

Public Document Pack

Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Chief Officer (Governance)
Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



Contact Officer:
Ceri Shotton 01352 702305
ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk

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

6 July 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 12TH JULY, 2023 at 10.00 AM

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Lord Barry Jones 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 - 10)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June, 2023.

4 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING (Pages 11 - 20)

Report of Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

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

5 COST OF LIVING & WELFARE REFORM (Pages 21 - 32)

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

Purpose: To provide the Committee with a combined operational update on the latest welfare response impacts, and the cost-of-living schemes to support residents.

6 HOUSING RENT INCOME (Pages 33 - 38)

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

Purpose: To present the latest operational update on the 2022-23 outturn collection of housing rent.

7 HOUSING MANAGEMENT POLICY (Pages 39 - 56)

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

Purpose: To consider Estate Management and work being undertaken by the Council and the impact this has on tenants.

8 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY (Pages 57 - 78)

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

Purpose: To update Members on the Policy and to outline any proposed changes to the Policy.

9 VOID MANAGEMENT (Pages 79 - 80)

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

Purpose: To provide a further update on voids management and delivery.

10 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (Pages 81 - 116)

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

Purpose: To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.

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

This page is intentionally left blank

COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2023**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a hybrid meeting on Wednesday, 14 June 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Dale Selvester (Vice Chair)

Councillors: Pam Banks, Gillian Brockley, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, David Evans, Dennis Hutchinson, Kevin Rush, Linda Thew

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Bernie Attridge (for Helen Brown)

APOLOGY: Councillor Rosetta Dolphin

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Dave Hughes, Paul Johnson and Billy Mullin attended as observers

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Sean Bibby (Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration); Chief Officer (Housing & Communities); Service Manager – Housing Assets and Strategic Finance Manager – Commercial & Housing

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

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023 were approved as a correct record.

The minutes were moved and seconded by Councillor Bernie Attridge and Councillor Pam Banks.

RESOLVED:

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

10. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME & ACTION TRACKING

The Facilitator presented the current Forward Work Programme (FWP) for consideration, adding that all future meeting dates from September 2023 had been added to the FWP following approval at the Annual Council meeting. All regular reports to the Committee had also been added to the FWP.

The Facilitator added that she would be meeting with the Chief Officer & Senior Management Team over the summer to discuss future reports and would liaise with the

Chair and Vice-Chair to bring a fuller FWP to the Committee for consideration in September.

The Facilitator also outlined the status of the actions arising from the previous meetings, which were shown at Appendix 2 of the report.

Councillor Bernie Attridge commented on the meeting being held at 2pm and asked if the Facilitator could confirm if all future meeting would be held at 10am as previously requested. Councillors Dennis Hutchinson and Linda Thew indicated their support for the Committee meetings to start at 10am. The Facilitator confirmed that all future meetings would start at 10am.

Councillor Linda Thew commented on the formal submission of a planning application to move asylum seekers to a former hotel in Flintshire and asked whether a report could be provided to the Committee around the type of accommodation offered. She raised concerns around equality and human rights and safety in the proposed accommodation.

Councillor Bernie Attridge indicated that he would need to declare a personal interest as a Member of the Planning Committee if a discussion was being held on the planning application.

The Facilitator responded that she did not think that it was appropriate for the Committee to consider a report during the planning process but would seek formal advice and provide this to the Committee following the meeting.

The recommendations, as outlined within the report, were moved by Councillor Bernie Attridge and seconded by Councillor Pam Banks.

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.

11. COMMUNAL HEATING CHARGES 2023/2024

The Chief Officer (Housing & Communities) gave an overview on the Councils current position with regards to Communal Heating Charges, reporting that the portfolio currently operated eight communal heating schemes within Flintshire, with 417 properties on communal heating systems. The Council had recently renegotiated the fuel tariff to be charges for 2023/24 as the previous contract ended in March 2023.

New communal heating charges were based on the prior year's energy use which ensured an accurate assessment of costs and impacts on the heating reserve

account. In order to recover the projected heating charges in full, there was a need to increase communal heating charges in line with the tariff increases. The proposed recharges for 2023/24 were set out within the report.

The Strategic Finance Manager – Commercial & Housing reported that if the Council continued to calculate the charge in the same way as previous years, tenants who were on the Communal Heating systems would be subject to increases of up to 515%, based on the newly agreed gas tariff. This was higher than the overall tariff increase of 420% as the revised communal charges came into effect from tenants from 31 July, 2023. Work had been undertaken to shield tenants from the potential increase and therefore the proposed average increase to tenants was 197%. This would mean that there would be a deficit remaining on the heating reserve of approximately £0.080m at the end of 2023/24 which would need to be recovered in future years as utilities prices recovered and stabilised.

Councillor Bernie Attridge said that he had sent questions ahead of the meeting to officers, as had the Leader of the Council as he was concerned over the proposed increase and said that he could not support such an increase to tenants at the current time. He referred to officer comments around equity for all tenants but said that an argument could be made that tenants were subsidising those that were in rent arrears or damaged their properties before them becoming voids. He said that he would like to see the costs being recovered over a longer period of time which had been done in the past and said that the majority of the tenants he represented in the two schemes listed in the report were vulnerable and were not able to claim for financial assistance as they were just above the threshold. He hoped the Committee supported him in not supporting the increase.

The Chief Officer referred to the e-mail exchange with Councillor Attridge and said that the Council aimed for full cost recovery on rent also, and were very proactive around this, as would be demonstrated in the report to the Committee at its next meeting. She explained that the Council was passporting the charge from utility companies and had tried to mitigate the scale of the increase to tenants as shown in the report. She referred to a decision in previous years to defer cost recovery over a three year period, but this had been reversed to a two year period which was what was being proposed now. Tenants had been protected to some degree from the increases to date, but the Council could not control global markets, but the Council was trying to mitigate the amount of increase tenants would experience.

Councillor Attridge responded that it had been a political decision to spread the cost recovery over a three year period. He referred to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which, he said, always had surplus at the end of the financial year and asked whether this could be used to bring down the proposed increase costs to tenants. The Strategic Finance Manager reported that in 2017 it was proposed that cost recovery be over a three year period, but it became evident after one year that the increases were impacting significantly on the heating account and a decision was made to reduce the number of years to two. Heating charges were always required to be fully cost recovered within the HRA, which was stipulated within the guidelines, and it was difficult to spread cost recovery over a longer period of time as gas prices continued to be volatile. The Chief Officer referred to the Committee to a previous decision taken, and

supported by Cabinet, that any surplus within the HRA for 2023/24 be used towards bringing down the number of void properties.

Councillor David Evans asked how the usage of communal areas would be calculated. The Service Manager - Housing Assets advised that work would commence on metering individual properties across the County with metres being installed in all communal areas also, in order to identify what the usage was. Work would also be undertaken to install energy efficient control measures over the next 12 months.

In response to a question from Councillor Linda Thew around the installation of solar panels, the Service Manager that the installation of solar panels would be considered when heating systems were due for renewal.

Councillor Geoff Collet thanked officers for their efforts in reducing the increase as much as possible. He asked if tenants fell behind on their payments on heating charges would this be considered in line with rent payments and could tenants be evicted. The Chief Officer advised that service charges were distinct from rent in tenants' payments.

Councillor Attridge commented on communal areas being used by groups, others than tenants, for events such as coffee morning and bingo and asked why tenants should be paying for the energy used in the communal areas if they were not participating. The Chief Officer advised that service charges to tenants had remained frozen, but heating charges was a service charge being passported by utility companies. Tenants were being charged for their usage, and they were not being charged for the usage in communal areas.

Councillor Kevin Rush asked if the Council were planning to introduce measures to combat heat loss in communal areas. The Service Manager advised that during a review of the communal central heating systems the implementation of further controls to improve energy efficiency would be considered.

The Chair outlined the recommendation contained within the report. Councillor Attridge moved an amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Thew, as follows:-

- That the Committee request that Cabinet consider spreading the proposed increases over a longer period of time to lessen the financial impact on Council tenants.

When put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee request that Cabinet consider spreading the proposed increases over a longer period of time to lessen the financial impact on Council tenants.

12. VOID MANAGEMENT

The Service Manager – Housing Assets presented the key figures and key activities against the void action plan, as outlined in the briefing note.

He outlined the number of new voids and those which had been completed and was pleased to report that the number of void properties had slightly decreased. He also outlined the number of properties requiring major works and those which required minor works along with demand for the properties. He added that the team were busy inspecting minor and major voids in preparation for the contractors, to ensure that the schedule of work remained robust.

In relation to the key activities against the void action plan and next steps, the Service Manager outlined the following:-

- Continue to engage with Welsh Government with regards to further funding streams for 2023/24; The Service had met with all newly commissioned contractors;
- The Training Coordinator was scheduling all required core training for the next 12 months;
- Undertake benchmarking against other local authorities.

The Service Manager also drew the Committee's attention to the information provided on the number of operatives within the DLO team and number of Team Leaders who managed the DLO, which had been requested by the Committee at previous meetings.

The Chair asked whether information on the performance of the external contractors was available. The Service Manager advised that on those properties returned from external contractors, feedback on the quality of work had been excellent.

Councillor David Evans said that whilst it was pleasing that the number of void properties had decreased, they needed to decrease at a faster pace in order to meet the targets expected. He also expressed concern around the data for the capital district areas of voids which he felt could be interpreted as voids in some areas being completed sooner than others.

The Service Manager advised that void maintenance was spread evenly across the County. He also commented that the number of void properties completed would increase once additional properties were handed to the external contractors. He added that he was confident that the overall number of void properties would reduce over the next 12 months.

Councillor David Evans moved that the update be noted. This was seconded by Councillor Kevin Rush.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

13. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 14.00 pm and ended at 15.14 p.m.)

.....

Chair



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 12 th July, 2023
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 & Assets OSC.

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.

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Report Author
Wednesday 13th September, 2023 10am Members of the Social & Health Care OSC to be invited for this item	Temporary Accommodation Audit Update Void Management Disabled Facilities Grant	To provide a progress report on the action plan for service improvement following the audit of the Temporary Accommodation. To provide a detailed update to the Committee on Void properties and the work undertaken to bring the properties back into use. To present the updated Policy for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)	Assurance Monitoring Assurance Monitoring Consultation	Service Manager – Housing & Prevention Service Manager – Housing Assets Service Manager – Housing, Welfare and communities
Wednesday 11th October, 2023 10am	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.	Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager – Housing Assets
Wednesday 15th November, 2023 10am	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Financial Business Plan	To consider the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2024/25 and the HRA Business Plan	Consultation	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Wednesday 13th December, 2023 10am	Council Plan 2023-24 Mid-Year Performance Reporting	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 10th January, 2024 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)
Wednesday 7th February, 2024 10am	NEW Homes Business Plan	To consider the NEW Homes Business Plan	Consultation	Strategic Housing & Program Delivery Manager
Wednesday 6th March, 2024 10am				
Wednesday 12th June, 2024 10am	Communal Heating Charges 2024/25	To consider the proposed heating charges in council properties with communal heating systems for 2024/25 prior to Cabinet approval.	Consultation	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)
Wednesday 10th July, 2024 10am	Welfare Reform Update /Housing Rent Income Council Plan 2023-24 Year-End Performance	To provide an update on the impacts of welfare reforms and the work that is ongoing to mitigate them. To review the levels of progress in the achievement of activities and performance levels identified in the Council Plan.	Assurance Monitoring Assurance Monitoring	Service Manager - Revenues and Procurement / Service Manager (Housing Welfare and Communities) Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

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.
- **NEW Homes** – Report to be presented to a future meeting as agreed at the March 2023 meeting.
- **Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site** - To report to the Committee on a Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site in the County – moved from 17th May meeting to be scheduled to a new date.

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

This page is intentionally left blank

ACTION TRACKING FOR THE COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Required	Action Officer(s)	Action taken	Timescale
11.01.2023	5. Housing Rent Income and Welfare Response	As shown at recommendation (c) that a letter be written to the DWP on behalf of the Committee.	Jen Griffiths / Ceri Shotton	Awaiting response from DWP. Letter sent on behalf of the Committee on 20.02.23.	On-going.
14.06.2023	4. Forward Work Programme and Action Tracking	Cllr Linda Thew commented on the formal submission of a planning application to move asylum seekers to a former hotel in Flintshire and asked whether a report could be provided to the Committee around the type of accommodation offered. The Facilitator responded that she did not think that it was appropriate for the Committee to consider a report during the planning process but would seek formal advice and provide this to the Committee following the meeting.	Ceri Shotton	Advice provided to the Committee via e-mail on 05.07.2023.	Completed.

This page is intentionally left blank



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 12 th July 2023
Report Subject	Cost of Living & Welfare Reform
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Scrutiny Committee with a combined operational update on the latest welfare response impacts, and the cost-of-living schemes to support residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Support the ongoing work to manage the impacts that welfare reform has and will continue to have on some of the most vulnerable residents.
2	Note the support measures implemented via Welsh Government to mitigate the cost-of-living crisis.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE LATEST POSITION FOR WELFARE REFORM AND COST OF LIVING CRISIS MITIGATION
1.01	<p>The report provides an update on the impacts that welfare reforms continue to have on Flintshire residents and the work that is ongoing to mitigate this and support these households.</p> <p>Vulnerable households are now also being impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. The report, therefore, also provides information around a range of measures implemented to help those affected by the cost of living and the support provided to residents to help mitigate these negative impacts.</p>
	Spare Room Subsidy
1.02	<p>More commonly referred to as the Bedroom Tax, this reform relates to restrictions of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit where the claimant is under occupying the property. The restrictions are:</p> <p>14% reduction to the eligible rent where a person living in a social landlord property, has one or more “spare bedroom”</p> <p>25% reduction to the eligible rent where a person living in a social landlord property, has two or more “spare bedrooms”.</p>
	Impact in Flintshire
1.03	<p>Currently, a total of 402 households in Flintshire are subject to a reduction in their housing benefit payments because of the Spare Room Subsidy.</p> <p>89 households are affected by a 25% reduction. These households comprise of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 75 LA properties with a total weekly reduction of £2,201.34• 14 Registered Social Landlords with a total weekly reduction of £415.89 <p>313 households are affected by a 14% reduction. These households comprise of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 242 LA properties with a total weekly reduction of £3,786.45• 71 Registered Social Landlords with a total weekly reduction of £1,155.28 <p>The above reduction totals £7,559 per week and equates to £393,000 per annum.</p> <p>The Bedroom Tax is a restriction that also is applied to Universal Credit (UC), statistics in September 2022 confirm that a total of 783 residents are subject to a reduction in their UC because of the Spare Room Subsidy. However, the reduction costs are not available to report.</p> <p>This means that contract holders affected by this restriction must find this extra money to pay their rent.</p>

	Benefit Cap
1.04	<p>The total amount of annual ‘out of work’ benefit income which a ‘working-age’ household can receive is set at (figures for households outside of greater London (figures updated effective April 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £22,020¹ for couples and lone parents (£422.30pw) • £14,753 for single claimants (£282.93pw) <p>The latest figures show that there are 9,516 households in Wales subject to a reduction in their housing benefit and 11,761 for those in receipt of UC.</p>
	Impact in Flintshire
1.05	<p>Currently there are 10 households in Flintshire which were subject to a reduction in their housing benefit or UC as a result of the benefit cap being applied. The total loss each week for all these households is a collective loss of income of around £474.00 per week, equating to approx. £24,651 per annum.</p>
	Cost of Living Support Scheme
1.06	<p>A Cost-of-Living support scheme has been delivered on behalf of Welsh Government (WG) to provide local households with a £150.00 payment to help mitigate the impacts of rising energy costs.</p> <p>The main scheme was aimed towards households in Council Tax bands A to D and households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction across all Council Tax bands. The main scheme closed for applications on 30th September 2022.</p> <p>A total of 45,789 main scheme payments have been made to eligible households totalling £6.9m – this equates to a take-up rate of 98.4%.</p> <p>Welsh Government have also provided further funding for local authorities to design and implement a discretionary scheme to provide support to those households not eligible for a payment under the main scheme.</p> <p>Discretionary payments, consisting of individual awards of either £125.00 or £150.00 have been awarded to 7,163 households, with total awards equating to £1.05m, including a £150k payment to Well Fed to support the development of affordable and nutritious food. Both schemes are now closed for applications.</p>
	Unpaid Carers
1.07	<p>As part of the package of support for the cost-of-living crisis Welsh Government introduced a one-off £500.00 payment to all eligible unpaid carers in Wales who were in receipt of Carers Allowance on 31 March 2022.</p>

