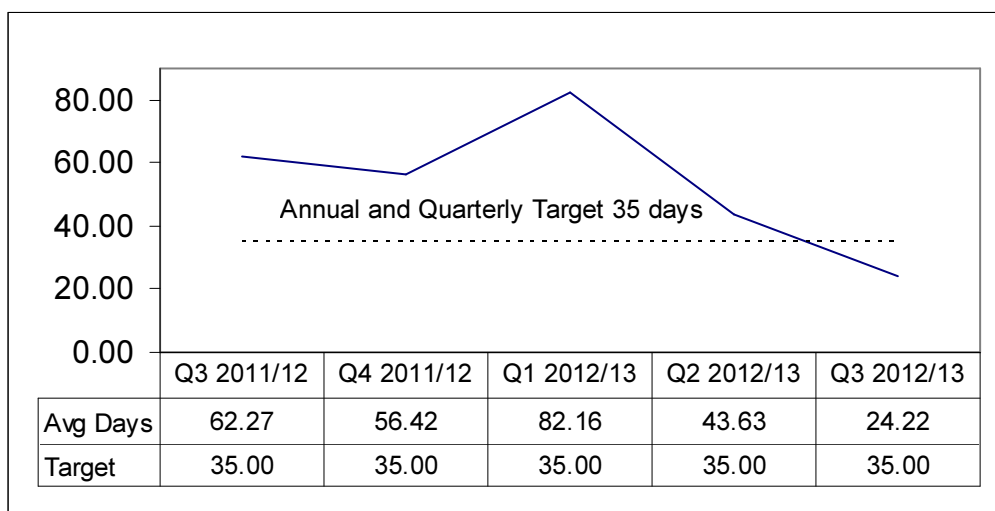
5 Housing Asset Maintenance

5.1 Performance Commentary

It is pleasing to see that for first time performance in all the responsive repairs indicators are green.

-  **HLS/10a**
Emergency repairs
-  **HLS/10b**
Non-urgent repairs
-  **HLS/10c**
Non-urgent repairs
-  **HPMM8**
Percentage of gas installations with a valid safety certificate

HLS/10cL Non-urgent repairs



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

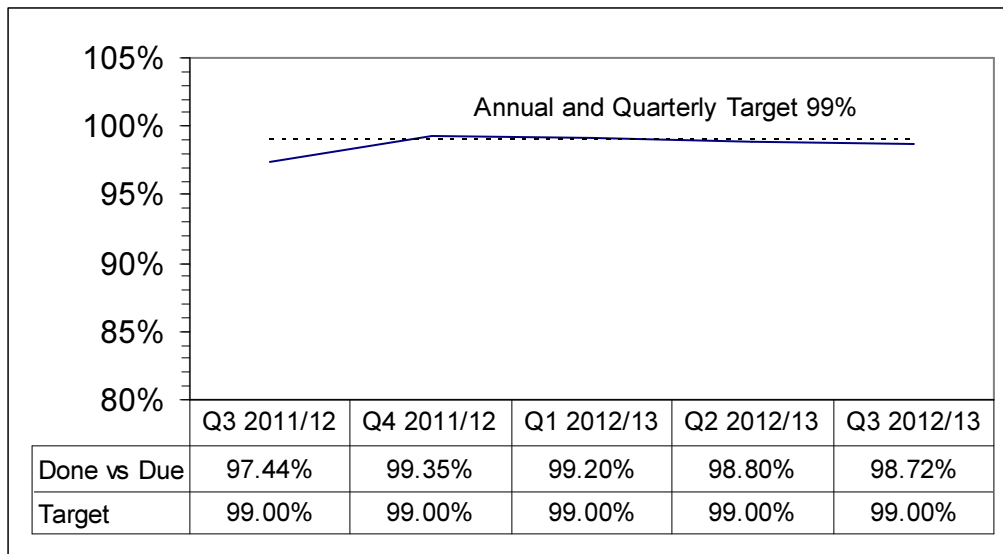
There is a significant improvement in the performance on non-urgent repairs (24.22 days against a 35 day target).

This is the first time that this category has achieved the target and is a huge success. The reason for this include operational improvements; ensured correct classification of the repairs; and continuing to increase the number of repairs being carried out by appointment.

However, there are still a small number of jobs that are out-of-target but as we are completing the majority of repairs within target - and many in just a few days, the average is significantly improved. There are many factors that will influence the average and the team would like to make members aware that this average may fluctuate. The Christmas period and the recent adverse weather may impact on performance in all categories in Q4 as the workforce will have been redeployed from completing non-urgent repairs to carry out essential emergency and urgent work.

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HPMM8 Percentage of gas installations with a valid safety certificate



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

The target has been narrowly missed for this indicator however all properties due a service were visited on-time and/or are subject to our no-access procedures. Improvement in this area remains a priority for both Housing Asset Management and Neighbourhood Management.

5.2 Service Plan Updates

The revised service plans for this area are on-track.

5.3 Internal and External Regulatory Reports

No reports for this section.

6 Community Support Services

6.1 Performance Commentary

It is pleasing to see despite both the increased demand for accommodation and the decreased availability of suitable and affordable accommodation in the private rented sector that the service is managing to maintain a Green RAG status on the majority of our indicators.



HHA/016

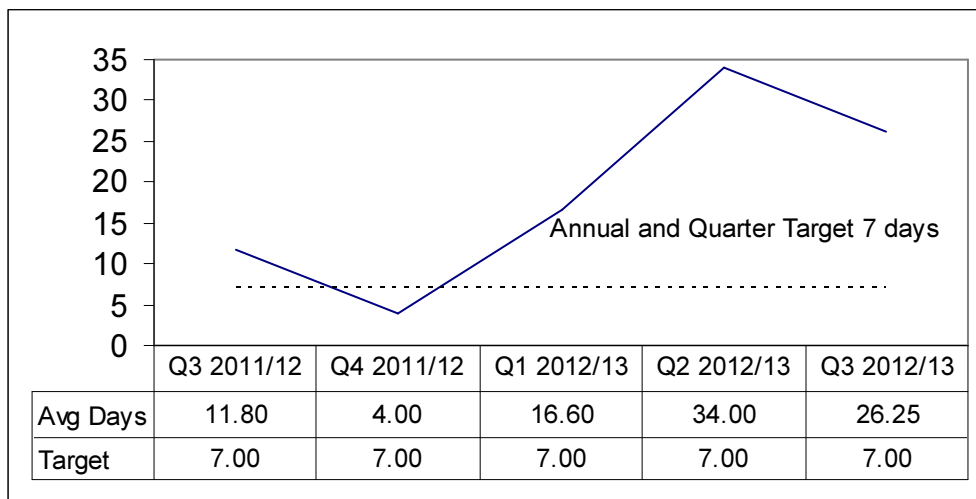
Average number of days families with children spent in B&B



