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Am unrhyw ymholiad yn ymwneud â'r agenda hwn cysylltwch â Rebecca Barrett
(Rhif Ffôn: 01443 864245 Ebst: barrerm@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher, 7 Tachwedd 2018

Annwyl Syr/Fadam,

Bydd cyfarfod **Pwyllgor Craffu Polisi ac Adnoddau** yn cael ei gynnal yn **Sirhowy Room - Tŷ Penallta, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** ar **Dydd Mawrth, 13eg Tachwedd, 2018** am **5.30 pm** i ystyried materion a gynhwysir yn yr agenda canlynol. Gall cynghorwyr a'r cyhoedd sy'n dymuno siarad am unrhyw eitem wneud hynny drwy wneud cais i'r Cadeirydd. Mae croeso i chi hefyd ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod. Mae'r ddau gais hyn yn gofyn am gyfnod rhybudd o 3 diwrnod gwaith, a bydd cyfieithu ar y pryd yn cael ei ddarparu os gofynnir amdano.

Mae pob cyfarfod Pwyllgor yn agored i'r Wasg a'r Cyhoedd. Gofynnir i arsylwyr a chyfranogwyr ymddwyn gyda pharch ac ystyriaeth at eraill. Sylwer y bydd methu â gwneud hynny yn golygu y gofynnir i chi adael y cyfarfodydd ac efallai y cewch eich hebrwng o'r safle.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christina Harrhy'.

Christina Harrhy
PRIF WEITHREDWR DROS DRO

AGENDA

Tudalennau

- 1 I dderbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb
- 2 Datganiadau o Ddiddordeb.

Atgoffi'r Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion o'u cyfrifoldeb personol i ddatgan unrhyw fuddiannau personol a/neu niweidiol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw eitem o fusnes ar yr agenda hwn yn unol â Deddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000, Cyfansoddiad y Cyngor a'r Cod Ymddygiad ar gyfer Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion.

A greener place Man gwyrddach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat



I gymeradwyo a llofnodi'r cofnodion canlynol:-

- 3 Pwyllgor Craffu Polisi ac Adnoddau a gynhaliwyd ar 2il Hydref 2018. 1 - 8
- 4 Ystyried unrhyw fater a gyfeiriwyd at y Pwyllgor hwn yn unol â'r drefn galw i mewn.
- 5 I dderbyn adroddiad llafar gan yr Aelod(au) Cabinet.
- 6 Rhaglen Waith y Dyfodol Pwyllgor Craffu Polisi ac Adnoddau. 9 - 22
- 7 I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau* Cabinet canlynol:-
1. Cynllun Cydraddoldeb Strategol - Adroddiad Monitro a Gwella Blynyddol 2017-2018 – 3ydd Hydref 2018;
 2. Adroddiad Gwelliannau Blynyddol 2017/18 – 31ain Hydref 2018;
 3. Cynnig i sefydlu cronfa wrth gefn a glustnodwyd ar gyfer buddsoddiad mewn Technoleg Ddigidol – 31ain Hydref 2018.

**Os oes aelod o'r Pwyllgor Craffu yn dymuno i unrhyw un o'r adroddiadau Cabinet uchod i gael eu dwyn ymlaen ar gyfer adolygiad yn y cyfarfod, cysylltwch â Rebecca Barrett, 01443 864245, erbyn 10.00 a.m. ar ddydd Llun, 12fed Tachwedd 2018.*

I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau Craffu canlynol:-

- 8 Egwyddorion Gweithio Ystwyth - Cyflwyniad.
- 9 Strategaeth Ddigartrefedd a Chynllun Gweithredu 2018-2022. 23 - 70

Cylchrediad:

Cynghorwyr M.A. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, K. Etheridge, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, L. Harding, G. Johnston, G. Kirby (Is Gadeirydd), C.P. Mann, Mrs D. Price, J. Pritchard (Cadeirydd), J. Ridgewell, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Taylor a L.G. Whittle

A Swyddogion Priodol

SUT FYDDWN YN DEFNYDDIO EICH GWYBODAETH

Bydd yr unigolion hynny sy'n mynychu cyfarfodydd pwyllgor i siarad/roi tystiolaeth yn cael eu henwi yng nghofnodion y cyfarfod hynny, weithiau bydd hyn yn cynnwys eu man gweithio neu fusnes a'r barnau a fynegir. Bydd cofnodion o'r cyfarfod gan gynnwys manylion y siaradwyr ar gael i'r cyhoedd ar wefan y Cyngor ar www.caerffili.gov.uk. ac eithrio am drafodaethau sy'n ymwneud ag eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig.

Mae gennych nifer o hawliau mewn perthynas â'r wybodaeth, gan gynnwys yr hawl i gael mynediad at wybodaeth sydd gennym amdanoch a'r hawl i gwyno os ydych yn anhapus gyda'r modd y mae eich gwybodaeth yn cael ei brosesu. Am wybodaeth bellach ar sut rydym yn prosesu eich gwybodaeth a'ch hawliau, ewch i'r Hysbysiad Preifatrwydd Cyfarfodydd Pwyllgor Llawn ar ein gwefan <http://www.caerffili.gov.uk/Pwyllgor/Preifatrwydd> neu cysylltwch â Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol drwy e-bostio griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk neu ffoniwch 01443 863028.



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
TUESDAY, 2ND OCTOBER 2018 AT 5.30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Pritchard - Chair
Councillor G. Kirby - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

M. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, K. Etheridge, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, L. Harding, C.P. Mann, J. Ridgewell, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Taylor, L.G. Whittle

Cabinet Members:

C. Gordon (Corporate Services), Mrs B. Jones (Finance, Performance and Governance),
Mrs L. Phipps (Homes and Places)

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), L. Lucas (Head of Head of Customer and Digital Services), N. Scammell (Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer), M. Williams (Interim Head of Property Services), C. Davies (Private Sector Housing Manager), F. Wilkins (Housing Services Manager), L. Lane (Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer), C. Forbes-Thompson (Interim Head of Democratic Services), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Dawson and Mrs D. Price.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES - 6TH SEPTEMBER 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 6th September 2018 (minute nos. 1 - 11) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBERS

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the reports from Councillors C. Gordon, Mrs L. Phipps and Mrs B. Jones, which provided an update on their respective portfolios, and had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

Councillor C. Gordon (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services) updated Members on the situation regarding workforce planning applications. Over 500 expressions of interest have been received and are being considered in detail by the relevant Senior Management Team, CMT, HR and the Cabinet Member to establish whether the business case is viable. The intention is to advise employees by the end of October 2018 as to whether their expression of interest can be supported.

The Scrutiny Committee were advised that the Council has been commended for their support of a special employment charter to support terminally ill employees in the workplace, which is part of the TUC's wider Dying to Work campaign. Members were also updated on the recent Volunteer Achievement Awards at Blackwood Miners Institute, a Digital Showcase held at Penallta House, Health and Safety successes, and work being carried out by the Procurement and Information Governance Teams.

Members sought further information on how the viability of business cases for workforce planning applications would be determined. The Cabinet Member explained that he was unable to comment further at this time due to ongoing discussions with HR and reiterated that applicants would be advised by the end of October. Assurances were given that any viable applications would be scrutinised and challenged by the relevant bodies in the correct and proper manner. A Member sought information on the numbers of starters replacing leavers across the Authority and the Corporate Director confirmed that he would arrange to circulate details to Members following the meeting.

Councillor L. Phipps (Cabinet Member for Homes and Places) provided an update on the recent introduction of Universal Credit across the county borough, the successful, Caerphilly Homes Celebration Event at Llancaiach Fawr and the latest progress across the WHQS programme. Members queried whether there had been an impact on staff workloads or to recipients arising from the changes to Universal Credit. The Cabinet Member confirmed that she would make further enquiries on the numbers affected by the changes, and explained that resources are being focused on supporting new claims and providing support/guidance to residents on the new processes.

Councillor Mrs B. Jones (Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Governance) provided an update on developments across Legal and Democratic Services, including the recent appointment of the Council's Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, and the lay member vacancy on the Standards Committee. The Scrutiny Self-Evaluation questionnaire will be circulated to all Members shortly and the results will be reported to Members. The Electoral Services annual canvass is underway and 63.25% of residential properties have replied to date. Every effort (including door to door canvassing) will be made to achieve the highest response rate possible. The Electoral Services Team are then due to commence work on a review of Polling Places within the county borough.

A Member referred to the large number of households that have not yet responded to the canvass and suggested that consideration be given to collecting this information by other means (such as Council Tax records). A query was received on the number of canvass

visits made to each non-responsive property. Discussion also took place on whether polling district boundaries could be examined, given that there are occasions where a street can span two districts. The Cabinet Member confirmed that she would relay the queries and comments to the Electoral Services Manager.

The Cabinet Members were thanked for their reports.

6. POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Cath Forbes-Thompson (Interim Head of Democratic Services) presented the report, which outlined details of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the period October 2018 to April 2019. Members were asked to consider the FWP alongside the Cabinet Work Programme as appended to the report and to suggest any changes to its content.