	<p>The payment was made in recognition of the increased financial pressures many unpaid carers have experienced during the pandemic, and to help with some of the additional costs they have incurred. The payment was targeted towards those individuals who care for someone for at least 35 hours a week and have low incomes.</p> <p>Individuals are not eligible for the payment if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they have an underlying entitlement to Carers Allowance but do not receive a payment because they are in receipt of another benefit at the same or higher rate; or • they receive a carer premium within a means tested benefit. <p>Registration commenced on 16 May 2022 to 15 July 2022. Payments for successful claims were made from June through to the end of November 2022.</p> <p>Following successful promotional activity through our Corporate Communication routes and Social Services, a total of 2,324 applications were received, 1,695 payments of £500.00 were made totalling £847,500.</p>
	<p>Winter Fuel Support Scheme 2022/23</p>
<p>1.08</p>	<p>On 20th July 2022 the Welsh Government announced the 2022/23 Fuel Support Scheme. The scheme was open for applications from 26th September 2022 to 28th February 2023 and was for households who were in receipt of an eligible benefit between 1st September 2022 and 31st January 2023.</p> <p>Eligible households could claim a one-off £200.00 payment from their local authority to provide support towards paying their fuel bills. The payment was available to all eligible households regardless of how they pay for their fuel, whether that is, for example, on a pre-payment meter, by direct debit or by paying a bill quarterly.</p> <p>A total of 15,955 Flintshire households received the £200.00 payment, resulting in Flintshire households benefiting from £3,191,000.</p> <p>7,868 of the payments were issued automatically as the households were in receipt of Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) and their bank account details were already as obtained as part of the Cost-of-living Scheme (COLSS).</p> <p>A further 482 Council Tax Reduction Scheme households were identified as eligible but despite numerous attempts the bank details could not be obtained. So that they did not miss out financially the £200.00 was credited to their Council Tax account, giving them the choice of a full refund once bank details were received or reduced instalments on their Council Tax bill.</p> <p>The remaining payments were issued following receipt of a registration form completed by the customer.</p> <p>A targeted take up campaign was carried out to raise awareness of the scheme and maximise take up. This involved:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking all schools to share the scheme in their chosen communication method. • Tweeting twice a week. • Issuing an email to all Flintshire Residents signed up via GovDelivery. • Promoting internally to staff via infonet. • Advising new customers of the scheme as they become entitled to CTRS/HB, via their notification letters. • Asking members to raise awareness within their constituents. • Contacting customers who were in receipt of a Council Tax exemption due to a disability to make them or their carer aware of the scheme. <p>Contacting all customers on CTRS who had not provide their bank details via the registration form. This was by either phone or letter, and to speed up the process, where the customer was happy, we completed the form over the phone there and then.</p>
	Energy Bills Support Scheme – Alternative Fund (EBSS-AF)
1.09	<p>The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS-AF) is providing support of £400.00 for energy bills for households in England, Scotland, and Wales without a direct relationship to a domestic electricity supplier. This support is provided by His Majesty’s Government and is delivered by local authorities. The scheme is now open to all eligible households across Great Britain until 31 May 2023.</p> <p>372 applications have been received and processed since the scheme opened. A total of 328 applications have been successful resulting in £131,200 payments issued.</p> <p>Take up on a local level has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing an email to all Flintshire Residents signed up via GovDelivery. • Promoting internally to the workforce via infonet. • Asking members to raise awareness within their constituents. • Asking Social Services to raise awareness to Care Home Residents. • Contacting Housing Associations to ask them raise awareness to tenants. • Asking Deputyship Team to support clients with their applications. • Working with the Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer to ensure awareness is raised and support is provided with applications. • Promoting via Twitter and Facebook. • Accommodation Support Officers individually contacting Council Tenants to ensure they are aware and provide support with applications.
	Alternative Fuel Payment – Alternative Fund (AFP-AF)
1.10	<p>The Alternative Fuel Payment - Alternative Funding (AFP-AF) is providing support of £200.00 for households that use alternative fuels, such as</p>

	<p>heating oil, biomass, and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). This support is provided by His Majesty's Government and is delivered by local authorities. The scheme is now open to all eligible households across Great Britain until 31 May 2023.</p> <p>946 applications have been received and processed since the scheme opened. A total of 756 applications have been successful resulting in £151,200 of payments issued.</p> <p>Take up on a local level has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing an email to all Flintshire Residents signed up via GovDelivery. • Promoting internally to the workforce via infonet. • Asking members to raise awareness within their constituents. • Contacting Housing Associations to ask them raise awareness to tenants. • Asking Deputyship Team to support clients with their applications. • Working with the Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer to ensure awareness is raised and support is provided with applications. • Promoting via Twitter and Facebook.
	<p>Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) and Eligibility Free School Meals (eFSM)</p>
<p>1.11</p>	<p>UPFSM is part of the Co-operation Agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, which will see school meals being available to all primary school pupils for free over the next three years regardless of household income.</p> <p>Welsh Government have given the commitment for a phased introduction of UPFSM to all primary school pupils by 2024 beginning with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception pupils - September 2022 • Years 1 and 2 – April 2023 <p>eFSM is a free school meal which is provided for pupils whose parents receive certain qualifying benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support, • Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, • Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, • Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, • Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed £16,190, • Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, • Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit. • Universal credit (If earned income is included in the assessment of UC it must be less than £616.66).

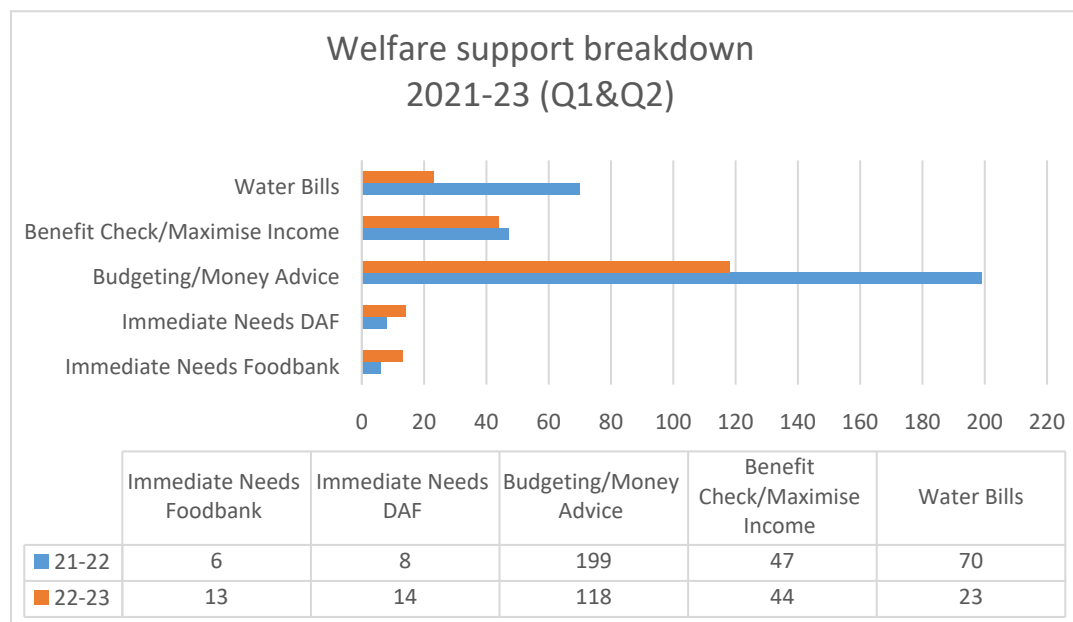
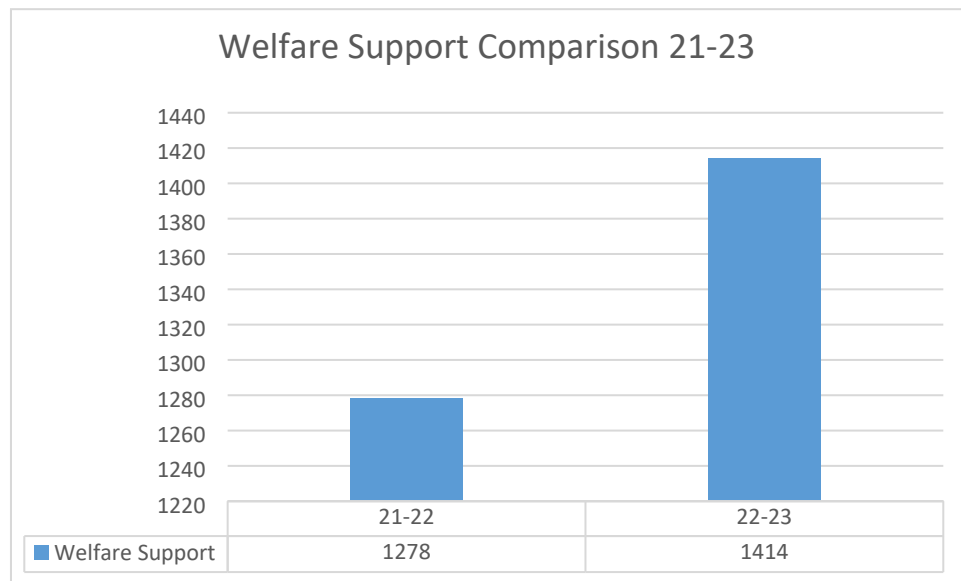
	<p>eFSM must be claimed for by completing an application form.</p> <p>Even though the roll out of UPFSM began in September 2022, and eligible year groups have begun to receive free school meals, families who are eligible for eFSM should continue to use the eFSM application process.</p> <p>Failure to claim eFSM could mean they miss out on other benefits such as Uniform Grants but will also affect the funding schools receive via the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG). It is therefore vital to keep promoting and raising awareness of eFSM via schools, etc.</p>
	<p>School Essentials Grant (Uniform Grants)</p>
<p>1.12</p>	<p>Children whose families are on lower incomes and qualify for certain benefits can apply for School Essentials Grant.</p> <p>To be eligible to apply, parents must already be in receipt of, or applying for Free School Meals (eFSM) based on the following income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support, • Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, • Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, • Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, • Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed £16,190, • Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, • Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit. • Universal credit (If earned income is included in the assessment of UC it must be less than £616.66) • All looked after children qualify for the grant, whether they receive free school meals or not. <p>Learners who receive free school meals due to transitional protection arrangements do not qualify.</p> <p>If eligible they will receive a grant of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £225.00 per learner • £300.00 for learners entering year 7 (to help with increased costs associated with starting secondary school) <p>All compulsory school years from reception to year 11 are now eligible.</p> <p>Families are only entitled to claim once per child, per school year.</p> <p>The School Essential grant runs from 01/07 to 30/06 each year. The grant for the 22/23 academic year therefore closed on 30/06/23 and the grant for the academic year 23/24 opened on 01/07/23.</p>

The above amount includes an extra payment of £100.00 for the 22/23 academic year only.

A targeted Take Up campaign is due to be carried out throughout June to ensure as many families as possible benefit from this grant. We will be identifying children who are eligible for eFSM but have not claimed a School Essential Grant to encourage and support them to submit the claim form.

Welfare Support

1.13 The number of residents needing support and advice (approx. 10.5% increase) to help manage finances continues to see a rise in demand when comparing 2021-22 and 2022-23 Figures are shown in the chart below:



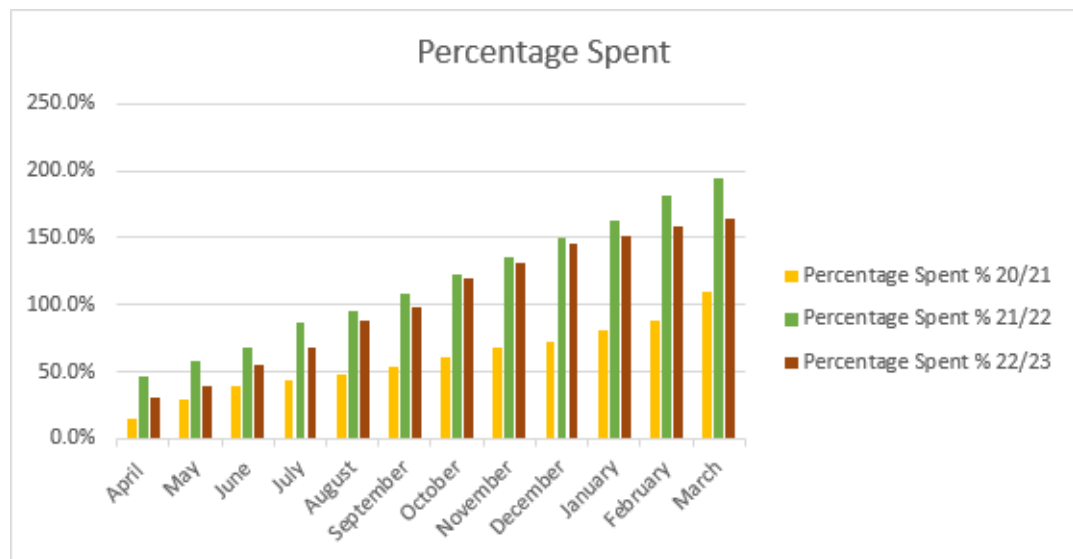
The chart above shows that demand continues, and the area of growth continues to be around support for immediate needs items such as Foodbanks and Discretionary Assistance Fund.

It is envisaged that with the ongoing cost of living crisis that this will continue to increase in demand during 2023/24.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)

1.14 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are payments that may be made by the Council to people that are receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (housing element), but who may still need further financial help with their housing costs.

The charts below shows the expenditure over the past three years. The expenditure shows continuing demand. However, it is important to note that the DHP expenditure provided by Government to the Council has not always increased.



The chart shows that current expenditure continues to be fully spent due to the ongoing demand. In addition to the funding provided by DWP, further funding via Homeless prevention has enabled additional households to be supported with DHP.

Bedroom Tax under-occupancy is still the most common reason for DHP applications which indicates that finding available suitable accommodation remains difficult for customers.

Our current benefits data shows that 79% of those receiving Housing Benefit and subject to MRSS are not claiming DHP. However, DHP may not be appropriate for all households due to various reasons such as income.

Additionally, it reflects that there are an increasing number of people in need of support and assistance so they can pay their rent.

1.15 During this financial quarter, the Welfare Response team targeted support to households to help access benefits to help increase potential household income.

- households were identified who access Disabled Facilities grants and may receive Council Tax Reduction (CTR).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the process have been made to ensure that more households are signposted to claim CTR earlier. • Identification of cases where HB in payment and no CTR. Identify and target cases who receive Housing Benefit and subject to MRSS where DHP is not in payment to help support vulnerable households. • Target Pension age residents who may be entitled to additional support by claiming Pension Credit and CTR. • Further work is being undertaken to promote awareness and applications for those with potential entitlement to CTR as application numbers have dropped across Wales and will help to reduce Council Tax arrears.
--	---

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Resource levels continue to be reviewed to ensure sufficient capacity is directed to areas with the greater level of demand.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	To monitor DHP expenditure as demand is expected to exceed the DWP funding allocation to the LA due to higher rental costs and reduction in available accommodation following amendments to the Rent homes Wales Act 2016 and replaced by Renting Homes (Amendment) (Wales) Act 2022.
3.02	To mitigate where possible demand on DHP funding by fully utilising additional Homeless Prevention funding for DHP applications.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare Reform Act 2012 • Housing (Wales) Act 2014 • Renting Homes Wales Act 2016

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>Discretionary Housing Payment: (DHP's) is a discretionary payment which can help towards housing costs and a person is entitled to Housing Benefit or the Housing Costs element of Universal Credit.</p> <p>Eligible Rent: this is the amount of rent (net of any ineligible services) that a claim for housing benefit or universal credit is calculated from.</p> <p>Ineligible Services: these are charges that may be included in rent that are not eligible for support through either housing benefit or universal credit. Such as: heating; lighting; hot water; meals.</p> <p>Housing Benefit: helps contract holders pay all, or part of their rent if they have a low income. Housing Benefit is administered by Local Authorities.</p> <p>Registered Social Landlord: (RSL) are not-for-profit organisations that aim to provide good, low-cost accommodation.</p> <p>Spare Bedroom: in the context of the spare room subsidy (or bedroom tax) this is where there are more bedrooms in the property than the household need. For example, a single person living in a two-bedroom house would be deemed as having one "spare" bedroom.</p> <p>Universal Credit: (UC) is an integrated means-tested benefit for people of working age whose income is below a specified minimum amount. UC can be claimed by working aged people in and out of employment.</p> <p>UC Managed Migration: Managed migration describes the transfer of existing legacy benefit claims to Universal Credit, where there has not been a change of circumstances that has resulted in a 'natural' transfer to Universal Credit.</p> <p>Welfare Reforms: changes introduced to a range of social security benefits and tax credits, which aim to ensure that the United Kingdom has an affordable benefit system.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 12 th July 2023
Report Subject	Housing Rent Income
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Community and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest operational update on the 2022-23 outturn collection of housing rent. For rent collection, cumulative rent arrears, as of 31st March 2023, were £2.02m compared to £1.90m in the previous year, an increase of £124k.

