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Chief Officer (Governance)

Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



Contact Officer:

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To: Cllr Helen Brown (Chair)

Councillors: Pam Banks, Gillian Brockley, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Rosetta Dolphin, David Evans, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Kevin Rush, Dale Selvester and Linda Thew

10th November, 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER, 2022 at 2.00 PM

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Council Chamber, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire or on a virtual basis.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. The live streaming will stop when any confidential items are considered. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

A G E N D A

1 **APOLOGIES**

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 16)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September and 12 October, 2022.

4 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING** (Pages 17 - 28)

Report of Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

Purpose: To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Community Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to inform the Committee of progress against actions from previous meetings.

5 **RENTING HOMES WALES ACT** (Pages 29 - 38)

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) - Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

Purpose: To outline changes proposed to the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties to be introduced from 1 December, 2022.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following item is considered to be exempt by virtue of Paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The report contains details of a proposed contract and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure until the contract has been awarded.

6 **MANAGED STORES CONTRACT** (Pages 39 - 54)

Report of Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) - Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration

Purpose: To consider the Stores Contract.

Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours

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COMMUNITY HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **27 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote attendance meeting on Tuesday, 27 September 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Helen Brown (Chair)

Councillors: Pam Banks, Gillian Brockley, Rosetta Dolphin, David Evans, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Dale Selvester and Linda Thew

APOLOGY: Councillor Tina Claydon

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Ted Palmer (for Councillor Kevin Rush)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Marion Bateman attended as an observer

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Sean Bibby (Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration); Councillor Billy Mullin (Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources); Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Housing and Communities); Housing Programmes Manager; Service Manager – Housing Assets; Service Manager - Housing Management, Benefit Service including Disabled Facilities Grants and Service Manager – Housing & Prevention

IN ATTENDANCE: Community & Education Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Electoral Services Officer

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

15. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 July 2022, were approved as a correct record, as moved and seconded by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin and Councillor David Evans.

RESOLVED:

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

16. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme for consideration, outlining the following proposed amendments: -

- That a report on the Renting Homes Wales Act would be moved back a cycle and would be reported at the 16 November meeting;

- That the Dynamic Resource Scheduler (DRS) System Update be moved from 16 November to 8 March, 2023 meeting; and
- A report on the 2023-24 budget, following the Member portfolio budget briefing sessions, be added for consideration at the 16 November 2022 meeting.

The Facilitator reported that the Chair had asked all Members of the Council if they had items they felt that the Committee should be considering and adding to the Forward Work Programme. A list of suggested items had been compiled and were shown at Appendix 3 of the report. The Facilitator advised that following the meeting, she would liaise with officers and the Chair to identify how they could be included in the Forward Work Programme.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved and seconded by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin and Councillor David Evans.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

17. STRATEGIC HOUSING & REGENERATION PROGRAMME (SHARP)

The Housing Programmes Manager presented the report to inform the Committee of the progress of the Strategic Housing & Regeneration Programme (SHARP) and to set out the Strategy for new affordable homes within the next five years.

The Housing Programmes Manager provided detailed updates on progress under the new Welsh procurement framework partnership and also the net zero carbon working group, highlighted changes in the Welsh Government (WG) new build priorities, the new funding regime and its implications for Flintshire and NEW Homes, as outlined in the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Rosetta Dolphin, the Housing Programmes Manager advised that he was aware of the project at Greenfield and was looking to add this to the SHARP.

In response to comments from the Chair and Councillor Rosetta Dolphin on consultation with local Members and the housing needs within wards, the Housing Programmes Manager assured the Committee that local Members, along with members of the public would be consulted on future projects. He also advised that a portfolio needed to be drawn up of the building needs across the County to get an overall view of what the strategy needed to be. He informed Members that the Council would be able to influence what was needed.

The recommendations, as outlined in the report, were moved by Councillor David Evans and seconded by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress with the Strategic Housing & Regeneration Programme (SHARP) to date be noted;
- (b) That the changes in Welsh Government funding for social housing be noted;
- (c) That the changes to the criterion for registration with Tai Teg for affordable rented housing be noted;
- (d) That the outline development programme SHARP 2 be noted; and
- (e) That the Committee support the re-allocation of £121K budget for scheme investigation and feasibility works to support new delivery routes.

18. VOID MANAGEMENT

The Service Manager - Housing Assets introduced a report to provide an update on voids management and delivery.

