

Public Document Pack

Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democrataidd



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

30 January 2014

Sharon Thomas 01352 702324
sharon.b.thomas@flintshire.gov.uk

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 **WEDNESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 2014** 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 - 8)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2013 (copy enclosed).
- 4 **SHELTERED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT** (Pages 9 - 16)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.

County Hall, Mold. CH7 6NA
Tel. 01352 702400 DX 708591 Mold 4
www.flintshire.gov.uk
Neuadd y Sir, Yr Wyddgrug. CH7 6NR
Ffôn 01352 702400 DX 708591 Mold 4
www.siryfflint.gov.uk

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

- 5 **UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF THE CHOICES DOCUMENT** (Pages 17 - 26)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 6 **COLLABORATIVE WORKING IN HOUSING** (Pages 27 - 32)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 33 - 40)
Report of Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

Agenda Item 3

HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **8 JANUARY 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 8 January 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)

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

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors: Ian Dunbar (for Sharon Williams) and Paul Shotton (for Ron Davies)

APOLOGY: Cabinet Member for Housing

CONTRIBUTORS: Director of Community Services, Head of Housing, Capital Works Manager, Housing Asset Manager and Neighbourhood Housing Manager (North)

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance (minute number 44)
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment (minute number 45)

IN ATTENDANCE: Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

43. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 20 November and 13 December 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Amanda Bragg asked that her apologies be recorded for the latter meeting.

RESOLVED:

That subject to one amendment, both sets of minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to seek the Committee's views on proposals to deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) through the development of a new Asset Management Strategy (AMS), and to share these with Cabinet. In referring to the housing stock transfer ballot which had registered the highest turnout and 'No' vote in

Wales, he paid tribute to the previous administration for the manner in which the ballot had been carried out in detailing alternative options within the Choices document. In line with the Council's Improvement Priorities, £103m of capital investment in the Council's housing stock during the seven year plan to reach the WHQS would be delivered by the Council, representing a significant achievement. To support this, a commitment had been given to the creation of additional jobs together with 20 apprenticeships to deliver this investment. The Leader stated that these achievements were due to the significant improvements in Housing performance and thanked the Director of Community Services, Head of Housing, Cabinet Member and colleagues in Housing for their contributions.

The Head of Housing explained that whereas the current £49m investment programme focussed mainly on internal elements of work, the report set out options to move forward with different investment streams to achieve the WHQS by 2020. Once approved by Cabinet, extensive consultation would take place with ward Members over the Spring/Summer of 2014 to discuss the detail of proposed investment plans and timing of various workstreams across the county. The creation of 200 jobs through engagement of large and small contractors and local people, together with 20 apprenticeships, would provide a range of high quality work experience and training. Opportunities would also be available for the Council's trades teams to work on elements of capital works. The Head of Housing went on to refer to the four main workstreams detailed in the report and sought Members' views on the options.

The Chairman commended the creation of employment and training opportunities through achievement of the WHQS.

Councillor Paul Shotton spoke in favour of internal work being undertaken on a 'whole house' approach to minimise upheaval to the tenant and asked whether all funding streams had been explored. The Head of Housing explained that in line with the Council's Improvement Priorities, the Council had been successful in securing energy efficiency funding to supplement the programme. In addition, changes by Central Government could create opportunities for funding over the next two years to help with non-traditional stock and a successful outcome to the bid submitted to the Wales Vibrant and Viable Places programme could bring extra funds for WHQS plans in those areas.

Following a query from the Chairman on solid wall insulation, it was explained that this would be considered for areas across the Authority according to the different criteria which applied.

On the importance of having a multi-skilled workforce, Councillor Alison Halford commented that some individuals may have more expertise in one area than another and that sufficient numbers of contractors would be required to carry out the work. She asked that consideration be taken of weather impacts on external elements of work and had reservations about whether work should be carried out on an area-by-area basis at the expense of delays to those in other areas.

The Head of Housing advised that the Capital Works Manager had carried out visits to establish how other areas were delivering their investment programmes. Although the Capital Works team in Flintshire was smaller than in

some other areas, there was confidence in the ability to deliver the programme with a slight increase in the team. There was ongoing liaison with Wrexham Council to co-ordinate tenders to plan work more effectively, along with consideration of internal workforce skills and programme timing of different elements of work. In reference to work previously undertaken on the kitchen programme, the Head of Housing spoke of challenges arising from contractors moving around which could be alleviated if an 'estate by estate' approach was taken. In response to clarification sought on 'SAP', the Capital Works Manager provided explanation on the energy rating of properties and would inform the Committee of the full term after the meeting.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin welcomed plans for pre-consultation with ward Members but had concerns about the effect on the tenant of carrying out internal work on a 'whole house' approach. In response to a query, it was confirmed that the WHQS did not apply to private houses taken on by the Council and that newer houses were built to more modern standards and were fit for purpose. The Capital Works Manager explained the different options for approaching the programme of works and that the approach to carry out all elements of work simultaneously could result in savings from project management costs which could then be allocated to new workstreams.

In welcoming the report, Councillor George Hardcastle echoed the point made by Councillor Halford on the timing of work, particularly in consideration of older residents.

Councillor Peter Curtis thanked officers for the informative report but thought that using the 'estate by estate' approach would create too much discontent amongst residents in other areas. He felt that working with other Councils was essential and commented on the need for a balanced approach to make the best use of funding available and skills needed.

In welcoming the comments put forward, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance said that difficult decisions would need to be made and that although these would not be agreeable to everyone, the Council was in a strong position to achieve the WHQS. He paid tribute to other Councils, alongside Flintshire, who had retained their housing stock and the impact of Welsh Government agreement to end the national housing subsidy scheme in Wales from 2015 which would benefit work on the AMS.

