

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & ASSETS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 10 th March 2021
Report Subject	Homelessness Update Report
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Housing
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing and Assets)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homelessness is a service area that has been under significant strain throughout the Covid pandemic. The need to offer accommodation and support to everyone who is homeless and at risk of rough sleeping during the pandemic has been challenging. It has however provided a unique window of opportunity to engage with a high number of people who may otherwise not have achieved positive wellbeing or housing outcomes under “normal circumstances”.

The journey of a person or a household who experiences homelessness is always unique and for some, success is only achieved by meeting basic needs such as health, loneliness and feelings of safety before moving onto longer term outcomes related to housing. This report looks to identify positive stories that have come from the Covid pandemic and build on those successes.

Whilst the last 10 months have been challenging there are further risks ahead as national restrictions are lifted and we move to the next phase of a Covid recovery. Positive interventions such as furlough, eviction bans, and extension of notice periods to six months instead of two months are all positive steps that have helped stem the flow of homelessness. However, mounting household debts; increases in domestic abuse and escalations in eviction proceedings are all likely to emerge over the next 6-12 months.

Whilst the challenges are significant, there are also exciting opportunities ahead for remodelling and developing new services to tackle some of these increasing pressures so we can support more people through early intervention and preventative approaches. Housing Support Grant is being increased significantly from 2021-2022 and provides a platform for future growth of our housing support and homeless prevention offer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny note the update report and continue to support the work being undertaken by the service and provide any feedback and comments to assist and inform our current approach.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE HOMELESSNESS UPDATE REPORT
1.01	<p>Funding the Covid Homelessness Response Emergency Hardship Funding for homelessness has been accessed to assist with the increased financial pressures that offering emergency housing and support services has placed on all Welsh Councils.</p> <p>Further funding has also been made available following the development of a Phase 2 Plan to respond to the growing pressures on homelessness services. Flintshire's Phase 2 Plan was approved by Welsh Government in the Sumer 2020 and additional funding secured as set out below.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Revenue Funding @ £186,000 Capital Funding @ £1,051,816</p> <p>Despite significant challenges with mobilising some revenue and capital activities linked to the Phase 2 Plan the funding has been well utilised and our projections for year-end expenditure are as follows:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Revenue Funding @ £186,000 Capital Funding @ £955,509</p> <p>A range of revenue activities have been successfully delivered including rapid rehousing, additional Mental Health support, increased engagement with prison leavers, the development of a collaborative assertive outreach activity and enhanced support and move on activity through the Homeless Hub which since late March 2020 has been operating 24/7.</p> <p>Capital expenditure will see an additional 12 units of self-contained accommodation (8x 1 beds 4x 2 beds) which will be Council owned and used as temporary accommodation by the Homeless Team. This will assist with the move away from shared accommodation environments (which present their own Covid transmission risk), and increases capacity within the Temporary Accommodation Portfolio.</p>
1.02	<p>Demand for Services The data below provides an insight into the levels of demand across the Housing & Prevention Service. This data is captured through a range of different datasets. This data is used to monitor service delivery, inform future resource planning, as well as for reporting internally and to Welsh Government.</p>

Homelessness Presentations

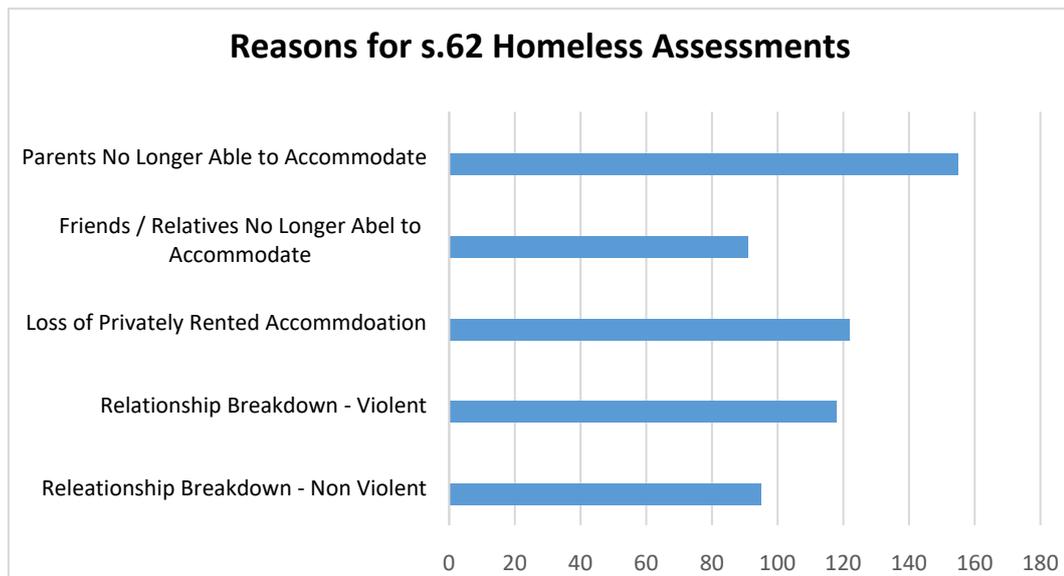
Homelessness is managed under the Housing Wales Act 2014. This legislation has a number of key duties and one of those early duties is the s.62 Duty to Assess. This is where there is a reason to believe someone is homeless or may be at risk of homelessness.