It was noted that there had been no report requests since the publication of the agenda papers. Members were advised that they would be contacted in due course regarding the five reports listed for 13th November 2018, in order to determine which report could be deferred to a later date or distributed as an information item.

Following discussion on its contents, it was unanimously agreed that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Council's website.

7. CABINET REPORTS

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

8. YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CORPORATE SERVICES 2017/18

Members welcomed Ed Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services) to his first meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Mr Edmunds introduced the report, which provided Members with a performance update of the Corporate Services Directorate. The report reviewed performance against objectives within each service area over the last 12 months, highlighted the exceptions, set out key objectives/priorities for the next twelve months (including any future challenges) and identified areas for improvement. The Committee were referred to performance against each service area as set out in the report (Corporate Finance, People Services, Property Services, Procurement Services, Corporate Customer Services, and Legal and Democratic Services) and were invited to ask questions of the relevant Heads of Service in attendance. It was noted that Property Services have now moved to the Communities Directorate and that future performance will be reported to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Discussion took place regarding the levels of sickness absence across Corporate Services for 2017/18. A Member expressed the need for improvement and sought assurances that all instances of sickness absence are proactively managed through return to work

interviews, trade union support, and monitoring of sickness levels. It was explained that the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services is now holding quarterly meetings with Heads of Service to identify whether any processes require review, ascertain that relevant procedures have been followed, and highlight any underlying reasons for absences. Members were reminded of the need to follow the appropriate processes for the management of sickness absence but were given assurances that the situation is being kept under review in order to bring about an improvement for 2018/19.

In response to a Member's query, it was confirmed that the Council are examining the feasibility of introducing a scheme for rewarding/recognising good attendance. Clarification was also sought on the reasons for sickness absence across Customer Services. Officers confirmed that the short-term absences mainly relate to ailments such as coughs and colds but are not stress-related, and that long-term sickness absence related to more serious illnesses.

A Member referred to future challenges within Procurement Services and queried why the Council had been unable to recruit for 2 fixed term positions covering the WHQS programme. It was explained that there is generally a shortage of professionals with the specific knowledge requirements for procurement within the EU sector and therefore the Council will now look to develop trainees at a lesser grade in order to cover these positions.

Discussion took place regarding the Contact Centre's telephone answer times and call handling system and a Member queried whether call duration could be reduced by way of providing menu options for a preferred language when callers hear the automated greeting. Officers explained that legislation requires this greeting to be bi-lingual but that the system is being upgraded in December 2018 which, together with the recruitment of 6 apprentices, should see an improvement in call handling times. In response to a query regarding apprenticeships, Members were reminded that Cabinet recently approved the allocation of £530k of savings in order to provide apprenticeship opportunities across a range of Councils services that had been identified as in need of additional resources in order to meet demand.

Concerns were raised regarding the low number of redeployments in 2017/18 (10 staff) given the number of staff in the redeployment pool (110 staff) and a Member suggested that cross-directorate secondments could help to improve this position. He indicated that he would be satisfied to receive a more detailed response in writing following the meeting. Officers explained that many vacancies require a particular skillset which may not be met by staff in the redeployment pool, and that in addition a number of the posts are grant-funded. At the present time there are 88 employees in the pool. It was confirmed that further information would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee discussed the Council Tax collection rate for 2017/18 of 96.9% collected in full. Officers explained that this relates to in-year collection and that the team proactively pursues arrears, which increases the collection rate to 99.5% over a typical 3 year period. It was noted that no authorities have a 100% collection rate and that non-payments are mainly due to bankruptcy, death or absconders. In addition, the Council over-exceeds its income targets and is ranked the 6th best in Wales for Council Tax collections.

A Member referred to future challenges within Property Services and expressed a need for changes to be made in terms of service delivery moving forward, given the likely resource pressures that have been identified from 2020 onwards as a result of the 21st Century Schools Band B programme. Officers explained that careful workforce planning has commenced to identify how the project team will take this forward and the resources that will be required. It was noted that a report on 21st Century Schools Match Funding Proposals is scheduled for Cabinet consideration which will outline the funding required to take the next stage of the programme forward. In addition, Officers also referred to the

Council's Business Improvement Portfolio' (BIP) Board which will lead a portfolio of change across the organisation to transform a range of areas and ensure that services are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible.

In referring to the overview of People Services as set out in the report, Members sought clarification on the reasons for a reduction in payroll payments for 2017/18, and requested specifics of the compulsory redundancies during 2017/18. Officers confirmed that they would arrange to circulate this information to Members following the meeting.

Having fully considered the report, the Scrutiny Committee noted its contents and the progress made against performance objectives within the Corporate Services Directorate for 2017/18. Members thanked the Heads of Service for their updates and for responding to the queries raised during consideration of the report.

9. WELLBEING OBJECTIVE 5: INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOMES TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND COMMUNITIES – END OF YEAR REPORT (2017/18)

Shaun Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) presented the report, which provided an update on performance made through Wellbeing Objective (WO5) for 2017/18 (Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities), and had also been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 20th September 2018.

Officers highlighted the significant investment in the WHQS programme (over £150m to date) and the achievements made towards meeting the Wellbeing Objective. These included the creation of jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities, progress made towards the realisation of 'whole home compliance' via internal and external works, energy efficiency and physical environmental improvements, and the increased provision of accommodation adapted to meet tenants with specific housing needs. It was noted that although some slippage has been experienced with the external works element, achievement of the WHQS standard is on target to be delivered by the 2020 deadline. At the end of March 2018, 73% of properties were compliant in relation to internal work and 46% for external work, with overall compliance being 35%. Full details of the progress made in respect of this Wellbeing Objective were appended to the report.

Tenant satisfaction levels continue to be monitored, with tenants generally happy with internal works (86%) and to a lesser extent for external works (70%). It was noted that the delivery of the WHQS programme remains challenging but is clearly making a significant contribution towards the successful achievement of the Wellbeing Objective. The programme continues to be financially viable, with the possibility of some additional borrowing being required towards the end of the programme. New arrangements introduced during 2017/18 means that the Council is well placed to deliver the WHQS programme in full by the 2020 deadline, with the substantial investment made helping to transform lives and communities. Therefore the report recommended that the Wellbeing Objective be deemed as being "partially successful" for 2017/18.

Discussion took place regarding the WHQS Environmental Programme, which will see circa £10.6m of investment for environmental improvements across council estates in the county borough. A 'Shape Your Place' consultation is being held for communities to give ideas on how to improve their local area, and Officers explained that this will be managed by a series of events and online surveys to seek the views of residents regarding environmental improvements. The Scrutiny Committee were advised that the £10.6m budget spend will be allocated based on the priorities that are identified in each area, and in response to a Member's query on whether the budget would extend to surrounding areas, it was confirmed that the focus would be on improvements within council estates themselves.

A Member commented on a lack of visible environmental improvement works to date in his

ward and Officers explained that there had been some delays in commencing the Environmental Programme (in that it began several years after the main WHQS programme of works had commenced) but that it is now gathering momentum. Members were advised that once the priorities have been identified from the consultation events, then they should start to see improvement works being carried out across their communities. Discussion also took place regarding the tenant survey process carried out upon completion of works and the proposal to conduct telephone surveys as a means of increasing feedback.

Following consideration of the report and in noting its contents, Members unanimously agreed that the Wellbeing Objective WO5 (Investment in Council Homes to Transform Lives and Communities) be judged as partially successful for 2017/18.

10. YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CAERPHILLY HOMES

Shaun Couzens (Chief Housing Officer) presented the report, which had previously been considered by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 20th September 2018. The report provided an overview of the performance of the services provided by Caerphilly Homes during 2017/18, set out the key service objectives for 2018 to 2023 and highlighted any potential challenges that may affect the delivery of these priorities.

Details of performance within each Caerphilly Homes section (Housing Repair Operations, Private Sector Housing, Public Sector Housing and Welsh Housing Quality Standard) together with areas for improvement, key objectives and priorities for the year ahead, and the main risks identified, were summarised within the report.

The Scrutiny Committee were advised that overall the performance of Caerphilly Homes for 2017/18 is considered to be good and continues to build on performance from previous years. Aspects of the service requiring improvement have been identified, and the section will work closely with stakeholders to introduce changes that will result in improved services and performance. Particular reference was made to the key priorities for the period 2018 to 2023 as set out in Section 4.19 of the report, which will aim to deliver further service improvements and will ensure that Caerphilly Homes are able to respond proactively to the needs and aspirations of those who use these services. In addition, a number of challenges have been identified that may affect the ability to implement these service improvements successfully. However, the service is currently regarded by the Housing Management Team to be well placed to respond to these challenges.

During the course of the ensuing debate, a Member queried whether legal costs incurred by the Authority in relation to rent arrears are recovered from tenants. Officers explained that these costs are added to the rent account if the amount does not exceed renegotiation terms, and that in the majority of cases, the costs are successfully negotiated and recovered from tenants. It was emphasised that the Council will actively seek alternatives to eviction for rent arrears, such as working with the homelessness prevention team to seek a recovery solution.

