

APPENDIX 1

Priority: Poverty
Sub-Priority: Welfare Reform
Impact: Protecting people from poverty

What we will do in 2014/15:

1. Place a greater emphasis on preventing homelessness

Progress Status	Progress RAG	A	Outcome RAG	A
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In order to robustly test the processes and policies that will be required to implement the new statutory homelessness provisions within the Housing Act 2014, (scheduled to be introduced in April 2015) a pilot of an enhanced homelessness prevention service is being delivered to anyone who is at risk of homeless within 56 days. Advice and support continues to be proactively targeted at vulnerable households impacted by the welfare reform who are struggling to maintain contractual housing payments.

Achievement will be measured through:

- The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months
- Number of tenants helped to move to more affordable accommodation (because of the spare room subsidy)

Improvement Plan Progress
August 2014

Achievement Measures	Lead Officer	2013/14 Baseline Data	2014/15 Target	2016/17 Aspirational Target	Current Outturn	Performance RAG	Outcome Performance Predictive RAG
HHA/013 - The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.	Chief Officer – Community and Enterprise	84.89%	90%	90%	N/A	N/A	G
Number of tenants helped to move to more affordable accommodation because of the spare room subsidy		50	65	TBC	9	A See point 3 in table below, reflecting the actions being employed in relation to this activity.	A

Risks to Manage - Meeting the growing costs of homelessness prevention

Gross Score (as if there are no measures in place to control the risk)			Current Actions / Arrangements in place to control the risk	Net Score (as it is now)			Future Actions and / or Arrangement to control the risk	Manager Responsible	Risk Trend	Target Score (when all actions are completed / satisfactory arrangements in place)		
Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score		Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score				Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score
(L)	(I)	(LxI)		(L)	(I)	(LxI)			(L)	(I)	(LxI)	
H	H	R	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing provision of homelessness prevention services for anyone at risk of homelessness within 56 days through our 'reasonable steps pilot'. Integrated Housing Access & Housing Options Team enables realistic housing options to be provided to residents seeking assistance with housing. To increase the number of transfers amongst tenants impacted by the spare room subsidy, a Housing Officer (Welfare Reform) has recently been appointed. However, the officer is now also working with households with more complex needs, i.e. disability & need to move to adapted properties. Such households are more difficult to transfer to alternative, suitable accommodation & the officer will be implementing a range of approaches to resolve the housing problems experienced by such tenants. 	M	M	A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying & putting place appropriate resources to enable the effective delivery of a Housing Solutions Service from April 2015. Implementing a Common Housing Register for all social housing providers operating within Flintshire. The Tackling Poverty Partnership is overseeing the implementation of measures to improve financial capability & access to affordable credit within households impacted by welfare reforms. 	Chief Officer Clare Budden	↓	M	M	A

2. Provide advice and support services to help people protect their income				
Progress Status	Progress RAG	G	Outcome RAG	G
<p>During the period April to June 2014, Welfare Rights maximised the income within 511 Flintshire households by helping them to claim welfare benefits and tax credits with a value of £518,000. In addition, households at risk of homelessness were assisted to manage debts totalling £428,000. Tenanted households, impacted by the welfare reforms – in particular by the spare room subsidy (bedroom tax), received discretionary housing payments totalling £64,923.23. This outcome of income maximisation work is not only beneficial for the household but also increases spending power within the local economy and positively supports the attainment of the objectives within the Tackling Poverty and Homelessness Prevention agendas.</p>				
<p>Achievement will be measured through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of Flintshire residents assisted by Flintshire County Council to maximise their income ▪ Number of residents supported to successfully challenge adverse benefit decisions ▪ Amount of additional Social Security and Tax Credits paid to Flintshire residents as a result of the work undertaken by Flintshire County Council ▪ Amount of monthly debt managed as a result of advice provided by the Money Advice Service ▪ Amount of monthly discretionary housing payment (DHP) paid to support peoples housing needs including changes due to Welfare Reform 				