HHA/017b

Average days all homeless households spent in other temporary accommodation

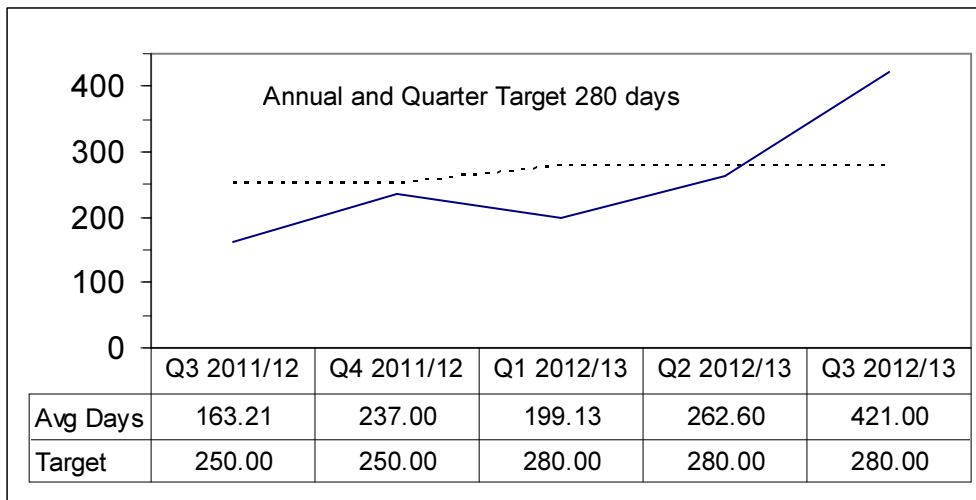
HHA/016 Average number of days families with children spent in B&B



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

During this quarter 8 households containing children were accommodated in B&B accommodation. Six of these households were accommodated prior to being moved-on into more suitable temporary homeless accommodation. The other 2 households were accommodated whilst they were provided with appropriate advice and support to secure their own accommodation (one household was determined to be intentionally homeless and the other found not to be homeless).

HHA017b Average days all homeless households spent in other temporary accommodation



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

The team were able to successfully move on 6 households this quarter. However 3 of these households had been accommodated in temporary accommodation for an average of 2 years. This was due to several factors including a household who needed intensive support to become able to live independently and households who had rent arrears which resulted in them having penalty points on the FCC housing register.

6.2 Service Plans

Progress is being made in line with the service plan in this area without exception.

Internal and External Regulatory Reports

No reports for this section.

7 Income Maximisation Unit

7.1 General Update

Successes

- The social security benefits and tax credits income generated for residents by successful welfare rights interventions totalled £759,000. This figure comprises of £647,000 on-going annual payments and £112,000 one-off lump sum payments. In the nine months of this current financial year the welfare rights team have generated over £1.9 million in benefit payments for residents
- 272 Flintshire residents received specialist advice and assistance from a welfare rights worker on a total of 424 welfare benefit and/or tax credit problems. Of these residents, 67 received specialist advice in connection with appealing an adverse decision on their benefit entitlement before a First-Tier Tribunal. Of concern though, 18 residents, who have recently contacted the service for assistance with challenging a decision, have not been allocated a caseworker. (see challenges below)
- Customer feedback received from residents who have been assisted by the caseworker service shows that 90% view the service as excellent and 97% said they would recommend the Welfare Rights Unit to someone else if they needed advice and assistance with welfare benefit problems.

Challenges

- *Resources* - the caseworker service is struggling to meet the demand from residents who need specialist advice and representation to challenge an adverse DWP decision on their benefit entitlement. Unfortunately, due to the combination of the sickness and disability benefit reforms and the reduction in benefit advisors in the Third Sector, due to the impact of the Legal Aid Bill 2012, this resource pressure will continue to intensify and residents needing specialist advice and representation may not be able to access the service.

Future

- *Undertake a lean review of the Advice and Homelessness service* – ensuring the effective and efficient use of the caseworker service resources and developing a casework management database that supports and enhances the delivery of the caseworker service.

Service Plan Updates

All service plan actions in this area are on-track without exception.

8 Welfare Reform Mitigation Project

Work continues on a number of work streams to help mitigate the effects of Welfare Reform. Key activity during Q2 is listed below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Project Management Arrangements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarification of the success factors for all work streams has been achieved and documented• Formal project planning for each work stream has been carried out along with supporting project documentation• Risk and issue logs have been established• Formal reporting to the various boards and stakeholder groups has been established |
| Establish Welfare Reform Response Team | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FCC provided funding for two additional posts.• Recruitment interviews held – first of two appointments made• Funding application for £100K to increase the team resources submitted to the Welsh Government |
| Supporting Under-Occupying FCC Social Housing Tenants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 78% of affected tenants discussed their options with a Housing Officer and identified how they may address problems when their Housing Benefit is reduced.• Financial Awareness workshop pilot planned to support tenants in rent arrears and help them to develop the skills needed to manage their household budget. |
| Development Programme for Front Line Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training programme for FCC front line staff developed and all training materials produced, first courses to be delivered in February 2013 |
| Supporting Adult Social Care Service Users Receiving a Sickness/Disability Benefit | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional project being developed to provide Adult Social Care Service Users with advice and support through the migration of their sickness and/or disability claims and protect the Adult Social Care charging policy income stream. |

9 Community Based Accommodation Support (Wardens)

9.1 General Update

Nine hubs are now open. The service is currently delivering services to a small number of general need tenants. The modernisation of the service has created the foundation for expanding coverage to a wider client base during 2013/14.

9.2 Service Plans

All service plans actions are on track with the exceptions of the procurement of a suitable ICT system to provide monitoring and reporting of outcomes for this service area. The delay in this area is due to the bespoke requirements for the service meaning that an in-house solution would need to be developed.