A Member expressed a need to reduce the days taken to let accommodation (69 days target and 84.52 days actual in 2017/18). Officers explained that an increasing number of voids are being refurbished with additional work being undertaken to bring the internal elements of the property up to WHQS, which is contributing towards longer voids period. Members were advised that the void period takes effect from the point that the property first becomes vacant. In some cases this period can be reduced if the tenant allows pre-inspection access before the end of their tenancy. Officers also explained that work has been carried out to promote hard to let number of properties, or those with an extended void period. A number of these properties were successfully re-let during 2016/17, which had an adverse impact on the overall number of void days. Discussion also took place regarding low demand properties and the work being carried out to manage these

properties in line with tenant expectations.

Further information was sought in respect of the priority to introduce a new management charge schedule for leaseholders. Officers explained that this had come about as a result of costs not being recovered for repair works in some buildings and that the new process would standardise the arrangements already in place.

Discussion took place regarding the percentage of empty Council Housing properties across the Authority (1.76%) and a Member queried whether this was also representative of the number of empty private sector properties and whether it is possible to compare like for like. Officers explained that it is difficult to measure the two owing to different parameters and circumstances for the two letting types, and also because the number of empty Council Housing properties represent a point in time figure. Officers also provided further details of the Right to Move pilot scheme to market a number of hard to let properties, explaining that the Council acts as the contact/liaison point between the property landlord and potential tenants who meet the relevant eligibility criteria.

A Member queried how Caerphilly Homes will contribute to the 'Coalition for Change' to drive forward housing improvements across the Lansbury Park estate. Officers confirmed that an additional funding application has recently been submitted to Welsh Government in this regard and that a decision is expected in the near future.

In response to a query on an increased target for fuel use in 2017/18, Officers explained that this was because they had anticipated greater use of the fleet due to increased momentum across the WHQS programme. However, there was an increase in shared vehicle arrangements, together with the acquisition of new fuel-efficient vehicles, which led to actual fuel costs being less than anticipated. Reference was made to the continued use of bed and breakfast accommodation and Officers explained that this is due to an increase in homelessness cases but that they are continually looking to use alternatives wherever possible. The Committee were also pleased to note the details of Caerphilly Homes' nomination for "Best Performing Authority in the UK for Building Maintenance" at the 2017 APSE Performance Networks Awards and congratulated all staff involved.

Following consideration of the report, Members noted its contents and progress made against performance objectives within Caerphilly Homes for 2017/18.

11. PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR DELIVERY OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT

Fiona Wilkins (Housing Services Manager) presented the report, which provided an update on performance in relation to the delivery of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), and also highlighted the challenges that have affected the delivery of these adaptations during 2017/18.

The Scrutiny Committee were advised that performance of the Private Sector Housing Adaptations Team in delivery of DFGs during 2017/18 has shown continuous improvement, although there are some aspects of the service which would benefit from further improvement. The main challenge moving forward relates to the continued ability to provide a high quality service that meets the needs and aspirations of service users, while satisfying medium term financial plan priorities, and the Housing Adaptations Team is well placed to respond to this challenge.

It was noted that in 2017/18 Caerphilly Council was ranked 21st out of the 22 local authorities in relation to the time taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant, but that the Council delivered the 6th highest number of DFGs with limited staff resources. Due to concerns regarding how the performance indicator data is gathered nationally, Welsh Government have now withdrawn this as a mandatory national performance indicator, and

are developing a new suite of performance indicators linked to the ENABLE system, which consider delivery of all types of adaptations (not just DFGs).

When reviewing performance in 2017/18 across Caerphilly Council, the picture is one of improvement. Following the introduction of improvements as set out in the report, the average number of days to deliver a DFG has decreased each quarter, meeting the target in quarter 3 and exceeding the target in quarter 4. This improvement has continued into quarter 1 of 2018/19 (266 days). It is hoped that continued improvements will be achieved in 2018/19, following the consideration of matters as detailed in Section 4.17 of the report which related to client or performance focused service.

During the course of the ensuing debate, Officers outlined the detailed and lengthy multi-agency process in place to deliver the DFG, which includes involvement by Social Services, the Occupation Therapy (OT) service, and the Adaptations Team. Members were advised that clients' financial circumstances and individual needs can change throughout the process, and these can lead to complications which can extend the overall delivery period. It was noted that Social Services prioritise assessments to ensure resources are targeted to those in the greatest need and at greatest risk.

A Member queried whether the length of time to deliver a DFG can result in delays to hospital discharge times. Officers explained that small adaptation works will be prioritised and that the section encourages early engagement with relevant agencies in order to get the application moving as quickly as possible. Officers also provided an outlined of the criteria required in order to meet the DFG. All clients are assessed on their individual circumstances but are required to complete a financial assessment form in all cases.

In response to a Member's query on whether additional staffing resources would improve delivery times for the DFG, Officers outlined budgetary limitations, previous significant difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified/trained, and highlighted the other competing priorities and workloads within the team. The provision of Disabled Facilities Grants has been reviewed from a procedural point of view within Private Sector Housing and a number of items addressed to improve delivery times for adaptations. These were set out in Section 4.16 of the report, and it was emphasised to the Committee that a balance needs to be met between the number of available staff and the service on offer.

Officers responded to queries on how difficulties in maintaining sufficient contractors to undertake adaptation works will be addressed, by explaining that they are examining the potential for a procurement framework to deliver Disabled Facilities Grant. However, further investigation is required as such arrangements may be contrary to tender requirements specified in relevant grant legislation. There are also difficulties in obtaining timely start dates from successful contractors, due to competing pressures linked in part to their workloads external to Private Sector Housing (which may include WHQS, Housing Repair Operations and private contracts)

Following consideration of the report, Members agreed that the current level of performance against delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants be deemed as acceptable, and noted the details of the improvements made to date.

The meeting closed at 8.04 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2018, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH NOVEMBER 2018

**SUBJECT: POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD
WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholders.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation. The Forward Work Programmes contribute to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016 by ensuring there is an effective scrutiny function and that council policies are scrutinised against the following goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on 2nd October 2018. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period November 2018 to April 2019.

4.2 The forward work programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

4.3 The Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1. The Cabinet Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

5.1 This report contributes to the well-being goals as set out in links to strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in that by ensuring the scrutiny function is effective when reviewing services and policies and ensure it considers the wellbeing goals.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Rebecca Barrett, Committee Services Officer

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer
Catherine Forbes-Thompson, Interim Head of Democratic Services

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

Appendix 2 Cabinet Work Programme.

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme November 2018 to April 2019			
Meeting Date: 13th November 2018			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses
Agile Working Principles Presentation			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Homelessness Strategy			Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer

Meeting Date: MTFP Special 3rd December 2018			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses
MTFP			

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
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Meeting Date: 15th January 2019			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses
Treasury Management Annual Strategy, Prudential Indicators and MRP Policy 2019/20			Nadeem Akhtar
Housing Revenue Account Charges 2019/20	To seek members approval of the 2019/20 proposed increases for council house rent and other Housing charges.	The annual rent increase must be in accordance with the rent policy issued by Welsh Government, but must also ensure adequate resource to meet and maintain the WHQS Programme as well as providing an efficient housing service.	Lesley Allen
6 Month Update Wellbeing Objectives			Ros Roberts
Council Tax Premiums	Member Request	Options around charging residents more council Tax with second and empty homes	Nicole Scammell – Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer

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Meeting Date: 26th February 2019			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses
Legal Services – Resources	Member request	Request from Committee.	Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Local Housing Strategy			Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Rationalisation of Assets/ Community Hubs			Mark Williams – Head of Property

Meeting Date: 9th April 2019			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Meeting Date: to be confirmed			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses
WAO – WHQS Outcome Report			Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Recruitment and Selection/ Probation			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Apprenticeships			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Organisational Development Strategy			Lynne Donovan - Head of People Services
Shared Resource Service (SRS) (Special Meeting) (P1)	To present the proposal in respect of the Authority joining the SRS.	The SRS is a joint committee that presently included Gwent Police, Torfaen CBC, Newport CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC and Monmouth CBC. This collaboration provides IT Services to its Members.	Matthew Lewis SRS

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

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Poverty Strategy			Rob Hartshorn – Head of Public Protection
Business Improvement Portfolio			
Presentation from Local House Builders RE Affordable Homes and Community Benefits (Member Request – Special Meeting)			

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Cabinet - Forward Work Programme

Wednesday - 14/11/2018

Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member	Time	Attendees
2019/20 Draft Budget Settlement	This report will seek Cabinet endorsement of draft budget proposals for the 2019/20 financial year based on the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement. This will then allow for a period of consultation prior to consideration of final 2019/20 budget proposals by Cabinet and Council in February 2019.	N Scamell	Cllr. Barbara Jones		
SARS Notice of motion - referred from Regeneration & Scrutiny Committee	To inform Cabinet what happened in Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee 30.10.18	Mark S Williams	Cllr. Nigel George		
Draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy	To seek Cabinet's endorsement of the Draft Sport and Leisure Strategy.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr. Nigel George		