Councillor Mike Reece spoke of the practicalities of programming work appropriately such as repairs to back kitchens alongside external work with scaffolding. In response to a query relating to ongoing work at garage sites in Castle Heights, the Housing Asset Manager explained that these were security measures being put in place to prevent further incidents of vandalism.

Reference was made by Councillor Gareth Roberts to work previously carried out at a property on a 'whole house' approach in which the tenant had been satisfied. He felt that kitchen and bathroom programmes should not be undertaken at the same time and suggested that work be programmed on an area/town basis rather than by ward.

Councillor Halford suggested that officers be tasked with planning the most suitable and transparent approach to prioritising workload, taking into account workforce capacity and savings. Councillor Hardcastle echoed this view.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman congratulated the Director of Community Services and Head of Housing for their achievements.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the three key aims of the draft strategy, as outlined in 2.02 of the report, be supported;
- (b) That the views of the Committee on the workstream approach be expressed to Cabinet; and
- (c) That the commitment for further consultations to develop schemes in more detail be noted.

45. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT

The Neighbourhood Housing Manager (North) presented an update on progress of the service in relation to the management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) following approval of the new ASB Policy in 2013.

In outlining the key considerations in the report, she spoke of the benefits of a new IT system (ReACT) and the recruitment of two additional specialist ASB officers together with provision of an external out of hours support service for victims of ASB. To support the Council's stance in tackling ASB and to protect the Council's investment in improvement works, there would be a reduced priority for tenants who deliberately damaged or neglected their properties. In example case studies where legal action had been taken, it was noted that the preferred approach was to apply for an injunction as this was cheaper, faster and more effective in terms of managing behaviour than eviction, which was used as a last resort. In addition, there were plans to develop a policy for responsible pet ownership in response to concerns from residents about pet related nuisance and in particular, the increasing problem of dog fouling.

In welcoming the progress made, Councillor Paul Shotton asked that his appreciation be relayed to Gerwyn Davies and his colleagues for their advice which encouraged tenants to report incidents of ASB. In response to plans to develop services for those experiencing domestic abuse, he referred to the 'White Ribbon Day' which had publicised excellent work in that area. He sought information on progress with the Responsible Pet Ownership Policy, particularly in view of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey which identified this as an area of concern for 54% of tenants who had responded. The Neighbourhood Housing Manager reported that work on the policy was due to commence the following week, linked with an RSPCA accredited scheme, and would be brought back to the Committee at a future date.

In response to comments from Councillor Rosetta Dolphin on the volume of ASB incidents involving children, the Neighbourhood Housing Manager confirmed that such issues were addressed with the parents and that Tenancy

Agreement terms reinforced the responsibility of parents within their property and the locality. Whilst further action could be explored, this did not apply to those in private tenancies. Following a further query, she advised that the out of hours service being piloted was currently on a referral basis only and that costs of £1200 would be required if the contact number was to be publicised.

Councillor Alison Halford congratulated officers on the excellent report and suggested that plans to establish the Responsible Pet Ownership Policy could include consultation with all Council Members. In response to a query on the map showing areas of ASB complaints, it was explained that this indicated cases outstanding since November 2013 and did not include cases which had closed. Following a request for more detail on the out of hours service, the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, advised that £1200 would be allocated in the budget proposals for 2014/15 for the rollout of publicity. Members welcomed this and Councillor Dolphin suggested that details could be advertised in the next tenants' publication.

Councillor Peter Curtis asked that his thanks be passed to Lee Roberts and his team for their assistance on incidents within his ward. He referred to a promotional DVD available through Women's Aid which was most effective in highlighting the effects of domestic abuse issues on young people and suggested that this be shown in 6th form colleges and in the Council. In response to the issues which had been raised in the tenants' survey, he pointed out that dog fouling was a widespread issue which was not confined to social housing areas.

Councillor David Cox said that consulting with ward Members on ASB issues may be beneficial in terms of using local knowledge and that consideration of individuals' age and needs should be taken into account during allocation of tenancies. He and Councillor Curtis spoke of the benefits of Members undertaking environmental visual audits (EVAs) in their wards.

The Neighbourhood Housing Manager said that teams were encouraged to work with local Members on the allocation of properties and that consideration was being given to extending the remit of EVAs to include evidence of ASB.

Following her earlier suggestion, Councillor Halford proposed that all Members be invited to contribute to the Responsible Pet Ownership Policy to help tackle the problem of dog fouling. This was agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) That all Members be invited to contribute to the proposed Responsible Pet Ownership Policy for Council tenants.

46. TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS AND ACTION PLAN

The Director of Community Services presented the results of the independent tenant satisfaction survey and proposals for improvement to further raise satisfaction levels to achieve top quartile outcomes.

The Director said it was pleasing to note that the overall results had improved significantly from the survey undertaken three years ago and that favourable comparison with results from housing associations was particularly impressive given the difference in ages and condition of properties. For those areas where improvement in performance was needed to reach the upper quartile, the report outlined work to be undertaken to achieve this.

In welcoming the report, Councillor Peter Curtis commented on the 39% return rate of completed forms. The Director said that the involvement of younger tenants was recognised as a key issue to ensure that a wider range of views could be accessed.

Councillor Brian Lloyd referred to the sample size selected from each of the housing management areas and said that all tenants should be offered the opportunity to participate, for example by including the survey in the tenants' newsletter. The Head of Housing explained that cost was a factor and that the recognised approach had been followed in relation to the percentage of tenants surveyed as a representative sample. However, if Members wished to survey all Council tenants, consideration could be given to providing sufficient budget for this to take place for the next survey. The Chairman spoke in favour of this.