10 Supporting People

Following the restructure of Development & Resources the Supporting People Team has been transferred into Housing Services. The following is an introduction to Supporting People.

What is the Supporting People Programme?

Supporting People is the Government's long-term policy to enable local authorities to plan, commission and provide housing-related support services, such as homeless hostels, women's refuges and sheltered housing, with a view to helping vulnerable people live independently.

The programme began in 2003 and brought together funding streams from a wide variety of sources including health, probation, housing benefit and social services into one central pot. The programme aims to deliver high quality and strategically planned housing-related support services which are cost effective and reliable, and which complement existing care services. In Flintshire, the Supporting People programme funds just over £7million of services.

The purpose of this support is to prevent the problems that can cause vulnerable people to become homeless: build up debts or rent arrears, need hospital treatment or move into care, and to help them to have a better quality of life and be independent in their community.

The programme is much more than a County Council activity – it is a working partnership, made up of representatives from the Local Health Board, North Wales Probation, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, Directorate of Community Services and the support agencies who provide housing-related support for vulnerable people.

Who is the programme for? What support can it deliver?

The programme aims to help a wide range of vulnerable adults, many of whom are not traditional users of statutory services. They include:

- Homeless people who need support or people who are at risk of losing their home
- People with physical, sensory or learning disabilities
- People with mental health problems
- People who misuse drugs or alcohol
- Young people at risk or who are leaving care
- Ex-offenders, people leaving prison or people at risk of offending
- Refugees who have been given leave to stay in the country
- Women or men fleeing domestic abuse
- Teenage parents
- People living with Chronic Illnesses
- Older People with Support needs

Housing related support can help people with many housing related matters, including:

- Managing debts, budgeting and applying for benefits
- Getting on with neighbours
- Setting up home and resettlement support

- Understanding tenancy agreements
- Dealing with other agencies, such as health and advice services
- Staying safe at home
- Life and social skills
- Taking up daytime activities, training and employment in a community

What difference does the programme make?

The Supporting People programme aims to help to reduce homelessness, offending and re-offending, anti-social behaviour and admission to hospital or care homes. It can also help people to be more in control of their lives, their finances and their future.

Each year, the Supporting People team monitor the amount of support that has been provided to vulnerable people within the county and requires providers to submit information to explain how successful the project has been in terms of securing stable accommodation for individuals and families.

We monitor outcome measurements for all projects to provide information about the difference that the programme makes. The measurements that we will require our providers to monitor against are:

- a. Feeling Safe
- b. Safety and wellbeing of themselves and others
- c. Managing Accommodation
- d. Managing relationships
- e. Feeling part of the community
- f. Managing money
- g. Education & Learning
- h. Employment/ volunteering
- i. Physically healthy
- j. Mentally healthy
- k. Healthy lifestyle

11 Housing Renewal

11.1 General Update

The Housing Renewal area continues to build on the good work delivered during the last Quarter.

Countywide Home Repair and Renovations

The Service continues to deliver home repair and renovation support across the County. During this quarter 15 people came forward requiring assistance. This is a fall of 13 from the previous quarter. This is attributable to the fact that the 2012/13 budget has been committed and people were being advised that there may be a wait for assistance. Three property surveys were undertaken; a fall from 14 in the previous quarter and scheduled work will now be taken forward for loan support. This fall is due to DFG's being prioritised, as no further new loans can be made until April 2013. A total of 18 loans were completed during this quarter, with a work value of £102,544. The loans continue to provide vital support to those homeowners who cannot fund the cost of repairs and improvements to their homes. It also supports small local contractors.

Delivery of Disabled Adaptations

Performance in this area continues to improve, with the average number of days from referral to Housing Renewal to completion on site being 96 days, an improvement of 2 days on the last quarter. This improvement in performance is to be welcomed and will begin to evidence within the national strategic indicator over time. However, with increased throughput comes increased cost. The Service has had to control cost carefully and ensure that sufficient budget is allocated to meet demand. In the Q2 performance report it was indicated that there is likely to be a budget shortfall of £128,000 on DFG's. I am pleased to report that this has been managed through efficiencies elsewhere in the housing renewal programme and through a £40,000 investment that has been made available to Flintshire Care & Repair by Welsh Government for disabled adaptations.

Connah's Quay, Shotton and Queensferry Renewal Area

A tendering exercise has been undertaken for a new contractor to deliver Phase 2 of the Group repair scheme and to date 120 of the 180 eligible properties have been surveyed. The Service is still not in a position to appoint a contractor at this stage and is in discussion with the Council's procurement service for the most expeditious way to move to appointment and start on site.

The partnership with Groundwork (an environmental works social enterprise) around the delivery of small scale environmental improvements has continued successfully during 2012/13. The types of work currently being undertaken include planting schemes, rubbish clearing, restoration of benches and planters and the painting of railings. In order to manage the remaining budget the programme has been scaled back, to include more volunteers and from October 2012, the Service was reduced to 3 days per week from the previous 5 days. Volunteer hours are currently averaging at over 100 per month, thanks predominantly to the support from local schools.

Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP)

The energy efficiency measures being installed as part of Phase 3 of the CESP programme comprising Connah's Quay and Greenfield continued in this Quarter. All CESP work was completed by the end of Quarter 3, as required by Central government. The Service is pleased that at the completion of the programme for every £1 of Council money spent on this programme, £5 has been levered in from other sources. The Service is therefore seeking to sustain investment in this area, despite the likely cut to the 2013/14 budget.

Additional Energy Efficiency Work

The Green Deal is the Coalition Government's flagship energy efficiency programme, aiming to provide finance in the form of Green Deal loans for energy efficiency measures.

As stated in the Quarter 2 Report, Welsh Government has funded consultancy support to examine the various options open to local authorities in a regional context in regard to the Green Deal. Marksman Consulting have been working on a joint business case with Flintshire and Wrexham during the quarter under the provider model. The provider model is one in which Council's would invest some of their own capital in the provision of recyclable Green Deal Loans to householders.

The business case is now complete and shows that for the programme to be self financing it would need to complete measures in 8,000 homes over a 3 year programme across the 6 North Wales counties. Whilst this number may appear high, it is only 5% of the entire accessible market, which are those homes still requiring energy efficiency measures. Further discussions with Members, Officers and other LA's will take place in Quarter 4 to determine whether there is sufficient interest to take this forward.