When looking at the levels of s.62 assessments this year up until 15/02/2021 (10½ months) a total of 753 assessments have been completed. Last year's data across the full year shows 1011 s.62 assessments were undertaken. We are therefore projecting that by the end of March 2021, the service will have received 15% fewer presentations for homelessness.

Whilst this may appear out of sync with the significant demands on the service, it should be noted that the demands placed on the service are not solely driven by presentations figures, but also by:

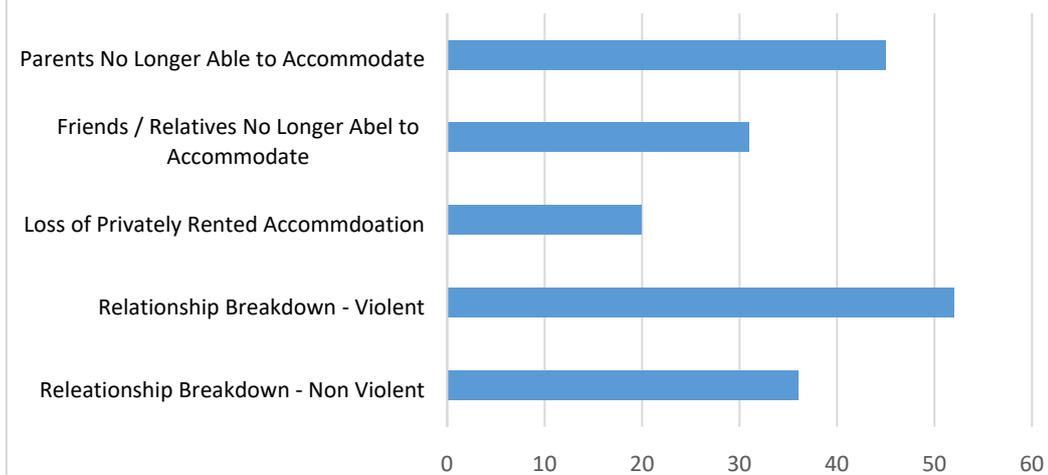
- subsequent duties accepted to people experiencing homelessness
- number of people assisted with emergency and temporary accommodation
- length of stays people have when accommodated
- complexity and range of support needs
- challenging behaviours people present with.

When looking at the main reasons for homeless presentations, the table below outlines the 6 most significant reasons for people approaching the homelessness service and a s.62 assessment being undertaken. The reasons for assessment are very much in keeping with the main reasons in previous years.



When looking at those people who have become homeless during the last financial year by reason, this is very much in keeping with the above reasons for s.62 assessments. When someone is homeless a s.73 duty is accepted and the Council has a duty to relieve the applicants homelessness. In the year to date a total of 245 applicants have been accepted as homeless and owed a s.73 duty. The top 5 reasons for households becoming homeless are evidenced below:

Reasons for s.73 Homelessness Relief Duty



Out Of Hours Emergency Response

The Homelessness service operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Flintshire's "out of hours emergency response" is available evenings and weekends as many instances of homelessness occur outside of the usual office hours. Detailed below are the number of calls received via the emergency response service in 2020. A significant increase in homelessness cases through the "out of hours emergency response" was noted early on in the first national lockdown period between April and June 2020. Demand has remained above the normal levels but has reduced as we have progressed through the calendar year.

	Jan –Mar 2020	Apr- Jun 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	2020 TOTAL
Homeless Enquiries via Out of Hours Service	22	76	46	40	184

Emergency & Temporary Accommodation

Emergency and temporary accommodation is limited in Flintshire and a lot of positive work is undertaken to help people sustain their housing placements in order to avoid the need to access emergency and temporary housing.

Prior to Covid pandemic there were 11 households placed in temporary accommodation and the emergency bed provision was also available through the Glanrafon Homeless Hub, which was operating as a traditional Night Shelter up until late March 2020.