The Service Manager - Housing Assets and Service Manager - Housing Management, Benefit Service including Disabled Facilities Grants gave a presentation which covered the following areas:-

- Voids
- Voids targets and costs
- Voids turnover and backlog
- Estate Management
- End to end process
- Resources – staffing
- Resources - staffing improvement activities
- Resources – budgets
- Resources – budget improvement activities
- Resources – refurbishment
- Resources – refurb improvement activities
- Oversight and reporting

In response to a request from Councillor Rosetta Dolphin, it was agreed that a copy of the presentation slides would be circulated to Members of the Committee following the meeting. Councillor Dolphin also gave examples of void properties in her ward that had remained empty for a long time and commented on the need to turn the properties around quicker to ensure continued revenue to the Council.

In response to concerns from Councillor Pam Banks around an issue in her ward and wait for a property, the Service Manager - Housing Management, Benefit Service

including Disabled Facilities Grants asked Councillor Banks to provide her with details following the meeting so that this matter could be looked into further.

Councillor Ted Palmer asked if additional in-house contractors could be used. He also asked how energy ratings would be improved for those properties which had already been allocated. The Service Manager – Housing Assets advised that there was an in-house voids team who were allocated all minor works. He also provided details of a pilot project around de-carbonisation of housing stock in Mostyn and added that this work was included within the Welsh Housing Quality Standard works.

Councillor Dave Evans suggested that the Committee visit a void property when it became empty and also a void property that had been brought back into use in order to see the standard of work carried out. He also referred to the cost of living crisis and asked what improvements were made to properties to keep costs lower for tenants. The Service Manager – Housing Assets advised that boilers, heating and loft insulation were all assessed at void stage and added that if conversion to air source heat pumps was a viable option for the property that was assessed at void stage too.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin asked if college students were employed to assist with brining back to use void properties. The Service Manager – Housing Assets advised that the Council did liaise with the colleges and do facilitate students undertaking practical work to fulfil their courses.

Councillor Dale Selvester raised concerns around the time taken to register meters with energy companies which added to the delay in allocating a void property. The Service Manager – Housing Assets responded that the tenant had previously had to contact energy companies directly which was very time consuming. They now had a company called Energy Angels that would be assisting with that going forward.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved and seconded by Councillor David Evans and Councillor Dale Selvester.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee note the increasing pressures and challenges impacting on service delivery across the Housing and Communities Portfolio; and
- (b) That the Committee support the proposals for addressing the challenges identified.

19. RAPID REHOUSING

The Service Manager – Housing & Prevention introduced a report to provide an update on progress with developing the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Local Authorities were required to develop Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans to demonstrate how they would move towards a new approach to preventing and relieving homelessness.

The report identified the high level priorities contained within the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and a draft action plan that Flintshire County Council and its

partners would need to deliver in order to achieve transformation in homeless prevention and statutory homelessness services and begin the transition to Rapid Rehousing.

The Service Manager – Housing & Prevention provided detailed information on the Key Principles, which were as follows:-

1. Tackling Homelessness through robust and effective partnerships
2. Remodelling our approaches to data, systems, policies and service delivery
3. Ensuring support is available to all who need it
4. Transforming our temporary housing offer
5. Increasing the supply of affordable housing and removing barriers to people accessing affordable housing promptly

The Service Manager – Housing & Prevention added that a report on the specific Challenges, Priorities and Action Plan would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting scheduled for October, 2022.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin asked for information on the demographic of people presenting themselves as homeless. The Service Manager – Housing & Prevention explained that the majority of people were single, which highlighted the demand for the need for single person accommodation in the County.

Councillor Pam Banks commented on people being housed in rural villages and she felt that there was a lack of help/support in the community. She asked if their needs were assessed prior to being housed. The Service Manager – Housing & Prevention advised that, in terms of emergency accommodation, housing was limited but added that all needs were assessed with personal action plans drawn up accordingly.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, was moved and second by Councillor David Evans and Councillor Ted Palmer.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the report and principles of Rapid Rehousing.

20. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT

The Service Manager - Housing Management, Benefit Service including Disabled Facilities Grants) introduced a report to update on the current Discretionary Policy and changes made in the last 12 months.

The Service Manager highlighted the two main changes within the Policy, which were as follows:-

1. The value for means testing had been reviewed and had been increased from £10,000 to £20,000; and
2. The need to apply for a land charge had now been removed. If an adapted property was sold within 5 – 10 years of the adaptation, then the Council

would look to re-coup the cost to provide security and assurances to the public purse.

In response to a question from Councillor David Evans around re-couping costs, the Service Manager said that this was a rare occurrence.