Following queries from Councillor Alison Halford, the Housing Asset Manager explained that changes had been put in place to enable trades teams to carry more items on their vehicles to carry out a wider range of repairs on the first visit, thus avoiding the need to return to stores to replenish stocks. On tenants' response to car parking issues, the Head of Housing acknowledged that this was a challenge due to the increasing number of vehicles per household and the design of many estates. The Capital Works Manager agreed and said that any additional parking provision should not restrict access to estates.

Councillor Ray Hughes asked if more could be done to encourage residents to park in appropriate areas, such as provision of adequate lighting where required and liaising with the Police to restrict parking in unsuitable areas. In response to his request for information on the survey of garage sites, the Head of Housing explained that dates were being sought for a workshop on this topic to receive input from Members.

RESOLVED:

That the outcomes of the survey and areas for continued improvement be noted and supported.

47. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme. She advised that following earlier discussion, an update on the Responsible Pet Ownership Policy for tenants would be included.

In response to a request from Councillor Rosetta Dolphin for an item on garages, the Head of Housing advised that a workshop was being planned for March 2014. The Facilitator added that dates were being sought for a joint

meeting with the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee to include the review of garage sites.

The Chairman reminded Members that Carl Sargeant AM was to be invited to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly.

48. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.15 am and ended at 12.20 pm)

.....

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **SHELTERED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To update Committee Members on the successful completion of the improvement programme within the Community Based Accommodation Support Service (previously the Sheltered Housing Service).

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At the (then) Executive meeting held on the 18 January 2011, approval was given for the model of the community based warden support service to be developed and piloted. The new service aimed to provide support services that are accessible, based on support needs, quality assured, and help people to live independently and safely within their own homes for as long as practical". The Executive also approved the commencement of the decision making process that would determine the continuation/cessation of the service tenancy arrangements at individual schemes.

2.02 At the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7th March 2012, members resolved to receive reports on the work being progressed to develop and implement the Community Based Accommodation Support Service.

2.03 At the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st February 2013, Members received a report providing them with an update on the development of the community hubs, the implementation of new working practices and the assessment of the support needs of all tenants. The report also advised Members that the next stage of the improvement project would include the implementation of a new staffing structure and the expansion of the support service to make it accessible to tenants residing in general needs accommodation. An update on the progress within these two areas and upon further service improvements is set out within this report.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

Progress with Implementing a 'Needs Based' Support Service

- 3.01 All sheltered tenants continue to have their support needs assessed through the completion of comprehensive support plans. A key aspect of the support assessment is to provide tenants with the reassurance that the service is not being 'taken away' but is now more flexible and responsive to when their needs change. For example, a tenant who has been assessed as having no current support needs is reassured that if their circumstances, unfortunately, change they will have their support needs immediately reviewed and, very importantly, all tenants automatically have their support needs reviewed every six months.
- 3.02 The maintaining and collating of the records from support sessions has enabled the service to be able to provide objective and detailed performance information. From April 2013, the service has been included in the suite of housing performance indicators which are reported to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The target is for the service to achieve a minimum 70% support time out of all the available staff hours. It is pleasing to report that the service has achieved and this target across each quarter during the current financial year.
- 3.03 The collation of the performance data has also provided valuable management information on the breakdown of support hours across each community hub. Using this information, the service is able to appropriately and effectively target its resources and identify where there is available support capacity, which is particularly relevant during a period of expansion.

Progress in Developing Community Hubs

- 3.04 There are nine community based hub offices in operation with a small team of between four to six staff based in each hub office. The staff provide support to tenants in all tenures living within the localities served by the office.
- 3.05 At its meeting in February 2013, the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported a proposal to move the hubs that have been set up in council accommodation to alternative locations, thus enabling these properties to be returned to council stock and allocated as suitable accommodation to people waiting on the housing register. The Ewloe Hub has been moved to a new location and the property has been let to an applicant on the housing register.
- 3.06 Only two hubs are now based within council accommodation. These are in Mostyn and Caergwrlle. Alternative locations have been explored in these areas; however, the options identified have either been unsuitable or expensive. All the hubs, apart from these two,

have been established with no rental costs and the service has been keen to identify cost effective options. A potential solution would be to allocate the two council properties where the hubs are based to people on the waiting list and reduce the nine hubs to seven across the county. The allocation of the Mostyn hub would be a priority as there are currently applicants on the register who would qualify for this property. However, the decision on the future of the Caergwrle hub could be made giving consideration to whether there would be demand for this property which is an upper floor flat. Where the hubs are returned to council stock, the staff can work from nearby hubs which will not have any negative impact on the service delivered. Indeed, most support services in the county work successfully from one main location or office base.

Progress on Expansion into General Needs Accommodation

- 3.07 In February 2013 the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the expansion of the service to people in their own homes who would benefit from the support the service provides and prevent the need for more costly care services. In the past few months, this has enabled the service to promote itself as a county wide, tenure neutral service accessible to Flintshire residents who need support to live independently and safely within their home irrespective of current tenure.
- 3.08 There has been significant progress with the expansion of the tenure neutral support service over the last few months and the service has connected with two important referral routes; Social Services for Adults First Contact Team and the Accommodation Support Referral Gateway.
- 3.09 In quarter three, the service received fourteen referrals from the First Contact Team, nine referrals from the Support Gateway and two from Age Connects, a Voluntary Sector Organisation working alongside the service. The service has been able to assess individuals and allocate support within two days of receiving a referral. In total, the service is now supporting forty-two people outside of sheltered housing accommodation.
- 3.10 The capacity of the service to further expand is being closely monitored and managed. Support staff are finding that those who were assessed as having no support needs are gradually coping with reduced levels of support which is enabling the staff to have the capacity to assess and support new referrals.
- 3.11 The service also plans to ensure additional support capacity is available by making best use of resources through developing closer links with other services supporting older people. The service is working closely with the Support Gateway and is contributing to the development of the new sub regional Age Connects service. The service already receives referrals from Age Connects and will invite

Age Connects staff to utilise the community hubs to promote closer working. It is anticipated that referrals will flow seamlessly between the services so that short term support can be provided to tenants around specific areas when and if needed. The close working arrangements with the Support Gateway will ensure that support services are targeted at those most in need and residents are referred to the most appropriate service for their needs and will enable the services to support as many people as possible.