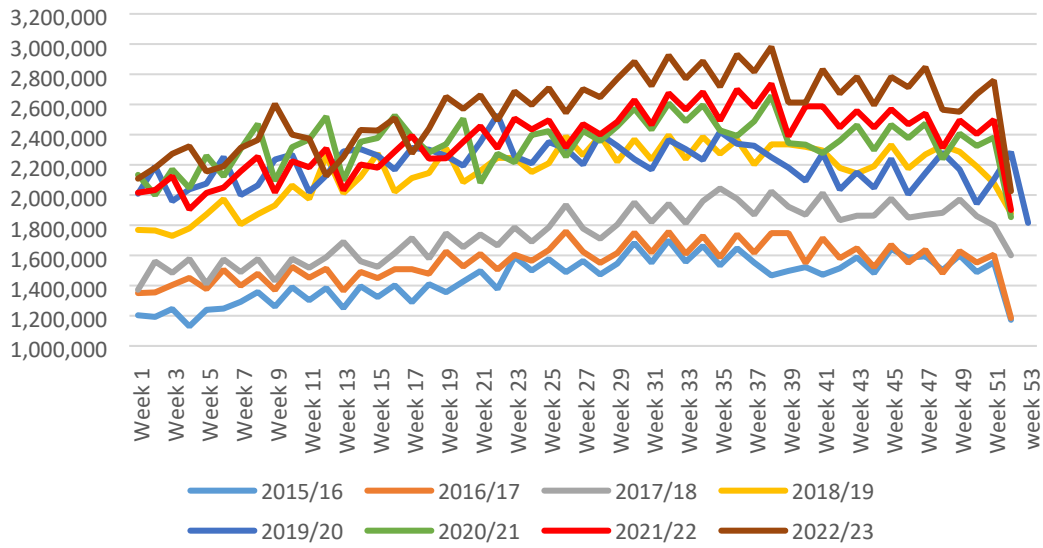
RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Note the latest financial position for rent collections in 2022-23 as set out in this report.
---	---

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE LATEST POSITION OF RENT ARREARS																																																																														
1.01	Collection of rent continues to remain challenging with the rise in costs-of-living and the impacts on some contract holder's ability to pay. 2022-23 has seen the biggest increase in inflation for a generation as prices rise at a much faster rate than household income. Social contract holders typically are less likely to have sufficient disposable income to cope with inflationary cost-of-living increases and this is having a direct impact on their ability to pay rent on time.																																																																														
1.02	We are continuing to signpost contract holders with referrals to specialist teams across the Council, including the Supporting People and Welfare Response teams.																																																																														
1.03	<p>Year-end rent arrears represent 5.0% of the total gross rent yield for 2022-23 and this reflects the continued challenges.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="416 808 1299 1487"> <thead> <tr> <th>Financial Year</th> <th>Gross Rent Yield</th> <th>Year End Rent Arrears</th> <th>Rent Arrears as % of Rent Yield</th> <th>Movement in Arrears (£)</th> <th>Movement in Arrears (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022-23</td> <td>£40,869,185</td> <td>£2,025,521</td> <td>5.0%</td> <td>£124,487</td> <td>0.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021-22</td> <td>£40,172,621</td> <td>£1,901,034</td> <td>4.7%</td> <td>£46,806</td> <td>0.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020-21</td> <td>£39,949,266</td> <td>£1,854,228</td> <td>4.6%</td> <td>£38,714</td> <td>0.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019-20</td> <td>£39,969,296</td> <td>£1,815,514</td> <td>4.5%</td> <td>−£65,000</td> <td>−0.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018-19</td> <td>£38,086,058</td> <td>£1,880,514</td> <td>4.9%</td> <td>£279,905</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017-18</td> <td>£36,153,000</td> <td>£1,600,609</td> <td>4.4%</td> <td>£415,211</td> <td>0.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016/17</td> <td>£34,293,000</td> <td>£1,185,398</td> <td>3.5%</td> <td>£12,368</td> <td>−0.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015-16</td> <td>£32,857,000</td> <td>£1,173,030</td> <td>3.6%</td> <td>£143,956</td> <td>0.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014-15</td> <td>£31,452,000</td> <td>£1,029,074</td> <td>3.3%</td> <td>£33,325</td> <td>0.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013-14</td> <td>£30,859,000</td> <td>£995,749</td> <td>3.2%</td> <td>£8,381</td> <td>−0.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012-13</td> <td>£29,222,000</td> <td>£987,368</td> <td>3.4%</td> <td>−£69,017</td> <td>−0.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011-12</td> <td>£28,097,000</td> <td>£1,056,385</td> <td>3.8%</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Financial Year	Gross Rent Yield	Year End Rent Arrears	Rent Arrears as % of Rent Yield	Movement in Arrears (£)	Movement in Arrears (%)	2022-23	£40,869,185	£2,025,521	5.0%	£124,487	0.2%	2021-22	£40,172,621	£1,901,034	4.7%	£46,806	0.1%	2020-21	£39,949,266	£1,854,228	4.6%	£38,714	0.1%	2019-20	£39,969,296	£1,815,514	4.5%	−£65,000	−0.4%	2018-19	£38,086,058	£1,880,514	4.9%	£279,905	0.5%	2017-18	£36,153,000	£1,600,609	4.4%	£415,211	0.9%	2016/17	£34,293,000	£1,185,398	3.5%	£12,368	−0.1%	2015-16	£32,857,000	£1,173,030	3.6%	£143,956	0.3%	2014-15	£31,452,000	£1,029,074	3.3%	£33,325	0.1%	2013-14	£30,859,000	£995,749	3.2%	£8,381	−0.2%	2012-13	£29,222,000	£987,368	3.4%	−£69,017	−0.4%	2011-12	£28,097,000	£1,056,385	3.8%	-	-
Financial Year	Gross Rent Yield	Year End Rent Arrears	Rent Arrears as % of Rent Yield	Movement in Arrears (£)	Movement in Arrears (%)																																																																										
2022-23	£40,869,185	£2,025,521	5.0%	£124,487	0.2%																																																																										
2021-22	£40,172,621	£1,901,034	4.7%	£46,806	0.1%																																																																										
2020-21	£39,949,266	£1,854,228	4.6%	£38,714	0.1%																																																																										
2019-20	£39,969,296	£1,815,514	4.5%	−£65,000	−0.4%																																																																										
2018-19	£38,086,058	£1,880,514	4.9%	£279,905	0.5%																																																																										
2017-18	£36,153,000	£1,600,609	4.4%	£415,211	0.9%																																																																										
2016/17	£34,293,000	£1,185,398	3.5%	£12,368	−0.1%																																																																										
2015-16	£32,857,000	£1,173,030	3.6%	£143,956	0.3%																																																																										
2014-15	£31,452,000	£1,029,074	3.3%	£33,325	0.1%																																																																										
2013-14	£30,859,000	£995,749	3.2%	£8,381	−0.2%																																																																										
2012-13	£29,222,000	£987,368	3.4%	−£69,017	−0.4%																																																																										
2011-12	£28,097,000	£1,056,385	3.8%	-	-																																																																										
1.04	Rent and arrears collection always follows a pattern where performance improves significantly at year-end compared to the in-year position. This is mainly due to collecting outstanding income through rent free weeks. The table below illustrates the latest position along with previous year comparisons:																																																																														

Arrears Comparisons (2015/16 - 2022/23)



1.05

The table below also shows the year-end analysis of banded arrears compared to previous years. The table sets out those contract holders who owe more than £250.00 in unpaid rent as contract holders who owe less than this are generally considered to be up to date with their payments.

Banded Arrears (£)	Mar-21		Mar-22		Mar-23	
	Num	Arrears (£)	Num	Arrears (£)	Num	Arrears (£)
250 - 500	460	169,224	502	186,917	497	179,240
500 - 750	244	150,878	254	153,646	273	168,286
750 - 1,000	155	132,552	170	146,587	168	146,302
1,000 - 2,500	432	674,751	399	626,994	400	638,966
2,500 - 5,000	132	449,779	141	483,502	157	537,944
5000+	28	176,290	31	199,655	40	252,917
Totals	1,451	1,753,474	1,497	1,797,301	1,535	1,923,654

1.06

The housing service continue to work collaboratively to discuss and support some of the more complex cases. Officers hold fortnightly panel meetings to discuss these cases and work together through engagement and support to attempt to get positive outcomes.

As a result of this work there have been many positive outcomes both for the contract holders and the Council with many contract holders paying their arrears and now having the support, they need to maintain their ongoing rent payments.

1.07 In appropriate cases, when all other attempts of recovery and support have been taken, when all attempts have been made to support contract holders and there is a continued cycle of non-payment and non-engagement, legal action is taken to repossess the property and during 2022-23 two evictions were undertaken.

Year	Number of Evictions
2022/23	2
2021/22	7
2020/21	0
2019/20	26
2018/19	30
2017/18	22
2016/17	19
2015/16	22

1.07 As part of the Councils ongoing response and to mitigate the impacts on contract holders and ensure the long-term financial stability of the Housing Revenue Account, Audit Wales identified additional information that may assist with additional reporting information to scrutiny – this relates to former contract holder arrears as well as amounts written off during the financial year.

The table below lists the levels of arrears that have been written off for various reasons including, insolvency, debt relief orders, contract holders leaving the property without a forwarding addresses and contract holders who have passed away leaving no estate or funds.

Year	Value (£)
2022-23	283,821
2021-22	288,898
2020-21	195,333
2019-20	624,478
2018-19	482,910
Total	1,875,440

When a contract holder vacates, passes away or is evicted from a Council property then the rent they owe become former arrears. The team continue to pursue these debts where possible and some former contract holders have arrangements to pay in place to clear these arrears over a longer period. There is £118k currently outstanding for former contract holder arrears.

1.08 New challenges lie ahead to maximise the collection of rent, including the aftereffects of the pandemic, rising living and energy costs and the need to deliver WG policy intentions of contract sustainment and “no evictions into homelessness”.

The vacant Team Manager position in Rent Income has also presented an opportunity for change/evolution, and re-consider the way in which we are

	structured to meet future demands, especially the need for better coordination of all aspects of tenancy management, having processes and resources in place to enable much earlier interventions with tenants and a more joined up approach across teams to address and respond to issues of non-payment of rent, and potentially other issues, at the very earliest opportunity.
1.09	The Housing Service has, over a 12-month period, been piloting different working methods to create better levels of service to contract holders, and to improve collection rates through a cultural shift across the teams and consider synergies between teams (Rent Income and Neighbourhood Housing). This is now helping to shape the service and develop a structure in which enables far greater early interventions, coordinated through a single team of officers who have a shared purposes and look at all aspects of tenancy management. With a greater focus on 'getting things right at the front end' it should result in less cases progressing through to court, improve service resilience and address skills gaps and recruitment issues.
1.10	The pilot has consisted of two Rent Income officers and two Neighbourhood Housing officers working on smaller patches to deliver better customer experiences and with single point of contact for housing, closer working arrangements and engagement with contract holders through more regular visits, identifying and coordinating multiple housing issues and developing a more joined up approach with Housing teams.
1.11	The outcome of the pilot is now helping to re-shape the service and way in which rent collection is coordinated across the portfolio since the reduction in rent arrears for pilot areas represents a 0.25% reduction in rent arrears.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The continued deployment of the Mobyssoft 'Rent Sense' software, funded by the HRA, is necessary to control rent arrears and to ensure resources are targeted effectively.
2.02	Each year, the HRA sets aside bad debt provision to meet the cost of write offs and there is currently adequate provision set aside for 2023-24 and within the 30-year business plan to fund write offs.
2.03	The ongoing pilot is also helping to ensure resources are in place to enable earlier interventions with tenants and a more joined up approach across teams to address and respond to issues of non-payment of rent at the very earliest opportunity.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	To ensure financial risks to the HRA are minimised as far as possible, rent arrears continue to be tracked on a weekly basis and cases are identified as quickly as possible to ensure targeted intervention if provided to those tenants at highest risk of non-payment.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	None.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing (Wales) Act 2014 • Welfare Reform Act 2012

7.00	CONTACT OFFICERS DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: David Barnes, Revenues and Procurement Manager Telephone: 01352 703652 E-mail: david.barnes@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Housing Revenue Account: The Council is required to keep a HRA to record all income and expenditure relating to the provision of local authority housing. All rental income, including arrears, must be held with a ring fenced HRA account. This means that income can only be used for council housing purposes and not general expenditure. This also allows rental income to be invested locally to help improve and maintain council owned homes and build new council homes.</p> <p>Bad Debt Provision (BDP): is a reserve to cover financial losses for rents that may be uncollectable in the future. BDP is sometimes also referred to as ‘impairment allowances for doubtful debts’.</p>



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 12 th July 2023
Report Subject	Housing Management Policy
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council is committed to providing an effective and efficient Housing Management service that reflects best practice, complies with legislation and protects the rights of contract holders as well as minimising risk to the Council for not complying with appropriate legislation.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, which came into effect from the 1st December 2022 is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. The new legislation has and will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 aim is 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 implementation of the significant changes brought about by the Act, has made it necessary to review and draft revised policies and procedures.

The report provides an overview of the changes that have been made to the Housing Management Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee support the Housing Management policy.
---	---

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPAINING THE TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY
1.01	The Council is committed to providing an effective and efficient Housing Management service that reflects best practice, complies with legislation and protects the rights of contract holders as well as minimising risk to the Council for not complying with appropriate legislation.
1.02	The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, which came into effect from the 1 st December 2022 is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. The new legislation has and will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.
1.03	The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 aim is 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.
1.04	<p>Some of the key changes in the Act to be aware of in the updated policy are the changes to the tenancy agreements. These have been replaced by occupation contracts and tenants are now referred to as contract holders.</p> <p>Tenancy Agreement > Occupation Contracts</p> <p>Tenants and Licensees > Contract Holders</p> <p>Contracts will fall into two types > ‘Secure’ for the Social Rented Sector and ‘Standard’ for the Private Rented Sector.</p>
1.05	<p>Within occupation contracts there will be four types of terms that should and can feature within them:</p> <p>Key matters: The names of the parties and address of the property. These must be inserted in every contract.</p> <p>Fundamental Terms: Cover the most important aspects of the contract, including the possession procedures and the landlord’s obligations regarding repair.</p> <p>Supplementary Terms: Deal with the more practical, day to day matters applying to the occupation contract, for example, the requirement for a contract holder to notify the landlord if the property is going to be empty for four weeks or more.</p> <p>Additional Terms: Addresses any other specifically agreed matters, for example a term which relates to the keeping of pets.</p>
1.06	There remains some difference in treatment for private landlords and social landlords, though the distinction between local authority and housing association landlords is largely gone – they are all now “community

	landlords” and treated the same. Community landlords will usually have to give secure contracts and private landlords will usually give standard ones.
1.07	<p>Other key changes are in relation to the increased security for contract holders as eviction notice periods have increased from two months to six months, as long as the contract has not been breached.</p> <p>However, for landlords, the changes in law also mean that it will be easier to repossess abandoned properties, without needing a court order. In relation to property safety standards, all landlords should ensure homes are fit for human habitation this includes working smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and electrical safety testing.</p>
1.08	In relation to the Housing Management Policy, a summary of the main changes are as follows:
1.09	<p>Adding and removing contract holders</p> <p>New procedures will now allow for some occupiers to leave without prejudicing the others.</p> <p>This simplifies the process in cases of domestic abuse, or where there is a relationship break down and one person wishes to remain in the property One contract holder will no longer be able to end the agreement for everyone else without their consent, a notice seeking to do so will only bind themselves.</p> <p>Whilst landlords will still have some control over people being added or removed from the contract, they will have to act reasonably (whether in withholding consent or imposing conditions), and unreasonable actions can be directly challenged in Court.</p>
1.10	<p>Abandonment</p> <p>The process of excluding an absent contract holder is now significantly easier whether against a sole or joint contract holder.</p> <p>A landlord can do so without a Court order and one joint contract holder can exclude another by an application to the Court.</p> <p>There will always be a mandatory investigation period and opportunity to challenge the outcome, but new strict deadlines will ensure that properties are not left unoccupied for lengthy periods.</p>
1.11	<p>Succession rights</p> <p>These are considerably enhanced in many cases. Most notably, survivorship falls outside of the succession rules, which has previously created real difficulties when children have been unable to succeed to a tenancy after the death of both parents.</p> <p>There will also in many cases be two opportunities to succeed to a contract following the death of sole contract holders – first from a spouse,</p>

	<p>civil partner or similar relation, if there is one, and then to other close family members.</p> <p>As independent living has become increasingly more difficult for many young people still living at home (whether by rising rents or inability to buy), this will be a welcome development in creating secure long-term living conditions for families in the rental sector.</p>
--	---

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT												
3.01	<p>If the Council does not provide a robust and efficient service in managing its estates, then the housing service will be at risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term voids • Increase in anti-social behaviour • An increase in litigation • Poor reputation • Having inadequate resources <p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Long-term</td> <td>Positive – Providing sustainable tenancies in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>Positive - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of needs.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> <td>Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> <td>Positive – Increased collaboration between services and partner organisations.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> <td>Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred</td> </tr> </table> <p>Well-being Goals Impact</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Prosperous Wales</td> <td>Positive – providing good quality and affordable homes</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Positive – Providing sustainable tenancies in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.	Prevention	Positive - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of needs.	Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations.	Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services and partner organisations.	Involvement	Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred	Prosperous Wales	Positive – providing good quality and affordable homes
Long-term	Positive – Providing sustainable tenancies in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.												
Prevention	Positive - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of needs.												
Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations.												
Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services and partner organisations.												
Involvement	Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred												
Prosperous Wales	Positive – providing good quality and affordable homes												

	Resilient Wales	Positive – Creating services that are prevention focused and build resilience to avoid households becoming homeless specifically vulnerable persons
	Healthier Wales	Positive – Reduction in homelessness and increase in targeted support for mental health
	More equal Wales	Housing service is delivered in a way that is inclusive for all
	Cohesive Wales	Positive – Safer and well-connected neighbourhoods
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – encourages tenants to be more involved in their community
	Globally responsible Wales	Neutral

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
-------------	---

4.01	This report forms part of a wider consultation programme.
4.02	<p>Consultation has already commenced, and this process will run throughout the summer. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft policy being shared with residents’ groups and the Tenants Federation • Workshop session for resident groups who request this • Attendance at resident group meetings • Other groups as identified following the first stage Integrated Impact Assessment
4.03	Following the completion of the consultation, the Policy will be brought back to this committee to be adopted later in the year. The final completed Integrated Impact Assessment will be included as this will be updated during the consultation period.

5.00	APPENDICES
-------------	-------------------

5.01	Appendix 1 – Housing Management Policy.
------	---

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
-------------	--

6.01	https://www.gov.wales/housing-law-changed-renting-homes
------	---

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	None.



Housing Management Policy

DRAFT

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

Table of Contents

1. Management Information etc

1. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Date Policy approved by FCC Cabinet / Scrutiny	
Replacing / Updating	Tenancy Management Policy 2020
Next Review Date	April 2026
Drafted By:	Dawn Kent
Responsible Senior Officer	Vicky Clark
Circulation list	Available to all FCC staff via Shared Drive

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

1.0 Policy Statement

Flintshire County Council (otherwise referred to as “the Council”) is committed to providing an effective and efficient Housing Management service that reflects best practice, complies with legislation and protects the rights of contract holders as well as minimising risk to the Council for not complying with appropriate legislation.

FCC Neighbourhood, Tenant Sustainment and Tenancy Enforcement teams will ensure that information can be provided in appropriate formats, explaining to contract holders their roles and responsibilities under the contract agreement they have signed. We will provide leaflets and advice in both written and verbal form to our contract holders so that they have all the necessary information to ensure they are able to keep to the terms of the agreement and sustain their occupation contracts.

A full suite of procedures have been developed and are available to the Housing Management team.

We will establish service standards and Key Performance Indicators in respect of the Housing Management Service so that our contract holders know what level of service they can expect from us and against which we will monitor our performance.

2.0 Allocations

The major social landlords operating in Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire have come together, with the Local Authorities, to form a Partnership to manage applications for and allocations of social housing.