Demand for accommodation has been significant throughout the last year and as of the 15/02/2022 had peaked at 55 households needing interim

housing. A breakdown of household types accommodated as of the 15/02/2021 can be found in the table below:

	Households by "Type" in Emergency & Temporary Housing as of 15/02/2021
Single	50
Couple	0
Family	5
TOTAL	55

Numbers have increased over the Christmas and New Year period and are expected to increase further over the coming months as we move into the next phase of the Covid recovery. A breakdown of the length of stay for those in accommodation can be found below:

	Length of Stay for Households in Emergency & Temporary Housing as of 15/02/2021
Less than 1 month	27
More than 1 but less than 3 months	7
More than 3 but less than 6 months	15
More than 6 months	6
TOTAL placed as of 15/02/2021	55

Rough Sleeper Data

Throughout the Covid pandemic, Councils have been required to report to Welsh Government the levels of rough sleeping. As referenced earlier in the report, accommodation is available to everyone who needs it, including rough sleepers and also those with no recourse to public funding.

Through our rough sleeper outreach activities, we have actively engaged with four people who had rough slept for prolonged periods during the pandemic. Outreach activities have included:

- initial response to street link referrals
- welfare checks,
- offers of food, clothing and hygiene products as required;
- offers of accommodation
- advice and assistance for Covid guidance and public health messages

Although five rough sleepers have been actively engaged during the Covid pandemic through street based engagement we are presently reporting 0 rough sleepers in Flintshire.

Of the five rough sleepers assisted through Outreach activities over the past 10½ months, two people have left the Flintshire area, one is now in custody following a period in temporary accommodation, one is presently in temporary accommodation and being supported by the Council and one is now in long term settled housing following several months in temporary accommodation.

It is usually the case that an Annual Rough Sleeper Count is completed across Wales in November of each year. In light of the “all in” guidance and more accurate and responsive data being shared with Welsh Government through Monthly Monitoring Reports and routine contact with Welsh government Officials, the National Rough Sleeper Count was cancelled this year.

Housing Support Gateway Data

The Housing Support Gateway is the single point of access for all referrals into housing related support and supported accommodation. Below is data relating to referrals received during the current financial year up to the date 15/02/2021, hence the lower numbers within Q4 as this is data reported at the half period point for Q4.

Housing Support Service Demand

Breakdown of allocated referrals (below stats do not include those currently on supported or floating waiting lists)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Floating Support	243	239	279	131
Supported Accommodation	25	27	30	9



Housing Related (Floating) Support Demand

Below is a breakdown of the Housing Related Support referrals received by the Housing Support Gateway broken down by support need type during the financial year 2020-2021. Some referrals will identify multiple needs, but the pathway records “lead need”. Once reviewed each referral is allocated to the support service most appropriate for the needs of the household requiring support.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Domestic Abuse	2	5	3	3
Learning Disabilities	4	3	11	7
Substance Misuse	13	11	5	0
Offenders	26	22	26	8
Physical Disability Sensory Impaired	5	3	2	0
Young People	14	12	13	5
Families	5	5	6	0
Older People	62	44	76	32
Generic Housing Support	82	99	89	53
Mental Health	6	2	6	3
Financial	24	33	42	20
Total	243	239	279	131

Supported Accommodation Demand

In addition to meeting peoples support needs through Floating Support, there are some referrals that have a requirement for accommodation and support. In most instances this is where people have either not lived independently before, or have failed when living independently in the past. Therefore a supported housing setting, where medium term housing (up to two years) is available, with significant support on-site enables people the opportunity to develop the skills needed to live independently.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Domestic Abuse	3	1	3	4
Young People (Under 25)	9	9	8	1
Families	9	12	9	4
Single Persons	4	5	10	0
Total	25	27	30	9

Housing Register Data

Whilst homelessness is often considered the most acute form of housing need, there are many other forms of housing needs, that qualify people for social housing such as:

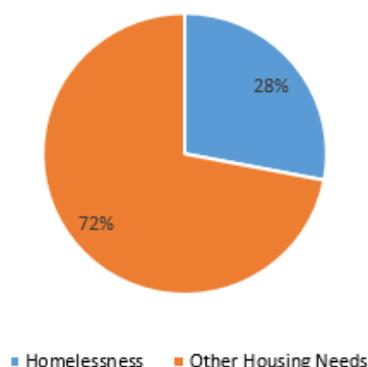
- over-crowding
- under-occupation
- financial hardship
- needing to move for medical reasons

- fleeing domestic abuse

All of these housing needs are captured and prioritised on the Common Housing Register as set out within the Common Allocations Policy.

When looking at the reasons people are accepted onto the register, we can drill down and identify an applicant's "lead need". As of 15/02/2021 there were a total of 1985 applications that are Live on Flintshire's Housing Register. 554 of these applications had "homelessness" as the reason for accessing the register. This means 28% of all applications for social housing in Flintshire is a result of homelessness or a significant risk of homelessness.