Progress with the Staff Restructure

- 3.12 Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the proposed restructure based on a comprehensive assessment of support needs and a breakdown of available staff time. The structure was developed with consideration to current and anticipated future needs. The proposed structure included three senior officers and 28 full time equivalent support officers.
- 3.13 In February 2013 there were 35.8 full time equivalent support officers in the structure and 3 of those posts were vacant. It was agreed that this number would be gradually reduced over a period of 12 months to achieve the efficiency in 2014/15 without staff redundancies. The service has now reduced to 28 full time equivalent posts. In September 2013 the restructure was finalised and all existing staff transferred into the new Accommodation Support Officer Posts. The three Senior Officer Posts are vacant and a business case has been submitted to recruit to these posts.
- 3.14 It has been an important element, when introducing the changes within the service, to keep staff fully involved in the process. It is pleasing to note that staff are finding their job more rewarding and have more job satisfaction through the new working arrangements and this is also reflected through improved attendance at work figures.

Consultation and Feedback

- 3.15 It has been important to recognise that the service improvement programme and the significant changes it proposed may have caused some residents and/or staff to be concerned about various aspects of the service improvements. However, Members will be aware that a commitment to engage in positive and effective consultation with residents, staff, and local members on potentially contentious and sensitive issues has been continuously demonstrated throughout the service improvement programme.
- 3.16 In order to build on the shadowing sessions which involved a reviewing officer shadowing a number of support staff on their visits and the feedback sessions held with tenants, a further independent assessment has been carried out and an additional evaluation is currently being undertaken.

This evaluation consisted of the Supporting People Reviewing Officer randomly selecting residents to interview about their experience of the new service. Thirty residents were selected to take part in the initial evaluation. Six residents did not want to take part and eleven could not be contacted to arrange a meeting. The thirteen that were interviewed provided positive feedback about the service. Six residents received regular support visits and seven no longer received support visits. The six in receipt of support were happy with the support they received. One person had made a complaint but was happy with how their complaint had been handled and fully resolved. The seven who were not in receipt of support were also content. Three of these residents who were now not receiving visits said that they had been worried at first but were now content with the service. One person explained how they had not had support visits, however, after a bad spell they had been reassessed and started to have regular support visits again. They further explained that as their circumstances had now improved they had now reverted back to no visits. This person felt reassured by these arrangements, i.e., the flexible and responsive support services.

- 3.17 Some issues raised through the interviews included the rotation of support workers, which has been one of the major challenges in implementing the new service. Residents like to have continuity of service from one person and some negative feedback was provided on the rotation of the three staff within a hub so that residents are familiar with the whole team. However, the rotation of staff is an important aspect of ensuring that residents are familiar with all staff members (and staff members are familiar with residents). The issues have been dealt with on an individual basis and residents seem happier now they have become familiar with all the staff within the small team.
- 3.18 Residents also talked about some people who no longer received visits who they perceived to be lonely. They recognised that it was not the role of the support worker to provide company but that activities or befriending may be a gap in current provision. Accommodation Support Officers will promote activities and refer to befriending schemes where relevant.
- 3.19 The first independent evaluation provided valuable feedback and the service is committed to continue to learn from customers about what is working well and what may remain as an area of concern. Therefore, a follow up independent evaluation with a second group of residents will be carried out in January 2014.
- 3.20 Further feedback was included in the STAR survey, an independent survey sent to randomly selected tenants to measure satisfaction levels with Flintshire Housing Service. The survey had a section specifically on the accommodation support service which demonstrated high levels of satisfaction reported across all measures.

Further Developments

3.21 Winter Preparation for Vulnerable People

The service has been working with third sector agencies to link up and co-ordinate bad weather preparations particularly in the event of heavy snowfall or floods. The Accommodation Support Officers work pro-actively to prepare people who receive the service but there remains an issue for the older people and others who maybe vulnerable who are not receiving services. Age Concern, Red Cross and Care and Repair all have plans in place for clearing snow, shopping and picking up prescriptions but until now have all been working in isolation.

3.22 The Community Based Accommodation Support Service has agreed with third sector agencies that all activity is coordinated through the housing staff based in Castle Heights. This team will act as the central point for elderly and vulnerable to contact when in crisis, staff would then be able to contact the relevant agency or Flintshire service to assist. The service has collected names of volunteers who can help in their local area in the event of bad weather. The 'Practical Assistance Line' has been launched and promoted across agencies and Flintshire Community Services Directorate.

Strategic Relevance, Value for Money and Benchmarking

3.23 The service has been working with the Supporting People Team to identify how this service will fit and link with other preventative support services to ensure Flintshire has an adequate range of services to meet the presenting need in the county.