Empty Homes

Activity in this area continues to enjoy a high profile by Welsh Government and a national target of 5000 homes returned to occupation during this term of government has been set. To assist in this endeavour, a £10M national revolving loans fund has been established and is being managed through 6 Regional Groups.

As Members will be aware from the previous quarterly report, Flintshire Housing Renewal was asked to lead the North Wales Region and to date has claimed for the Region £1,570,597 out of a total of £2,332,532. Flintshire's current claimed share of this resource is £526,000, which is the highest claim across the region to date. This will provide loans for 22 units of accommodation across the County. Again, detailed information has proved vital in securing these resources.

The resources can only be claimed once a valid application is in place and the North Wales Region has been the most successful in making claims. Welsh Government have stated that on this basis it is likely they will be able to release further resources to the Region before the end of the financial year from an under spending region. Flintshire alone now has an application waiting list totalling £360K, so any further resources would be welcomed.

During this Quarter the new 3 stage letters have been prepared and sent out. These letters are an attempt to further engage with the owners of empty properties, offering

APPENDIX 1

encouragement and support in the initial letter, through to the threat of enforcement action in the third letter. This will offer an opportunity, not only to further improve data on empty homes, but should act to find a solution for an increasing number. Through this data cleanse and subsequent discussion with property owners, 406 properties are long term vacant as opposed to the 1100 previously recorded.

The target of 3% of 554 properties suspected as being empty on 1 April 2012 gave us a target of 17 homes to be brought back into use through direct action. It is extremely pleasing to see that in the first three quarters of this year we have exceeded that target with a count to date of 29 properties, this equates to 5.23%. On this basis a more challenging target will be set for returning empty homes in to use during the 2013/14 financial year.

Customer Service Excellence

The Housing Service is seeking to provide excellent service to all its customers. As part of this commitment the Housing Renewal Service is currently preparing to seek accreditation for the Customer Service Excellence Award. This Government standard will be externally assessed and will give a particular focus to delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Work is ongoing to compile evidence against the standard and it is hoped that the Service will be in a position to undergo the pre-assessment in Quarter 4. It is then envisaged that the Customer Service Excellence approach will be rolled out across the Housing Service.

11.2 Service Plan Updates

All areas of the service plan are on track with the exception of the following:

5b) Private Sector Housing Strategy

This item has been rescheduled for Q1 of 2012/13, as it is to be informed by the WLGA Private Rented Sector Improvement Project

5c) Develop the capacity for Renewal Services

This area is subject to the JEQ process and has been rescheduled to Q1 of 2013/14.

11.3 Internal and External Regulatory Reports

No reports for this section.

12 Housing Strategy

12.1 General Update

The following are brief updates on the Housing Strategy Team's main functions:

Local Housing Strategy

The new Flintshire Local Housing Strategy was endorsed by the Scrutiny committee in October 2012. Once formally adopted by the Council, this will inform the development of a range of supporting strategies forming the core of the Housing Strategy Team's activities during 2013-2014.

Gypsy-Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

The findings of the North Wales Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment were endorsed by the Scrutiny committee in December 2012. This assessment will inform the development of a Flintshire Gypsy & Traveller strategy. The accommodation assessment indicates growth for additional pitches and as part of the strategy development process we will clarify with the Welsh Government its expectations over a regional approach with all authorities meeting localised need as identified.

Affordable Housing

The first draft of the Affordable Housing Strategy has been prepared. This strategy will include measures to inform robust monitoring of both housing delivery and marketing activity to promote the council's initiatives. Delivery of additional affordable homes continues to be a challenge in the current economic and financial climate with developer confidence remaining low.

Customer Involvement

Engagement with elected members continued with a members' briefing seminar on working with Registered Social Landlords. The programme of future sessions will be confirmed shortly and added to the member's calendar.

12.2 Service Plan Updates

Progress is being made in line with the service plan in this area without exception.

12.3 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARCs)

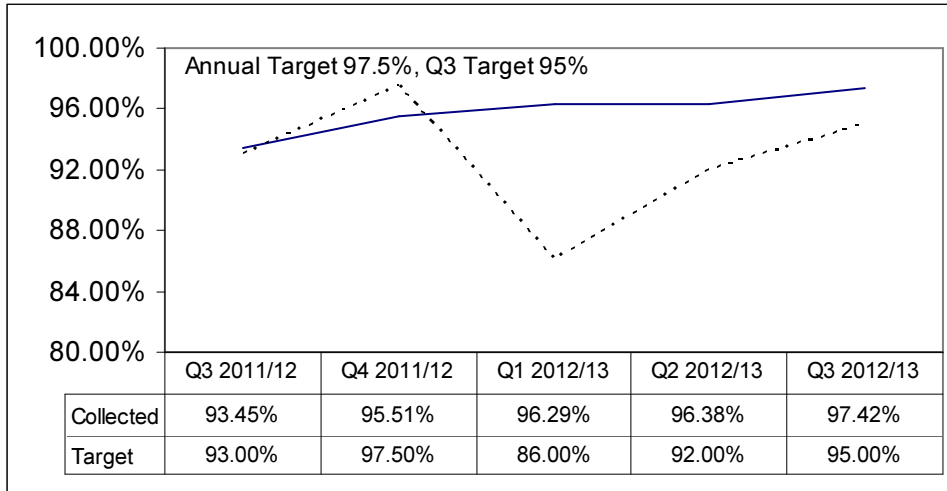
Housing Strategy has taken the opportunity to refresh the SARCs on Housing Strategy and Affordable Housing as part of an exercise to transform the SARCS to a new format recommended by Internal Audit. The SARCs for this area are currently awaiting approval by DMT and CMT.

12.4 Internal and External Regulatory Reports

No reports for this section.