Housing Register Data - Homelessness



1.03

Outcomes during the pandemic

When managing homelessness under the Housing Wales Act 2014, the primary aim is to prevent homelessness at every opportunity, and when it does occur, ensure it is rare, brief and non-repeated. Quarterly reports known as WHO12 Data is usually submitted but have been placed on hold with more pandemic focus and responsive data being reported to Welsh government on a monthly basis at present. We continue to capture the usual datasets and report both positive and negative outcomes as people leave the service.

Positive Homeless Outcomes

Achieving positive outcomes during the pandemic has been a challenge as the availability of all forms of housing has been slower this year than in previous years. This is due to the lockdown periods where movement within the housing market has been limited and stressors within accommodation have been heightened. 153 positive outcomes have been achieved at the prevention stage this financial year and a summary of these positive case closures are detailed below by outcome reason:

	Positive Outcomes to Prevent Homelessness (s66)
Remain with Relatives/Friends	26
Move to Supported accommodation	9
Move to Lost Cost Home Ownership	1
Move to Private rented, with incentive	12
Move Private rented, no incentive	38
Issue resolved through Mediation	21
Issue resolved through Debt/Benefits assistance	10
Moved to Social Housing	36
TOTAL	153

When homelessness does occur, the Homeless Team will seek to help bring this to an end as promptly as possible and put appropriate support in place to ensure people do not return to homelessness. Below is a breakdown of the 95 positive outcomes achieved at the s.73 Duty, which is the homeless relief duty.

	Positive Outcomes to Relieve Homelessness (s73)
Return to Relatives/Friends	13
Move to Supported accommodation	27
Move to Private rented, with incentive	13
Move Private rented, no incentive	9
Moved to Social Housing	33
TOTAL	95

Negative Homeless Outcomes

Despite significant positive work undertaken by the Homeless Team and our support services, homelessness can continue despite the interventions put in place. This can be due to a wide range of reasons including but not limited to; people going into custody; people withdrawing their homeless applications; people voluntarily leaving their accommodation; people not engaging with support services; loss of contact etc.

Detailed below is a summary of negative outcomes recorded at the prevention stage s.66 duty this financial year. 38% of these households became homeless but remained open to the service and progressed onto other duties within the Housing Wales Act 2014 (s.73) whilst continuing to be assisted by the Homeless Team.

	Negative Outcomes at Prevention Stage (s66)
Loss of contact	10
Application withdrawn	22
Applicant Refused assistance	5
Change of eligibility status	1
Non co-operation	13
Homeless, transferred to s.73	31
TOTAL	82

Detailed below are the unsuccessful outcomes achieved for those people who have experienced homelessness. Those people who transfer to a s75 duty continue to be supported and in many instances accommodated by the Council and will be assisted until their homelessness ends with a positive outcome.

	Negative Outcomes at Relief Stage (s73)
Loss of Contact	14
Application withdrawn	37
Refused assistance	2
Non co-operation	31
End of 56 days, no further duty	16
End of 56 days, transfer to S75	16
TOTAL	116

SARTH 50% Nominations Data

The 50% nominations process for the Covid Cohort has been adopted across Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire SARTH housing partners since June 2020. This rapid rehousing approach is intended to prevent significant blockages within the Councils limited emergency and temporary housing provision and is an intervention necessary at present due to the Covid pandemic.

Table.1 - All Social Housing Lets by Housing Partner Jun 20 – Jan 21

	Jun 2020	Jul 2020	Aug 2020	Sep 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021
FCC	29	49	50	41	45	51	50	18
CA	8	10	5	2	7	9	11	1
GC	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
WWH	1	9	11	3	1	4	4	1
TOTAL	41	69	66	47	53	64	65	20

Table.2 – Breakdown of Lets inc. Lets to Covid Cohort Jun 20 – Jan 21

	No. of Lets by SARTH Partners	No. of Lets to Covid Cohort	Covid Cohort Lets as a %
FCC	333	16	5%
CA	53	8	15%
GC	5	1	20%
WWH	34	13	38%
TOTAL	425	38	9%

1.04

Understanding peoples journeys

The journey of a person or a household who experiences homelessness is always unique and for some, success is only achieved by meeting basic needs such as health, loneliness and feelings of safety before moving onto longer term outcomes related to housing. Success long term may well be resettlement into a home and sustainment of a tenancy, but for some people, success can be staying out of prison, maintaining sobriety and engaging with services.

Everyone who works with the Homeless Team will have a personal housing plan and support plan. This identifies the steps required to help exit homelessness. When pulling together this report we took the time to engage with some of the people we work with to better understand the steps they have taken or still need to take to exit homelessness.