3.24 The transformation and modernisation of the sheltered service to a Community Based Accommodation Support Service has been fully implemented. The next steps being undertaken are to continue to engage with customers to improve and shape delivery. It is also an ambition of the service to benchmark with wider organisations in terms of quality and value for money to ensure the service achieves excellence and remains strategically relevant. The service has been working in partnership with the finance team and Supporting People to start to benchmark the costs of the service with other Local Authorities and Housing Associations.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Committee notes the progress of the Sheltered Housing Improvement Project from February 2013 and that the Improvement Programme has now been successfully completed.

4.02 Committee supports the proposals to reduce the total number of hubs from nine to eight and seek alternatives to the use of council housing.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 Efficiency savings of £110k have already been achieved. There are no further financial implications arising from this update report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 Housing Support Services make a positive contribution to the prevention and reduction of poverty across vulnerable households.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no specific environmental implications within this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no specific equality implications within this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 All personnel issues have been managed and all necessary consultation has taken place. There are no further implications arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No further consultation required

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Full consultation undertaken throughout the process.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

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

None

Contact Officer: Katie Davis
Telephone: 01352 703518
Email: Katie.davis@flintshire.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF THE CHOICES DOCUMENT**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 At the time of the tenant ballot in 2012, the Council made a number of commitments to improve service delivery to tenants. This report describes the progress to date in delivering these promises

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Flintshire Council was required by Welsh Government to ballot its tenants on stock transfer as it could not produce a business plan which demonstrated that it could meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) in a timescale acceptable to Welsh Government.

2.02 In partnership with Welsh Government, Flintshire took an unusual step when balloting its tenants in 2012, in that it provided a balanced view of what the prospective new landlord Dee Housing could provide if tenants voted for a stock transfer, and what the Council could provide if tenants preferred to remain Council tenants. This document was labelled a "Choices" document, rather than an "Offer" document. This was distinctive but was reflective of the Council wishing to be transparent and fair.

2.03 Preparation of the Council's offer was made on the basis of realistic investment planning at the time. Following detailed work, the capital programme which could be guaranteed was £49m over five years, compared to a Dee Housing commitment of £164m. In addition the level of service improvement offered was different between the two options tenants were being asked to consider, with Dee Housing having more revenue available to spend on service improvements.

2.04 The ballot outcome in March 2012 delivered a strong commitment from tenants for the council to remain as their landlord with 71% tenants voting and of these, 88% were against stock transfer.

2.05 The Choices document, (quite rightly), has become a "binding document" in the eyes of members, tenants and officers and the promises made in the document have been the foundation for budget

and service improvement planning in the two years since. The Council is committed to ensuring that all promises are delivered (and exceeded where possible) in the five year commitment timeframe (up to March 2018) at the time of ballot.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 This report provided a summary of progress against the promises made. Appendix 1 provides a summary table.
- 3.02 To date excellent progress is being made especially in relation to the WHQS investment programme where the level of investment promised per annum has been exceeded and the number of improvements provided also exceeded.
- 3.03 The service improvements promised are also being progressed. For example, the 2012/13 budget identified additional resources to improve tenant participation and Anti Social Behaviour, which have now been implemented. The 2014/15 budget to be considered at County Council on 18th February proposes that resources are made available to meet promises to improve financial inclusion support for tenants and that a handy person service is developed. There is one area where work has been slow to progress. This is in relation to work with engaging leaseholders effectively. This has been identified as a priority area for the 2014/5 service plan.
- 3.04 This Committee will receive an annual report on progress.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 The Committee is asked to consider and note the progress being made to deliver the promises in the Choices Document

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 There are no new financial implications not reported previously. The 2014/15 HRA business plan identifies only a c£7m shortfall in meeting WHQS by 2020, without any prudential borrowing. The Council is confident that this shortfall will be met over the next few years, however if a small gap remains then is committed to meeting this through prudential borrowing.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 Planned investment in homes to achieve WHQS will impact positively on the running costs of tenants homes, so helping to alleviate poverty.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 A number of environmental improvement work streams will be

implemented enhancing quality of life and the visual appearance of the Housing stock but also helping to reduce Co2 emissions and meet the Council's carbon reduction targets.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Work programmes are individually planned and designed in most cases to meet individual tenant and household need.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no new personnel implications arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Ongoing consultation takes place with tenants to inform annual service improvement and investment plans.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 The Tenants Federation has received reports and will continue to do so, on progress in meeting the Choices document promises.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - Choices document delivery progress

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

None

**Contact Officer: Clare Budden
Telephone: 01352 703800
Email: clare.budden@flintshire.gov.uk**

This page is intentionally left blank

Choices Document Comparison

Question: Have we delivered what we 'promised' so far....

Proposals in choices document	What we have delivered//plans to deliver
<p><u>PART A = Overall plan</u></p>	
<p><u>PART B</u></p> <p>Housing Revenue Account - Under the current housing subsidy system, the council will continue to pay approximately 6.2 million of monies received in rent to HM treasury and not be able to spend it on housing in Flintshire</p>	<p>Currently working with welsh Government and 11 affected Welsh Local authorities to agree debt apportionment and long term financing of Council Housing investment to introduce self financing from April 2015.</p>
<p><u>PART C</u></p> <p>Delivering better local services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council cannot guarantee there will be additional resources to spend on environmental improvements 2013 - 2018. • The council cannot guarantee additional resources to spend on additional car parking 2013 - 2018 <p>Delivering better local services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council cannot guarantee additional resources to improve the grounds maintenance service or to enhance the current free gardening service for elderly, disabled and vulnerable tenants. The council would consult tenants and could improve these 	<p>The council will be able to deliver an environmental improvement programme and car parking improvements from approximately 2017/18 onwards subject to member and tenant consultation re priorities for the development of the investment programme. A revised Asset Management Strategy has been developed and is now being taken forward for approval. The document reflects the revised agreement with Welsh Government to meet WHQS by 2020. A new Stock Condition Survey is currently underway and the outcomes of this will help formulate a revised 7 year Capital Investment Programme.</p> <p>The council can now develop a programme of works to improve the environment on council estates as part of its plan to achieve WHQS by 2020. Full consultation will take place with tenants about the nature and scope of works in</p>

services if either future efficiencies allow further investment or tenants are willing to pay a service charge.

