

BRIEFING NOTE

NIGHT SHELTER PROVISION IN FLINTSHIRE

Background

The Council's night shelter provision began as a pilot project in Flint back in December 2018. The Shelter was then relocated to Holywell. The service was terminated in September 2019 at very short notice by the service provider - Clwyd Alyn - leaving us without any provision for rough sleepers.

We immediately went about looking for a number of premises as a new location whilst being conscious that our major client group was in the Deeside area. We immediately selected the former Glanrafon Daycare Centre in Shotton as the preferred available facility. The Chief Officer Team, fully supported by the Cabinet Member and Leader, moved forward with the project with urgency to fulfill our legal and our moral duties to the homeless.

This Centre, which is all on one level, is larger than needed. However, the additional space will allow partner organisations to offer support services to our client group.

Our Journey

Before confirming Glanrafon as our choice of location we had to undertake a risk assessment. This was particularly sensitive due to the close proximity of a primary school, community facilities and the new day care centre at Hwb Cyfle.

During September and October 2019 we carried out scoping works based, at that time, on a limited refurbishment and sourced a service provider to run the night shelter when operational. We commenced a limited fit out in November and applied for planning permission in December. The limited fit out was designed to ensure that we could use the facility as our emergency centre should we need to activate our Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP). We have operated SWEP on at least eight occasions during this interim period.

We procured our service partner - Walich - in November, and they have been going through a period of recruitment on the basis that they would mobilise and open the night shelter from the 17th February. A transitional handover is leading to a full handover on the 2nd March.

It is important to note that we are still fitting out our night shelter. Currently fire sprinkler systems and security measures are being installed, and bed areas set up.

AGENDA ITEM 8 - NOTICE OF MOTION

Operation of our night shelter

We are now using the night shelter in a limited way during the ongoing building work in time for 2nd March. The shelter opens at 20:00hrs and the doors close at 22:00hrs. There is a 'waking watch' in place for security and health and safety reasons. The staff areas are secured and separate from the main sleeping areas. There are showers, cubicles with beds, a general communal area, kitchen, laundry room, external secure areas, a staff room, and reception area. Our intention is to also run multi-agency support (Health, Housing Solutions, Benefits, drug and alcohol advisory teams) at the location.

Volunteering and contributions

There have been a number of questions come in from people who wish to help out at the Centre. Wallich operate a managed volunteering policy. Once the centre is more settled they will be seeking volunteers. Volunteers are not needed at this stage.

Wallich will lead on clothing and food donations from the community. They also plan to set up a 'giving' page where people can make financial contributions. We have received clothes from Help the Homeless and SHARE - these have been gratefully received. Wallich may seek to grow this now established relationship with these partners. We plan, as part of our social enterprise 'Well Fed' brand, and the partnership through our commercial kitchen hub in Shotton, to move to a pre-packaged food delivery using food delivered from this commercial kitchen. This will ensure our food offer is of the highest quality standards, hygienically prepared, and meets nutritional standards.