Wednesday - 28/11/2018

The National Training Framework on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence	To advise Cabinet of the progress made against the CCBC staff training plan, to align corporate governance arrangements, and to seek approval to invoke Section 17(2) of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.	Sian Wolfe-Williams	Cllr. Barbara Jones		
Whole Authority Mid-Year Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2018/19	The report will provide details of projected Whole-Authority revenue expenditure for the 2018/19 financial year along with details of any significant issues arising. The report will also update Cabinet on progress in delivering the approved savings for 2018/19	N Scamell	Councillor B Jones		

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Future Lighting and Energy Saving Proposals	To consider options available to achieve street lighting energy savings that could contribute to the Medium Term Financial Plan and mitigate energy cost increases	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Sean Morgan		
Wales Stalled Sites Fund and Self Build Fund (Plot shop)	To seek approval to progress work in consultation with the Interim Head of Property Services and the Chief Housing Officer on sites that have the potential to attract funding through the Self Build Fund. To agree the extent to which the Council will intervene in the market to de-risk such plots to make them attractive to SMEs and residents seeking to build their own home.	R Kyte/ D Lucas	Councillors S. Morgan/L. Phipps		
Decriminalisation of Parking - Residents' Parking Amendment Order 2018	The report provides details for Cabinet consideration on the consultation feedback received to the proposals to implement residents parking permits in accordance with the councils approved policy.	M Lloyd	Cllr. Sean Morgan		
Decriminalisation of Parking - Resourcing Report	To seek Cabinet approval to progress recruitment of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) officers to ensure that the implementation of CPE meets the proposed 8th April 2019 go live date	M Lloyd	Cllr. Sean Morgan		
Local Toilet Strategy	To seek Cabinet approval for the commencement of a Consultation	Rob Hartshorn / Ceri Edwards	Cllr. Nigel George		
Wednesday - 12/12/2018					
Council Tax Base 2019/20.	It will be a presentation and slides will be available but there won't be a report	N Scamell	Cllr. Barbara Jones		
Homelessness Strategy	The report seeks Cabinet approval for implementation of the Strategy.	S. Couzens	Cllr. Lisa Phipps		
Bryn Brithdir, Oakdale Business Park - Renewal of CCBC and WG Joint Venture Agreement	To seek approval for the terms of the Joint Venture agreement with WG in relation to allocation of rental income received by the Council for Units 1-4 Bryn Brithdir, Oakdale Business Park	A Bolter	Councillor S. Morgan		
Lease Renewal 21 The Lawns, Rhymney	To seek approval for the Council to enter into a new 10 year lease to Groundwork Caerphilly (trading as The Furniture Revival) for Unit 21	A Bolter	Cllr. Sean Morgan		
Industrial and Office Property Portfolio - Proposed changes to Lettings Procedure	To seek approval for proposed changes to the lettings procedure for the Council's industrial and office property portfolio	A Bolter	Cllr. Sean Morgan		

Wednesday - 30/01/2019					
Corporate Risk Register	To provide an update of the Corporate Risk register in accordance with the Council's risk Management Strategy. The update Corporate Risk Register (CRR) is presented to Audit Committee so there is opportunity for the Committee to satisfy itself that appropriate arrangements are in place for the council's risk management processes to be regularly and robustly monitored and scrutinised.	S Haris	Cllr. Barbara Jones		
Update on Reserves	To present details of the usable reserves held by the Authority and to outline proposals for the use of reserves in some areas.	N Scammell	Cllr. Barbara Jones		
Housing Revenue Account Charges 2019/20	To present details of proposed increases in rent charges for the 2019/20 financial year.	L Allen	Cllr. Lisa Phipps		



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH NOVEMBER 2018

SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2018-2022

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request that Members provide their views on the Gwent Regional Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022, prior to the report being presented to Cabinet to request its approval.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires all Welsh local authorities to undertake a review of their homelessness services and produce a four year homelessness strategy to address the issues identified. The five local authorities in Gwent have responded to the requirement by working together to produce a regional strategy, delivered through local and regional action plans. A regional approach was approved by Welsh Government and this takes into account the need to consider more partnership and cross boundary working. The strategy has been developed from the findings of an extensive regional consultation and review. Local Authorities across Wales are required to implement their homelessness strategies by 31 December 2018.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires all Welsh local authorities to undertake a homelessness review and produce a four year homelessness strategy
- 3.2 Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015:

*A prosperous Wales** P2: Improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the county borough

- *A resilient Wales*
- *A more equal Wales*
- *A Wales of cohesive communities*
- *A globally responsible Wales*

Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales 2010 which sets out the national context on meeting housing need, homelessness and housing related support services.

Caerphilly Homes Service Plan (2018-2023) Priority Objective 7.

Caerphilly CBC Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan 2016-2020: Objectives 1,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9.

- 3.3 **Corporate Plan (CCBC, 2018-2023): Well-being Objective 3:** *“Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people’s well-being.”*
- 3.4 **The Caerphilly We Want (CCBC, 2018-2023) - Well-Being Plan: Positive Places - Enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable.**

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Preventing and addressing homelessness remains a high priority for the Welsh and Local Governments in Wales. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires all Welsh local authorities to undertake a homelessness review and using the results, produce a four year homelessness strategy to be operational by 31 December 2018 (see Sections 50-2 of the Act). This document reviews homelessness in five local authority areas:
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
 - Caerphilly County Borough Council
 - Monmouthshire County Council
 - Newport City Council
 - Torfaen County Borough Council
- 4.2 Each of the five authorities has worked together to take both a regional and local approach to this work. As well as making better use of resources, it is anticipated a broader view will help create further opportunities for working together in the future, supporting consistency and quality in the delivery of homelessness services across the region. An extract of the Gwent Homelessness Review 2018 is attached at Appendix 1, which defines the scale of the issue across the region and within Caerphilly. A full copy of the review will be placed on the Members’ Portal and made available in the Members’ Library. The reviews analyse the nature and extent of homelessness in Gwent, specifically covering:
- The wider environment that homelessness services operate within.
 - The accommodation in place to prevent and alleviate homelessness.
 - Demand for homelessness services and trends – past, current and estimated future levels of homelessness.
 - The main causes of homelessness.
 - The resources currently in place to prevent homelessness and support those who are homeless and possible gaps.
 - Potential areas of improvement.
 - The resources used to deliver statutory homelessness services.
- 4.3 The table below displays the number of households approaching the Gwent local authorities requesting homelessness services. The initial focus is to prevent homelessness but if this cannot be achieved, temporary accommodation is provided and where the household is eligible, in priority need and unintentionally homeless, we secure a housing solution for that household. The data represents a section of the Welsh Government statutory return and shows a general upward trend in the number of households approaching local authorities for homelessness assistance. Of note, 391 additional households approached the homeless service in Caerphilly when comparing the 2016/17 data to the 2017/18 data.

Household Numbers (i.e. Not Percentages)	Blaenau Gwent			Caerphilly			Monmouthshire			Newport			Torfaen		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of households requesting homelessness assistance	552	651	668	672*	1581	1972	591	744	584	2154	2532	2142	780	1053	1116
Total households whose homelessness was prevented	267	303	289	249	609	571	249	183	255	393	537	461	333	432	427
Total households provided with temporary accommodation because of actual homelessness	132	198	263	288	525	410	96	216	228	537	1107	968	147	315	395
Total households housed by the local authority (where a statutory housing duty existed)	12	21	36	54	81	134	39	36	32	204	180	278	69	66	39
Assistance provided as a percentage of total households approaching homelessness service requesting housing assistance	74%	80%	88%	88%	77%	56%	65%	58%	88%	53%	72%	79%	70%	77%	77%
Not owed any duty to assist (not homeless, not eligible, not in priority need, intentionally homeless)	26%	20%	12%	12%	23%	44%	42%	42%	12%	47%	28%	21%	30%	23%	23%

*Footnote - the number of Caerphilly households requesting homelessness assistance in 2015/16 is considered to be significantly underestimated due to the change to the computerised data recording system during that period.

- 4.4 Using the reviews and strategy, each local authority will produce their own bespoke plans to deliver specific actions to address homelessness in their areas, continuing to engage with partners and stakeholders as appropriate, and anchored to the reviews and strategy. To ensure that sustainability and quality of life factors are optimised, a wellbeing assessment will be undertaken on the action plans in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The action plans will be reviewed periodically during the lifetime of the strategy (as will the homeless strategy itself) by each local authority, so they remain responsive to emerging needs and trends and the ever changing environment. If any significant changes are required to the strategy, a further report will be submitted to seek Cabinet approval.
- 4.5 The strategy document is attached as Appendix 2 to this report and contains four key priorities and ten strategic objectives. A regional action plan has been developed which in Caerphilly's case, also contains the local actions we intend to deliver through the term of the strategy period. The Gwent Homelessness (Caerphilly) Action plan is attached in Appendix 3.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that:

Long Term – supports the sustainability of cohesive communities for tenants and residents; providing a fair and transparent service for tenancy sustainment.