Below are some extracts from the interviews completed with people we work with.

Service User 1:

“When I came out of prison I thought I wouldn’t have anywhere to live so I didn’t think about how I could move on or get out of the situation I was in. I would usually give up before I even started. I was using Class A drugs and had no goals.

I went to Glanrafon and I didn’t settle at first. I was abusive to staff and as a result I was asked to leave. I went back and asked whether the exclusion could be reduced and after speaking with the manager

she agreed to let me back in early and from that moment I started to realise that this place was good for me.

Glanrafon was a good location and I worked well with other agencies to try and better myself. Moving into my own cabin gave me some independence. I had to do more for myself and this helped me develop as a person. I had to buy my own food and take my washing into the main building for example.

After a few months, my housing solutions officer helped me move into my own temporary flat and there have been no issues. I have a support worker and we all keep in touch which works well. I hope I can be offered my own place soon. I would like to have a place of my own to live. Somewhere that I can call home, stay out of trouble. I have been clean for 6 months now.

Service User 2:

Before getting help from Flintshire Council, I hadn't had my own home for a while. I had some inheritance given to me but was unable to find anywhere that would accept my application for flats as I didn't have any references. All my inheritance then went on staying in hotels rather than being street homeless.

It's taken a while but everything has turned out really well for me since being open to Housing Solutions Team. I was in temporary accommodation for a few months. I was visited regularly by staff within Housing Solutions Team and made sure I was ok. I suffer with epilepsy and can have multiple seizures a day. Staff knew I was alone and went out of their way to help me, more than what their job says for them to do.

I have now moved into social housing. It's in an area that is quiet for me and all my neighbours are friendly. I have also a dog now that I rescued and keeps me company.

This may sound dramatic but if it weren't for the help I've received this year, I think I would be dead. I would probably have been found on the streets somewhere passed away from a seizure.

Moving into temporary accommodation meant I could keep on track with all my appointments with my neurologist. Staff reminded me of when my appointments were and transport was also arranged to ensure that I went to these appointments. My Homeless Officer would find out which services could help with my support needs, provide me with the numbers to encourage independence for myself but I always knew she was available to speak to her about stuff, if I was struggling.

My goal now is to keep, keeping myself to myself and I'm just grateful to have a roof over my head. I was homeless for such a long time and having a home has taken so much stress away from me. I am just happy to stay in and do my own thing.

Service User 3:

Before I became homeless I was in a 17 year relationship. The relationship broke down, he met someone else and that's when I became homeless. The flat we lived in was in his name.

Staff have supported me with my drug issues. I've come off drugs now and I'm sorting my benefits and universal credit out. I've been able to build my clothes back up now. My ex-partner had burnt everything I had when we broke up.

I want to find a place of my own to live now. I want to get some hobbies too. One day I would like to college and do animal studies part time.

If it weren't for the help I've had I think I would be dead from the cold or the drugs.

There are many similar examples of people's journeys. By providing people with somewhere safe to stay, without the worry of moving around from place to place, or being out on the streets, we have the opportunity to work with people in a much more meaningful way and we can better understand their needs. We can then help people to access support and sustain engagement with critical services such as GP's, Mental Health Services, Probation, Benefits Teams etc. Once we are able to meet people's basic needs, we can then help them to prepare for exiting homelessness and transitioning to independent living.

1.05

The Homeless Hub – Queensferry

Attached at Appendix 1 is a report about the Homeless Hub in Queensferry. This report outlines the approach taken when developing the original night shelter model to a 24/7 provision as a result of Covid.

Since the service began on the 17 February 2020, there have been more than 215 referrals to the Homeless Hub. People needing emergency accommodation have reported that some of the reasons for their homelessness were:

- relationship breakdowns
- prison leavers
- street homeless
- sofa surfing
- leaving hospital
- asked to leave other accommodation

In addition to being a safe place to stay, staff are on site to support people with a wide range of issues. The list below identifies the types of issues the staff on-site have supported service users with at this time (this not an exhaustive list):