Councillor Dennis Hutchinson asked if equipment installed in properties could be recycled and re-used when removed. The Service Manager that an effective recycling system was used for equipment and all equipment was tested before being re-installed in another property. She added that the equipment was also installed with a five year warranty.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved and seconded by Councillor David Evans and Councillor Rosetta Dolphin.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the updated DFG Policy be supported and the ongoing work to improve the service be noted;
- (b) That the amendment, shown at Appendix 2 in the Policy, for the removal of the means test for medium sized adaptations be noted; and
- (c) That the changes to Land Charges in-line with Welsh Government Revised Housing Standards, as outlined in the report, be noted.

21. COUNCIL PLAN 2022/23 TIMELINE REVIEW

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator introduced the report on the review of timelines for the Council Plan 2022/23 as requested at County Council in July.

The Chief Executive advised that the timeline related to the Council Plan for 2022-23 which included some items rolling forward beyond that period. Officers were currently focussed on developing the five year Council Plan which would incorporate more specific detail of use to Overview & Scrutiny Committees in identifying topics for their Forward Work Programmes.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, was moved and seconded by Councillor David Evans and Councillor Ted Palmer.

RESOLVED:

That the Council Plan Part 1 reviewed and updated timelines for completion be agreed.

22. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.05 pm)

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Chair

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COMMUNITY HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 OCTOBER 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote attendance meeting on Wednesday, 12 October 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Helen Brown (Chair)

Councillors: Pam Banks, Gilliam Brockley, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Rosetta Dolphin, David Evans, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Kevin Rush, Dale Selvester and Linda Thew

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Glyn Banks, Marion Bateman and Jean Davies attended as observers

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Sean Bibby (Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration); Councillor Billy Mullin (Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources); Chief Executive; Chief Officer (Housing and Communities); Housing Programmes Manager; Service Manager – Housing Assets; Service Manager - Housing Management and Service Manager – Housing & Prevention

IN ATTENDANCE: Community & Education Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Electoral Services Officer

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

24. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME & ACTION TRACKING

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme for consideration, outlining the following proposed amendment: -

- That a report on Stores Contract would be brought forward and presented at the next meeting scheduled for 16th November

The Facilitator referred to the actions arising from the last meeting and reported that the majority of the actions had been completed. For those showing as ongoing, the Facilitator explained that a briefing session for all Members had been arranged, with notification having been sent out to Members. Work was ongoing to identify a date for a site visit and Members would be notified once a date had been agreed.

Councillor Tina Claydon referred to the item on Poverty scheduled to be presented to the Committee in April 2023 and suggested that this be brought forward to an earlier meeting. The Facilitator agreed to liaise with the relevant officer on this following the meeting.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Dennis Hutchinson, and seconded by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be noted;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

25. PERFORMANCE OF THE WHQS CAPITAL PROGRAMME – ASSURANCE REPORT

The Service Manager - Housing Assets introduced a report to provide an update on the Council's delivery of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) through the Capital Investment Programme.

The Service Manager provided a detailed presentation which covered the following areas: -

- WHQS – Explained
- WHQS - Current Position
- WHQS – Challenges
- WHQS – Decarbonisation
- WHQS 2023
- Local Labour & Apprenticeships
- WHQS - Next Steps

In response to a question from the Chair around inspections, the Service Manager advised that as part of the in-house Stock Condition Survey, all Council properties would be visited and inspected.

Councillor Dale Selvester commented on the thermal energy efficiency and asked whether the external works to replace rendering of properties had been completed on all properties or whether there were some properties outstanding. The Service Manager explained that the programme would be focussing on not also meeting the WHQS but also de-carbonisation with a survey being carried out on the energy efficiency of all properties. Where new components were required, these would be replaced to make sure the properties were as thermal efficiency as possible.

The recommendations, as outlined in the report, was moved by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin, and seconded by Councillor Dale Selvester.

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Investment Programme in its next phase of compliance, as it moved towards the updated Welsh Housing Quality Standards and requirement be noted.

26. RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN

The Service Manager – Housing & Prevention introduced a report to provide an update on progress with developing the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. The report also identified the high-level priorities contained within the Transition Plan and a draft action plan that Flintshire County Council and its partners would need to deliver in order to achieve transformation in homeless prevention and statutory homelessness services and begin the transition to Rapid Rehousing.

He commented that a TrACE agenda was being developed with regards to trauma and complex needs. He also added that a vital part was supporting the workforce through development and training to build up resilience in the service, to avoid staff burnout and in turn to help maintain the retention of staff.

The Service Manager informed the Committee that they were looking to supply a provision for a second homeless hub to serve both the North and South of Flintshire and commented on the need to increase supply of affordable housing. He assured the Committee that there was a commitment to continue helping people sustain tenancies.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration thanked the Service Manager for the detailed report. He commented on a successful case study around Rapid Rehousing which he had been made aware of for Perth & Kinross which he said he would happily share with the Committee following the meeting. He added that he would like more success stories to be presented at future meetings on the work being undertaken by the Council.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin commented that the biggest challenge was to acquire more housing stock and asked what could be done to utilize more assets for 2- and 1-bedroom flats. The Service Manager advised that they were working closely with assets to explore more stock opportunities.