Prevention – supports tenants and assists in the prevention of eviction and homelessness. It supports the well-being of tenants and residents.

Integration – improved standards of housing and stable community environments.

Collaboration – joined up working arrangements within the organisation and with outside agencies to support tenancy sustainment.

Involvement – Engages tenants, residents and support agencies in relation to sustainment of tenancies.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Equality Impact Assessment for the strategy has been undertaken and is contained in Appendix 4.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The strategy will be introduced in quarter 3 of this financial year (2018/19) and funding commitments are already in place by way of the Revenue Support Grant. Welsh Government Ministers have announced that there will be a new grant funding system to ring fence funding for Supporting People, Homeless Prevention Grant and Rent Smart Wales enforcement funding. This announcement confirms that financial support will be available to the local authority to enable us to implement the actions identified within the strategy. A separate report has been drafted on the amalgamation of existing grants into two new grants: The Children and Communities Grant and the Housing Support Grant. That report requests recommendations on governance of both grants moving forward.
- 7.2 Statutory Homelessness schemes currently receiving Supporting People funding will be unaffected by the costs of funding the strategic actions identified, which will be reviewed annually.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications for Housing.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 Consultation responses have been reflected in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Members are asked to provide their views on the Gwent Regional Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022, prior to the report being presented to Cabinet to request its approval.

11. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 To comply with the requirements of Section 50 Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

12. STATUTORY POWER

- 12.1 Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Author: Sue Cousins, Housing Solutions Manager
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Consultees: Cllr Dave Poole - Leader of the Council
Cllr. L. Phipps - Cabinet Member for Homes and Places
Cllr S. Morgan - Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure, Sustainability & Wellbeing of Future Generations Champion.

Christina HARRY - Interim Chief Executive
David Street - Corporate Director of Social Services and Housing
Shaun Couzens - Chief Housing Officer
Robert Tranter - Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Rhian Kyte - Head of Regeneration & Planning
Fiona Wilkins - Housing Services Manager
Lesley Allen - Principle Accountant
Shelly Jones - Supporting People Manager
Claire Davies - Private Sector Housing Manager

Background Papers:

Gwent Homelessness Review 2018 (Copy placed on the Members' Portal and made available in the Members' Library)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Extract from Gwent Homelessness Reviews 2018
Appendix 2 Gwent Regional Homeless Strategy 2018-2022
Appendix 3 Gwent Homelessness (Caerphilly) Action Plan
Appendix 4 Gwent Regional Homelessness Strategy Equality Impact Assessment

Extract from Gwent Homelessness Strategy 2018

5.22 Key Points:

- The above data has provided a wealth of information into homelessness in Gwent, which helps us to summarise the main themes, trends and higher risk groups moving forward; also what future demand on homeless services should look like over the next four to five years. The main points include:
- Newport has the greatest demand on its homeless services, followed by Caerphilly, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire in that order. That trend is not expected to change during the lifetime of the strategy.
- The levels of successful preventions (section 66) across Gwent appear to be broadly decreasing over the last three financial years. Successful Section 73 outcomes have reduced almost year on year for every Gwent local authority. Based on the data alone, some local authorities may be seeing greater success in discharging their Section 75 duties in some parts of Gwent than others.
- Operating effective 'triage' type systems in providing homeless services and also securing as many successful Section 66 outcomes as possible to prevent escalation to Section 73 and 75 duties is going to be essential in the future. This is especially the case for Newport, where greater proportions of service users are in greater need. Addressing client expectations and encouraging people to help themselves as much as possible will be important.
- It will be imperative for the Gwent authorities to concentrate on co-ordinating access to more temporary accommodation in the region. There is an acute need for appropriate temporary accommodation in Gwent and as is affordable single person accommodation. This will become even more critical when the intentionality test is no longer applied to households with children by 2019.
- Improving systems and support for move on from temporary and supported housing should be a key focus.
- The councils should work together to ensure homeless statistics are recorded in as uniform a way as possible.
- All councils should focus on effective activities that respond to and ideally prevent: breakdowns in relationships, rent arrears and loss of rented or tied accommodation. Such factors are also causes of escalating homelessness issues i.e. rough sleeping. Sufficient resources should continue to be channelled towards preventing these major causes of homelessness.
- Proportionally 16 to 24 year olds are over-represented in accessing homelessness services, as are single person households and males. These cohorts are likely to require additional support from the Gwent local authorities moving forward. In doing so, there is the potential that successful preventative outcomes with these demographics would in-turn save resources to be used on other demographics. Monmouthshire and Torfaen could give additional focus to those

over 25; and Newport Asian/Asian British and people categorised as 'other ethnicity'.

- Gwent councils and their partners to work together to reduce all use of (B & B going forward).
- Activities that mitigate domestic abuse should be a key focus – particularly in households with dependent children in them.
- Prison leavers and those leaving institutions or care are cohorts that are consistently at risk of homelessness and should be focused upon. Prison leavers are especially at risk of rough sleeping. Single households are more likely to be ex-prisoners and leaving an institution and/or care and also more susceptible to rough sleeping e.g. specialist recovery and rehabilitation programmes, community payback unpaid work, education, training and employment, mentoring and working with families of offenders etc. can be effective.
- Single person households are more likely to see harassment due to a protected characteristic, causing a homeless issue (under the Equality Act 2010). Gwent councils should aim to focus on this issues.
- Housing affordability remains a key issue - households with dependent children are considerably more susceptible to rent arrears in both the private and social housing sectors.
- Debt advice, financial payments, resolving benefit issues and resolving rent and service charge arrears are having the most impact in helping households remain in their homes, thereby preventing homelessness in Gwent – focus should be expanded in these areas if possible.
- Mediation intervention may be less likely to be effective with younger people and alternatives should be considered going forward.
- Partnership working and sharing best practice is likely to be becoming more important. Any reductions in this area (indeed increases will be needed), would mean that the Gwent councils would likely be at an increasing disadvantage, struggling more and more to cope with rising demand for homeless services (especially Newport). There's the real potential that co-ordinated strength and effectiveness in this area would bolster preventative work, potentially easing pressure on council's homeless services over the next four to five years.
- Each local authority must engage with and work with private landlords to meet their expectations. There will be variation in each local authority – because each of the markets differ; supplying incentives are clearly not the only factor at play in successful engagement with the private sector in any of the Gwent authorities. Finding new ways to develop mutually beneficial relationships between councils and private landlords needs to be a key focus (especially in Monmouthshire).
- Social housing appears to be becoming relatively harder to access in Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen – leading to increased reliance other types of housing such as the private rented sector in Newport. Councils should work with social landlords to reverse this trend.
- People experiencing homelessness repeatedly are far less likely to be living in stable long-term housing.
- Councils will have to increasingly forge links between themselves and social landlords and the private sector during the lifetime of the new strategy – with the goal of getting access to more affordable housing, in order to discharge homeless duties.

- There may be potential for local authorities to develop more LCHO schemes. Table 6.2.1 below and the numbers of people asking for more affordable housing to buy, suggests that a considerable proportion of service users would support this.
- Councils should also consider how they record and evidence the preventative work that is undertaken to stop homelessness (including in connection with homeless services and related services, such as SP funded services). Feedback from council staff would suggest that they routinely offer at least some advice when someone approaches them and the household isn't threatened with homelessness within 56 days. There is also recognition that many households can find themselves at risk of homelessness through no fault of their own e.g. through a 'no fault' section 21 notice in the private rented sector. They often have no support needs and with some basic advice they resolve the risk themselves.
- Working to understand why service users disengage from services after beginning the statutory process.
- There are a number of different trends in connection with rough sleepers in the Gwent authorities e.g. rough sleepers appear most prevalent in Newport, probably because of its city status. Rough sleeping is also a chronic issue in Gwent - 76% of all respondents to the survey have slept out before in the past. Rough sleeping also appears to be more of an issue in Caerphilly, compared to the remaining three Gwent authorities. In Monmouthshire it seems that rough sleepers are less likely to be sleeping rough for shorter periods of time, compared to the other three Gwent authorities. Rough sleepers tend to be male in Gwent, although there are female rough sleepers reported in Newport. People seem less likely to sleep rough on their own in Newport and this may again be linked to its status as a city; perceived or more likely real risk in sleeping out alone.
- The service user survey cited a number of causes linked to homelessness: drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, criminal offending history, discharge from custody, breakdown in relationships, debt and lack of affordable housing, tenancy ending, exclusion from school, unemployment, domestic abuse, poor access to health and social care services, leaving care and sexual and/or physical abuse, living in unsuitable housing due to physical or sensory impairment. This would reinforce what local authority staff said during consultation, that intense and bespoke support in conjunction with the Housing First is essential. This shows why councils must maintain awareness of the services operated by partners and why there must be a wide menu of (person-centred) support provided to address homelessness.
- The service user survey also suggested that some characteristics are a lot more prevalent than others in relation to repeat presenters to homeless services i.e. they are very likely to be single, male and have chronic social and medical issues and/or a disability.
- Further consideration of how households 'eligible, but not in priority need' are assisted and how this is evidenced may also be another area for consideration.