- Liaison with DWP for benefits
- Gaining ID
- Citizenship Cards
- Opening bank accounts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to supported accommodation or specialist accommodation such as refuges • Support with private landlords • Employment & Training opportunities • Reconnection with family members • Social services • Registering with a GP and dentist • Attending health appointments • Attending court <p>The report also details the partnership working and range of interventions that have been available for people accessing the Homeless Hub. Case studies within the report provide an insight to how the Homeless Hub has worked from a service user's perspective.</p> <p>Significant value has been achieved through partnership working and multi-agency approaches adopted within the Homeless Hub. This model has worked in terms of having the opportunity to identify peoples support needs through active engagement. Understanding peoples support needs, limitations and fears, as well as their aspirations for the future enables better planning for longer term housing options.</p> <p>The Queensferry site was never meant to be long term provision and work is underway to identify alternative sites from which to deliver emergency accommodation and support services. We aim to identify at least one site where we could mirror the approach taken at Glanrafon with multi agency support on site, but with self-contained 1 bed accommodation in the upper floors of the building</p>
1.06	<p>Housing Support Grant</p> <p>In April 2019 Welsh Government introduced the new Housing Support Grant (HSG). This is an early intervention housing related support programme targeted at people in housing need and at increased risk of homelessness. The HSG programme brings the historic funding streams of Supporting People, Homelessness Prevention and Rent Smart Wales grants into one single funding stream.</p> <p>Despite having anticipated a reduction in this funding stream, Welsh Government in December 2020, announced a further £40m would be put into the national award for HSG. Flintshire have since received an indicative allocation letter for 2021-2022 of £7,828,610. This increase of £1,877,792 is significant and reflects the priority that Welsh Government place on this funding stream and the importance of housing related support and the prevention of homelessness.</p> <p>There is an expectation that this additional funding will provide a platform to transform services and build on positive practice that has been developed during the response to Covid, by sustaining and enhancing activities outlined with local Phase 2 Homelessness Plans. The funding should also be used to prepare for increased pressures on housing and homelessness services as we move out of the current phase and into the next phase of the Covid health pandemic.</p>

This is a wonderful opportunity to increase support services to reduce the potential impact of homelessness in Flintshire. There are however risks associated with this additional funding, most notably with regards staffing and recruitment. This risk is explored further in Section 3.01 of this report.

A marketing campaign across Wales to promote the great work of the housing support and homelessness sector is being considered in an effort to generate awareness of the work done to protect vulnerable people from homelessness, whilst also seeking to create interest in the sector for career development.

The Welsh Government set up the Homelessness Action Group to progress the steps needed to end homelessness in Wales. Their findings and recommendations have now been published and there is specific reference to the need to support the existing workforce, whilst also ensuring that roles and terms and conditions for workers within the sector are attractive to help retain and attract high quality professionals. Now more than ever this is needed if we are to maximise the impact that this additional grant funding potentially offers.

Additional activities that we be delivered through the enhanced HSG and which will have an immediate impact on homelessness services include:

Housing First

In partnership with Conwy and Denbighshire, Flintshire will be developing a Housing First Project. This is an intensive support service, targeted at people with highly complex needs and often with a significant history of rough sleeping. Elected Members from the Community Housing & Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a briefing about the roll out of Housing First on the 20th January 2021.

Opening up the Private Rented Sector

Limited social housing, increasing demand, and lengthier waiting times, mean that supporting people to access the private rental sector is more important than ever. Having dedicated officers working with landlords, letting agencies and prospective private renters to remove barriers to securing a privately rented home in Flintshire will support the move towards a “rapid rehousing approach” and seek to increase the supply of affordable homes across all tenures.

Additional Forms of Supported Housing

One of the areas of attention relates to increasing capacity for supported housing for people over the age of 25 with complex needs. Flintshire already has a similar project for young people aged 16-25, which works extremely well with very positive outcomes for its residents. Developing this approach further to offer more supported housing units will be explored through the additional revenue funding, subject to a suitable property being identified.

Increasing capacity within Tenancy Support Services

Whilst we have not yet seen the full impact of Covid due to the protections of six months notices and court closures, there are increasing levels of hardship that have a significant impact on people’s wellbeing, affordability and tenancy sustainability which all heighten potential risks of failed tenancies and homelessness. Increasing generic and specialist tenancy

	<p>support services will assist with increasing pressures within our communities through early intervention.</p>
<p>1.07</p>	<p>Ending Evictions into Homelessness In October 2019 Welsh Government published a Policy Statement, outlining a Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness. Within the document there is reference to “rapid rehousing” which is now a core approach for Wales; the importance of partnership working; adopting early interventions and support for those in crisis. The Policy Statement clearly sets out a vision for:</p> <p><i>”A Wales where everyone has a safe home that meets their needs and supports a healthy, successful and prosperous life. A Wales where we work together to prevent homelessness and where it cannot be prevented ensure it is rare, brief and unrepeated.”</i></p> <p>Whilst evictions have not been a significant issue within the last year due to safeguards put in place during the Covid pandemic such as extended notice periods and eviction bans, the risk of increasing numbers of evictions across social and private sector housing is significant and a collective effort is needed to ensure that robust approaches are embedded across the public, private and 3rd sector to work together and support people who may be at increased risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Funding such as HSG provides an opportunity to reinforce services which are prevention focussed, but other income streams such as The National Lottery Community Fund, are also available.</p> <p>The National Lottery have recently launched a £10m Community Fund called “Helping End Homelessness” to respond specifically to the challenges people and communities face around housing and homelessness.</p> <p>Funding is available to strategic projects that operate across one or more local authority areas in urban and rural settings that seek to redesign services to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurrent. They will be person-centred and delivered by multi-agency partnerships where third sector and public sector organisations work closely together, based on a mutually agreed vision for tackling homelessness.</p> <p>Flintshire along with all other North Wales Councils have come together to work with a range of partners on a Regional Proposal. As the funding guidance does not allow Local Authorities to submit proposals for this funding stream, Clwyd Alyn and Shelter Cymru are leading the development of a Regional Project for North Wales called “Together to End Homelessness”.</p> <p>An initial expression of interest has been submitted and if successful a development grant will be issued which will enable further work to develop the project. A final decision on longer term funding would then be expected in November 2021. The submission to The National Lottery outlines that:</p> <p><i>“Together to End Homelessness is a partnership between the public, 3rd and private rented sector and people affected by homelessness.</i></p>