Achievement Measures	Lead Officer	2013/14 Baseline Data	2014/15 Target	2016/17 Aspirational Target	Current Outturn	Performance RAG	Outcome Performance Predictive RAG
Amount of additional Social Security and Tax Credits paid to Flintshire residents as a result of the work undertaken by FCC (WEL/001)	Chief Officer – Community and Enterprise	£2.3 million	£2 million	£2.6 million	£518,403	G	G
The following indicators are provided for information and monitoring only and are not suitable for setting targets against							
Number of Flintshire residents assisted by FCC to claim Additional Social Security and Tax Credits	Chief Officer – Community and Enterprise	1,680	N/A	N/A	511	N/A	N/A
Number of residents supported to successfully challenge adverse benefit decisions		180	N/A	N/A	43	N/A	N/A
Amount of additional Social Security and Tax Credits paid to Flintshire residents as a result of the work undertaken by Flintshire County Council		£2.3 million	N/A	N/A	£518,403	N/A	N/A
Amount of monthly debt managed as a result of advice provided by the Money Advice Service <i>It has been decided this year to exclude the housing costs (i.e., total amount of outstanding mortgage) from the debt managed</i>		N/A – new measure	N/A	N/A	£428,100	N/A	N/A
Amount of monthly discretionary housing payment (DHP) paid to support people to adjust to Welfare Reform changes		N/A – new measure	N/A	N/A	£64,923.23	N/A	N/A

Risks to Manage - Advice and support services sufficient to be able to meet demand

Gross Score (as if there are no measures in place to control the risk)			Current Actions / Arrangements in place to control the risk	Net Score (as it is now)			Future Actions and / or Arrangement to control the risk	Manager Responsible	Risk Trend	Target Score (when all actions are completed / satisfactory arrangements in place)		
Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score		Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score				Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score
(L)	(I)	(LxI)		(L)	(I)	(LxI)			(L)	(I)	(LxI)	
H	H	R	<p>1. The development of an Advice Gateway to complement the Support Gateway will maximise the effective use of available services resources through reducing duplication of effort and ensuring residents have ease of access to the most appropriate service provider.</p> <p>2. We are ensuring front line staff possesses the knowledge, skills and confidence to be able to advise and support service users/residents on a range of social welfare issues, i.e., maximising income, managing money, etc.</p>	M	M	A	<p>1. The development of the Local Support Services Framework will promote partnership working in order to make effective use of available service resources.</p> <p>2. The Tackling Poverty Partnership will identify and co-ordinate funding applications with the aim of maximising the take-up of funding opportunities amongst services</p>	Chief Officer Clare Budden	↓	M	M	A

3. Support the implementation of Universal Credit (UC) within the Shotton Jobcentre Plus area

Progress Status	Progress RAG	G	Outcome RAG	G
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Flintshire County Council and the Department of Working Pensions (DWP) have put into operation a local delivery agreement to ensure appropriate support is available to help claimants to make and sustain their Universal Credit (UC) claims. The agreement will also provide DWP decision makers with direct access to technical advice and support from the Council's Housing Benefit Service on UC claims that include housing costs. The achievement measures for 2014/15 are based upon figures provided by the DWP, which they based upon projected claimant numbers from the six original UC pathfinder areas. As a Local Authority, Flintshire has no control over the speed at which the Westminster Government is progressively implementing UC within Flintshire. As such it is not appropriate to have targets for these measures but outturns will be provided as management information. However, the DWP have agreed to fund the local delivery agreement during the period April 2014 – March 2015, and the low numbers claiming UC will not negatively affect the agreed level of funding, nor will there be any negative impact upon residents. It is also important to note that the role out within Flintshire is progressing very positively and as a live UC area it has enabled FCC to positively influence the DWP to formulate their national UC policies to reflect best practice being undertaken to support UC claimants in Flintshire.