- The council would expand the current tenant participation team from 1 officer to three officers
- The council makes tackling all forms of anti social behaviour a high priority and would create a dedicated ASB team of three officers
- The council would set up a financial inclusion team of 1.5 officers and a tenancy support team of 1.5 officers to help tenants struggling with debt and/or maintain their tenancies
- The council would give priority to increasing resources for housing management services including creating a 'handyperson' service with three officers

future years. In addition, the service now has control of the Tidy Towns budget of £35k per annum. This can be used to fund improvements in towns and villages.

A new garden maintenance contract will commence in April 2014. This has provided 250k efficiencies and will be chargeable and available to all tenants. Those with disabilities will pay a reduced charge. This efficiency has allowed other service improvements and increases in investment to be supported.

This promise has been met. Tenant Liaison Officer and Customer Involvement Assistant appointed. Further appointments to be made in line with a revised 7 year delivery programme.

2 additional officers appointed to meet this promise.

A targeted tenant support team is in place, helping people sustain their tenancies and helping those with debt. The Housing income team have made 231 referrals to this service for support over the last 6 months. A some of this funding is short term the 2014/15 budget provides funding for 2 additional financial inclusion posts. This will ensure that this promise is met in full.

There is funding provided in the 2104/15 budget for this service to be developed. The number of jobs it will create nor best method of service delivery has not been agreed yet

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council would aim to improve communication with tenants and make services more accessible 	<p>The council is in the middle of opening a number of accessible Connects Centres. One is open and 3 more are planned by the end of the summer of 2014</p> <p>Facebook and twitter are now being used to open up new channels of communication with tenants.</p> <p>A STAR survey has been completed in 2013 to gain independent feed back on the quality of service delivery. Tenants are now carrying out mystery shopping and formal auditing of services.</p>
<p><u>PART D</u></p> <p>WHQS programme 2013 -2018 The council promised to provide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New kitchens = 4,800 • New Bathrooms with showers = 1,300 • New boilers/heating systems = 3,550 • Smoke detectors = 4,667 • Disabled adaptations = £5million <p>All other improvements = Essential works only</p> <p>Total anticipated spend = £49 million</p>	<p>Delivery of the landlord capital improvement programme has outperformed the targets set in the Choices document in 2012/13, through efficiency measures providing more resources than expected, strong project management and improved tender prices. The programme itself has been stretched from £11m per annum in 10/11 to £12m in 13/14 and this is expected to increase for each of the next 7 years to achieve the WHQS by 2020, with just over £100m investment in total.</p> <p>HRA Capital programme 2012/13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heating upgrades- 600 homes planned- 1100 delivered • Kitchen replacements- 922 planned-1100 delivered • Smoke detectors- 884 planned- 2400 delivered • Bathroom replacements- 56 planned- 62 delivered <p>It is anticipated that by the end of this financial year 2013/14 we will have completed the following:</p>

<p><u>PART D continued</u></p> <p>Regeneration of Flint Maisonettes- to demolish and develop plans for new homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New kitchens = 1,000 • New Bathrooms with showers =110 • New boilers/heating systems = 1,000 • Smoke detectors = 800 <p>These outcomes will mean that the council is well ahead of schedule.</p> <p>The commitment to spend £1m per annum on disabled adaptations has been met and budgets have been provided for fire risk assessment work, DDA requirements, some fencing and paths and other essential work.</p> <p>There are only circa 30 households left to re house, which means the programme is at least 12 months ahead of schedule. Plans are being finalised for member consideration for new homes to be developed to meet local need. These will be finalised over the Spring 2014.</p>
<p><u>PART E</u></p> <p>Services for older people & sheltered housing</p> <p>Delivering WHQS</p> <p>The council would set aside an annual budget of around £100,000 to carry out improvements in sheltered housing schemes.</p>	<p>This promise has been met to date with works taking pace at Glan Y Morfa Court and Chapel Court. This will be extended in 2014/15 to include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence a programme to provide facilities and stores to accommodate and charge mobility scooters • Improve security measures through the provision of improved entrance doors etc • Provision of lifts and stair lifts where appropriate • The provision, where possible, of a small number of rehabilitation flats to allow quicker discharge from hospital or to prevent admission • Provide communal computer and internet access

<p>Develop community based support teams</p> <p>Provide warden support services to council tenants who need it but do not live in sheltered housing.</p>	<p>free of charge at all schemes. This is commencing at Castle Heights in February 2014, with training also being provided.</p> <p>Community hubs developed in 9 areas. Ewloe, Buckley, Hope/Caergwrle, Mold, Flint, Holywell, Mostyn, Connah's Quay and Shotton, with small teams of 4-6 staff working from each. Feedback from tenants about the new service delivery model has been positive.</p> <p>The service has been expanded into general needs accommodation. New referrals are being made regularly.</p>
<p>PART F Involving you in the running of the housing service</p> <p>A resident involvement group will develop and monitor implementation of the customer involvement strategy. this will comprise four tenants and four Councillors</p> <p>Housing Overview and Scrutiny committee will scrutinise housing service delivery and performance.</p> <p>The council would increase the level of resources allocated and would increase the team from 1 - 3 officers</p> <p>The council will continue to develop new ways for you to have your say so that it can be sure that it's services are meeting tenants and leaseholders needs</p>	<p>This has now been extended to 6 from each group, who meet quarterly to discuss and improve the strategy and action plan</p> <p>This continues and minutes can be accessed from the FCC website</p> <p>Met. See Part C</p> <p>STAR survey completed in the summer of 2013. Service performance benchmarking has been introduced. New Customer Involvement Assistant is focussing on engaging 'seldom heard' tenants. Further work is needed to improve engagement with the</p>