Councillor Glyn Banks commented on void properties and said that whilst the Committee had previously agreed to receive an update report on void properties in six months' time, he felt that this needed to be considered at every meeting. His comments were supported by Councillor Kevin Rush. The Chief Officer (Housing and Communities) responded that the Committee, at its last meeting, had recommended an update report in six months' time, to allow for the actions within the action plan to be implemented. In the meantime, the Committee would be invited to a site visit to take part in a walkthrough of the voids process from start to finish.

The Chair asked if she could attend the meetings of the Voids Working Group, as Chair of the Committee to sit as an observer. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration explained that he would now be sitting on the Voids Working Group and welcomed attendance by Members of the Committee when appropriate.

The Chair asked if there had been any progress with identifying suitable locations for a replacement to the current Homeless hub. The Service Manager advised that there had been a potential site identified in the Deeside area. A feasibility study would need to be undertaken and there would be engagement with local Members, prior to an update report being presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin, and seconded by Councillor Dale Selvester.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress to date, as shown in the report be noted; and
- (b) That the Committee approve the high-level priorities and action plan ahead of the formal adoption of the Full Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan by the end of Q3 2022-23.

27. COUNCIL PLAN 2023-28

The Chief Executive presented a report on the refreshed priorities, sub-priorities and well-being objectives within the Council Plan for 2023-28 which reflected a long-term view of recovery, projects and ambitions over the period. Members were reminded that this was a high-level summary document with further detail to be reported in Part 2 of the Council Plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Rosetta Dolphin around the replacement and renewal of energy/solar panels, the Service Manager – Housing Assets explained that solar panel were regularly serviced, assessed and maintained, and would be replaced when required. He said there was no exact life cycle of the equipment but would expect it to be around the 15-year mark.

The recommendation, as outlined within the report, was moved by Councillor Rosetta Dolphin, and seconded by Councillor Dale Selvester.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee support the proposed Priorities, Sub-priorities and Well-being objectives of the Council Plan 2023-28, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

28. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press in attendance.

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

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Chair



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 16 th November, 2022
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking
Report Author	Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

The report also shows actions arising from previous meetings of the Community Housing & Assets Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the progress made in completing them. Any outstanding actions will be continued to be reported to the Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATION

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.
3	That the Committee notes the progress made in completing the outstanding actions.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING
1.01	Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Improvement Plan.
1.02	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?
1.03	In previous meetings, requests for information, reports or actions have been made. These have been summarised as action points. Following a meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July 2018, it was recognised that there was a need to formalise such reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committees, as 'Matters Arising' was not an item which can feature on an agenda.
1.04	It was suggested that the 'Action tracking' approach be trialled for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Following a successful trial, it was agreed to extend the approach to all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
1.05	The Action Tracking details including an update on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	In some cases, action owners have been contacted to provide an update on their actions.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None as a result of this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme. Appendix 2 – Action Tracking for the Community & Housing.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee as identified in Appendix 2. Contact Officer: Ceri Shotton Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator Telephone: 01352 702305 E-mail: ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk

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

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COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Report Author
<p>Wednesday 14th December, 2022</p> <p>10am</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 21</p>	<p>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Financial Business Plan</p>	<p>To consider the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2023/24 and the HRA Business Plan.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)</p>
	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) & Budget Setting 2023-24 (Stage 2)</p>	<p>That the Committee reviews and comments on the cost pressures and overall budget strategy, and advises on any areas of cost efficiency it would like to see explored further.</p>	<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)</p>
	<p>Council Plan 2022-23 Mid-Year Performance Reporting</p>	<p>To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)</p>
	<p>Estate Management</p>	<p>To consider Estate Management and work being undertaken by the Council and the impact this has on tenants.</p>	<p>Consultation / Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities</p>
	<p>Anti-Social behaviour</p>	<p>To update Members on the Policy and to outline any proposed changes to the Policy.</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities</p>
	<p>Housing Strategy</p>	<p>To provide an update on the Housing Strategy</p>	<p>Assurance Monitoring</p>	<p>Service Manager – Housing Programmes</p>