Achievement will be measured through:

- Number of Universal Credit claimants referred to Citizens Advice Bureau for Personal Budgeting support
- Number of Universal Credit claimants assisted with on-line access
- Number of claims referred from Jobcentre Plus to Flintshire County Council Housing Benefit service

Achievement Measures	Lead Officer	2013/14 Baseline Data	2014/15 Target	2016/17 Aspirational Target	Current Outturn	Performance RAG	Outcome Performance Predictive RAG
The following indicators are provided for information and monitoring only and are not suitable for setting targets against							
Number of Universal Credit claimants referred to Citizens Advice Bureau for Personal Budgeting support	Chief Officer – Community and Enterprise	N/A – new measure	N/A	TBC	4	N/A	N/A
Number of Universal Credit claimants assisted with on-line access		N/A – new measure	N/A	TBC	1	N/A	N/A
Number of claims referred from Jobcentre Plus to Flintshire County Council Housing Benefit service		N/A – new measure	N/A	TBC	25	N/A	N/A

Risks to Manage - Eviction levels rising if tenants are unable to afford to pay their rent

Gross Score (as if there are no measures in place to control the risk)			Current Actions / Arrangements in place to control the risk	Net Score (as it is now)			Future Actions and / or Arrangement to control the risk	Manager Responsible	Risk Trend	Target Score (when all actions are completed / satisfactory arrangements in place)		
Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score		Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score				Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score
(L)	(I)	(LxI)		(L)	(I)	(LxI)			(L)	(I)	(LxI)	
H	H	R	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> FCC Housing Benefit Service proactively uses Discretionary Housing Payments to assist households at risk of homelessness. Welfare Reform Team targets support & early interventions at vulnerable households losing social security income. DWP are introducing positive changes to improve the processes for UC claims that include housing costs. These improvements include a new specialist team within the UC service centre to manage housing costs claims & improved communications between Social Landlords and the universal credit service centre. 	M	M	A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> FCC is part of an all Wales Project that is reviewing the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme with the aim of promoting best practice & ensure efficient use of the DHP budget over the longer term. Consider ways in which the social & private rented sectors can identify the capabilities of tenants to manage direct payment of benefit Implement appropriate measures to prepare tenants, as much as practical, to be better able to seamlessly transfer over to direct payments of housing costs as the UC roll out intensifies. 	Chief Officer Clare Budden	↓	M	M	A

Risks to Manage - Local Economy may suffer as residents have less income to spend

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Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score		Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score				Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score
(L)	(I)	(LxI)		(L)	(I)	(LxI)			(L)	(I)	(LxI)	
M	M	A	<p>1. Services in place to assist residents to maximise household income by encouraging & enabling the take-up of social security benefits & tax credits & by competently managing their financial commitments.</p> <p>2. FCC funding a personal budgeting support service delivered by the CAB, for UC claimants who experience problems managing their household budget.</p>	M	M	A	<p>1. The development of the Local Support Services Framework will identify the advice & support resources that are required to help residents to manage the impacts of longer-term transformations of the social security system.</p> <p>2. The Council needs to continue to forecast the projected impacts of future changes to social security legislation upon residents, service users, service providers, local businesses.</p>	Chief Officer Clare Budden	↔	M	M	A

Risks to Manage - Resources to meet the requirements of the Universal Credit roll-out

Gross Score (as if there are no measures in place to control the risk)			Current Actions / Arrangements in place to control the risk	Net Score (as it is now)			Future Actions and / or Arrangement to control the risk	Manager Responsible	Risk Trend	Target Score (when all actions are completed / satisfactory arrangements in place)		
Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score		Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score				Likelihood	Impact	Gross Score
(L)	(I)	(LxI)		(L)	(I)	(LxI)			(L)	(I)	(LxI)	
M	M	A	<p>1. During the period April 14 – March 15, the UC delivery partnership agreement will ensure resources are in place to UC claimants to make & sustain UC claims.</p> <p>2. FCC & DWP hold a regular UC strategic meeting to manage the implementation of the Universal Credit local delivery partnership agreement.</p> <p>3. FCC has created a UC liaison officer to collate & disseminate management information on UC.</p>	L	L	G	<p>1. Whilst measures are in place to offer personal budgeting support to new Universal Credit claimants, the Tackling Poverty Partnership need to develop a strategic approach to how the financial literacy and money management skills within all households impacted by welfare reforms, or who will be as Universal Credit is rolled out are to be improved.</p>	Chief Officer Clare Budden	↔	L	L	G