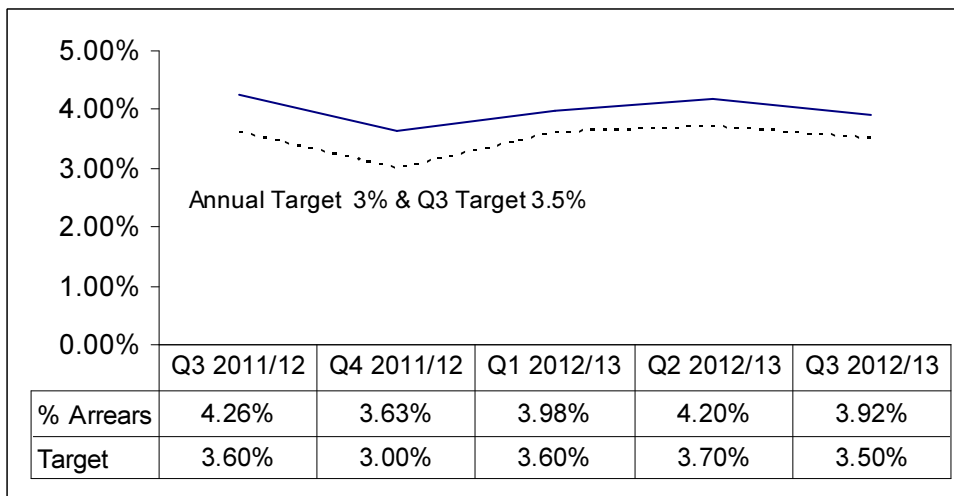
Appendix A – Performance Graphs

HLS/006aL Rent Collection, Permanent Accommodation



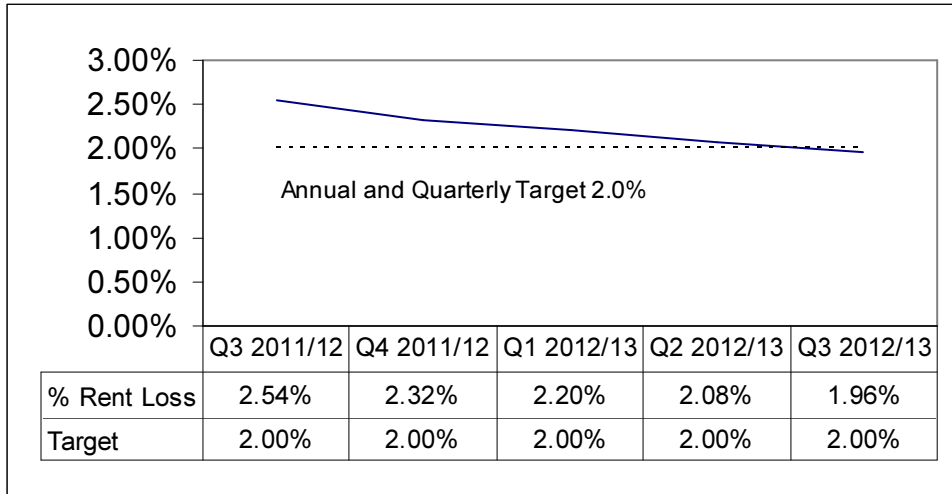
An upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

HLS/012aL Current tenant rent arrears



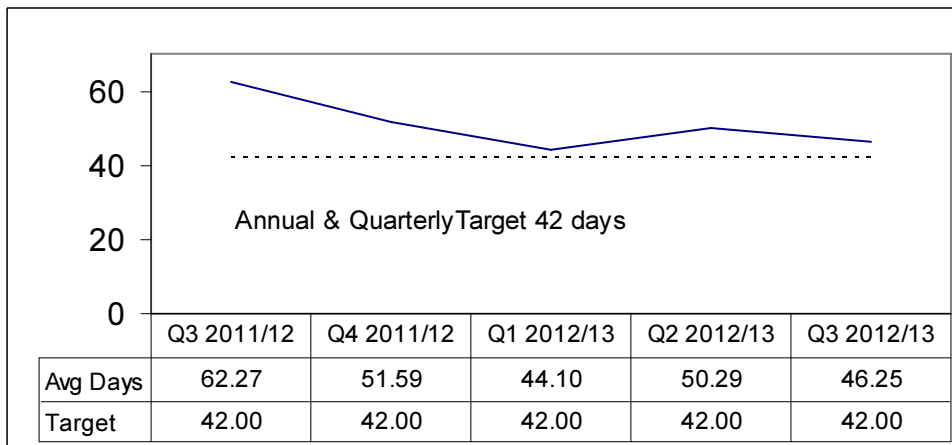
A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

HLS/013L Percentage rent loss due to empty property



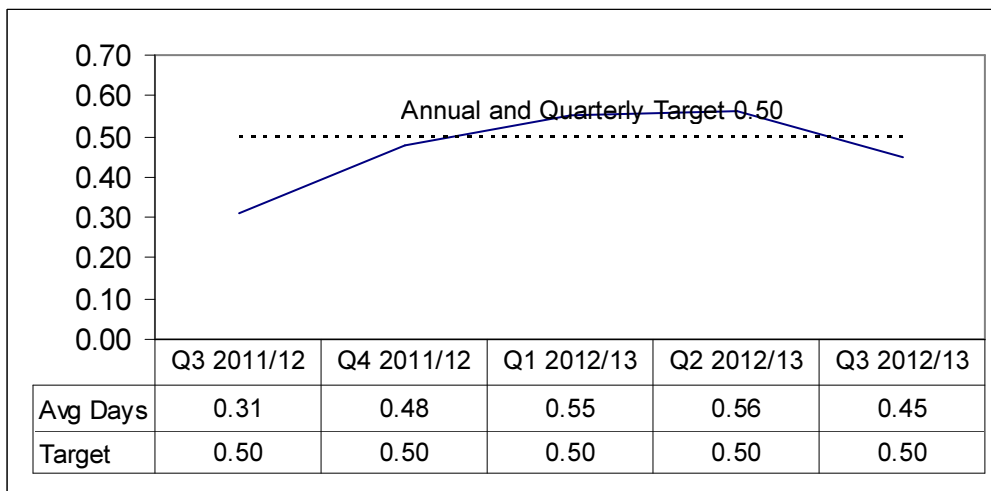
A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