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

	Flintshire Housing Need Prospectus	To provide an update on the Housing Need Prospectus which informs the Social Housing Grant Programme.	Information Sharing	Service Manager – Housing Programmes
Wednesday 11th January, 2023 10am	Welfare Reform Update /Housing Rent Income	To provide an update on the impacts of welfare reforms and the work that is ongoing to mitigate them. To include information on the Tenancy Hardship Grant Scheme (THG).	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement / Service Manager (Housing Welfare and Communities)
	Tenant Engagement Strategy	To present to committee the draft tenant engagement strategy and provide information on the tenants federation and other forms of consultation.	Consultation	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
Wednesday 8th February, 2023 10am	NEW Homes Business Plan	To consider the NEW Homes Business Plan	Consultation	Strategic Housing & Program Delivery Manager
	The Common Housing Register	To provide an update on the Common Housing Register and outcome of the customer satisfaction survey	Information Sharing	Service Manager – Housing & Prevention
	Housing Support Grant Update	To provide an update on the Housing Support Grant	Information Sharing	Service Manager – Housing & Prevention
	Garage Sites	To provide an update on work being carried out at Garage sites across the County.	Information Sharing	Strategic Housing & Program Delivery Manager
	Sheltered Housing	To provide an update to the	Consultation	Strategic Housing &

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

	Review	Committee following the Sheltered Housing review		Program Delivery Manager
Wednesday 8th March, 2023 10am Page 23	Homelessness Update inc: Rough Sleepers	To provide an update on the work ongoing to mitigate Homelessness and support provided to rough sleepers	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager – Housing & Prevention
	Standard Tenants and Residents (STAR) Survey Outcomes	To outline the outcome of the (STAR) Survey	Consultation	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
	Dynamic Resource Scheduler (DRS) System Update	To provide an update following implementation of the DRS System.	Assurance Monitoring	Senior Manager - Housing & Asset Management
	Voids Management	To provide an update to the Committee on Void properties and the work undertaken to bring the properties back into use.	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager - Housing Assets
Wednesday 14th April, 2023 10am	Disrepair Update	To provide an update on work ongoing to deal with disrepairs.	Assurance Monitoring	Senior Manager - Housing & Asset Management
	Poverty	To provide information on work being undertaken to mitigate the impacts of Poverty, specifically around food poverty.	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
	Temporary Accommodation Audit	To provide a progress report on the action plan for service improvement	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager – Housing & Prevention

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

	Update	following the audit of the Temporary Accommodation.		
Wednesday 17th May, 2023 10am	Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site	To report to the Committee on a Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site in the County	Consultation	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
Wednesday 14th June, 2023 2pm	Communal Heating Charges 2023/24	To consider the proposed heating charges in council properties with communal heating systems for 2023/24 prior to Cabinet approval.	Consultation	Corporate Finance – Accountant
Page 21	Council Plan 2022-23 Year-End Performance	To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Assurance Monitoring	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)
Wednesday 12th July, 2023 10am	Welfare Reform Update /Housing Rent Income	To provide an update on the impacts of welfare reforms and the work that is ongoing to mitigate them.	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement / Service Manager (Housing Welfare and Communities)

Items to be scheduled

- **Refugees Update** - To provide an update on the settlement of Refugees across Flintshire. This item was on the FWP for November, 2022 but will be moved to an appropriate date in due course.

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly / Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Chief Officer (Housing and Assets)
Six monthly	Welfare Reform Update – including Universal Credit	To update Members on the impact of Welfare Reform and the cost to the Council.	Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
Six monthly	Update on North East Wales Homes & Property Management	To update Members on the work of the North East Wales Homes & Property Management	Housing Strategy Manager
Annually – September	WHQS Capital Programme – Delivery review update	To provide an update on progress of the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS), that the Council is delivering through its Capital Investment Programme. Report to include information around the use of local labour and number of apprentices and school leavers.	Chief Officer (Housing and Assets)
Six monthly	Update on Housing Rent Income	To provide an update on rent collection and current arrear levels	Revenues Manager

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ACTION TRACKING FOR THE COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Timescale
27.09.2022	6. Voids Management	<p>The Chair suggested that the Committee visit the Council offices in Flint to allow them to take part in a walkthrough of the voids process from start to finish. Vicky Clare agreed that this could be accommodated at a future date.</p> <p>Cllr Dave Evans suggested that the Committee visit a void property when it became empty and also a void property that had been brought back into use in order to see the standard of work carried out. Vicky Clarke agreed that this could be facilitated.</p>	<p>Vicky Clark / Ceri Shotton</p> <p>Vicky Clark / Ceri Shotton</p>	<p>A site visit will be arranged for Friday 9th December, 2022 as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit 1 – void property pre-works • Site visit 2 – void ready for tenant • One hour session at Flint office to run through the void process <p>Information on times and location etc. will be provided to Members of the Committee in due course.</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Completed.</p>
12.10.2022	3. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Cllr Tina Claydon referred to the item on Poverty scheduled to be presented to the Committee in April 2023 and suggested that this be brought forward to an earlier meeting. The Facilitator agreed to liaise with the relevant officer on this following the meeting.	Ceri Shotton		Ongoing.