<p>The tenants repairs and improvements forum would play a key role in ensuring high standards in repairs and improvement works</p> <p>Regardless of the outcome of the ballot, tenant will receive a new tenants handbook in the post ballot period. if tenants vote to stay with the council, the existing tenant handbook will be updated and distributed</p>	<p>councils leaseholders. This will be a priority for 2014.</p> <p>This is in pace via the 'Reality checkers' group.</p> <p>Consultation has taken place in various arena's This work will continue so we have a concise and informative handbook for tenants & leaseholders which will be distributed alongside the new tenancy agreement in early 2014</p>
<p>PART G Your rights</p>	<p>Your rights will stay the same as described in the document. Consultation will take place regarding the tenancy agreement planned.</p>
<p>PART H About the Council</p>	<p>This stays the same as outlined within the document</p>
<p>PART I Community & Economic Regeneration</p> <p>The council's investment program could result in up to 100 new jobs being created in the five years from 2013</p> <p>The council would aim to create 10 apprenticeships for local people in the five years from 2013</p>	<p>The original promises have been implemented proportionally to date. The council expects one job to be created for every £1m spent. However now that the council has a business plan to achieve WHQS by 2020 this plan is being extended considerably. The revised Asset Management Strategy sets out our aim to provide 200 local jobs and 20 apprentices by 2020. The mechanism for achieving this will be via a number of means; use of the i2i toolkit, Value Wales and working through the North Wales Construction Shared Apprenticeship scheme.</p>

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **COLLABORATIVE WORKING IN HOUSING**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide Scrutiny Committee with an update on current collaborative work across North Wales in Housing services.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The North Wales Heads of Housing meet quarterly to share good practice, problem solve and take forward any joint work which could provide added value, performance and service improvement to the benefit of our individual local communities. This is framed in the context of support and direction from Welsh Government to develop joint working as appropriate.

2.02 In March 2011, the Simpson report was published recommending service collaboration as an important activity to deliver economies of scale in service cost, performance and leadership. Flintshire Council has had a programme of change called Flintshire Futures for the last 3 years and one of the work streams has been regional collaboration alongside internal service change and modernisation.

2.03 The North Wales region is geographically large with different population needs, economic issues and a diverse culture with a number of urban areas and significant numbers of very small rural communities. This means that although collaboration may be technically possible over this large area sometimes local issues and needs have meant that sub regional working has been the preferred approach. Each potential opportunity has been considered on a case by case basis.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Appendix 1 provides a table of current activity and joint work across the North Wales region. The most significant joint work to date has been the partnership established to deliver a Community Alarm service to vulnerable older people (Galw Gofal), the work to develop a regional allocations policy (SARTH), and the single administration of the national empty homes scheme (Houses to Homes), for the North Wales region.

3.02 Less formally there is good local collaboration on best practice and problem solving which can lead to reduced cost for service delivery and/or improved performance. This has been ongoing through work to commission specialist supporting people services regionally.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Scrutiny committee is asked to consider and discuss this report and to support the collaborative work undertaken to date and currently in development.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 There are no direct impacts arising from this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no direct impacts arising from this report

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no direct impacts arising from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no direct impacts arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 No new requirements at this stage.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Where consultation has been needed for specific projects this has been undertaken.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1- Table of current Regional Collaborative Work.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Contact Officer: Clare Budden
Telephone: 01352 703800
Email: clare.budden@flintshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1- Table of Current Regional Collaborative Work

North Wales	LAs involved	Rationale	Timescale	Additional information
Regional Collaborative Committee for Supporting People	All North Wales Councils	To develop understanding of regional needs and where practical to commission and manage services regionally, while budget accountability remains a local matter.	Established September 2012	Regional commissioning plan has been produced and submitted to Welsh Government. A number of regional services have been commissioned such as body positive, Night Stop and Supported Lodgings. Plans are being developed to consider options for (sub) regional contract monitoring and review.
North Wales Housing Management Apprenticeship Consortia	Denbighshire; Conwy; Flintshire;	Optimise opportunities for the utilisation of housing management apprenticeships	Commenced September 2012	Housing Associations also involved, including, Pennaf, Wales and West, North Wales Housing, Cartrefi Conwy. Flintshire had 3 existing staff who were identified to take part in the programme.
Regional Telecare and Warden Call” service	Conwy, Anglesey and Flintshire with Denbighshire as a customer	Cost savings, service efficiencies and improvement of quality of service across North Wales	Regional Call Monitoring centre established June 2011	Service working well. Further work to be undertaken to develop new services and grow the business, including an out of hours personal response service
Joint application form for Affordable Housing Register	Flintshire, Denbighshire, Wrexham and Conwy have one joint form. Anglesey and Gwynedd have developed their own independently.	Improve services for customers – who only have to fill out one form to apply across a number of North Wales areas. Also costs shared as only one form developed for four councils	Both launched 2011/12	Next steps are to develop an online form and associated services to streamline process and to see whether SARTH can be utilised as a single process for Flintshire.