HLS/014L Letting Times



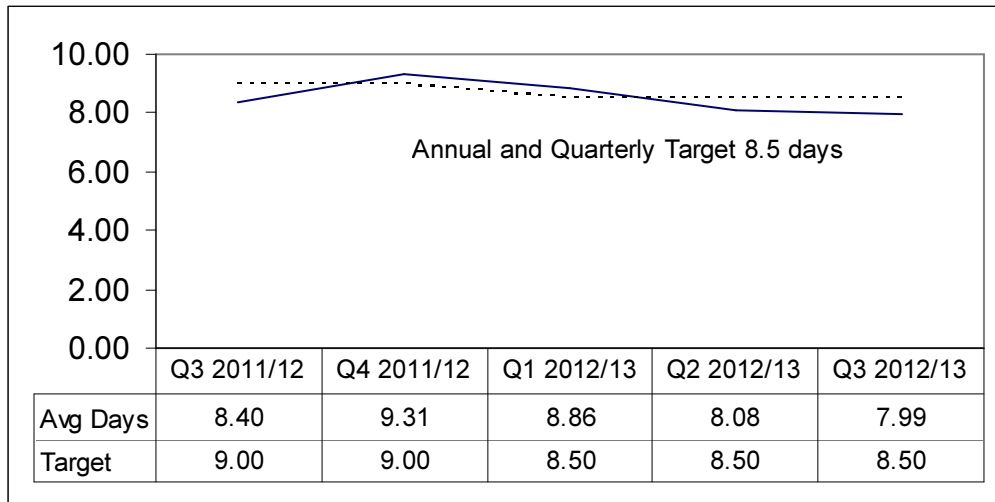
A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

HLS/10aL Emergency Repairs



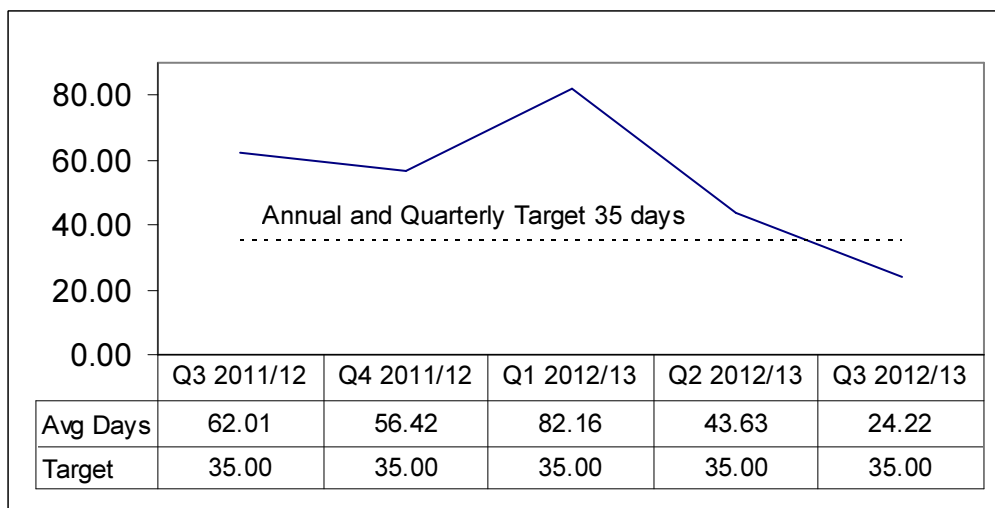
A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

HLS/10bL Urgent Repairs



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

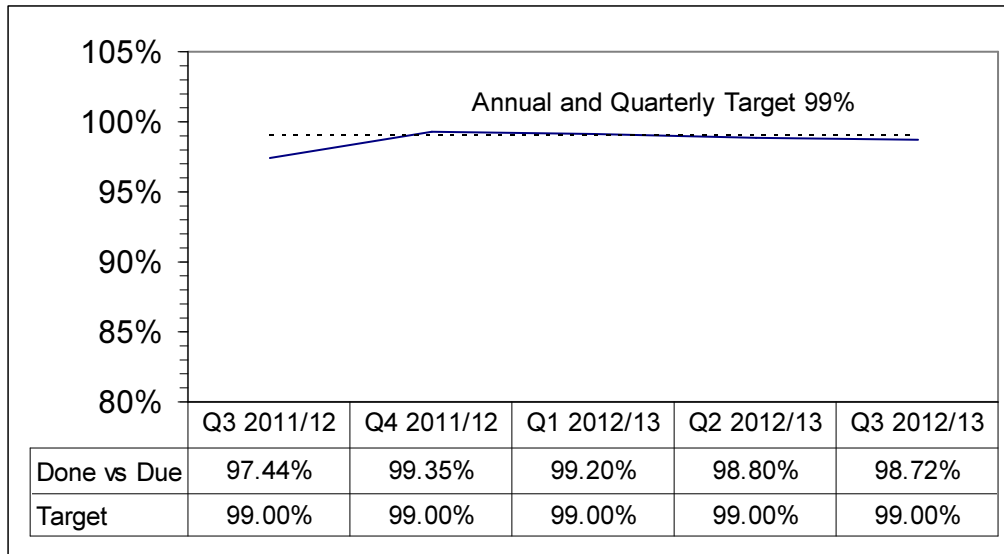
HLS/10cL Non-urgent repairs



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

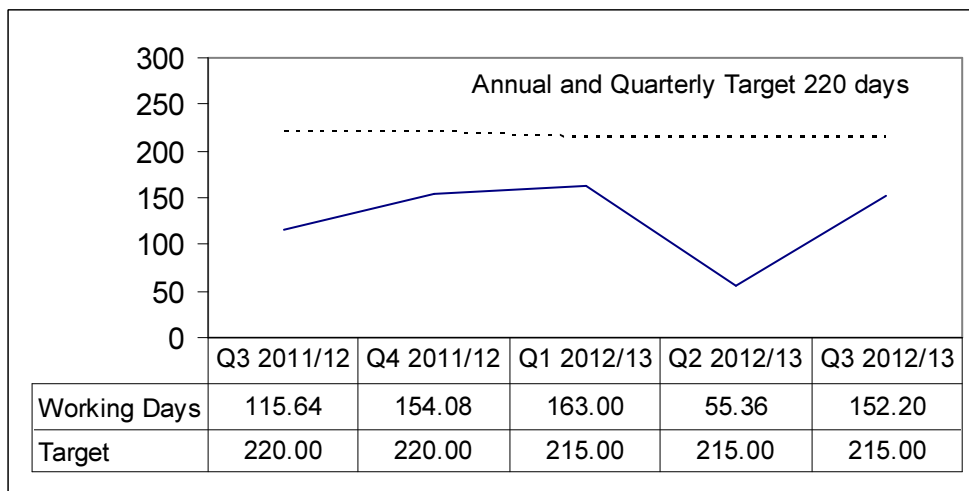
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HPMM8L Percentage of gas installations with a valid safety certificate