The partners in the scheme are:

- Conwy County Borough Council
- Denbighshire County Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Cartrefi Conwy
- North Wales Housing Association
- Grwp Cynefin
- Wales and West Housing Association
- Clwyd Alyn Housing Limited

All partners agree that there is a high demand for rented homes in the region and too few vacancies to meet demand. We must be realistic about this. It requires us to do two things:

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

Firstly, we will provide the best, most useful, consistent and accessible advice and information to everyone who comes to us looking for housing. We aim to help customers make the most informed choice about how to find a home to meet their needs. This advice must cover the whole range of affordable housing options, including social housing, private rented accommodation, home ownership and other alternatives.

Secondly, we will allocate our housing stock in a transparent, fair, consistent and accessible way, which prioritises the people in our communities according to their housing needs and which meets our legal requirements

Working together to these ends, we can share our strengths and good practice and place the customer at the heart of everything we do. We will simplify the access route to advice and to housing with one clear purpose: to help people find a home to meet their needs.

3.0 Rent Income Management

Each year rent is reviewed for all Contract Holders. The rent which is received is used to pay for the services to maintain council properties, carry out repairs and undertake property improvements as part of the Council's priority to modernise council homes.

A Tenancy Charge letter is issued to Contract Holders at commencement and every year thereafter with a breakdown of rent and other charges.

A rent account statement is issued to all Contract Holders every 3 months and on request, showing an up to date account balance.

The way in which the council calculate rent increases is determined by a Welsh Government formula. Contract Holders will be issued with written notification at least two months prior to a change in their basic rent taking affect.

The council operates two non- collection weeks which are shown on the tenancy charge letter. If a Contract Holder is behind with their rent or other charges the non- collection weeks do not apply and they must pay any rent or other charges during these weeks.

4.0 Pre-contract Assessments

The council recognises the importance of ensuring contract holders are able to sustain their contracts. The current economic climate presents a tough and challenging outlook for many contract holders. Although it is recognised that contract holders may be affected in different way they are all susceptible to the potential impact at any time during the term of their contract as it only takes, for example, the loss of a job, or change in benefits to substantially change circumstances and create a need for advice and support.

Before any contract commences, a pre-contract assessment is carried out with a focus on:

- affordability assessments that include all the costs with managing a home
- allocating the most suitable type of property – for example, where a contract holder has a disability, ensuring the property is suitable for their needs
- undertaking verification checks on a contract-holder's identification, immigration status, circumstances and contract history (this will include former landlord references)
- checking with other housing providers for former contract holder arrears/incidents of ASB
- making timely and appropriate referrals to support services

Contract holders, who have been assessed as requiring further support, will be offered and provided with sustainment visits to ensure that they are equipped with the appropriate skills, knowledge and resources to successfully manage the contract.

4.1 Types of Contract

This Policy document will concentrate on the Housing Management function of the service and will also cover how new and existing contract agreements will be managed. There is one type of contract entered into with the council, in the majority of cases namely: secure.

4.2 Secure Occupation Contracts

Under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (the Act) secure contract holders have a number of rights, some of which may be subject to the council's consent.

These rights include:

- To be supplied with a written statement of the contract within 14 days of the Occupation Date. If the identity of the contract holder changes, the council must give the new contract holder a written statement within 14 days of the

change (or of the day on which the council became aware of the change) Other information and documents must also be given at the onset or within the first 14 days of the contract.

- To be given any notice, statement or other document required or authorised to be given or made either by an occupation contract under the Act, in writing. Electronic service is permissible if the contract holder has indicated they are willing to receive the document electronically.
- That the property is fit for human habitation
- A joint contract holder will be able to leave the contract without ending the contract entirely
- Live in the property - no contract holder can be made to leave their home unless ordered to do so by a court.
- Pass on the contract upon death, provided certain conditions are satisfied. The Act allows two successions to a contract to take place. .
- Take in lodgers provided this does not cause overcrowding
- Sublet part of the home
- New contract holders will be able to be added without having to end the current contract
- To transfer the contract to a potential successor.
- To transfer the contract to another secure contract holder
- To be consulted on any changes to their contract.
- If they report behaviour which is classed as prohibited conduct under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 on the part of anyone living in a property belonging to us, including the property occupied by the person reporting, we must give appropriate advice. – there is a separate policy document and accompanying procedure to cover this in further detail.

4.3 Terminating a Contract

A contract holder may end an occupation contract by giving not less than four weeks' notice to the Council. We will manage the process within the defined legislation. (Renting Homes Wales Act 2016, s163)

4.4 Successions

In the event of the death of a contract holder, we are committed to dealing with requests to succeed contracts as quickly and sensitively as possible. We will manage the process within the defined legislation. (Renting Homes Wales Act 2016, s74 -83)

4.5 Transfers to another secure contract holder

It is recognised that promoting transfers encourages contract holders mobility, gives contract holders more choice about where they want to live and creates sustainability through best use of housing stock as well as assisting those contract

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

holders who may be experiencing difficulty with affordability, due to the under occupation charge.

We will manage the process within the defined legislation. (Renting Homes Wales Act 2016, s114 and s118)

4.6 Name Changes

A contract holder may want to put their contract in a new name even though they may be remaining as a contract holder of the property. This would mainly be due to a marriage, a divorce or for religious or family reasons.

We will check the details of the name change and will request to see and copy any formal documentation relating to the change of name such as:

- marriage certificate;
- divorce decree absolute;
- legal notification e.g. changes by deed poll.

A name change will be granted upon receipt of all the relevant information and documentation having been provided by the contract holder.

4.7 Adding a joint contract holder

If an application to add a new joint contract holder is received, then we will ensure that the current contract holder and proposed contract holder are advised to seek independent advice about the implications of holding a joint contract.

We will ask for certain information to enable a decision to be made. We will manage the process within the defined legislation (Renting Homes Wales Act 2016, s49-51).

4.8 Withdrawal of a contract holder

A joint contractor holder may request to withdraw from the contract. Usually this is because of the breakdown of a relationship and it may be that the other joint contract holder has left the property. We will ensure that the joint contract holder is advised to take independent advice. If they still wish to proceed we will manage the process within the defined legislation (Renting Homes Wales Act 2016, s111). It should be noted if a person withdraws from the contract the contract continues.

4.9 Ending a Contract upon death

We recognise that this is a very difficult time for families of deceased sole contract holders and aim to deal with them in a sympathetic and understanding manner.

We will liaise with the family or the solicitor dealing with the estate if the family request that course of action. If necessary, we will ask for a copy of the death certificate to verify the death.

We will also request that the property is cleared of furniture, rubbish and personal possessions, offering appropriate advice should the family experience difficulties with the clearance.

All keys and access fobs for the property must be handed into any council office when the contract is terminated. In some circumstances, arrangements may be made to collect the keys directly from the family.

If there are any rent arrears outstanding or any other charges and recharges to be recovered we will seek to recoup this through the estate.

4.10 Contract holders and temporary absence

We recognise that there will be times when a Contract Holder will be absent from the property on a temporary basis for a number of reasons, which may include hospital admission, respite care or short term prison. In these circumstances we will work with the Contract Holder and relevant organisations such as Probation and Social Services to ensure appropriate advice is provided to limit any financial impact/hardship on all parties. In certain circumstances it may be required to ascertain if the absence may be long term or permanent.

4.11 Lodgers and subletting

We recognise that contract holders may wish to share their home with another person, especially with affordability and under occupation charges. Secure contract holders have a right to take in lodgers provided they do not overcrowd the home. They do however need to request and receive written permission from us to sublet part of their home.

We will not unreasonably withhold permission. Taking lodgers and subletting may impact on a Contract Holder's benefits and we will advise of this possibility and that the Contract Holder should seek appropriate advice from Housing Benefits, CAB etc.

It is important that we are notified of any lodger or anyone who sub-lets part of the home.

4.12 Decants

On occasion it may be necessary for a contract holder to vacate their home on a temporary or permanent basis. This may be due to either some major repair works being required at the property or some emergency situation arising. This process is known as decanting.

The type of repair and/or potential hazard will dictate the length of time that the contract holder needs to be housed elsewhere and this could range from days to, weeks or months.

Our aim is to minimise disruption and to return a contract holder to their home as soon as possible and to cause them the minimum inconvenience and cost.

5.0 Neighbourhood Management

The Council recognises that we have an important role in the management of our neighbourhoods and not just contracts, even though that is our main purpose. The following section outlines some elements of the neighbourhood management to be undertaken.

5.1 Estate Walkabouts

In order to contribute to the wider neighbourhood management of estates we will conduct regular and programmed Estate Walkabouts involving local members and colleagues from other council departments [as appropriate]. We will record what we find and alert as appropriate other relevant services and departments. We will follow this up to ensure action is taken to keep our neighbourhoods an attractive place to live.

5.2 Management of Communal Areas

In order to comply with current fire safety regulations and also to keep the communal areas of our schemes whether it be sheltered or general needs, safe and free from hazards the Council has adopted a sterile communal area approach to all internal communal areas. This means that all communal areas are not to be utilised for the storage of items which could pose a risk in the event of a fire – either due to combustibility or hindering egress in the event of an evacuation.

We recognise that some contract holders may want to enjoy the external communal areas and gardens so in some circumstances, following written consent from

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

ourselves certain improvements maybe allowed such as installation of planters or hanging baskets as examples.

5.3 Open Spaces/Trees

The Housing Management Service will maintain communal areas and other open spaces, including boundary hedges and trees which is within the ownership of the service. This will be on a planned programme to ensure these areas are maintained to a high standard and enhance the environment on our estates.

We will also take into account any environmental impact and relevant legislation and/or wider council strategies when undertaking any maintenance.

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Countryside--Coast/Tree/Tree-Plan.pdf>

6.0 Customer Focus and Support

We recognise the importance of understanding the diverse needs of our customers to ensure that we deliver customer focussed services shaped around the different needs of customer groups. We also understand the mutual benefit that can be realised if customers are able to sustain their contract successfully and in turn reduce costs to the council which are associated with failing contracts, high contract turnover and less stable communities.

6.1 Tenant Sustainment

We may support the sustainability of contracts by offering support to any contract holders who are experiencing difficulties with maintaining the obligations of their contracts due to either financial, medical and or other reasons.

We may do this by either direct involvement from the Tenant Sustainment Team who will support contract holders directly or by referrals to relevant specialist support services

7.0 Equality and diversity

We recognise that we operate in a community within which there is wide customer diversity, we aim to value that diversity and shape our services around the needs of our customers.

Through the management of our homes and estates we aim to treat all customers fairly, and with respect and professionalism regardless of their gender, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation and marital status. We will gather information on the diverse needs of our customers to ensure our services meet their needs and are consequently more efficient.

To enable all residents to have clear information and equal access to our available properties, we will publish clear information in a range of appropriate languages and formats and through a range of media on request. Feedback is also accepted through a variety of different routes to reflect individual contract holder's preferences or needs.

8.0 Performance Management

We will monitor customer satisfaction within our contract management services and the results will subsequently feed into our monitoring and review processes. We will establish a series of monthly and annual key performance indicators for our contract management services and report progress against these at monthly managers meetings. We will also make these available to contract holders through our various methods of communication and involvement.

We will monitor the cost of our contract management services and compare these through formal and informal benchmarking methods.

9.0 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the councils Policy Review Framework. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years. In line with the councils continuous improvement strategy the policy review will incorporate an assessment of key internal and external influencers to ensure the policy reflects best practice together with all legal and statutory requirements.

10.0 Responsibility

The Service Manager for Housing and Communities has overall responsibility for the successful delivery of the policy. The Housing Manager will ensure that all staff within the Neighbourhood and Customer services team are fully trained on their operational responsibilities in respect of contract management.

A full set of operational procedures will be available to support the delivery of this policy and these will be version controlled and easily available to staff for reference.

This page is intentionally left blank



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 12 th July 2023
Report Subject	Anti -Social Behaviour Policy
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing & Communities)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, which came into effect from the 1st December 2022 is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. The new legislation has and will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 aim is 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 implementation of the significant changes brought about by the Act, has made it necessary to review and draft revised policies and procedures.

The Council is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour as we know that it has a devastating impact on the lives of our customers. The Policy needs to reflect best practice and protect the rights of contract holders as well as minimising risk to the Council for not complying with appropriate legislation.

The report provides an overview of the changes that have been made to the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee comments on the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy as part of the wider consultation process.
---	--

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY
1.01	The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, which came into effect from the 1 st December 2022 is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. The new legislation has and will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.
	The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, which came into effect from the 1 st December 2022 is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. The new legislation has and will change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties.
	The Council is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour as we know that it has a devastating impact on the lives of our customers. The Policy needs to reflect best practice and protect the rights of contract holders as well as minimising risk to the Council for not complying with appropriate legislation.
	The aim of the policy is to ensure that effective systems are adopted to prevent and minimise instances of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and to resolve them as early as possible through timely and appropriate intervention.
1.02	Anti-social behaviour covers the range of behaviours from low-level nuisance to serious harassment, which can damage the quality of life and interfere with the ability of people to use and enjoy their home and/or community.
1.03	All low-level anti-social behaviour, general neighbour disputes, noise etc are dealt with by Neighbourhood Housing Officers however, should a breach of tenancy be determined the case is escalated to Tenancy Enforcement Officers for enforcement action. A dedicated Tenancy Enforcement team deal with all high level cases, such as drugs, assault and anything deemed to be personal harm following a risk assessment and a number of other tenancy breaches which cannot be resolved by the relevant neighbourhood officer.
1.04	Flintshire County Council is committed to preventing incidents of anti-social behaviour occurring in the first instance and will use a range of preventative actions to achieve this. Where incidents have occurred we recognise that early intervention is the key to avoid escalation. However, we will take legal action to resolve the situation, if it is deemed necessary and appropriate.
1.05	The Occupation Contract clearly sets out the obligations of Contract Holders and contains a number of clauses which can be relied upon when dealing with complaints of anti-social behaviour. The contracts make it clear that tenants are responsible for the behaviour of everyone (including children) living in or visiting their home.

1.06	The Council will take a victim centred approach, taking action quickly, decisively and using a harm/risk-based approach. Dealing with all matters professionally and sensitively placing a strong emphasis on early intervention and positive communication. As a landlord we may work with other agencies, such as the police to take any appropriate action.
1.07	<p>The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy contains a number of sections which explain the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of anti-social behaviour • General Policy Statement on Anti-Social Behaviour • Strategic and Legislative Context • Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour and Nuisance • Tenant and Landlord Responsibilities • Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour • Victim Centred Approach
1.08	<p>Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>Chapters 7, Section 55 of the Renting Homes Wales [2016] covers anti-social behaviour and other prohibited conduct and states clearly outlines what is prohibited conduct</p> <p><i>Additionally Section 2 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines anti-social behaviour as:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>(a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>(b) Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>(c) Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.</i></p> <p>In simple terms, it can be defined as behavior causing harassment, alarm or distress to members or any member of the public.</p>
1.09	<p>Anti-Social behaviour can include the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug related offences • Violence or threats of violence and actual assault • Intimidation and harassment • Aggressive and threatening language and behaviour • Hate crime or behaviour • Noise and other neighbour nuisance • Local environmental quality issues such as fly-tipping, vandalism and graffiti • Illegal or immoral use of residential premises.
1.10	The Council recognises that the term Anti-social Behaviour can and does mean different things to different people, and what might appear to be acceptable behaviour for one resident, may not be acceptable to another.

1.11	It is also recognised that such behaviour may happen over a sustained and/or long period of time, making life very difficult for residents, or there might be one very serious incident of anti-social behaviour which requires immediate intervention.
1.12	Not every complaint received will constitute anti-social behaviour and where this is the case no further action will be taken but appropriate advice and guidance will be given to the person reporting. This can be subject to review if there is a change or escalation in the circumstances. Anti-Social Behaviour is not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children playing in the street or local parks. • Young people gathering socially. • Being unable to park outside your home. • One off parties/Celebrations • DIY works at reasonable hours etc.
1.13	The Policy focuses on tackling anti-social behaviour that either affects or is carried out by people living within our properties and our neighbourhoods. This includes Contract Holders and complainants, their family members (including children) or friends, owner-occupiers, lodgers or private Contract holders.
1.14	The intentions of the person/s carrying out the behaviour will also be taken into account, as well as any disability and/or support needs they may have. It is important to state that anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT				
	<p>Anti-social behaviour can be a destructive force within communities and the lives of a significant number of people within those communities can be negatively affected by the behaviour of an unreasonable minority.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour can also damage the sustainability of communities and adversely affect the Council's ability to let our properties.</p> <p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Long-term</td> <td>Positive – Providing sustainable tenancies in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> <td>Positive - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Positive – Providing sustainable tenancies in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.	Prevention	Positive - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate
Long-term	Positive – Providing sustainable tenancies in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.				
Prevention	Positive - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate				

		support and accommodation to cater for a range of needs.
	Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations.
	Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services and partner organisations.
	Involvement	Positive – Customer involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred
Well-being Goals Impact		
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – providing good quality and affordable homes
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Creating services that are prevention focused and build resilience to avoid households becoming homeless specifically vulnerable persons
	Healthier Wales	Positive – Reduction in homelessness and increase in targeted support for mental health
	More equal Wales	Housing service is delivered in a way that is inclusive for all
	Cohesive Wales	Positive – Safer and well-connected neighbourhoods
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – encourages tenants to be more involved in their community
	Globally responsible Wales	Neutral

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	This report forms part of a wider consultation programme
	<p>Consultation has already commenced and this process will run throughout the summer. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft policy being shared with residents groups and the Tenants Federation • Workshop session for resident groups who request this • Attendance at resident group meetings • Other groups as identified following the first stage Integrated Impact Assessment

	Following the completion of the consultation, the Policy will be brought back to this committee to be adopted later in the year. The final completed Integrated Impact Assessment will be included as this will be updated during the consultation period.
--	--

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Anti-social Behaviour Policy.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	https://www.gov.wales/housing-law-changed-renting-homes
6.02	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents/enacted

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Jen Griffiths – Service Manager, Housing; Welfare and Communities Telephone: 01352 702929 E-mail: jen.griffiths@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	None.



Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

DRAFT

Table of Contents

1. Management Information

1. **MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

Date Policy approved by THE COUNCIL Cabinet / Scrutiny	OSC – 16 th December 2020
Replacing / Updating	ASB Policy 2011
Next Review Date	April 2026
Drafted By:	Dawn Kent
Responsible Senior Officer	Vicky Clark
Circulation list	Available on Flintshire County Council website

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Purpose of the Document
- 1.2 Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour
- 1.3 General Policy Statement on Anti-Social Behaviour
- 1.4 Strategic and Legislative Context
- 1.5 Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour and Nuisance

2. Tenant and Landlord Responsibilities

- 2.1 Tenant Responsibilities
 - 2.1.1 Tenancy Agreement
 - 2.1.2 Tenancy Types
- 2.2 Landlord Responsibilities
 - 2.2.1 Approach to Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
 - 2.2.2 Working with Perpetrators
 - 2.2.3 Supporting Staff
 - 2.2.4 Confidentiality and Sharing Information

3. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

- 3.1 Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour
- 3.2 Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
- 3.3 Remedies to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour
- 3.4 Hate Incidents, Harassment and Discrimination
- 3.5 Illegal Drugs
- 3.6 Assault, Violence & Threatening Behaviour
- 3.7 Neighbour & Noise Nuisance

4. Victim Centred Approach

4.1 Supporting Victims of Anti-Social Behaviour

4.2 Supporting Witnesses of Anti-Social Behaviour

5. Measuring Our Success

5.1 Performance Management

5.2 Equality and Diversity

5.3 Complaints

5.4 Data Protection

5.5 Policy Review

DRAFT

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document [Renting Homes Wales update]

Previously Section 218A of Housing Act 1996 required social landlords to publish a statement of policy in relation to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and procedures for dealing with any occurrences of anti-social behaviour, with the implementation of Renting Homes Wales [2016] this section is no longer relevant within Wales however it is felt to be good practice to have such a Policy in place.

This document is designed to give a clear statement of the approach of Flintshire County Council (the Council) as a landlord to tackle anti-social behaviour within the remit of the Housing Management Team and to provide guidance as to what constitutes prohibited conduct, as defined under Renting Homes Wales [2016]

The Council will take a victim centered approach, taking action quickly, decisively and using a harm/risk-based approach. Dealing with all matters professionally and sensitively placing a strong emphasis on early intervention and positive communication. As a landlord we may work with other agencies, such as the police to take any appropriate action.

1.2 Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour

Chapters 7, Section 55 of the Renting Homes Wales [2016] covers anti-social behaviour and other prohibited conduct and states clearly outlines what is prohibited conduct, this covered in more detail later on in this Policy Document

Additionally Section 2 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines anti-social behaviour as:

- (a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,*
- (b) Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or*
- (c) Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.*

For the purposes of ASB cases reviews (the community trigger) ASB is defined as behaviour causing harassment, alarm or distress to members or any member of the public.

Anti-Social Behaviour can include the following examples:

- Drug related offences
- Violence or threats of violence and actual assault

- Intimidation and harassment
- Aggressive and threatening language and behaviour
- Hate crime or behaviour
- Noise and other neighbour nuisance
- Local environmental quality issues such as fly-tipping, vandalism and graffiti
- Illegal or immoral use of residential premises.

The Council recognises that the term anti-social behaviour can and does mean different things to different people, and what might appear to be acceptable behaviour for one resident, may not be acceptable to another. It should also be recognized that such behaviour may happen over a sustained and/or long period of time, making life very difficult for residents, or there might be one very serious incident of Anti-social Behavior which requires immediate intervention.

Not every complaint received will constitute anti-social behaviour and where this is the case no further action will be taken but appropriate advice and guidance will be given to the person reporting. This can be subject to review if there is a change or escalation in the circumstances.

Our approach focuses on tackling anti-social behaviour that either affects or is carried out by people living within our properties and our neighbourhoods. This includes Contract Holders and complainants, their family members (including children) or friends, owner-occupiers, lodgers or private Contract holders

The intentions of the person/s carrying out the behavior will also be taken into account, as well as any disability and/or support needs they may have. It is important to state that Anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.

Anti-Social Behaviour is not:

- Children playing in the street or local parks.
- Young people gathering socially.
- Being unable to park outside your home.
- One off parties/Celebrations
- DIY works at reasonable hours etc.

1.3 General Policy Statement on Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is unacceptable in our neighbourhoods and we will:

- Not tolerate anti-social behaviour by or against our Contract holders and their families.

- Provide guidance to our Contract holders around and how to report any anti-social behaviour.
- Provide a strong victim focused approach.
- Treat reports all anti-social behaviour seriously.
- Carry out a careful and thorough investigation.
- Provide realistic expectations.
- Support perpetrators, as appropriate, to change their behaviour.
- Take appropriate relevant action at the right time.
- Work closely with other agencies and professionals where necessary.

1.4 Strategic and Legislative Context

This document is designed to meet our statutory obligations that impact on the way we deal with cases of anti-social behaviour and our duties as a Housing Management Team

Our Policy Objectives are:

- To work with North Wales Police and other relevant agencies in sharing information to ensure the most appropriate action is taken against a perpetrator.
- To work in partnership with other Registered Social Landlords and Private Landlords/tenants to resolve any issues of anti-social behaviour in our communities.
- To adopt a multi-agency approach to resolve anti-social behaviour on our estates and take a lead role in coordinating this approach.
- To ensure good working relationships with those service areas and agencies facilitating support.

1.5 Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour

We will work with other agencies in relation to diversionary measures as well as stopping anti-social behaviour, criminal and/or nuisance behaviour and preventing reoccurrence.

We will, in some cases, consider mediation, acceptable behaviour contracts, restorative justice and the use of other non-legal measures in the first instance where appropriate.

In certain cases of anti-social behaviour, for example, serious or cases which are not able to be resolved with early intervention consideration will be given to legal remedies as deemed appropriate.

2. Contract Holder and Landlord Responsibilities

2.1 Contract Holder Responsibilities

The Council's Contract Holders are subject to the terms of the Occupation Contract, which sets out the behaviour expected of them, and anyone else living at or visiting the property. All tenants are provided with an Occupation Contract at the outset of their Occupational Contract and the clauses relating to anti-social behaviour are explained to them.

2.2 Occupation Contract

The Council has two Occupation Contracts currently being issued:

- New Secure Occupation Contract, which is issued to all new Contract Holders taking up occupation since 1st December 2022, when the Renting Homes Wales [2016] commenced
- Converted Secure Occupation Contract, which all existed Tenants who held a tenancy with the Council at the time Renting Homes Wales commenced.

Anti-social behaviour is covered by a fundamental term which deals with what is known as Prohibited Conduct. It is a fundamental term of the Occupation Contract, which cannot be modified therefore the council cannot include additional terms within the Occupation Contract which relate to anti-social behaviour, however it can [and does] provide more detailed explanation for the Contract Holder.

It should be noted that any behaviour of the Contract Holder themselves is covered under Renting Homes Wales [2016] so any action can be taken directly against the Contract Holder by way of breach. If there are Joint Contract Holders then there is provision for action to be taken against either or both.

If the complaints of anti-social behaviour relate to the actions of someone who is not a Contract Holder, then the Contract Holder is deemed to be liable for their behaviour only if it can be proven that they [Contract Holder] allowed, incited or encouraged the behaviour – this is a fundamental change compared to the previous Housing Act, therefore a more robust approach will be taken when investigating complaints of anti-social behaviour concerning family, friends and visitors of Contract Holders.

2.4 Landlord Responsibilities

[Approach to Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour](#)

We are committed to taking a victim centered approach in tackling Anti-social Behavior, with an emphasis on risk assessment, early intervention and regular contact/support with victims and witnesses

Our approach will be proportionate and fair, depending on the facts of each case. For example, in appropriate cases we will consider early intervention methods such as mediation and acceptable behaviour contracts, to provide opportunities for unacceptable behaviour to be rectified.

We will work closely with North Wales Police to deal with serious cases of anti-social behaviour. We share relevant information based on evidence gathered and, in conjunction with our legal team and relevant legislation, will decide in all cases upon the most appropriate action based on evidence.

Working with Perpetrators

When dealing with perpetrators our response will depend on the nature of the offending behaviour. In many cases there may be underlying causes such as:

- Drug addiction
- Alcohol addiction
- Mental health issues
- Learning difficulties
- Family or relationship breakdown
- Adverse Childhood Experiences [ACE's]

Individuals whose anti-social behaviour is a consequence of one or more of the issues listed above may sometimes require additional support in maintaining their Occupation Contracts and addressing their behaviour. When dealing with vulnerable individuals we will consider the factors which may be contributing to neighbour nuisance before deciding on an appropriate course of action.

We may refer perpetrators for support, however we may take enforcement action, including possession actions where this is proportionate and reasonable

Supporting Staff

We will provide effective and regular training and support to ensure staff are competent and confident to tackle anti-social behaviour, to include any changes to current legislation.

We will ensure relevant training and systems are in place to maintain the safety and wellbeing of staff and will not tolerate threats or violence against council employees or their agents. Where such behaviour can be proved to the satisfaction of the County Court an injunction may be obtained, consideration will also be given to alternatives such as a claim for possession in the most serious or persistent cases

Our Policy objectives and standards around supporting staff which will ensure:

- That perpetrators of verbal threats, intimidation or violence against staff may face appropriate legal action
- That staff are trained to ensure compliance with legislation and policies including health and safety and the lone working policy.
- Staff are required to report all incidents of verbal abuse, threats and assaults to the appropriate manager.
- Preventative and protective action will be taken depending on risk assessment of task or where perpetrator is known or perceived to be a risk. Risk assessments are to be maintained and updated regularly.

Partnership working

Sharing information is an integral part of dealing with anti-social behaviour. We will share information with other organisations as part of a strategy to reduce crime and disorder. We will do this in compliance with the law and with any protocols or agreements in place.

3. TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

3.1 Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour

We will assist in taking action on behalf of Contract Holders who are affected by anti-social behaviour. ASB can reported to us by:

- 1) contacting the Housing Management Team or
- 2) by contacting a Local Connects Office. These are located in Mold, Buckley, Flint, Holywell and Connah's Quay

Reports will then be directed to the relevant Neighbourhood/ Tenancy Enforcement Officer.

If the anti-social behaviour also constitutes as a crime, it should be reported to the police by phoning 101, or in an emergency, by phoning 999.

3.2 Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour

When a report of anti-social behaviour is received, if it requires an urgent response, for example, incidents of hate crime, harassment, violence or other criminal behaviour, the Council will aim to contact the complainant within one working day. Complainants should also be encouraged to report such incidents to North Wales Police

In less serious such as noise from visitors, animal nuisance, neighbour disputes etc then the Council will aim to contact the complainant within three working days

It should be noted that in cases relating to noise, the complainant should also be encouraged to report the issue to Noise Pollution, Environmental Health as they have statutory powers to deal with noise related cases. It should be noted that Environmental Health will not take third party referrals from the Enforcement Team.

Having the Enforcement Team deal with all complaints of anti-social behaviour allows for a consistent approach to investigation, evidence gathering and advice/support to complainants

The Council will also:

- Treat the information you provide to us as confidential under the GDPR guidelines.
- Take all complaints seriously and investigate them thoroughly.
- Making the safety of complainant a primary focus.
- Consider how best to support complainants
- Provide complainants with regular updates.
- Work as part of a multi-agency partnership e.g. with Police and other relevant agencies.
- Use informal and also legal remedies to solve the problem.

3.3 Remedies to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour

We may decide to use a variety of early, informal remedies and legal remedies to resolve anti-social behaviour which can include the following listed below, (please note this is not an exhaustive list of the options available).

Mediation

Where the anti-social behaviour is low-level and there are no threats of violence, Mediation may be used to quickly resolve any issues before any escalation.

Meetings

Relevant Officers may meet with alleged perpetrators to discuss their behaviour and any other concerns. This will include any actions that can be taken by the alleged perpetrator and the Officers to resolve the complaint. The Officers will gather relevant evidence, and this can be helpful in resolving issues at an early stage.

Verbal Warning

A warning advises a person what behaviour is causing the issue, what effect this is having on the victim or the wider community, and the consequences of non-compliance or non-engagement.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

ABCs are an informal, voluntary agreement between an individual who has committed anti-social behaviour, and a local agency whose role includes protecting victims and

communities from such behaviour. Such contracts can be put in place if both parties agree and can stop further escalation of anti-social behaviour.

Partnership Visits with Other Relevant Agencies

Relevant Officers may carry out visits with partners within the Council or with outside agencies, such as Housing Officers and the police. These visits can stress how serious the matter is, the effect their behaviour is having on the complainant or community, and the consequences if they continue to behave in an anti-social way.

Restorative Approach

Restorative Approach focuses on resolving conflicts and supporting people to take responsibility to solve them. It encourages effective communication and working towards positive outcomes.

A Restorative Conference brings all parties of a conflict together including family and friends to talk openly about how they have been affected and what needs to happen to make things better.

CCTV for Target Hardening

Installing CCTV can be a useful tool in some cases. It can collect evidence of the anti-social behaviour, reassure the victim and can act as a preventative measure towards any further anti-social behaviour.

Community Protection Notices

Community Protection Notices will be sought – in partnership with other agencies, such as North Wales Police.

Formal Warning

A formal warning would clearly state which tenancy conditions have been breached, details of the breach and explain the consequences of any further breaches.

Final Warning

If the anti-social behaviour persists after a formal warning has been issued or if the situation escalates further, then a final warning may be issued, this is often the final stage before starting possession proceedings. A final warning may be issued before any other interventions if the anti-social behaviour is severe.

Injunction

In certain cases, and after obtaining appropriate legal advice, it may be appropriate for the Council to seek an injunction to assist with resolving the issues of ASB. The injunction may be against the Contract Holder, or anyone else living in the area, to stop them behaving in a way which causes nuisance or annoyance to other people living in or visiting the rented property or the area itself.

Possession

Possession action maybe sought against a Contract Holder or Holders on the basis of a breach of Occupation Contract

The Council may seek a court order imposing a Standard Contract on the basis of the conduct (a prohibited Conduct Standard Contract).

It should be noted that in the circumstances of a Joint Occupation Contract, the Council may decide to seek an order to end the Occupation Contract for the Contract Holder who is causing the breach of Occupation Contract.

If the Council is seeking to end the Occupation Contract, Renting Homes Wales [2016] then it must follow the relevant guidance within the Act and serve upon the Contract Holder the relevant prescribed form and may commence proceedings immediately that notice has been served.

3.4 Hate Incidents, Harassment and Discrimination

We will not tolerate any form of hate incident. A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence. A hate incident is one perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. The prejudice may be about the victim's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, age, sexual identity or transgender identity.

Incidents are not only limited to physical attacks on persons and/or damage property but also includes verbal abuse and graffiti or any other behaviour that causes distress or harm to the victim.

Where appropriate we will use legal remedies against anybody found perpetrating this type of behaviour.

3.5 Illegal Drugs

We will not tolerate any form of illegal drug activity by our Contract Holders, anyone living with them or visiting them. We will work with North Wales Police and other agencies where such behaviour is reported to us.

Where it is deemed appropriate the Council will use relevant legal remedies against anybody found perpetrating these types of crime. Examples of this including growing cannabis, dealing drugs etc.

3.6 Violence, Assaults or Threatening Behaviour

We will not tolerate the use of threatening, abusive or violent behaviour by Contract Holders and/or anyone living with them, visiting them towards their neighbours, Council staff, subcontractors, agents or the wider community. The Council will work closely with the North Wales Police and other agencies and take appropriate action.

3.7 Neighbour Nuisance or Disputes

The Council recognises that people are different and are in some cases likely to have different lifestyles, working pattern, beliefs etc. Living close to others will sometimes result in noise or activity that a person may find to be annoying.

Incidents – such as, for example, normal everyday noise, cooking smells - are not anti-social behaviour and in such cases it may be decided that no further action will be taken. However, we will not tolerate behaviour which does constitute anti-social behaviour and will take appropriate action.

4. Victim Centered Approach

4.1 Supporting Victims of Anti-Social Behaviour

We will ensure that it is easy to report anti-social behaviour and will provide support, where appropriate, to complainants, victims or witnesses. The Council will work with other agencies and professionals that may be able to help when dealing with any problems and if considered necessary offer any appropriate support.

All reports will be dealt with sensitively, if required, in confidence.

We aim to do this by supporting victims of anti-social behaviour to:

- To make it easy and accessible for victims to report any anti-social behaviour to ensure that staff keep complainants, witnesses and victims informed.
- To have a sensitive and proactive approach working with other agencies where appropriate to offer support and assistance.
- Ensure that there are discussions and an action plan developed with the person reporting anti-social behaviour.
- To protect the confidentiality of people reporting issues, where possible.
- Maintain regular contact with complainants, victims and witnesses.
- Provide protection measures such as target hardening working alongside The Community Safety Team.

4.2 Supporting Witnesses of Anti-Social Behaviour

We will support witnesses of anti-social behaviour and work with them to secure a successful outcome where anti-social behaviour occurs. We will aim to protect witnesses and work in partnership with North Wales Police and other agencies as appropriate to ensure that witnesses feel secure and are supported throughout the process. The aim is to alleviate any fears of intimidation, will include any referrals to victim support, keeping

witnessing informed at all stages, target hardening measures as well as CCTV installation should this be deemed an appropriate measure of support.

5. Measuring Our Success

5.1 Performance Management

We will monitor tenant satisfaction with our tenancy management services, the results will subsequently feed into our monitoring and review processes.

We will establish a series of monthly and annual key performance indicators for our tenancy management services and report progress against these at monthly managers meetings. We will also make these available to tenants through our various methods of communication and involvement.

We will monitor the cost of our tenancy management services and compare these through formal and informal benchmarking methods.

5.2 Equality and Diversity

We recognise that we operate in a community and neighbourhoods within which there is wide diversity, we aim to value that diversity and aim to shape our services around the needs of our tenants.