Gwent Homelessness Strategy 2018 – 2022



VISION: Everyone in Gwent has a home to live in and the right support if they need it, to lead a fulfilling life.



MISSION: Work together to overcome homelessness in Gwent.



VALUES: Listening; Collaborative; Innovative and Accountable.

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Strategic Objectives:



Gwent Homelessness Strategy 2018 –2022 Caerphilly Action Plan

Interim Actions						
Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
Establish a project group to steer and move forward the homeless strategy and actions, ensuring that monitoring mechanisms are in place and that links are sustained with key strategic groups and forums across each area and the region as a whole.	Provide a strategic steer to homelessness services across the region and then locally	Establishment of regional steering group	All Homeless Leads	January 2019	Lack of overall co-ordination of service development with the risk of duplication of work, ineffective use of resources and reduction in effectiveness of interventions	
		Secure appropriate chair in order to raise profile of groups	All Homeless Leads	January 2019		
		Establishment of local steering groups	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	January 2019		
		Establish reporting mechanisms and links with relevant groups including PSB	All Homeless Leads	March 2019		
1 Increase prevention work to obtain successful outcomes						
Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
Undertake a review and benchmarking exercise of individual homeless services to compare approaches, identify opportunities to improve, increase consistency and replicate good practice	Increase consistency in service delivery across Wales	Agree key areas to be considered from the review	All Homeless Leads (Regional)	March 2019	Inconsistent application of legislation and inequality of services	
		Set work plans based on key areas to be delivered	All Homeless Leads (regional)	May 2019 & Ongoing review		

<p>To introduce a hospital discharge framework across Gwent</p>		<p>Establish Regional hospital discharge framework across Gwent</p>	<p>All Homeless Leads, Social Care and ABUHB (Regional)</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p>	<p>Individuals discharged from hospital inappropriately and placed at significant risk Increased rough sleeping</p>	
<p>To increase the level of engagement of service users in addressing homelessness</p>	<p>Increase in homeless prevention activities and services</p>	<p>Consider the information as to why people disengage from services Review existing process/procedure in light of revised code of guidance issued by Welsh Government and information around disengagement Implement revised process/procedures based on findings and review</p>	<p>All Homeless Leads (Regional) Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>June 2019 Sept 2019 February 2020</p>	<p>Dissatisfaction with services Services not meeting needs</p>	
<p>Benchmark and compare prevention approaches by each local authority and identify good practice focusing on relationship breakdown, rent arrears and tied accommodation</p>	<p>Increase in homeless prevention activities and services</p>	<p>Analyse information and identify opportunities for improvement Implement identified opportunities as appropriate</p>	<p>All Homeless Leads (Regional) All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>June 2019 July 2020</p>	<p>Presentation numbers of clients continues to increase Clients won't get the right services at the right time</p>	

		around Prevention Fund use	All Homeless Leads (Regional)	June 2020	
		Benchmark and compare Bond Scheme services and 3 rd sector provision			
Benchmark and compare early intervention, advice and support by each local authority and to identify good practice	Increase in homeless prevention activity and options	Analyse information and identify opportunities for improvement	All Homeless Leads (Regional)	Sept 2019	Presentations continue to increase
		Implement identified opportunities as appropriate	All Homeless Leads (Regional)	April 2020	Clients won't get the right services at the right time

2 Raise awareness of homelessness and services, encouraging self-help and resilience

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
To provide clear information on homelessness, homeless prevention, access to accommodation and access to services	Develop effective communications and information for households seeking accommodation	Consult with service users/former services users and partners over the information provided and review information	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	July 2019	Inappropriate advice provided leading to increased homelessness and a reduction in homeless prevention as a result	
		Review information provided and produce appropriate information based on findings in conjunction with service users and key stakeholders		February 2020		
		Consider opportunities for delivery of regional information and guides on homelessness through the Steering Group	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	June 2020		

<p>To ensure that front line services are responsive and co-ordinated to meet the needs of service users</p> <p>Operating effective 'triage' type systems in providing homeless services and also securing as many successful Section 66 outcomes as possible to prevent escalation to Section 73 and 75 duties is going to be increasingly essential</p>	<p>Increase in homeless prevention activity and options</p>	<p>Review existing provision within Caerphilly across Council services, involving service users where appropriate</p> <p>Explore available options and provide recommendations for implementation of changes as appropriate with key services</p> <p>Implement preferred changes</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>July 2019</p> <p>October 2019</p> <p>February 2020 & review annually in April each year</p>	<p>Inappropriate advice provided leading to increased homelessness and a reduction in homeless prevention as a result</p>	
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3 Work with social and private rented sector landlords to sustain tenancies and increase access to housing

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
<p>Develop effective mechanisms to maximise the access to affordable housing schemes for households either homeless or faced with homelessness</p>	<p>Development of affordable housing across the region to meet the increased demand in line with projected population growth</p>	<p>Review existing provision in each local area</p> <p>Work across the region to identify regional development requirements and opportunities</p>	<p>Local Strategic Planning, Development and Enabling teams. Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <p>February 2020 & review annually in April each year</p>	<p>Continued failure to meet local and regional social housing demands</p>	

Co-ordinating access to more temporary accommodation in the region	Reduction In the use of B&B accommodation	<p>Review existing provision in each local area</p> <p>Consider local and regional requirements based on review</p> <p>Develop alternative and additional options locally and regionally based on requirements</p> <p>Develop regional agreement for temporary accommodation provision and access</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>Ongoing – Annual Review in January</p> <p>Ongoing – Annual Review in January</p> <p>Ongoing – Annual Review in January</p> <p>April 2020</p>	<p>Lack of supply of suitable temporary accommodation</p> <p>Continued use of B&B accommodation and increased costs to Local Authorities</p> <p>Increased negative impact on the health, wellbeing and life chances of households faced with homelessness</p>	
To increase the supply of good quality affordable private rented sector accommodation	Increase in homeless prevention and housing options for households faced with homelessness	<p>Review existing work with PRS across Caerphilly</p> <p>Consider findings and develop options available tailored to Caerphilly area</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>April 2019</p> <p>June 2019</p>	<p>Reduction in positive homelessness interventions</p> <p>Increase in homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation</p>	

		Develop work across Gwent region with PRS following review to increase Gwent wide engagement and options with the private rented sector	All Homeless Leads (Regional)	June 2020	Increased costs to Local Authorities	
To develop effective strategies, practices and services to tackle evictions from the private rented sector	Increase in homeless prevention and housing options for households faced with homelessness from the private rented sector	<p>Consider work already undertaken across each Local Authority area and review effectiveness, duplication of work and outcomes</p> <p>Consult with private landlords and letting agents around their views and opinions</p> <p>Develop local and potential regional options for greater intervention services and consistency of approaches</p>	<p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>June 2020</p> <p>October 2020</p> <p>February 2021</p>	<p>Reduction in positive homelessness interventions</p> <p>Increase in homelessness and demand for temporary accommodation</p> <p>Increased costs to Council in provision of temporary accommodation services</p>	
To provide appropriate accommodation options for homeless households with physical disabilities	Development and delivery of accessible emergency accommodation for homelessness households	Review current emergency accommodation provisions and assess likely needs based on trends and demands	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	May 2019	Lack of supply of suitable temporary accommodation	

		<p>Review provision across the region and consider options for shared resources to meet needs across Gwent</p> <p>Identify gaps in provision and develop plan to secure appropriate accommodation to meet needs</p>	<p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homeless Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Sept 2020 & review annually</p>	<p>Delayed discharge for hospital or potential unsafe discharges</p> <p>Increased costs to Council in provision of temporary accommodation services</p>	
To seek to widen housing options and choices for all single people seeking accommodation across a range of tenures, both emergency and temporary	<p>Reduce number of single homeless people</p> <p>Reduce levels of rough sleeping</p>	<p>Examine review findings and extract options presently available to identify gaps</p> <p>Consider the gaps and explore the options available to address these gaps</p> <p>Develop options based on the above, seeking funding where appropriate and involving key partners and stakeholders across Caerphilly</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>May 2019</p> <p>Oct 2019</p> <p>Feb 2020 & ongoing</p>	<p>Increased risk of more single homeless households, lack of available temporary accommodation and greater costs to provide emergency accommodation</p>	
4 Reduce the number of 'repeat presenters' and rough sleeping						
Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
To improve the availability and access to emergency accommodation provision to address rough sleeping in	Reduction in rough sleeping	Review the existing emergency provision across each Local Authority area and	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	April 2019	Increase in rough sleeping	