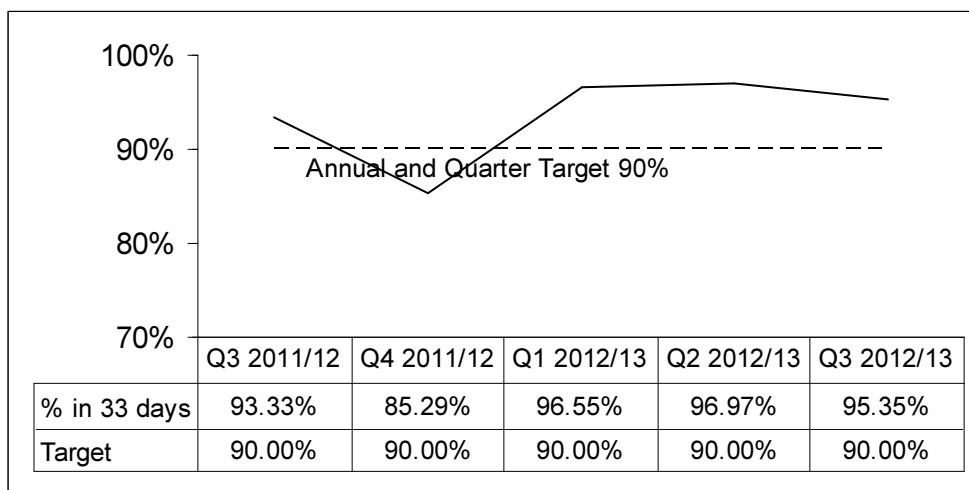
An upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

HHA/002 Timeliness of discharging full homelessness duty



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

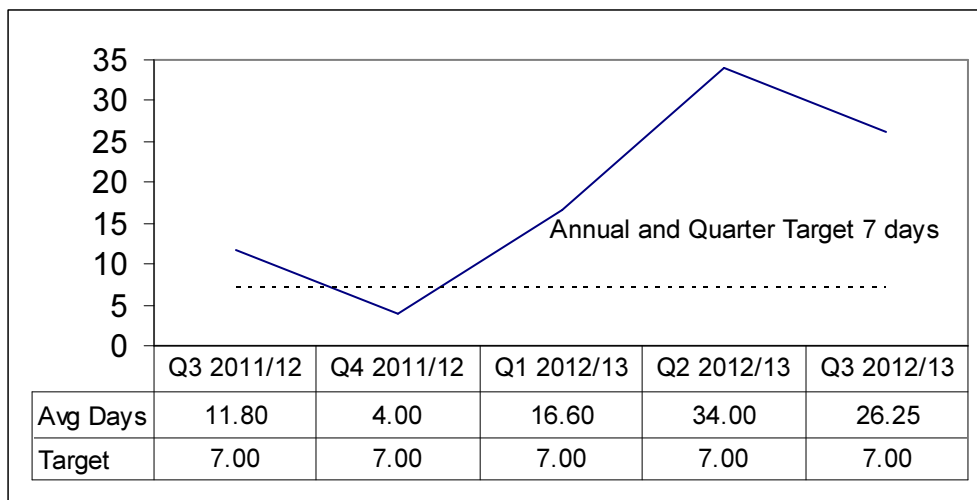
HHA/008 Homelessness presentations decided within target



An upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

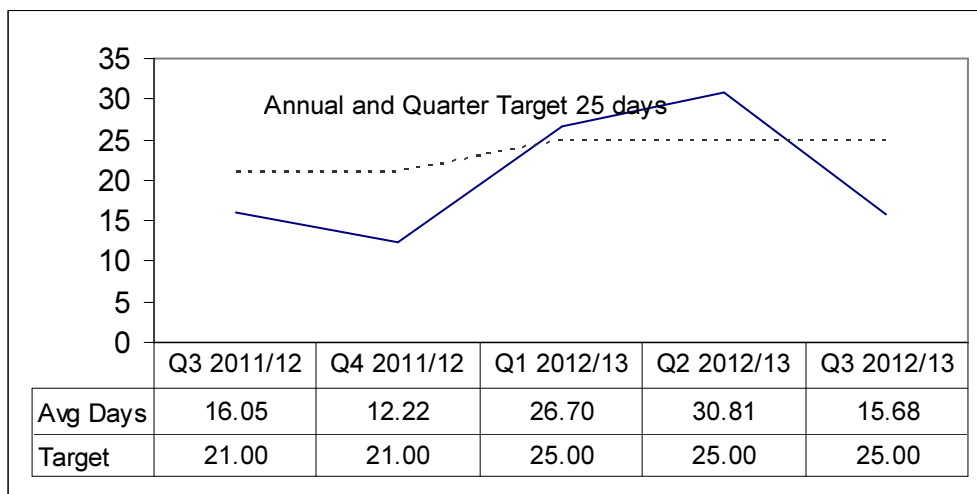
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HHA/016 Average number of days families with children spent in B&B accommodation



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

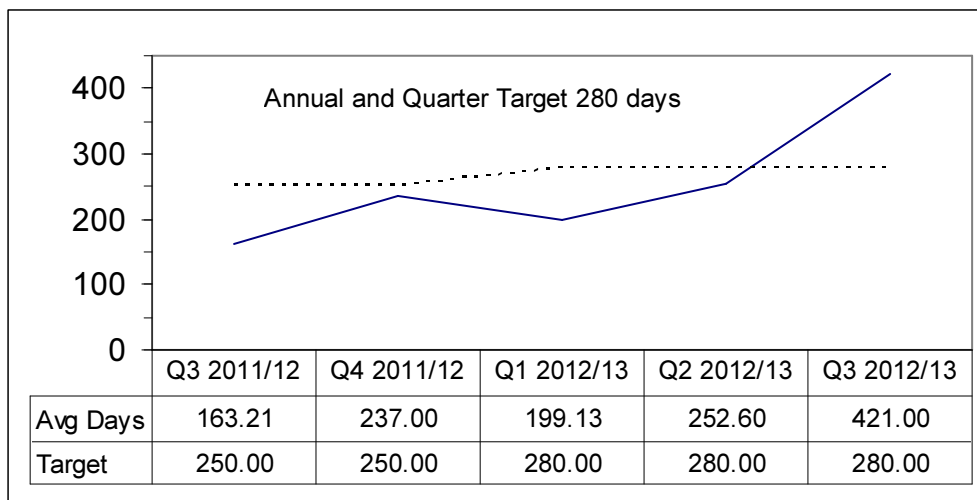
HHA/017a Average number of days all homeless households spent in B&B accommodation