Through the management of our homes and estates we aim to treat all Contract Holders fairly, and with respect and professionalism regardless of their gender, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation and marital status. We will gather information on the diverse needs of our tenants to ensure our services meet their needs and are consequently more victim/customer focussed.

5.3 Complaints

Any complaints about how a case of anti-social behaviour has been handled are to be dealt with through the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure or through the community trigger. This information is available to anyone via accessing the Council's website or via a visit a Connects Offices for further guidance on how to make a complaint.

5.4 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or where there has been significant changes to regulation or legislation to warrant a further policy review. The policy may also be reviewed sooner where there is a need to address operational issues or where best practice has evolved and there is a need to incorporate this.

DRAFT



**Communities and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 Voids Management Update
 Reporting period: June 2023**

Key figures			M	A	M	J	J	A
Number of new void properties in reporting period			26	24	25	28		
Number of properties completed ready for allocation			23	18	30	30		
Breakdown of total void figures	Housing Assets	Major voids	129	137	132	142		
		Minor voids	57	50	52	60		
		TBC	73	81	79	59		
	Housing Management	Demand	158	173	169	171		
		Low demand	93	90	92	90		
		TBC	8	5	2	0		
Property Type	General Needs		118	125	120	122		
	Sheltered		141	143	143	139		
Property Type	1 bed		87	89	90	91		
	2 bed		99	100	98	96		
	3 bed		70	76	71	69		
	4 bed		2	2	3	4		
	4 bed plus		1	1	1	1		
Capital District Areas	Buckley		23	26	26	29		
	C'Quay & Shotton		56	61	62	60		
	Deeside & Saltney		33	35	34	31		
	Flint		57	53	54	51		
	Holywell		59	61	56	55		
	Mold		31	32	31	35		
Total voids			259	268	263	261		

Key activity against void action plan

Bullet point list of activity against action plan in reporting period

B3 - Management and performance monitoring of Void Refurbishment Framework

- Allocation of work to newly commissioned contractors in line with their capacity to deliver
- Progress meetings scheduled over the next 12 months to monitor performance and quality
- Contractors Performance meetings set up for the next 12 months - to monitor target times, quality of work, capacity, and general performance.
- All meetings will be recorded to evaluate and provide ongoing evidence of performance standards.

Next steps

Bullet point list of activity planned against action plan in next reporting period

D4 – Undertake benchmarking against other local authorities

- Commence with contacting local authorities
- Ascertain different void standards and categories

Any other information

Provision of other information to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Allocated Budget for this year:

- £4.6m Overall Total Voids Budget

Void properties require major investment:

- Approximately 70%

Top 3 reasons for terminations:

- June
 - Move to residential care (3)
 - Deceased (3)
 - Transfer to another FCC property (2)

In-house DLO Team - Work Allocation

Number of operatives within the DLO team

- 32 operatives (working on approximately 25-30 Voids)

Number of Team Leaders who manage the DLO

- 2 Team Leaders

Contractor - Work Allocation

Number of Contractors

- 6 Contractors (working on approximately 50 Voids)

Number of Team Leaders who manage contractors

- 2 Team Leaders

Number of Capital Works Surveyors who manage contractors

- 2 Surveyors



COMMUNITY & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 12 th July, 2023
Report Subject	End of Year Performance Monitoring Report
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health and Safety and Human Resources; and Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing and Communities)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council Plan 2022/23 was adopted by the Council in July 2022. This report presents a summary of performance of progress against the Council Plan priorities identified for 2022-23 at year end (Q4) position relevant to the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

This out-turn report for the Council Plan 2022/23 shows 78% of activities are making good progress. 61% of the performance indicators have met or exceeded their targets, 11% are being closely monitored and 25% are currently not meeting target.

This report is an exception-based report and concentrates on those areas of performance which are not currently achieving their target.

RECOMMENDATION

1.	To support the levels of progress and have confidence in the achievement of priorities as detailed within the Council Plan 2022/23.
2.	To support overall performance against Council Plan 2022/23 performance indicators/measures.
3.	To be assured by explanations given for those areas of underperformance.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE PERFORMANCE AT YEAR-END 2021/2022
1.01	The Council Plan End of Year Performance Report provides an explanation of the progress made towards the delivery of the priorities set out in the 2022/23 Council Plan. The narrative is supported by information on performance indicators and/or milestones.
1.02	This report is an exception-based report and concentrates on those areas of performance which are not currently achieving their target.
1.03	<p>Monitoring Activities</p> <p>Each of the sub-priorities under each theme within the Plan have high level activities which are monitored over time. ‘Progress’ shows action against scheduled activity and is categorised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RED: Limited Progress – delay in scheduled activity and not on track • AMBER: Satisfactory Progress – some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track • GREEN: Good Progress – activities completed on schedule and on track
1.04	<p>In summary our overall progress against activities at year end was:</p> <p>Progress RAG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good (green) progress was achieved in 78% (124) of activities • Satisfactory (amber) progress was achieved in 19% (31) of activities • Limited (red) progress was made in 3% (5) of activities
1.05	<p>The activity which show a red RAG status for current performance against target relevant to the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee are: -</p> <p>PRIORITY: AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING <u>Sub Priority: Housing Support and Homeless Prevention</u> <i>Exploring opportunities to develop a young person’s homeless hub offering accommodation and support services</i></p> <p>This is a long-term action which has stalled as the priority is to identify a suitable location for a permanent Homeless Hub. Should a potential site for a young person’s hub become available, capacity for design and explorative work will be identified.</p>
1.06	<p>Monitoring our Performance</p> <p>Analysis of performance against the performance indicators is undertaken using the RAG status. This is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RED - under-performance against target. • AMBER - where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GREEN - positive performance against target.
1.07	<p>Analysis of the end of year performance against the targets set for 2022/23 shows the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68 (61%) measures have a green RAG status • 12 (11%) measures have an amber RAG status • 28 (25%) measures have a red RAG status • 3 (3%) measures have not been fully updated for End of Year (Q4)
1.08	<p>The performance indicators (PIs) /measures which show a red RAG status for performance against the target set for 2022/23, relevant to the Community & Housing OSC are:-</p> <p>PRIORITY: POVERTY <u>Sub Priority: Food Poverty</u> <i>Number of residents supported by the 'Hospital to Home' meals service</i> The process is working well but the initial take up has been low during the pilot. Further promotional work will be carried out to raise awareness of this service.</p> <p>PRIORITY: AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING <u>Sub Priority: Housing Support and Homeless Prevention</u> <i>Number of presentations to the homeless service</i> Presentations are up significantly from the previous year; this reflects the continued housing and cost of living crisis. More people are presenting as homeless or at risk of homelessness. There are fewer homes available in the private sector and many landlords are serving notices ahead of the implementation of the 6-month notice rules linked to Rent Homes (Wales) Act 2016 which apply from 01 June 2023.</p> <p><u>Sub Priority: Housing Needs and Housing Options</u> <i>Number of applicants rehoused via SARTH by all Housing Partners</i> Lettings by housing partners are as follows: Flintshire County Council 85; Clwyd Alyn 7; Wales and West Housing 25; Grwp Cynefin 1.</p> <p>It is noted that lettings across all housing partners are lower than target and with fewer properties becoming available. The consequence is that the length of time applicants will wait to be rehoused will be longer. Also, there are fewer homes available through social housing providers which reduces the opportunities for the Council to prevent and relieve homelessness through positive move on into social housing.</p> <p>The introduction of Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 on 01 December 2022, may have contributed to the lower numbers of lettings. Turnaround of void properties may also have impacted on the number of lettings.</p> <p><i>Number of applicants rehoused via SARTH by Flintshire County Council</i> 85 applicants were rehoused by Flintshire County Council in the final quarter of 2022/23 and the total number of applicants rehoused for 2022/23 was 366.</p>

Sub Priority: Social Housing

Number of Council Homes under construction

There has been a delay in the completion of designated homeless units at Park Lane (4 units) and Duke Street (2 units). Progress has been slower on both sites due to several issues, mostly contractor related but also connected to BT, Flintshire Street naming and client preferred kitchen supplier. We are closely monitoring progress and anticipate that that these units will be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 financial year. The social homes at Mostyn (30 units) have also been delayed due to adverse weather conditions, Way Leave issues and sub-contractor issues. We remain optimistic that these units will also be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 financial year. In addition, there are 2 larger properties at Ash Grove which also ought to complete in 2023/2024.

Number of Council Homes completed

There has been a delay in the completion of designated Homeless units at Park Lane (4 units) and Duke Street (2 units). Progress has been slower on both sites due to several issues, mostly contractor related but also connected to BT, Flintshire Street naming and client preferred kitchen supplier. We are closely monitoring progress and anticipate that that these units will be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 financial year. The social homes at Mostyn (30 units) have also been delayed due to adverse weather, Way Leave issues and sub-contractor issues. We remain optimistic that these units will also be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 financial year. In addition, there are 2 larger properties at Ash Grove which also ought to complete in 2023/2024.

Number of Affordable Homes under construction via NEW Homes

We have redesignated a potential site at Pandy, Oakenholt to a different Tenure mix. A fresh Planning Application will be required. The targets for 2023/2024 will be updated to reflect the change.

Number of Affordable Homes completed via NEW Homes

This target will be reviewed and updated for the next financial year 2023/2024. The acquisition of 6 properties ought to complete in the first quarter of 2023/2024.

Number of Residential Social Landlord (RSL's) homes under construction

There has been a delay in some of the larger sites being developed including Northern Gateway (100 units) and 66A Mold Road, Mynydd Isa (56 units) due to contractors withdrawing from contracts which they deemed to have become unviable due to increased costs. The contractor for Northern Gateway has recently entered Administration. The full Welsh Government grant of £11.2 million was secured. We are closely monitoring both sites and a meeting has been arranged with the RSL.

Total number of Mandatory Medium Disabled Adaptations completed

We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive. These have reduced in line with the increase in Discretionary Adaptations.

	<p>Total number of Mandatory Large Disabled Adaptations completed We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive. Large cases can take up to 15 months or longer to complete. Currently we have 10 cases in progress at different stages, some of these may be completed in 2023/24.</p> <p>Average number of days to complete a Mandatory Large Disabled adaptation A legacy case which had been ongoing for a considerable period (prior to 2022/23) was completed in the 2022/23 reporting period. This had an adverse effect on completion target times. Should this legacy case be excluded from our actual figures then the average number of days to complete a mandatory large disabled adaptation would be 379, which is below our target of 456 days.</p> <p>Sub Priority: Private Rented Sector Number of homeless households assisted under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to secure Private Sector Accommodation 51 households were recorded as being supported into private rented housing to either relief or prevent their homelessness. Availability of private rental homes is reducing and rent costs are going up, making renting privately unaffordable for many people. A report by the Bevan Foundation into availability of private rental homes found 59 homes available in Flintshire in February 2023 and 0 were charging the Local Housing Allowance rate, meaning they would be unaffordable for most people who are in receipt of benefits or on a low wage.</p> <p>Number of inspections of House in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) 24 inspections were undertaken against the target of 35. Operational and statutory pressures, such as suitability checks for Ukrainian refugees and legislative changes in the Private Rented Sector, has affected the delivery of proactive work.</p>
--	---

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no specific resource implications for this report.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT						
3.01	<p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Long-term</td> <td rowspan="5">Throughout the End of Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2022/23.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prevention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Integration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaboration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Involvement</td> </tr> </table>	Long-term	Throughout the End of Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2022/23.	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involvement
Long-term	Throughout the End of Year Monitoring Report there are demonstrable actions and activities which relate to all the Sustainable Development Principles. Specific case studies will be included in the Annual Performance Report for 2022/23.						
Prevention							
Integration							
Collaboration							
Involvement							

Well-being Goals Impact

Prosperous Wales	Throughout the End of Year Monitoring Report there is evidence of alignment with the Well-being Goals. Specific strategic and policy reports include impact and risk assessments.
Resilient Wales	
Healthier Wales	
More equal Wales	
Cohesive Wales	
Vibrant Wales	
Globally responsible Wales	

Council's Well-being Objectives

The Council undertook a review of its Well-being Objectives during the development of the Council Plan. The updated set of Well-being Objectives are a more focused set of six. The Well-being Objectives identified have associated priorities for which they resonate. See the full list below.

Priority	Well-being Objective
Poverty	Protecting people from poverty by supporting them to meet their basic needs
Affordable and Accessible Housing	Housing in Flintshire meeting the needs of our residents and supporting safer communities
Green Society and Environment	Limiting the impact of the Council's services on the natural environment and supporting the wider communities of Flintshire to reduce their own carbon footprint
Economy	Enabling a sustainable economic recovery and growth
Personal and Community Well-being	Supporting people in need to live as well as they can
Education and Skills	Enabling and Supporting Learning Communities

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	The actions/measures detailed within the Council Plan are monitored by the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees according to the priority area of interest.
4.02	Chief Officers and Senior Managers have contributed towards reporting of relevant information.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Council Plan 2022-23 End of Year Performance Monitoring Report.

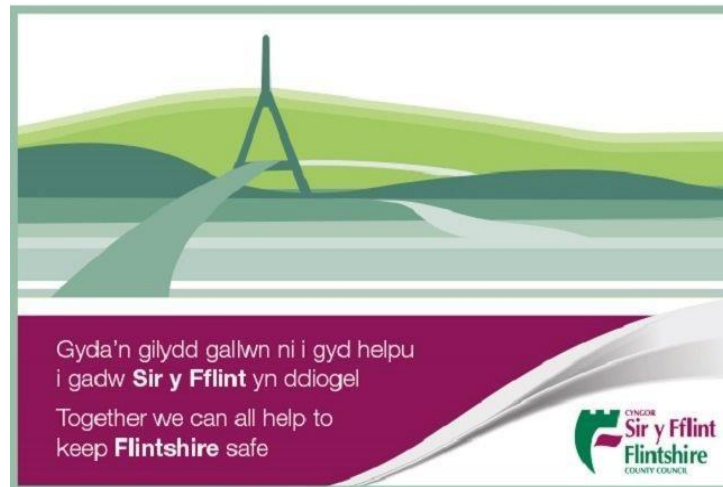
6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Council Plan 2022/23.

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Ceri Shotton, Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator Telephone: 01352 702305 E-mail: ceri.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Council Plan: the document which sets out the annual priorities of the Council. It is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for organisations to ‘set out any actions to increase the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements.’ Plans for organisations should be robust; be clear on where it wants to go; and how it will get there.</p> <p><u>An explanation of the report headings</u></p> <p>Measures (Key Performance Indicators - KPIs)</p> <p>Actual (YTD) – the year-to-date performance identified i.e. by numbers, percentages, etc</p> <p>Target (YTD) – The target for the year to date which is set at the beginning of the year.</p> <p>Current RAG Rating – This measures performance for the year against the target. It is automatically generated according to the data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red = a position of under performance against target • Amber = a mid-position where improvement may have been made but performance has missed the target; and • Green = a position of positive performance against the target.

This page is intentionally left blank

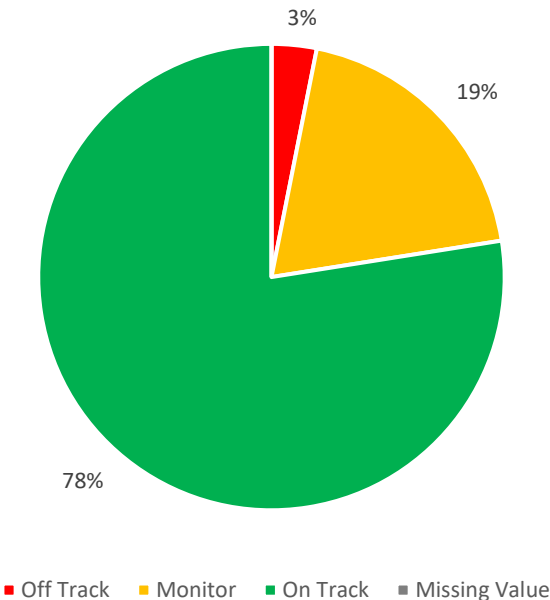
Council Plan End of Year Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23



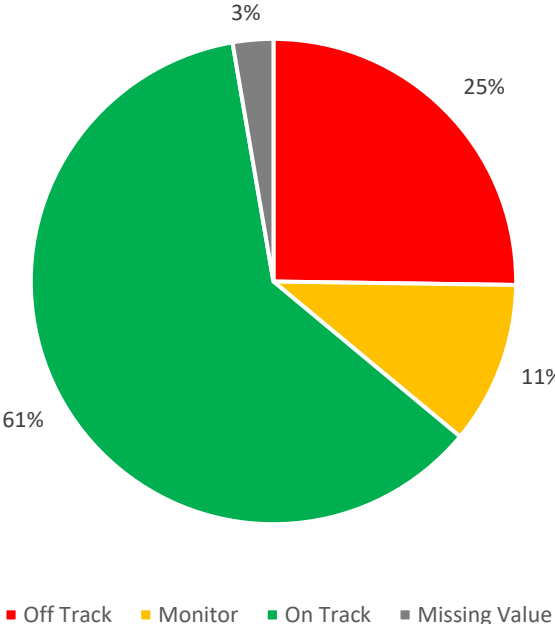
Analysis

Page 90

Council Plan - Action RAG Status



Council Plan - Measure RAG Status

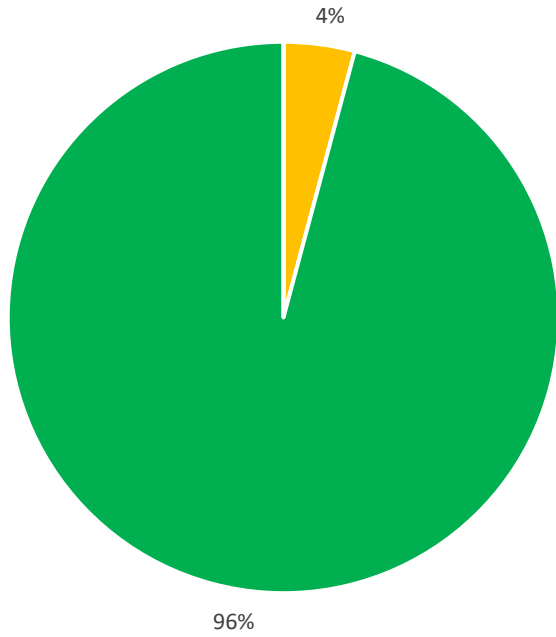


- Key**
- ▲ Red: Limited Progress – delay in scheduled activity and, not on track.
 - Amber: Satisfactory Progress – some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track.
 - ★ Green: Good Progress – activities completed on schedule and on track.
 - ◆ Grey: Not Reported / Part Reported