Appendix 1- Table of Current Regional Collaborative Work

North Wales	LAs involved	Rationale	Timescale	Additional information
Gypsy Traveller Needs Assessment	Flintshire, Conwy, Denbighshire, Anglesey, Gwynedd	Housing Act requires the assessment of Gypsies Travellers accommodation needs	Report finalised and accepted by all partners	Additional provision to be developed across the region to meet identified need.
North Wales Gypsy & Traveller Coordination Group	Flintshire Conwy Denbighshire Anglesey Gwynedd Wrexham Snowdonia NPA	Coordination of activities relating to the management of Gypsy Traveller issues across the authorities involved	Commenced in April 2013	The group was established to continue and expand the network established to oversee the Gypsy Traveller Assessment. The group is expanding its remit to include the coordination of policy and strategy development to ensure consistency and establish mechanisms to collect needs data to assist future planning
Regional Empty Homes initiative	All 6 NW authorities	Create efficiencies in regional delivery and plus greater ability to share expertise	Scheme commenced in 2012 and is ongoing	Flintshire leading on administering national loans scheme. Good outputs achieved to date
Regional Supporting People developments via Regional Collaborative committee	All 6 NW Authorities	WG requirement for economies of scale, efficiencies and sharing best practice	Implemented 2012	Some joint commissioning achieved for specialist services. See report to joint scrutiny on 6 th February. Further work being developed to achieve cost efficiencies needed
Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) (Common housing register)	Flintshire, Wrexham, Denbighshire & Conwy councils	To provide realistic advice for all applicants utilising a single access route incorporating early housing	Flintshire, Conwy and Denbighshire currently seeking approval to	Flintshire will implement the new allocations policy from late 2014. Further work will continue to assess the viability of a regional approach. IT costs and the

Appendix 1- Table of Current Regional Collaborative Work

North Wales	LAs involved	Rationale	Timescale	Additional information
	Glyndwr University	options advice	implement the agreed allocation policy and single register for their own counties.	need to balance local knowledge with maximum efficiency are causing some slow down in regional progress but individual councils are moving ahead with local implementation RSL partners include – Cartrefi Conwy, Pennaf, Tai Clwyd, North Wales Housing and Wales & West
Procurement of Private Sector Loans Administrator	Flintshire, Denbighshire & Gwynedd	Better pricing through increased capacity	October 12 implementation	19 loans administered to date by Street UK for Flintshire at an average of £14.5k per loan
Joint Housing Market Assessments	Flintshire and Wrexham (with Glyndwr University)	Updated Local Housing data – to feed into the Local Development Plan and Local Housing Strategy	January 2012	Revised Housing strategy agreed in early 2013
Eco scheme-	Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire	Maximise energy efficiency resources through fuel company obligations and help to address fuel poverty	Scheme about to go live following tendering in Autumn 2013	Wrexham lead. Main focus on solid wall insulation at present.
Out of county protocol for homeless cases	All 6 Local Authorities	Improved service to homeless cases and protection of vulnerable households	Protocol signed Sep 2013	Protocol implemented

Appendix 1- Table of Current Regional Collaborative Work

North Wales	LAs involved	Rationale	Timescale	Additional information
Staff training and development	All 6 Local Authorities	Cost saving Sharing knowledge and building relationships between staff in different authorities	Joint training plan to be developed as appropriate	Quarterly meeting taking place
Reviewing options to introduce Service charging policy (WG legislative priority)	Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham and Anglesey	Service efficiency and maximise income to HRA	2014-2015	Working group established with consultant support. No political approval as yet.
Private Rented Sector Market Assessment	Gwynedd Conwy Ynys Mon Flintshire	Reduced costs through joins commission.	October 13	To support activity to better understand the Private Rented Sector market and develop proposals to support its growth.
WHQS Programme	Flintshire and Wrexham	Reduced costs through joint procurement of work streams where appropriate and sharing of investment planning and timescales to ensure the construction sector has capacity to deliver.	April 14 to April 20	First joint procurement agreed for cross boundary roofing contract in 2014.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **WEDNESDAY 5TH FEBRUARY, 2014**

REPORT BY: **HOUSING AND 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 for 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
6 February, 2014 Meeting to be held at Llys Jasmine	Disabled Facilities Grant (and the use of removable 1 bedroom/bathroom pods)	To inform Members of current performance in relation the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants.	Performance Monitoring / Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
	Supporting People	To update Members on the Supporting People Programme in Flintshire.	Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
	Telecare	To update Members on the regional plan for Telecare / Telehealth.	Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
	Extra Care	To update Members on the development of further Extra Care schemes in Flintshire.	Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
5 March 2014	Private Sector Housing Renewal	To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service developments and county wide projects	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	26 February 2014

	Universal Credit Implementation Update	To receive a report on the implementation of Universal Credit	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
16 April 2014	2013/14 Quarter 3 Improvement Plan Monitoring Update	To consider Q3 performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	8 April 2014
	Update on the Repairs and Maintenance Service	To monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	
	Welfare Reform	To consider the impact that Welfare Reform is having on the Council, Council tenants and other residents in Flintshire and work the Council is undertaking to manage and mitigate the impact as far as possible.	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
21 May 2014					13 May 2014

10 June 2014	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q4/Year End performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	3 June, 2014
---------------------	--	--	------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------

Joint meeting with the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – date to be confirmed

- Empty Homes
- Adopted/Un-adopted land and review of garage sites

Items to be scheduled

- Update on the implementation of SARTH (September, 2014)
- Update on Gas Servicing
- Responsible Pet Ownership Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management (September, 2014)

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.	Head of Housing
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
Six monthly	Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management	To consider progress in delivering the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	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
	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)

This page is intentionally left blank