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

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HHA017b Average days all homeless households spent in other temporary accommodation



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

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Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges' RAG

Summary (Refresh)

Risk Title	2012-2013					Predictive Green/Amber
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	
Community Leadership	Dec 11	Mar 12	June 12	Sept 12	Dec 12	
Affordable Housing	A	A	A			
Social Care For Older People	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Relationship with Local Health Board & Public & Primary Health	A	A	R	R ↑	R	TBC
Climate Change & Flood Risk Management	A	A	A	A ↔	A	SEPT 2017
Economic Regeneration	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
County Town Network Regeneration & Protection	G	G	G	G ↓	G	FEB 2011
Integrated and Public Transport Infrastructure (External)	A	A	A	A ↔	A	2015/16
Skills Needs of Employers	G	G	G	G ↔	G	OCT 2011
North Wales Regional Waste Treatment Partnership	A	A	A	A ↔	A	2016/17
Clwyd Theatr Cymru (CTC)	A	A	A	G ↓	G	SEPT 2012
Council Delivery	Dec 11	Mar 12	June 12	Sept 12	Dec 12	Predictive Green/Amber
Streetscene	A	A	A	A ↑	A	TBC
Transistion from UDP to LDP	G	G	G	A ↑	A	SEPT 2017
Planning Protocol	G	G	G	G ↓	G	MAR 2012
Highways Infrastructure	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Transport Arrangments For Service Users	A	A	A	A ↔	A	DEC 2013
Depot Provision	A	A	A	A ↔	A	DEC 2013
Connah's Quay, Shotton & Deeside Housing Renewal Area	A	A	A	R ↑	R	MAR 2020
Leisure - Revenue Funding	R	R	R	R ↔	R	TBC
Leisure - Capital Projects	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Leisure - Play Strategy	A	A	A	R ↔	R	TBC
Housing Strategy	A	A	A			
Housing Management	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Housing Repairs and Maintenance Services	A	A	A	A ↔	A	APR 2013
Homelessness	A	A	A			
Sheltered Housing	A	A	A	A ↔	A	NOV 2013
Gypsies and Travellers	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
School Buildings/School modernisation	R	R	R	R ↔	R	2018
School Improvement - Regional Project	A	A	A	A ↔	A	APR 2013
Procurement of Independent Sector placements for looked after children	A	A	A	A ↓	A	TBC
Disabled Facilities Grants	A	A	A	A ↔	A	MAR 2013
Waste Management Targets/Food Waste Treatment Project	A	A	A	A ↔	A	2016/17
Waste Management Operations	A	A	A	A ↔	A	2016/17
Severe Winter Weather	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Food Waste Treatment Project	A	A		A ↔	G	SEPT 2012
Welfare Reform		R	R	R ↓	R	2016/17
Council Governance	Dec 11	Mar 12	June 12	Sept 12	Dec 12	Predictive Green/Amber
Asset Management - Strategic	A	A	A	A ↔	A	2015/16
Asset Rationalisation	A	A	A	A ↔	A	2015/16
Medium Term Financial Strategy	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Financial Management and Control	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
ICT Strategy	G	G	G	G ↔	G	DEC 2011
Information Governance	A	A	A	A ↔	A	TBC
Human Resources and Management	A	A	A	A ↔	A	MAR 2013
Single Status and Terms and Conditions of Employment	A	A	A	A ↔	A	JUN 2013
Customer Focus	G	G	G	G ↔	G	JUN 2011
Workforce and Succession Planning	A	A	A	A ↔	A	MAR 2013
Procurement	A	A	A	A ↔	A	MAR 2013
Business Continuity (including Winter Disruption)	A	A	A	G ↔	G	SEPT 2012
Flintshire Futures	A	A	A	A ↔	A	MAR 2013
Data Protection		R	R	R ↔	R	TBC

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **21 MARCH 2013**

REPORT BY: **HOUSING & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 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 Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful or a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees 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.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 N/A

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

Contact Officer: Ceri Owen
Telephone: 01352 702305
Email: ceri.owen@flintshire.gov.uk

CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
24 April 2013	Adopted/Un-adopted land	To consider HRA land that adopted and un-adopted together with management of garage sites.	Member request	Head of Housing	15 April 2013
	Repairs & Maintenance In-House DFG's	To enable Members to monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include proposals for the delivery of in-house DFG's as previously approved.	Service Improvement	Head of Housing	
	Anti-Social Behaviour Policy	To consider the draft Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.	Pre-decision scrutiny	Head of Housing	
5 June 2013	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q4, year end outturns for improvement targets.	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	29 May 2013
	PDA and Capita Update	The committee resolved at its October and December meetings to receive an update on a regular basis.	Service improvement / progress monitoring	Head of Housing	

10 July 2013	To be determined				1 July 2013
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ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED as agreed by Committee

Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Collaborative Working within Housing Services	To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives.	Head of Housing
HRA Subsidy	To receive an update on the potential amendments to the HRA subsidy, to include proposals to meet the WHQS.	Head of Housing

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly / Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Director of Community
Six monthly	Update on Repairs and Improvements	To enable Members to monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.	Head of Housing
Quarterly	Sheltered Housing Improvement Project	To receive progress with the review on sheltered accommodation.	

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Six monthly	Private Sector Housing Renewal	To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service development and county wide projects.	Head of Housing
Quarterly	Collaborative Working within Housing Services	To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives.	Head of Housing

APPENDIX B**STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISKS AND CHALLENGES**
TOPICS ALLOCATED TO OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**SECTION 1 - COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
Strategic Partnerships	CL04	Affordable Housing	Housing

SECTION 2 - COUNCIL DELIVERY

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
Environment	CD08	Shotton and Deeside Renewal Area	Housing
Housing	CD12a	Housing Strategy	C&H
	CD12b	Housing Management	C&H
	CD12c	Housing Repairs & Maintenance	C&H

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
	CD12d	Homelessness	C&H
	CD12e	Sheltered Housing	Housing
	CD14	Housing Ballot	C&H
	CD19	Gypsies and Travellers	C&H
Social Care	CD26	Disabled Facilities Grants	S&H and Housing (joint meetings)