Poverty

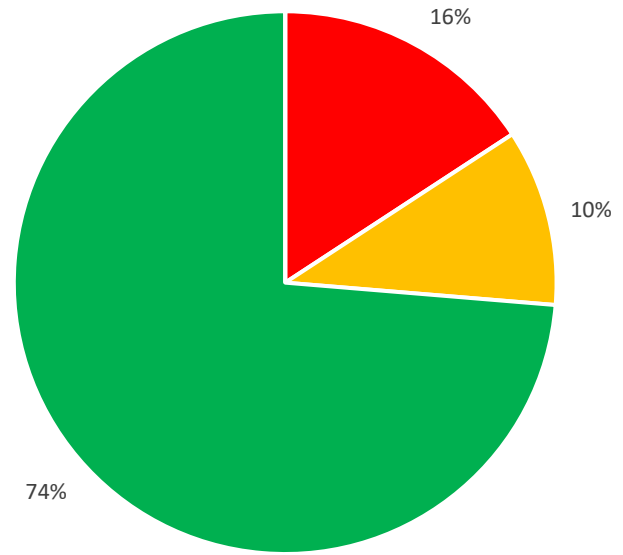
Poverty Overall Performance

Poverty - Action RAG Status



■ Off Track ■ Monitor ■ On Track ■ Missing Value

Poverty - Measure RAG Status

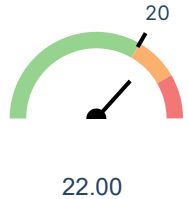

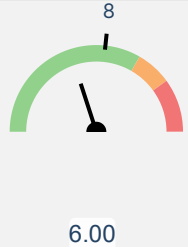





■ Off Track ■ Monitor ■ On Track ■ Missing Value

Income Poverty 2022/23

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Continuing to offer our community hub (Contact Centres) approach giving access to a range of programmes, services and agencies together in one place	90%	★	Our two community support hubs continue to be busy in Shotton and Holywell, providing support in the five key areas, food, income, mental health, digital and employment.
Ensuring that take-up to benefit entitlements is maximised in a timely way by processing claims efficiently	100%	✔	We have carried out a thorough take-up campaign to ensure the Welsh Government Winter Fuel Payment Scheme 2022/23 was widely promoted and take-up was high. We ensured a variety of methods were used to reach as many people as possible. This included promotion by schools, members, emails to Flintshire residents via GovDelivery, Twitter and Facebook, as well as phone calls and letters to customers already identified as eligible. We have issued the £200 payment to 15,955 households totaling £3,191,000.
Maximising take up of the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme and other financial support	100%	✔	Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) funding continues to increase due to the additional financial pressures of rent and rising cost of fuel bills which has had an impact on tenants' ability to pay their rent. Welsh Government are continually encouraging Local Authorities to use DHP in the prevention of homelessness.
Maximising the number of people signposted for support to facilitate longer term change	100%	✔	Referrals continue to be received due to the continuation of the impacts of the cost of living. Ongoing advice and support forms part of the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) application process even if a DHP is unsuccessful. It is envisaged that figures will continue to rise with the increased costs of energy bills and general cost of living expenditure.

Income Poverty 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA001M	Average number of calendar days to process new claims for housing benefit and council tax reduction	22.00	20.00	17.00	 <p>22.00</p>	
<p>Speed of processing for new claims is slightly higher for Q4 than for Q3 and is also above target. We have had a reduced team for Q4 due to outstanding recruitment, and have also had to managed increased workloads across the team due to the going Winter Fuel Payment Scheme and the launch of the Energy Bill Support Scheme.</p>						
CHA002M	Average number of calendar days to process change in circumstances for housing benefit and council tax reduction	6.00	8.00	3.00	 <p>6.00</p>	
<p>Speed of processing for change of circumstances is on target for Q4.</p>						
CHA003M	Total spend of Discretionary Housing Payments (%)	100.00	100.00	130.00	 <p>100.00</p>	
<p>All of the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) allocation was fully spent by supporting households with help towards housing costs to continue to mitigate and prevent potential homelessness situations due to increases in the cost of living.</p>						

Food Poverty 2022/23

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Continuing to develop delivery of a "Hospital to Home" meals service	60%	★	The hospital to home service is going well, helping to support residents to eat well when arriving home from either Mold or Deeside Community Hospitals.
Developing a "Well Fed at Home service"	80%	★	We will continue to increase awareness and promote the meals on wheels service to our residents, providing support with their meal orders etc.
Introducing a transported and delivered food service "Mobile Meals" to those who are vulnerable	90%	★	The successful Croeso Cynnes/Warm Welcome project came to an end on 31st March 2023. Well-Fed have delivered 4 roadshows in the Heights, Flint and Trelogan to launch the Meals on Wheels delivery service. Meals will be purchased and delivered to the community centre for the resident to collect to take home with them or enjoy together at the centre.

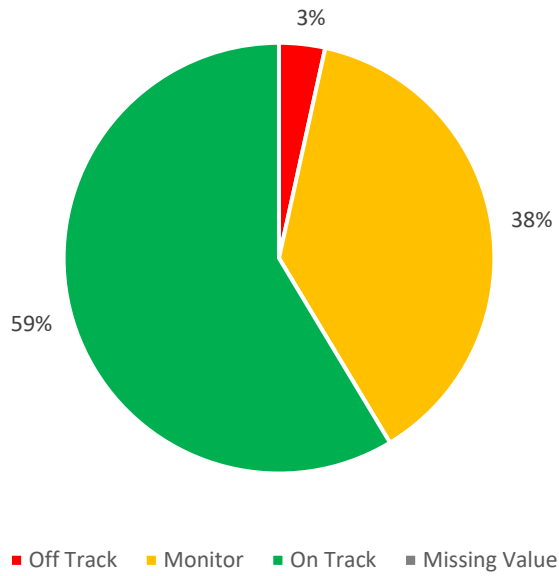
Food Poverty 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA005M	Numbers of residents enrolled in the "Mobile Meals" service	30.00	24.00	27.00		
<p>Well Fed have launched the meals on wheels service in 3 of the Council's sheltered accommodation community centres. Residents were very impressed with the free meals they received during the Croeso Cynnes project over the winter months. Residents were pleased to see the menu had increased and they had the opportunity to purchase the meals to be collected when they attend the activities at the centre.</p>						
CHA006M	Number of residents supported by the "Hospital to Home" meals service	5.00	24.00	27.00		
<p>The process is working well but the initial take up has been low during the pilot. Further promotional work will be carried out to raise awareness of this service.</p>						

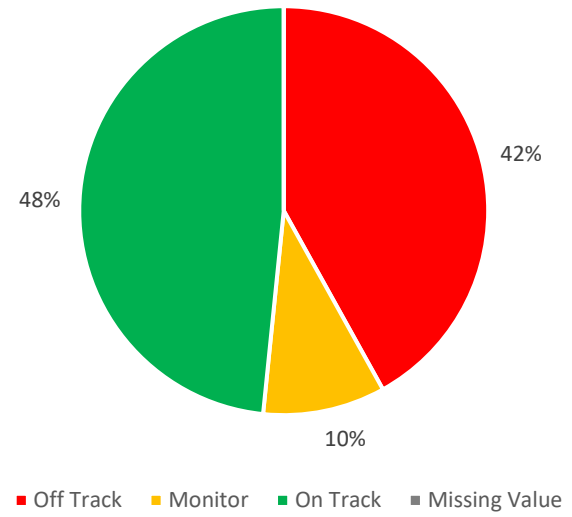
Affordable and Accessible Housing

Affordable and Accessible Housing Overall Performance

Affordable and Accessible Housing - Action RAG Status



Affordable and Accessible Housing - Measure RAG Status



Housing Support and Homeless Prevention 2022/23

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Commissioning a wide range of housing related support that meets the needs of the people of Flintshire	100%	✓	All Domestic Abuse tender documents have been finalised and are awaiting approval from Cabinet to commence with the tendering process. A family supported accommodation has been decommissioned due to the property being sold. The provider is now delivering a floating support service for the families who have moved out of Plas Bellin and have been allocated properties through SARTH (Single Access Route to Housing) and also for other families coming through our Housing Support Gateway. In addition, the Housing Support Team have started consultations with all Floating Support providers so going forward the Housing Support Team will be able to recommission these services.
Developing and extending our Housing First and Rapid Rehousing approaches for those who do experience homelessness	100%	✓	Housing First Project continues to support up to 20 residents through the principles of Housing First. The service is currently undertaking an assessment with Cymorth Cymru as part of the accreditation process with very positive feedback provided to date. Final decision is expected in Quarter 1 of 2023. The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is still in Draft but elected members have accepted and endorsed the Priority Areas and the Action Plan, and the 50% Homeless Direct Lets variation to the Common Allocations Policy remains in place. Flintshire County Council have been identified by Welsh Government as a partner for research into Allocations of Social Housing to inform the future direction of Social Housing Allocations Guidance for Wales alongside Rapid Rehousing.
Ensuring a multi-agency partnership approach to homeless prevention and develop a culture where homelessness is "everyone's business"	100%	✓	Engagement with partners through Multi Disciplinary Team activity and joint working continues to work well on complex cases. The Housing Support Forum provides a vehicle for the Housing and Prevention Service to engage with partners and tackle key challenges together. Further work with health partners is required. A regional event was planned for 9th March in partnership with North Wales Area Planning Boards, however this event was cancelled due to snow and hazardous conditions but has been rearranged for 04 May 2023, now with a bigger venue due to the significant interest generated.
Ensuring when homelessness does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurring	100%	✓	As much as can be done is being done by the homeless prevention and housing support services to reduce homelessness. Homelessness is however still increasing due to challenging conditions across the whole of Wales, many of which are associated with the housing crisis and the cost of living crisis. Moving people on from interim housing and enabling them to exit homelessness is difficult with significant barriers to securing housing. Most notable is the lack of 1 bedroom accommodation within both social housing and private rentals. Approximately 83% of the households in interim housing require 1 bedroom housing. When people do move on from interim housing and exit homelessness significant financial assistance and support is provided to ensure people are able to sustain their housing and avoid them becoming homeless again.
Exploring opportunities to develop a young person's homeless hub offering accommodation and support services	10%	▲	This is a long term action which has stalled as the priority is to identify a suitable location for a permanent Homeless Hub. Should a potential site for a young persons hub become available, capacity for design and explorative work will be identified.

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Promoting housing support and homeless prevention services with our residents and partners	80%	●	A successful Housing Support Forum was delivered with a wide range of partners in attendance. The Website was relaunched with a dedicated 'Housing Hub' which provides details of a wide range of housing support and homeless prevention information. New online access forms have been launched for the Housing Support Gateway to enable easier access for people to refer into services and be matched with support. A new Outcomes Framework pilot was completed with Welsh Government and several local commissioned services engaged in the Pilot. We had intended to deliver more outreach activities within the community to promote the various services available but due to service pressures we were unable to achieve all that had been planned.
Remodelling the "emergency beds" Homeless Hub accommodation offer and service delivery	25%	●	This is a long term action. Designs have been developed and a potential site has been identified. Discussions with local ward members for the site are planned for Quarter 1 of 2023. Exploration of funding for the Homeless Hub is underway.

Housing Support and Homeless Prevention 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA007M	Number of presentations to the homeless service	1,598.00	1,400.00	379.00		
<p>Presentation are up significantly from the previous year, this reflects the continued housing and cost of living crisis. More people are presenting as homeless or at risk of homelessness. There are fewer homes available in the private sector and many landlords are serving notices ahead of the implementation of the 6 month notice rules linked to Rent Homes Wales Act 2016 which apply from 01 June 2023.</p>						
CHA008M	Percentage of successful prevention outcomes for homelessness under Housing Wales Act 2014	59.25	65.00	63.00		
<p>Causes of homelessness continue to be varied but high levels of private rental notices, relationship breakdown, asked to leave by family or friends remain the most common reasons for homelessness. There were 319 prevention outcomes reported in the year and of those 189 were positive. Negative outcomes were recorded as follows: 47 unsuccessful prevention. 3 refused assistance. 21 non co-operation. 37 application withdrawn. 19 loss of contact. 2 change in eligibility. 1 mistake of fact.</p>						
CHA009M	Percentage of successful relief outcomes for homelessness under Housing Wales Act 2014	44.26	45.00	57.00		
<p>When considering the relief and discharge of full homeless duties there were a total of 357 outcomes recorded for the year and 158 of these were positive. This reflects 44.26% which is slightly below target. Opportunities to assist people to exit homelessness are increasingly challenging with few private rental properties being affordable and social housing supply limited. The homeless cohort continues to be predominantly single person households (approx. 84%) and there is minimal 1 bed accommodation available across the county.</p>						

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA010M	Number of households accommodated by the Council under Housing Wales act 2014 homeless duties	184.00	100.00	101.00		

At the end of the reporting period, there were 184 households in interim housing. This is a significant increase over the course of the year and reflects the ongoing pressures within the homelessness system. Annual target was to sustain a similar level of households in homeless accommodation. Whilst number of homeless households accommodated by the Council is a concern this is not unique to Flintshire. The breakdown of household types is as follows; Single Male 117, Single Female 38, Families 19, Other 10. Rough sleeping figures remain low (2).

CHA011M	Average length of stay for those households in interim homeless accommodation under Housing Wales Act 2014	95.28	130.00	117.00		
---------	--	-------	--------	--------	--	--

Homeless accommodation includes those in temporary accommodation, homeless hub and also emergency accommodation (hotel or B&B). The high number of residents placed within emergency housing in the later part of the year is bringing the average figure down. Whilst the average length of stay reducing would usually be a positive outcome, the increase in numbers of households in homeless accommodation is a concern and the increased reliance on hotel and B&B create significant financial pressures. Financial support through the No-one Left Out grant for homeless accommodation has not increased in line with the increase in demand for accommodation.

The longest standing resident occupying homeless accommodation at year end had been in homeless accommodation for 472 days. Average length of stay by homeless accommodation type is as follows; temporary accommodation 150.62 days; homeless hub 126.04 days; emergency hotel & B&B 62.64 days.

CHA012M	Number of referrals received through the Housing Support Gateway	1,447.00	1,400.00	409.00		
---------	--	----------	----------	--------	--	--

Total referrals for housing related support through the Housing Support Gateway in Quarter 4 was 520. Our service area has continued promotional work and has finalised the development of our webpage on the Council's website. New referral pathways via the Housing and Prevention Service webpage has improved access to services for clients, which is evidenced by the increase in number of presentations to the service. Our IT system to manage referrals is now in its final stages of development which will enable us to report on more accurate data. This data also links into Housing Solutions (Homeless Team) data which shows a significant increase in Homeless presentations - In March 2022, there were 63 Section 62 assessments, compared with March 2023, where there were 127 Section 62 assessments undertaken. Housing Solutions Officers make up a high percentage of the referrals that we receive for support which explains the increase in referrals for housing-related support and supported housing.

Housing Needs and Housing Options 2022/23

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Developing self-service approaches that enable people to identify their own housing options through online support	80%	●	Phase 2 of of this project is planned for 2023/24 which will offer customers further opportunity to communicate with the housing register team using a digital platform.
Piloting a risk assessment process to identify pre tenancy support needs to reduce risk of tenancy failure	60%	●	Officers continue to work with residents to address those issues that heighten the risk of tenancy failure. Packages of support have been developed to support positive tenancy start up and tenancy sustainment. A lot of activity has been geared towards the homeless cohort due to current focus on moving people of from homeless accommodation. Recent recruitment within the service have provided additional resource to continue this work.
Promoting the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH), Common Housing Register, Affordable Housing Register and Housing Support Gateway within the community and with professionals	85%	●	A range of communication activities continue to be routinely delivered to promote our services and generate take up of services. Training for colleagues in other service areas has been delivered to promote the Common Housing Register and the Housing Support Gateway. Work has been completed on revamping both content and design on the website for both the Common Housing Register and Homelessness services. Phase 2 of of this project is planned for the start of the next financial year which will offer customers further opportunity to communicate with the housing register team using a digital platform. Training is being delivered on a regular basis to both internal and external colleagues and is being well received.
Reviewing our sheltered housing stock to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of current and prospective tenants	100%	✔	The Council have now finalised the detailed option appraisals for each identified sheltered scheme/site. We have also completed further assessments in terms of condition of properties and our proposed investment costs to ensure compliance with the Welsh Housing Quality Standards, building safety compliance and energy efficiency. A report has been presented to Cabinet and Housing Scrutiny, detailing our approach to re-classification and further options appraisals as and when sheltered schemes are identified for review. A task and finish working group has now been established to finalise the findings and agree the next steps in terms of consultation with members and residents.