	<p><i>Spanning the 6 North Wales local authorities, we believe the prevention of homelessness is a collective responsibility, and we will work across departmental, organisational, and geographical boundaries to achieve our vision where:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>no-one loses their home or is evicted into homelessness</i> • <i>there is a clear pathway into sustainable housing when homelessness does occur</i> <p><i>By pooling our considerable skills, knowledge, and resources we want to deliver a more cohesive and networked service that draws on and extends the existing strengths of individuals and organisations, taking forward the aspirations of multiple service providers to successfully deliver earlier intervention to prevent homelessness, whilst providing service redesign and system-change. Landlords, local authorities' and partners will work together aiming to end evictions into homelessness from all tenures."</i></p> <p>Regional working is a real positive within North Wales. This piece of work compliments and adds value to the North Wales Regional Homelessness Strategy and seeks to build on existing positive ways of working across North Wales.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Lettings functions are "business as usual" so there are no additional resource implication of continuing to adopt the 50% nominations approach within either Housing Management or Asset Management functions. Revenue funding is in place to sustain the intensive support offered to people moving into new homes.
2.02	Not moving people on from emergency and temporary housing would lead to increased financial pressures with potential for significant expenditure on hotel and bed & breakfast accommodation. Increased expenditure through homeless placements and longer term cost implications is captured within the Councils Risk Recovery Plan under Risk Measure HA09.
2.03	Developing accommodation as an alternative to the Homeless Hub in Queensferry, will require significant capital investment by the Council. This planned activity is already outlined within the Councils Capital Programme. External funding streams will also be explored as part of the development process.
2.04	With Courts closed and no evictions it creates a positive situation however this will not be forever. There will be an increase in homelessness and there is a need to increase capacity for temporary accommodation to meet this future demand. The alternative is costly Bed and Breakfast.
2.05	Housing Support Grant provides opportunity to deliver more support worker capacity but cannot be used for statutory functions such as

	homeless case management under the Housing Wales Act 2014, or housing management activity within the temporary accommodation portfolio. If an increase in these roles is required to meet growing demand, this would need to be funded through Council funding.
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
3.01	<p>The following risks and mitigations have been identified by way of control measures:</p> <p>Risk: Insufficient turnover and move on from emergency and temporary housing creates blockages and insufficient capacity to meet future demand and increases financial risk</p> <p>Mitigation: Continue to support the 50% nominations process to the “Covid cohort”. Further increased engagement with the private rented sector to increase supply of move on options. Review of current temporary accommodation and increase capacity as needed and if feasible.</p> <p>Risk: Significant reliance on the Queensferry Homeless Hub and no alternative emergency bed provision longer term.</p> <p>Mitigation: Support the 50% nominations process for “Covid cohort” enabling to emergency and temporary accommodation portfolio to turnover and explore a wide range of alternative models and locations for emergency bed provision.</p> <p>Risk: Failure to utilise the full award of Housing Support Grant in light of the significant increase in this year’s award and due to lack of appropriate prevention activities, homelessness increases exponentially</p> <p>Mitigation: A robust delivery plan, prompt commissioning of services along with monitoring the spend against the delivery plan.</p> <p>Risk: Failure to secure enough people into posts in order to fulfil the aspirations of the HSG Delivery Plan and increase in housing support and homeless prevention activities.</p> <p>Mitigations: Explore communications opportunities to generate interest in the housing and homelessness sector as a career choice and create training and development opportunities in order to develop, attract and retain appropriately skilled workforce.</p>	
3.02	Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact	
	Long-term	Positive – Increase in targeted support and alternative delivery methods to ensure services are inclusive for all