ACTION TRACKING

APPENDIX 2

12.10.2022	5. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	In response to concerns and a suggestion from Cllr Glyn Banks, Vicky Clark said that the Committee had recommended to receive an update report on Void properties in six months' time and in the meantime a site visit for the Committee to see the process from start to finish would be arranged.	Vicky Clark / Ceri Shotton / Sean O'Donnell	See action above – Site visit being arranged for Friday 9 th December.	Completed.
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COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 16 th November 2022
Report Subject	Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Renting Homes Act is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. From 1 December 2022 the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 aims to simplify the process of renting a home in Wales and to provide parties with more information about their rights and obligations. The Act is now partially in force, for the purpose of making regulations and issuing guidance.

The report provides an overview of the new Act and the changes that will be brought into effect from 1st December 2022

RECOMMENDATIONS

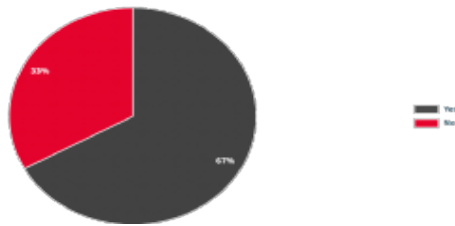
1	Community, Housing and Assets, Overview and Scrutiny Committee to note changes proposed to the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties for implementation from 1 December 2022.
2	Community, Housing and Assets, Overview and Scrutiny Committee to note the use of discretion provided in the Act to remove the use of introductory tenancies from our policy

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE RENTING HOMES (WALES) ACT 2016
1.01	The Renting Homes (Wales) Act is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. From 1 December 2022 the Act will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.
1.02	The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 aims to simplify the process of renting a home in Wales and to provide parties with more information about their rights and obligations. The Act is now partially in force, for the purpose of making regulations and issuing guidance.
1.03	Once fully enacted, the Act will create a completely new system for residential tenancies in Wales. It is intended to entirely replace the secure, assured, assured shorthold and assured agricultural occupancies tenancy regimes which currently operate under the Housing Act 1985 and Housing Act 1988.
1.04	Tenancies under the Rent Act 1977 and Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976 will remain unaffected.
1.05	<p>Who is affected by the new law?</p> <p>All social and private tenants will see some changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the way their contracts are provided • in the way their homes are maintained • to how they communicate with their landlords <p>All social and private landlords, including those who rent their properties through management companies or agents, will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with the new law • make the necessary updates to their properties and paperwork
1.06	<p>Tenants</p> <p>Under the new law tenants and licensees will become 'contract-holders'. Tenancy agreements will be replaced with 'occupation contracts'. The new law will make renting easier and provide greater security.</p> <p>For contract-holders this will mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receiving a written contract setting out your rights and responsibilities • an increase in the 'no fault' notice period from two to six months • greater protection from eviction • improved succession rights, these set out who has a right to continue to live in a dwelling, for example after the current tenant dies • more flexible arrangements for joint contract-holders, making it easier to add or remove others to an occupation contract
1.07	Landlords

	<p>For landlords this will mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A simpler system, with two types of contract: ‘Secure’ for the social rented sector and ‘Standard’ for the private rented sector. • Ensuring homes are fit for human habitation (FFHH). This will include electrical safety testing and ensuring working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are fitted. • Abandoned properties can be repossessed without needing a court order.
1.08	<p>Occupation contract</p> <p>Once the Act is implemented most existing current tenancies and licenses will be converted into occupation contracts. The occupation contract will sit on top of a tenancy or license and will set out the rights and obligations of each party.</p> <p>The Act introduces the concept of a ‘landlord’ and a ‘contract holder’, who will enter into an occupation contract with one another. Landlords will also be grouped into one of two groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community landlords (as defined by section 9 of the Act and includes local authorities, housing associations and Registered Social Landlords) • Private landlords (any landlord in Wales who is not a community landlord) <p>There are two types of occupation contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure contract: This replaces secure tenancies issued by local authorities and assured tenancies issued by housing associations that are Registered Social Landlords (RSLs); and • Standard contract: This is the contract that will mainly be used in the private rented sector (where you have a landlord who is not a council/local authority or a RSL), but can be used by local authorities and RSLs in some circumstances (e.g. a ‘supported standard contract’ for supported accommodation). <p>Whilst generally, a secure contract will be used by community landlords and standard contracts will be used by private landlords, there are exceptions to this contained within the Act (section 11 and schedule 2).</p> <p>As part of the Act, there are discretions for community landlords like Flintshire to decide whether to use Introductory Tenancies from 1st December 2022.</p> <p>Our legal partners, Hugh James, have been having discussions with their clients about whether or not they will continue to use Introductory Contracts from December 2022. Hugh James ran a poll across those clients to provide an overall view.</p> <p>The first question was to establish the use of introductory or starter tenancies currently:</p>