Page 103

Housing Needs and Housing Options 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA013M	Number of applicants on the Common Housing Register	2,424.00	2,400.00	2,401.00		
<p>There has been a 1.5% decrease in the number of applicants for Social Housing but the demand is still high compared to the number of properties available across all Housing Partners.</p>						
CHA014M	Customer satisfaction data for the Housing Register Service	52.27	40.00	32.00		
<p>An online survey was issued in January to a sample of 300 applicants of which 64 responded. 24.38% of the applicants found it very easy to apply in the first instance and 23.36% found the rate of the service good. 52.27% of the applicants would like the opportunity to receive updates on their application via an online service. The responses will inform further online surveys and help inform how we engage digitally with our customers going forward.</p>						
CHA015M	Number of applicants rehoused via SARTH by All Housing Partners	534.00	610.00	149.00		
<p>Lettings by Housing partners are as follows: Flintshire County Council 85; Clwyd Alyn 7; Wales and West Housing 25; Gwrp Cynefin 1. It is noted that Lettings across all housing partners are lower than target and with fewer properties becoming available. The consequence is that the length of time applicants will wait to be rehoused will be longer. Also, there are fewer homes available through social housing providers which reduces the opportunities for the Council to prevent and relieve homelessness through positive move on into social housing. The introduction of Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 on 01 December 2022, may have contributed to the lower numbers of lettings. Turn around of void properties may also have impacted on the number of Lettings.</p>						

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA016M	Number of applicants rehoused via SARTH by Flintshire County Council	366.00	440.00	122.00		
85 applicants were rehoused by Flintshire County Council in the final quarter of 2022/23 and the total number of applicants rehoused for 2022/23 was 366.						
CHA017M	Number of households rehoused with significant adaptations requirements	15.00	10.00	10.00		
<p>This measure seeks to highlight the work of the specialist housing panel and the rehousing of households with significant property adaptation requirements. Due to their complexity of some applicants property need, the traditional route of the Common Housing Register and existing stock would not routinely meet the needs of this cohort of residents. The specialist housing panel therefore seeks to focus on those residents who without creative and innovative housing solutions, would fail to have their housing needs met. At the end of the reporting year there are 46 live applicants being reviewed by the specialist housing panel and 15 households have been successfully rehoused in the last 12months.</p>						

Social Housing 2022/23



Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Creation of a new amalgamated Disabled Adaptations Team consisting of Privately rented/Owned properties and Council Housing stock	100%		New staff members have now had their assimilation meetings with HR, management, union rep and a start date of 1st February 2023 has now been agreed by all parties.
Developing plans for the de-carbonisation of Council homes in line with Welsh Government guidance to ensure their thermal efficiency is optimised and the cost of heating homes are minimised	100%		The Council is currently in the process of testing our draft strategy though our Decarbonisation Pilot works programme following the successful grant award (£3m) through the Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP) bid. The draft decarbonisation strategy will continue to be reviewed and updated and is nearing the final stages for sign off. The Council will ensure the strategy captures our aims and objectives in assuring our plans for decarbonisation are robust and correct for the tenants of Flintshire.
Ensuring that the Council's housing stock meets the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and achieves a minimum SAP energy efficiency rating of 65	100%		The Council continues to target properties that do not meet the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 65 rating through various improvement works. This includes, installation of efficient central heating systems, renewable technology (Solar Panels and Air Source Heating) and extensive external refurbishment contracts comprising of new windows, doors, loft insulation and roof coverings, the energy performance and thermal efficiency of our properties is addressed and improved. Our current average SAP rating for our entire stock is 73.5 We are currently moving towards incorporating our decarbonisation measures into our investment programmes of refurbishment works to our tenanted homes. The Council are currently waiting for the new standards and guidance (Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan and Welsh Housing Quality standards 2) to be published from Welsh Government, which will be incorporated into our investment programmes.
In partnership with Denbighshire CC, creating a new Dynamic Procurement System in order to ensure CPR's are met and provide a wider opportunity for tendering Disabled Adaptation projects	60%		Currently progressing the project with Denbighshire County Council and Procurement. Unfortunately, due to leave and workloads there has been some delay in progressing it.
Increasing the Council's housing portfolio by building social housing properties and affordable properties for North East Wales (NEW) Homes	80%		NEW Homes were originally looking to acquire an additional 5 properties @ Maes Gwern this has since increased to 6 There has been a delay in the completion of designated homeless provision @ Park Lane (4 units) and Duke Street (2 units). Progress has been slower than anticipated on both sites due to a number of issues, mostly contractor but with BT, Flintshire Street Naming and client preferred kitchen supplier as well. Completion was scheduled for the 3rd February for Duke Street and the Park Lane for the 28th of April and we are monitoring this closely It is anticipated that these will be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/23024 Financial year. The social homes @ Mostyn (30 units) have also been delayed due to adverse weather and also sub-contractor issues. The FCC Housing management team have visited this site and we are optimistic that they will be also be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/23024 Financial year. There are also 2 larger properties @ Ash Grove which we hope to have completed circa Q1 of the 2023/23024 Financial year. In relation to NEW 5 additional properties located @ Maes Gwern are shortly to be added to the NEW Homes portfolio.

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Listening to our tenants and working with them to improve our services, homes and communities	75%	★	An Action Plan will be developed following the outcome of the STAR survey to ensure services are tailored to the needs of tenant's priorities. Follow up on contact with tenants who have indicated an interest in being involved and devise matrix of areas for preferred involvement.
Supporting our tenants to access technology and create sustainable digital communities	50%	★	Residents enjoyed attending the digital courses delivered by Coleg Cambria as part of the Croeso Cynnes Project November 2022 to March 2023. They have been trained on how to use the device enabling them to keep in touch with family and access to money saving offers. Residents then have the opportunity to lone a tablet device using the Aura tablet loan scheme if they are unable to purchase their own.
Working with housing association partners to build new social housing properties and additional affordable properties	80%	●	We continue to work closely with our Housing Association partners. The next meetings have been arranged for April 2023. Regular review meetings are held both with the individual Associations at both a Housing strategy and at the Regional Strategic Lead level. This is in addition to quarterly meetings with the Housing associations and the Welsh Government. 8 units @ Pen Y Coed, Drury were completed by Adra in April 2022. Wales and West completed 23 units at Bryn Awel hotel Mold together with 6 units at Northop Chapel United reform church, Northop.
Working with residents to ensure our communities are well managed, safe, and sustainable places to live	75%	★	Developing digital solution through Total Mobile to ensure that Housing Officers are better equipped to support tenants by having a greater presence on their patch area. Identifying support needs at an earlier stage and referring to Tenancy Sustainment and other support agencies where appropriate.

Social Housing 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA018M	Number of Council Homes under construction	38.00	77.00	77.00		
<p>There has been a delay in the completion of designated homeless units @ Park Lane (4) & Duke street (2). Progress has been slower on both sites due to a number of issues, mostly Contractor related but also connected to BT, Flintshire street naming and Client preferred kitchen supplier. We are closely monitoring progress and anticipate that that these units will be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 Financial year. The Social homes @ Mostyn (30 units) have also been delayed due to adverse weather conditions, Way Leave issues and sub contractor issues. We remain optimistic that these units will also be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 Financial year. In addition there are 2 larger properties @ Ash Grove which also ought to complete in the next 2023/2024 Financial year.</p>						
CHA019M	Number of Council Homes completed	0.00	36.00	0.00		
<p>There has been a delay in the completion of designated Homeless units @ Park Lane (4) & Duke street (2). Progress has been slower on both sites due to a number of issues, mostly Contractor related but also connected to BT, Flintshire street naming and Client preferred kitchen supplier. We are closely monitoring progress and anticipate that that these units will be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 Financial year. The Social homes @ Mostyn (30 units) have also been delayed due to adverse weather, Way Leave issues and sub contractor issues. We remain optimistic that these units will also be completed circa Q1 of the 2023/2024 Financial year. In addition there are 2 larger properties @ Ash Grove which also ought to complete 2023/2024 Financial year.</p>						
CHA020M	Number of Affordable Homes under construction via NEW Homes	6.00	21.00	0.00		
<p>We have re designated a potential site @ Pandy, Oakenholt to a different Tenure mix. A fresh Planning Application will be required. The targets for 2023/2024 will be updated to reflect the change.</p>						

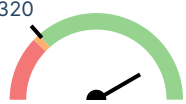

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA021M	Number of Affordable Homes completed via NEW Homes	0.00	5.00	4.00		
<p>This target will be reviewed and updated for the next Financial year 2023/2024. The acquisition of 6 properties ought to complete in the first quarter of 2023/2024</p>						
CHA022M	Number of Residential social landlords (RSL's) homes under construction	22.00	150.00			
<p>There has been a delay in some of the larger sites being developed including Northern gateway (100) and 66A Mold Road, Mynydd Isa (56) due to contractors withdrawing from Contracts which they deemed to have unviable due to increased costs. the Contractor for Northern Gateway has recently entered Administration. The full Welsh Government grant of £11.2 million from WG was secured. We are closely monitoring both of these sites and a meeting has been arranged with the RSL.</p>						
CHA023M	Number of Residential Social Landlord (RSL's) homes completed	43.00	41.00			
<p>We are pleased to report that in these challenging times that 43 homes have been completed.</p>						
CHA024M	To deliver the Welsh Housing Quality Standard to all Flintshire County Council stock by December 2022	100.00	100.00	100.00		
<p>The Council successfully complied with the Welsh Housing Quality Standards to all housing stock on the 31st December 2021. We have continued to maintain this standard to our tenanted homes and will now move into the maintenance phase of these standards. We are now working with Welsh Government and our supply partners in readiness for the new WHQS 2.0 standards that will be shared with the Council in 2023.</p>						

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA025M	Achieving a SAP rating of 65 or above will be one of the key measures to determine whether or not the WHQS standard has been attained	100.00	100.00	100.00	 100.00	


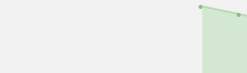
The Council continues to target properties that do not meet the SAP 65 rating through various improvement works. Installation of efficient central heating systems, renewable technology (Solar Panels and Air Source Heating) and extensive external refurbishment contracts comprising of new windows, doors, loft insulation and roof coverings, the energy performance and thermal efficiency of our properties is addressed and improved.

Our current average SAP rating for our entire stock is 73.5

All properties now comply with the SAP 65 rating and we are currently moving towards incorporating our decarbonisation measures into our investment programmes of refurbishment works to our tenanted homes.

CHA026M	Total number of Small Disabled Adaptations completed	987.00	320.00		 987.00	
---------	--	--------	--------	--	---	---

We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive.

CHA027M	Average number of days to complete a Small Disabled adaptation	7.00	28.00		 7.00	
---------	--	------	-------	--	---	---

These are the small adaptations that are classed as priority. They are to prevent risk, hospital admissions, for example, grab rails, hand rails etc.

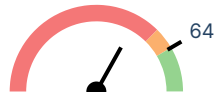

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA028M	Total number of Discretionary Medium Disabled Adaptations completed	59.00	40.00			
<p>We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive. Discretionary adaptations have increased due to the change in DFG policy and removal of a limit to discretionary works.</p>						
CHA029M	Average number of days to complete a Discretionary Medium Disabled adaptation	131.00	122.00			
<p>This is an amalgamated figure of all medium sized adaptations completed, discretionary and mandatory. Unfortunately some mandatory medium cases have had delays when processing the means testing, however now that means testing for all medium adaptations has been removed 23/24 target figures should hopefully be met.</p>						
CHA030M	Total number of Mandatory Medium Disabled Adaptations completed	47.00	60.00			
<p>We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive. These have reduced inline with the increase in Discretionary Adaptations.</p>						
CHA031M	Average number of days to complete a Mandatory Medium Disabled adaptation	131.00	122.00			
<p>This is an amalgamated figure of all medium sized adaptations completed, discretionary and mandatory. Unfortunately some mandatory medium cases have had delays when processing means testing, however now that means testing for medium adaptations has been removed 23/24 target figures should hopefully be met.</p>						

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA032M	Total number of Mandatory Large Disabled Adaptations completed	4.00	8.00			
<p>We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive. Large cases can take up to 15 months or longer to complete, currently we have 10 cases in progress at different stages, some of these may be completed 23/24.</p>						
CHA033M	Average number of days to complete a Mandatory Large Disabled adaptation	502.00	456.00			
Page 112	<p>A legacy case which had been ongoing for a considerable period (prior to 2022/23) was completed in the 2022/23 reporting period. This had an adverse effect on completion target times. Should this legacy case be excluded from our actual figures then the average number of days to complete a mandatory large disabled adaptation would be 379, which is below our target of 456 days.</p>					
CHA034M	Total number of Disabled Adaptations completed	1,097.00	428.00			
<p>We are completely reliant on the Occupational Therapist recommendation and their clients need, so it is always difficult to project the amount of different sized works we may receive.</p>						

Private Rented Sector 2022/23

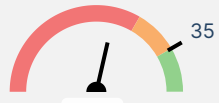
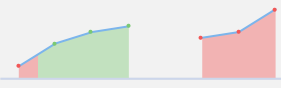
Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Developing a "landlord offer" that encourages landlords to work with the Council to raise standards of property management and condition of homes where needed	90%	●	The Landlord Hub section of the Councils Website is now in its final stages of development and due to be launched in Quarter 1 of 2023/24. Continued use of Welsh Government Homeless Prevention Grant has enabled us to sustain the landlord offer relating to rent rescue packages for failing tenancies, including support for landlords who have experienced significant interest rate hikes and have had to increase rents due to their cost pressures. Advice and guidance with the implementation of the Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 is extended to landlords routinely by the Bonds Scheme Officers. The Council are unable to sign up to the Welsh Government Leasing Scheme due to staffing pressures.
Engaging with private sector tenants, giving them a voice and responding to their needs	100%	✔	We continue to work with regional partners and TPAS Cymru to develop a Private Rented Sector Forum to provide opportunity for residents to engage with services and promote opportunities for engagement with residents who live in private rented sector homes. An online event was held online on the 01 March 2023, and residents who attended the event helped develop a Factsheet about the Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 as this was an issue they had identified as creating uncertainty and confusion for private renters. Their feedback has helped shape the content of the form and they have identified further subject ideas for future factsheets.
Improving access to private sector properties for those who are homeless, at risk of homeless and in housing need	60%	●	Market conditions mean that this task is increasingly challenging to deliver on. Many landlords are serving notices in order to sell their properties. Whilst we have a wide range of financial incentives to encourage landlords to consider residents who are open to the Councils Housing Support and Homeless Prevention services, as Contract Holders, the lack of housing and the increasing costs to rent privately is creating additional barriers to being able to improve access to the private rented sector.
Mapping Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) across Flintshire to ensure legal minimum housing standards are met and to improve residents' quality of life	67%	●	The target for this activity was amended from 40 to 35 HMO's to inspect due to the fact that the programme of work commenced during quarter two of 2022/23, following new members of staff joining the team.
Working in partnership with landlords and private sector agents to better understand their needs	100%	✔	The Landlord Forum continues to be delivered online in partnership with National Residential Landlords Association. The last Forum focused on damp and disrepair as this is a topic landlords had requested advice and guidance on. Over 40 landlord attended the Forum. Financial Hardship and Cost of Living issues were identified as another concern for landlords and the Landlord Forum in May 2023 will have a range of guest speakers to help raise awareness of support services that can assist residents and help sustain their accommodation which is positive for landlords.

Private Rented Sector 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CHA035M	Number of homeless households assisted under the Housing Wales Act 2014 to secure Private Sector Accommodation	51.00	64.00	62.00	 51.00	

51 households were recorded as being supported into private rented housing in order to either relief or prevent their homelessness. Availability of private rental homes is reducing and rent costs are going up, making renting privately unaffordable for many people. A report by the Bevan Foundation into availability of private rental homes found 59 homes available in Flintshire in February 2023 and 0 were charging the Local Housing Allowance rate, meaning they would be unaffordable for most people who are in receipt of benefits or on low wage.

Page 114

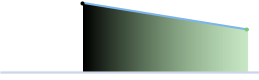
CPE02M	Number of inspections of HMOs	24.00	35.00	18.00	 24.00	
--------	-------------------------------	-------	-------	-------	--	---

24 inspections undertaken from the target of 35. Operational and statutory pressures, such suitability checks for Ukrainian refugees and legislative changes in the Private Rented Sector, has affected the delivery of proactive work.

Empty Properties 2022/23

Action	Percentage Complete	RAG	Comment
Bringing empty homes back into use thorough the Empty Homes Loan Scheme	100%		This is on-going and this financial (2022/23) year we have approved £200,000 in house into home loans, with a further 3 in the application stage.
Exploring opportunities to develop a project management service for non-commercial landlords to encourage take up of the Empty Home Loan Scheme	100%		This is on-going. We are waiting on a meeting to put the project management service to a test by undertaking a full refurbishment.
Exploring opportunities to maximise housing and revitalise our towns through the redevelopment of the High Street	100%		A number of regeneration schemes have been awarded Welsh Government 'Transforming Towns - Place Making Grant' for 2022-23 and the Regeneration team has worked with property owners and developers to secure funds, start and progress work on site and claim grant funds at the end of March 2023. Amongst grant funded projects (which property owners have invested a minimum of 30% capital funding themselves) one scheme has also applied for and been awarded repayable loan funding as part of a funding investment package alongside non-repayable grant funding. Work is ongoing into the next financial year regarding recent and new enquiries from property owners and developers about regeneration grant and loan funding available to them to support the regeneration of high streets in town centres, and facilitating the development and delivery of new regeneration projects. An application for Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) was submitted by the Council's Regeneration team, which has been successful at stage 1 (of 2) to secure funds to implement a Town Centre Investment programme comprising 8 projects across 7 towns in Flintshire. In quarter 1 of 2023-24, stage 2 SPF funding application will be developed and submitted. The outcome of this funding application is expected by end June/ early July 2023.
Targeting 'problem' empty homes in our communities and use enforcement powers where appropriate to improve our communities and increase housing supply	100%		Enforcement powers have been used to successfully take 2 long term empty properties through the enforced sale procedure and they are now back in use. Empty Homes has passed over the 3rd property to the solicitors and its due to be sold at auction in the next 2 months.

Empty Properties 2022/23

Measure	Measure Description	Actual	Target	Last Year	Performance	Performance Trend
CPE003M	Percentage of empty private properties brought back into use	2.20	1.10	3.60		

Based on Council Tax figures of 500 when the housing strategy plan was produced in 2019, we have brought 11 properties back into use with the assistance of loans, enforcement and encouragement which equates to 2.2% for the financial year 2022/23.