	Prevention	Prevention - Preventing homelessness through ensuring there is adequate support and accommodation to cater for a range of people's needs
	Integration	Positive – Increased integration between services and partner organisations
	Collaboration	Positive – Increased collaboration between services, partner organisations and service users
	Involvement	Positive – Service user involvement to help shape effective services so that support is timely and person centred
3.03	Well-being Goals Impact	
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – With additional funding more jobs will be created to deliver housing related support on a greater scale within Flintshire. Opportunities to support the labour market through training and development opportunities are being considered in conjunction with colleagues from Communities for Work.
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Creating services that are prevention focused and build resilience to avoid households becoming homeless
	Healthier Wales	Positive – Reduction in rough sleeping, overcoming health inequalities associated with homelessness and poor housing conditions and investment to increase targeted support for people with housing issues and mental ill-health
	More equal Wales	Positive – Services are delivered in a way that are inclusive for all. Consideration has been given to local and regional gaps in provision for often marginalised communities such as the homeless, those with mental health or substances issues and the LGBTQ+ community.
	Cohesive Wales	No Impact
	Vibrant Wales	No impact
	Globally responsible Wales	No impact

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	Consultation with Housing Associations and Local Authority partners, via the SARTH Steering Group, ensures there is a consistent approach being adopted across all three counties for social housing allocations. All partners within Conwy Denbighshire and Flintshire are supportive of the continuation of the 50% nominations process for the current Covid cohort.
4.02	Consultation and engagement has been undertaken with a number of people who have accessed homeless services during the pandemic and specifically the Homeless Hub in Queensferry this will be shared with Members when presenting this report to Scrutiny Committee.
4.03	Engagement with Service users and stakeholders undertaken when developing our Housing Support Grant Delivery Plan. Council colleagues have also been consulted to inform plans for responding to gaps in provision and new revenue activity on the back of the additional £1.87m HSG funding.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Glanrafon Emergency Bed Provision Report by The Wallich

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Homeless Action Group Recommendations https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-11/homelessness-action-group-report-july-2020.pdf</p> <p>Rough Sleeping in Wales – Everyone’s Problem; No One’s Responsibility https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/2020-11/Rough-sleeping-Eng_0.pdf</p> <p>Welsh Government Strategy for Preventing an Ending Homelessness https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/homelessness-strategy.pdf</p> <p>Housing Support Grant Guidance https://gov.wales/housing-support-grant-practice-guidance</p> <p>Welsh Government Draft Budget 2021-2022 https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-12/2021-2022-draft-budget-narrative.pdf</p> <p>The National Lottery Community Fund – Helping End Homelessness https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/helping-end-homelessness</p>

	<p>North Wales Regional Homelessness Strategy – “People, homes and services”</p> <p>https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Housing/North-Wales-Regional-Homelessness-Strategy.pdf</p>
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Martin Cooil, Housing & Prevention Service Manager Telephone: 07880 423234 E-mail: martin.cooil@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>Housing Support Grant This is an early intervention housing related support programme targeted at people in housing need and at increased risk of homelessness. The HSG programme brings the historic funding streams for Supporting People, Homelessness Prevention and Rent Smart Wales grants into 1 single funding stream.</p>
8.02	<p>Covid Cohort Those people affected during the pandemic period by homelessness and presently accommodated by Flintshire’s Homeless Team and requiring rehousing to resolve their homelessness.</p>
8.03	<p>Common Allocation Policy The Common Allocations Policy outlines the approach to managing applications for social housing and awarding priority for different housing needs when people apply for social housing. This Policy also outlines how social housing is to be allocated. The Common Allocations Policy has been adopted by all social housing providers within the counties of Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire.</p>
8.04	<p>Common Housing Register The Common Housing Register is the register of demand and need for social housing in Flintshire. Applicants who are verified as have a housing need as per the Common Allocations Policy will be accepted onto the Common Housing Register. All social housing is allocated via the Common Housing Register.</p>
8.05	<p>Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) A Single Access Route to Housing, operates in Flintshire and ensures that people are offered a wide range of housing options. Those people with a clearly evidenced housing need, will be accepted onto Flintshire’s Common Housing Register.</p>
8.06	<p>Rapid Rehousing Rapid rehousing is an approach for people whose first and most important need is to access housing; with a lack of it often the main reason why they</p>

	are homeless. Rapid rehousing helps people settle quickly back with family or friends, into private rented, social housing or other affordable and safe long-term housing options.
8.07	Housing First A housing and support approach which gives people who have experienced homelessness and chronic health and social care needs a stable home from which to rebuild their lives. Provides intensive, person-centred, holistic support that is open-ended. Places no conditions on individuals; however, they should desire to have a tenancy.
8.08	LGBTQ+ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), and others. The "plus" represents other sexual identities including pansexual and Two-Spirit.