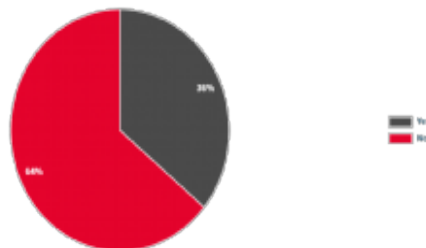
Do you use introductory or starter tenancies at the moment?



The responses were equally split between RSL and local authority clients. Around 66% of respondents currently use introductory or starter tenancies.

The next question was to establish the views of clients who are currently using such tenancies and whether they will use them up to and beyond December 2022

Are you currently planning to use introductory contracts when the Renting Homes (Wales) Act comes into force?



The survey found that approximately half of those who currently use introductory or starter tenancies are planning to no longer use them

Under current legislation one of the main benefits to the council of using introductory tenancies is the ability to terminate that tenancy in a timely way to protect from escalating rent arrears or long drawn out court proceedings.

Under the new Act the process for ending a tenancy is the same for both introductory and secure contracts, and as such, it is recommended to end the use of introductory tenancies and have one contract for all tenants.

1.09

Written Statement

The Occupation Contract will have to be set out in a 'written statement'. The purpose of the written statement is to confirm the terms of the contract.

This written statement must contain all the 'required contractual terms'. These are:

- Key matters: For example, the names of the landlord and contract-holder and address of the property. These must be inserted in every contract.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental Terms: Covers the most important aspects of the contract, including how the landlord gets possession and the landlord's obligations regarding repairs. • Supplementary Terms: Deals with the more practical, day to day matters applying to the occupation contract. For example, the requirement to notify the landlord if the property is going to be left unoccupied for four weeks or more. • Additional Terms: Addresses any other specifically agreed matters, for example a term which relates to the keeping of pets. <p>New contracts can be given in hardcopy or, if the contract-holder agrees, electronically. We are planning to hand deliver all our converted contracts within 6 months from 1st December. The contract does not need to be signed.</p> <p>All landlords will be obliged to issue contract holders with a written statement within fourteen days of the contract holder becoming entitled to occupy the dwelling. The occupation contract will not be enforceable until the landlord has provided a written statement to the contract holder.</p>
1.10	<p>Joint contract</p> <p>Contract-holders can be added or removed from occupation contracts without the need to end one contract and start another. This will make managing joint contracts easier and help people experiencing domestic abuse by enabling the abuser to be targeted for eviction.</p> <p>This is a real positive and will assist with some of the issues that our residents have experienced with Universal Credit claims around joint tenancies.</p>
1.11	<p>Enhanced Succession Rights</p> <p>Enables both a 'priority' and 'reserve' person ('successor') to succeed to the occupation contract. This allows two successions to the contract to take place, for example, a husband or wife followed by another family member. In addition, a new succession right for carers is created.</p> <p>All previous successions will be wiped clean giving all contract holders a clean slate, this is to ensure that there are no challenges on previous successions.</p>
1.12	<p>Fitness for Human Habitation</p> <p>Landlords must ensure properties are fit for human habitation (FFHH). This will include, for instance, electrical safety testing and ensuring working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are fitted.</p> <p>There is a general obligation on all landlords to ensure that the dwelling is fit for human habitation at the start of the contract and throughout the time the contract is operational.</p>

	<p>The obligation on landlords to keep the structure and exterior in repair and keep installations for the supply of water, gas or electricity, for sanitation, for space heating, and hot water in repair and proper working order.</p> <p>Landlords are not liable to do any work where they cannot do so at reasonable expense,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to make good damage caused by fire, storm, flood or other accident • repair anything that the tenant is entitled to remove from the premises • or anything which does not affect the contract holder's enjoyment of the property <p>Landlords are also not required to do any work which is due to the tenant causing damage or not taking proper care of the property or its contents.</p> <p>Rent will not be payable for any period during which the property is not fit for human habitation. However, concerns must have been raised with your landlord and contract holders should continue to pay rent. If there is a dispute, this is a matter for the Court to decide the landlord has complied with the fitness obligation, and the contract holder may be required to pay back any rent owed.</p> <p>Landlords have a reasonable time to carry our works once they become aware that the works are necessary. Landlords must give 24 hours' notice to access a property for the purposes of undertaking such repairs.</p>
1.13	<p>Abandonment Procedure</p> <p>Landlords can repossess an abandoned property without needing a court order, after serving a four-week warning notice and carrying out investigations to be sure the property is abandoned.</p>
1.14	<p>Protection against 'retaliatory eviction'</p> <p>Landlords cannot issue a no fault notice just because of a complaint that the home is in a poor state of repair. The Court would need to be satisfied that the landlord hasn't issued the notice to avoid carrying out the repair.</p>
1.15	<p>Private Rented Sector</p> <p>There is greater security for people who live in the private rented sector (PRS) under the new law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A landlord must give you at least six months' notice (a 'section 173' notice in the Act) to end the contract, providing the tenant does not break a term of the contract, often called a 'no fault' notice (increased from two months' notice). • No fault notices cannot be issued until six months after the tenant moves in (the 'occupation date' of the contract). • If the landlord has not acted on the 'no fault notice' (so they haven't used it to try to get possession of the property), they can't issue another one for six months.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the tenant has a fixed term contract (which says how long the contract is for) the landlord cannot normally issue a notice to end the contract. If the tenant does not leave, the fixed term contract will usually become what is called a 'periodic standard contract' at the end of the fixed term, and the landlord will have to serve a six-month no fault notice to bring this to an end. • Landlords cannot include a break clause (to regain possession) in fixed term standard contracts of less than two years. If the fixed term is two years or more, the landlord cannot give notice until at least month 18 of the fixed term contract, and will have to give the tenant at least six months' notice.
1.16	<p>Termination of occupation contract</p> <p>Under both a secure contract and a periodic standard contract, the contract holder can terminate the contract early by giving no less than four weeks' notice to the landlord. Under a fixed term standard contract, the contract holder's ability to terminate the contract early depends on whether there is a break clause in the contract.</p>
1.17	<p>Implementation In Flintshire</p> <p>Services have been actively working through the implementation of the Act. The original planned date of implementation was 15th July 2022, however, Welsh Government recognised there were still a number of outstanding changes required within the regulations that would not be resolved for the original implementation date. As such, a decision was made to postpone implementation to 1st December 2022.</p> <p>As part of a regional collaboration Hugh James solicitors have been engaged to support implementation and to provide a collective and aligned approach from a legal perspective. This work has been progressing well and we continue to engage with them on a local and regional level.</p> <p>We have developed a communication and training plan with actions to be implemented at the appropriate time. As it has taken until mid-July to finalise some of the detail around the regulations and to ensure information and training are as close to the implementation date as possible, this work is now starting to move at pace.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>As part of a regional collaboration, we procured the services of Hugh James solicitors. The contract provides the following for us and regional partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train together: access 5 delegate places at each of the sessions in our unique webinar series developed with Community Housing Cymru. • Draft together: producing your written statements of terms (occupation contracts) in conjunction with counsel.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build policy together: our plain-English manual to help guide your teams through the legislation and understand the new approach. Once you have used that to build your policies, we will carry out a final review of the updated policies you have developed. • Added value: shared learning across the sector in the form of weekly summaries of all of our clients' questions and answers and 25 hours of bespoke “surgery” style sessions with our team over the 6 month implementation period <p>This has reduced the cost of the legal advice as we procured this as a region, it has also provided the forum for shared learning and support with the legal experts and colleagues across North Wales</p>
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	The IIA is currently being drafted.
3.02	There is a live risk register associated with the implementation which is managed by the officer project team.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>There is no consultation required, or appropriate, for implementation of the regulations as it is a legislative requirement and the current tenants will transfer over to a secure contract.</p> <p>However, the contracts will be reviewed and consideration given to the need to vary some for specific reasons; i.e. garden condition, parking and pets. The consultation process will be defined and structured at the appropriate time after the implementation date.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>https://gov.wales/search?global-keywords=toolkit+for+renting+homes+wales</p> <p>https://gov.wales/renting-homes-act-and-regulations</p> <p>https://gov.wales/fitness-homes-human-habitation-guidance-landlords-html</p> <p>https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/1/contents/enacted</p>

	https://law.gov.wales/public-services/housing/renting-homes-wales-act-2016
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Jen Griffiths, Service Manager, Housing, Welfare and Communities</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 702929</p> <p>E-mail: jen.griffiths@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Private Tenant – someone who rents their home from a private individual.</p> <p>Registered Social Landlord - Registered social landlords are independent housing organisations, mostly housing associations.</p> <p>Social Tenant – Someone who rents their home from a housing association or local council.</p>

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