<p>each local area and across the region as a whole</p>		<p>identify shortfalls/demand</p> <p>Explore options available for expanding services to meet the demands in each Local Authority area</p> <p>Consider regional approaches to address increased rough sleeping where appropriate</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2020 and Ongoing</p>		
<p>To ensure Extreme Weather Plans are reviewed and are fit for purpose</p>	<p>Reduction in rough sleeping in inclement weather</p>	<p>Review local extreme weather plans in partnership with key stakeholders</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>June 2019 and annually thereafter</p>	<p>Increase in rough sleeping</p> <p>Increased risk of harm due to adverse weather to rough sleepers</p>	
<p>To develop independent accommodation based projects aimed at addressing the needs of chaotic clients and those rough sleeping</p>	<p>Reduction in rough sleeping</p>	<p>To establish a regional working group on developing projects based on the key principles of Housing First linked to the Housing First Network</p> <p>Develop and deliver models across each region in partnership with RSL partners to deliver "Housing First" projects</p> <p>Evaluate impact of projects and revise</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>February 2019</p> <p>April 2019</p> <p>April 2020</p>	<p>Increase in rough sleeping</p>	

		projects as appropriate and required		and ongoing		
To research repeat homeless presentations in order to enable services to respond to the identified issues	To ensure equality of access to service and improve service quality and outcomes	To research repeat presentations and identify local trends and issues Examine local trends across the 5 Gwent areas and to consider options for addressing repeat homeless presentations Implement options where appropriate and review effectiveness of changes/options	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local) All Homelessness Leads (Regional) All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	June 2020 Dec 2020 February 2021 and annual review	Increase in homelessness Increase in rough sleeping Increase in tenancy failures	

5 Reduce homelessness for younger people and support their wellbeing

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
Develop education packages and information for young people around housing and homelessness	Reduction in youth homelessness through the Youth Pathway model	Review existing provision across each Local Authority area Develop an education package and engage with education services over implementing this within schools and other educational settings in	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local) Social Services leads and SP commissioned services Caerphilly CBC Sue Cousins	March 2019 June 2019 & Review in June 2020	Lack of awareness around housing and homelessness issues leading to increases in homelessness presentations and young people not being aware of their rights and responsibilities	

		each local authority area				
		Consider options for developing packages that create consistency across the region	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	June 2021		
Develop effective pre-tenancy training for young people in order to prepare young people for independent living	Reduction in youth homelessness through the Youth Pathway model	Review existing pre-tenancy training available in local area	Social Services leads and SP commissioned services Caerphilly CBC Sue Cousins	March 2019	Increase in youth homelessness and tenancy failures amongst young people	
	Reduction in tenancy failures from young people	Consider options available for reviewing existing provision and in partnership, implement revised programme across Caerphilly area		June 2019 & annual review		
Develop clear pathways for young people leaving care	Reduction in homelessness in care leaving population	Review existing process and procedure, considering guidance, best practice, service user input and relevant legislation	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	Sept 2019	Increase in number of care leavers becoming homeless	
		Develop and implement revised pathway and identify gaps in best practice to be taken forward	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	January 2020 & Ongoing	Failure to meet corporate parenting objectives and responsibilities for care leavers	
Ensure that appropriate support and interventions are in place to help young people to remain in in appropriate	Reduction in youth homelessness through the youth pathway model	Review current support and intervention provisions across each Local Authority area	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	Sept 2019	Increase in youth homelessness	

accommodation	Reduction in tenancy failure through the youth pathway model	Consider options in light of review and how these could be better joined together and more effective in delivery	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	January 2020		
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6 Increase joint planning, commissioning and delivery of services

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
To consider the methods and potential benefits of joint funding arrangements linked to the Funding Flexibility arrangements in the development and funding of services	To make best use of resources to tackle homelessness and related issue	Consider the findings resulting from the Flexible Funding pilots	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	Sept 2020	Ineffective use of funding	
		Develop possible options for considering joint funding across the region for services provided	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	April 2021	Duplication of services and work	
		Seek to secure funding and develop preferred pilot options where appropriate	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	April 2022		
To deliver joint training around homelessness, homeless prevention and related services across a range of partner agencies	To deliver more joined up, consistent and connected services that meet the needs of service users	Establish Gwent wide training programme for key services and stakeholders	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	March 2019	Advice and Information provide to service users is not accurate	
		Deliver training on homeless process across region and locally as required	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	June 2019 and ongoing	Increase in homelessness and reduction in effective preventative services	
		Deliver specific training	Housing	June 2019		

		in Caerphilly area on process, service access and signposting	Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	and ongoing		
		Obtain feedback from agencies and review training programmes	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	March 2020 & ongoing		
To develop greater co-operation arrangements under Section 95 of the Housing (wales) Act 2014	To deliver more joined up, consistent and connected services that meet the needs of service users	To develop local agreements with partner RSLs	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	June 2019 and ongoing	Ineffective working practices.	
		To develop partner arrangements with Health across the region in relation to homelessness	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	June 2020	Increase in homelessness Unsafe hospital discharge arrangements Inappropriate accommodation placements and risks for both the public and the individual	
To provide greater understanding of the journey through homeless services	To deliver more service user focused services that are more consistently applied	Identify a cohort in each of the authority areas and track them through the homeless process	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	March 2021	Ineffective use of funding	
		Assess effectiveness of this, identifying gaps, duplication and cost effectiveness of services	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	June 2021	Duplication of services and work	
		Develop options for	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)			

		different models of service delivery and pilot these in each area or as appropriate		August 2021		
To ensure that relevant legislation is fully integrated and taken into account in homelessness assessment policies and procedures	To ensure services are legally compliant	<p>Review homelessness procedures and processes to ensure compliance</p> <p>Implement revisions and provide appropriate training for staff with an annual review as required</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>Feb 2020</p> <p>April 2020 & ongoing</p>	<p>Advice and Information provide to service users is not accurate</p> <p>Increased legal challenge on decision issued leading to increased staff time being diverted to reviews of decisions</p> <p>Increased use of temporary accommodation and associated costs</p> <p>Need to identify funding streams where new services need to be developed</p>	
To review and develop working practices and processes with key partner agencies – Health, Probation, Social Services, RSL's	To increase partnership working and improve access to services for homeless households	Develop agreements with RSL partners around homeless prevention and associated activities linked to securing accommodation	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	Sept 2019	Increased tenancy failure from Social Housing	

		<p>Develop agreements with Probation around homeless prevention, assessment and interventions for individuals leaving the secure estate in line with the National Offender Pathway</p> <p>Review and revise local working arrangements with Social Services</p> <p>Review local agreements across Gwent and consider options for merging arrangements where appropriate</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>Sept 2019</p> <p>Sept 2019</p> <p>April 2020 & ongoing</p>	<p>Increased homelessness</p> <p>Increased community risk</p> <p>Delays in re-housing through lack of coordination of support</p>	
<p>Review and develop Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements across Gwent in partnership with statutory agencies and agencies with a duty to co-operate</p>	<p>To deliver effective multi agency working arrangements for high risk offenders</p>	<p>Review MAPPA working arrangements across Gwent and implement these as appropriate</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)/ Gwent MAPPA Co-ordinator</p>	<p>April 2020</p>	<p>Increased community risk from/towards MAPPA offenders</p>	

7 Maximise access to a range of support

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
<p>To enhance the work of voluntary groups and services across Gwent that is provided to vulnerable households</p>	<p>To maximise the support and services available to individuals faced with homelessness</p>	<p>Develop a greater understanding of all local services provided for vulnerable households, what services are</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p>	<p>Duplication of work</p> <p>Ineffective use of resources</p>	

		<p>delivered and how they are funded</p> <p>Review this information across Gwent and explore options for how this could be better co-ordinated and supported</p> <p>Produce a directory of voluntary services for use across Gwent</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>February 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p>		
<p>To seek to manage and mitigate against the impacts of Universal Credit</p> <p>Page 47</p>	<p>To seek to reduce poverty, hardship and homelessness</p>	<p>Review demand for financial inclusion/debt advice services across Gwent</p> <p>Examine options for increasing capacity and joint working across Gwent</p> <p>Pilot possible options and evaluate outcomes and benefits</p> <p>Ensure homelessness is raised as a key issue in Anti-Poverty work in each Local Authority</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>Sept 2020</p> <p>Dec 2020</p> <p>April 2021 & annual review</p> <p>Dec 2019 & ongoing</p>	<p>Increased homelessness presentations</p> <p>Increased cost to Local Authorities</p> <p>Universal credit – regional information on web with partners. Reduce duplication.</p>	

<p>To seek to further integrate Supporting People services at the heart of homeless prevention provision</p>	<p>To create greater connectivity between Support and homeless prevention, increasing the effectiveness of services overall</p>	<p>Develop specific training around homeless prevention for support workers in each local authority area</p> <p>Seek to develop local information sharing arrangements in line with GDPR in order to aid the facilitation of greater joint working and integration of services/outcomes</p> <p>To examine models of co-working/co-funding to deliver services more effectively</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>July 2019 & ongoing</p> <p>May 2019</p> <p>February 2020 & ongoing</p>	<p>Increased homelessness presentations</p> <p>Potential loss of funding to SP programme through lack of evidence in homeless prevention agenda</p>	
<p>To provide easy access to debt and money management services</p> <p>Debt and money management - households with dependent children in them are considerably more susceptible to rent arrears in both the private and social housing sectors.</p>	<p>To seek to reduce poverty, hardship and homelessness</p>	<p>Review current provision and access arrangements</p> <p>Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p>	<p>Increase in homelessness presentations</p> <p>Inability to financially sustain tenancies</p>	

		Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better integrated	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	May 2021						
Page 49	To provide an appropriate range of support services for individuals with mental health issues	To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	Review current provision and access arrangements	Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services	Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies	Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better integrated	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	March 2020	Increase in homeless presentations from individuals with mental health issues	Increased costs to agencies in addressing acute mental health issues
							All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	Sept 2020		
								February 2020		
								June 2020		
	To provide an appropriate range of support services for individuals with drug and alcohol issues	To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	Review current provision and access arrangements	Obtain views from service users and key	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)			March 2020	Increase in homelessness presentations	
								Sept 2020	Increased costs to statutory agencies	

		<p>agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies</p> <p>Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better integrated</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>February 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p>	<p>in addressing health and wellbeing issues as a result of chronic alcohol/drug abuse</p>	
<p>To provide an appropriate range of support services for individuals fleeing domestic use</p> <p>Page 50</p>	<p>To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness</p>	<p>Review current provision and access arrangements</p> <p>Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies</p> <p>Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>February 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p>	<p>More significant adverse effects on individuals feeling domestic abuse</p> <p>Increased risk of harm to victims of abuse</p>	

		integrated				
To provide an appropriate range of support services for individuals being discharged from custody	To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	<p>Review current provision and access arrangements</p> <p>Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies</p> <p>Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better integrated</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>February 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p>	<p>Increase in homeless presentations</p> <p>Increase in rough sleeping</p> <p>Increased community risks and impact on wider community</p>	
To ensure that services are accessible to all households irrespective of their particular needs and backgrounds	To provide equality of access to services	<p>To undertake a review of services and how these are accessed, including a potential mystery shopper survey</p> <p>Explore findings and make recommendations across each area for service improvements where required</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p> <p>June 2021</p>	<p>Increase in homeless presentations</p> <p>Ineffective use of resources</p> <p>Inequality in service delivery</p>	

To provide access to appropriate mediation services to prevent homelessness and tenancy failure	Increase in the homeless prevention activity and positive outcomes	<p>To undertake a review of the mediation services provided and explore possibilities for different delivery models, taking into account the funding used for schemes</p> <p>Consider options and make recommendations in light of findings</p> <p>Implement preferred options</p>	<p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>Sept 2020</p> <p>Feb 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p>	<p>Increase in youth homelessness</p> <p>Ineffective use of funding</p> <p>Duplication of services</p>	
To provide an appropriate range of support services for refugees and asylum seekers	To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	<p>Review current provision and access arrangements</p> <p>Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies</p> <p>Consider the services across each Local</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>February 2020</p>	<p>Increase in homeless presentations</p> <p>Increase in rough sleeping among refugees</p> <p>Lack of community cohesion and impact on wider community</p>	

		Authority and how these could be better integrated		June 2020		
To provide an appropriate range of support services older persons at risk of homelessness	To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	<p>Review current provision and access arrangements</p> <p>Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies</p> <p>Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better integrated</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>February 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p>	<p>Increase in homeless presentations</p> <p>Increase in risk to health and wellbeing of older persons</p> <p>Increased costs in health care</p>	
To provide a co-ordinated approach to delivering support to families and expectant parents	To ensure appropriate support is provided to a range households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	<p>Review current provision and access arrangements</p> <p>Obtain views from service users and key agencies around services</p> <p>Make recommendations based on the findings</p>	<p>Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)</p> <p>All Homelessness Leads (Regional)</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>Sept 2020</p> <p>February 2020</p>	<p>Increase in homelessness presentations</p> <p>Increased costs to Local Authorities in provision of services</p> <p>Adverse impact on children's health, wellbeing and</p>	

		and implement these where appropriate and practicable to do so in partnership with relevant agencies Consider the services across each Local Authority and how these could be better integrated		June 2020	education	
Page 34	To ensure homelessness services are aligned with the expectations of the Gwent Safeguarding Board	To ensure appropriate support and safeguards are in place to a range of households in order to prevent or relieve homelessness	Review existing safeguarding procedures within each Local Authority and Gwent protocols.	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	Aug 2019	
			Ensure staff are provided with appropriate training	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	Aug 2019 and ongoing	

8 Increase opportunities for training and employment for vulnerable people

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
To create opportunities for training and employment for the most vulnerable in society including those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless	To increase training, education and employment opportunities to reduce poverty and increase financial capacity of households	Examine current provisions and to establish the gaps in services alongside opportunities Develop local partnerships to increase capacity and to increase opportunities	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local) Housing Solutions	April 2020 July 2020 & ongoing	Increased social exclusion Increase in homelessness	

			Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)			
9 Recording and sharing information between partners, as appropriate, to help service-users						
Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
To ensure that services comply with the requirements of GDPR in day to day service delivery	To ensure services are legally compliant	Review existing arrangements in place under WASPI and make appropriate changes to ensure compliance	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	May 2019	Failure to meet legal requirements and obligations	
To ensure that case recording systems and subsequent performance information are robust	To ensure the data provided and case recording systems are robust and can be used to inform service delivery, shape policy and inform demand	Review case recording system, database information and reporting system	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	April 2020	Failure to meet legal requirements and obligations	
		Consider outcomes of review and implement recommendations		October 2020	Failure to be able to accurately record outcomes and data required by Welsh Government	
		Compare systems and data recording across Gwent in order to develop common frameworks and consistency in recording including supporting people funding services	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	January 2021	Inability to accurately assess demand for services	
		Provide training to staff and implement framework	All Homelessness Leads (Regional)	April 2021		

To develop local information on service demands, performance and delivery to demonstrate service pressures and effectiveness of provision	Increase the local knowledge of service demands and pressure to inform future service delivery	Develop key reports and information from Caerphilly Council's database relating to Homelessness, Support and Temporary Accommodation	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	Dec 2020	Failure to be able to accurately record outcomes and data required by Welsh Government Inability to accurately assess demand for services	

10 Modernise services to embrace new technologies and ways of working

Actions	Welsh Government /Review Priorities	Tasks	Lead Officer	By When	Risk	Comments
To ensure services are responsive and effective in addressing local needs through embracing new working practices and technology	Increase the effectiveness and resilience of statutory services provided to homeless households To provide connected customer service information systems in line with the requirements of GDPR	To develop agile working processes and implement this across the Housing Solutions service	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	April 2019	Increase in homelessness through lack of service user awareness of services	
		To review and develop information sharing agreements across partner agencies in line with GDPR	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	May 2020	Safe use and management of data and information	
		To examine IT system usage and how data and information can be best utilised to improve customer experiences and the effectiveness of service provision	Housing Solutions Manager Caerphilly CBC (local)	May 2021		

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

April 2016

THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES STATEMENT

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED PROPOSAL *	Gwent Homelessness Strategy 2018-22
DIRECTORATE	Social Services and Housing
SERVICE AREA	Housing Solutions
CONTACT OFFICER	Sue Cousins
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW OR REVISION	December 2019

***Throughout this Equalities Impact Assessment Form, 'proposal' is used to refer to what is being assessed, and therefore includes policies, strategies, functions, procedures, practices, initiatives, projects and savings proposals.**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that Equalities and Welsh Language issues have been proactively considered throughout the decision making processes governing work undertaken by every service area in the Council as well as work done at a corporate level.

The form should be used if you have identified a need for a full EIA following the screening process covered in the [Equalities Implications in Committee Reports](#) guidance document (available on the [Equalities and Welsh Language Portal](#) on the Council's intranet).

The EIA should highlight any areas of risk and maximise the benefits of proposals in terms of Equalities. It therefore helps to ensure that the Council has considered everyone who might be affected by the proposal.

It also helps the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and supports the wider aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. There is also a requirement under Human Rights legislation for Local Authorities to consider Human Rights in developing proposals.

Specifically, Section 147 of the Equality Act 2010 is the provision that requires decision-makers to have 'due regard' to the equality implications of their decisions and Welsh Language Standards 88-97 require specific consideration of Welsh speakers under the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015.

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales has also published 'Good Practice Guidance for Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments and Scrutinising Changes to Community Services in Wales' to ensure that Local Authorities, and other service providers, carry out thorough and robust impact assessments and scrutiny when changes to community services are proposed, and that every consideration is given to mitigate the impact on older people and propose alternative approaches to service delivery.

The Council's work across Equalities, Welsh Language and Human Rights is covered in more detail through the [Equalities and Welsh Language Objectives and Action Plan 2016-2020](#).

This approach strengthens work to promote Equalities by helping to identify and address any potential discriminatory effects before introducing something new or changing working practices, and reduces the risk of potential legal challenges.

When carrying out an EIA you should consider both the positive and negative consequences of your proposals. If a project is designed for a specific group e.g. disabled people, you also need to think about what potential effects it could have on other areas e.g. young people with a disability, BME people with a disability.

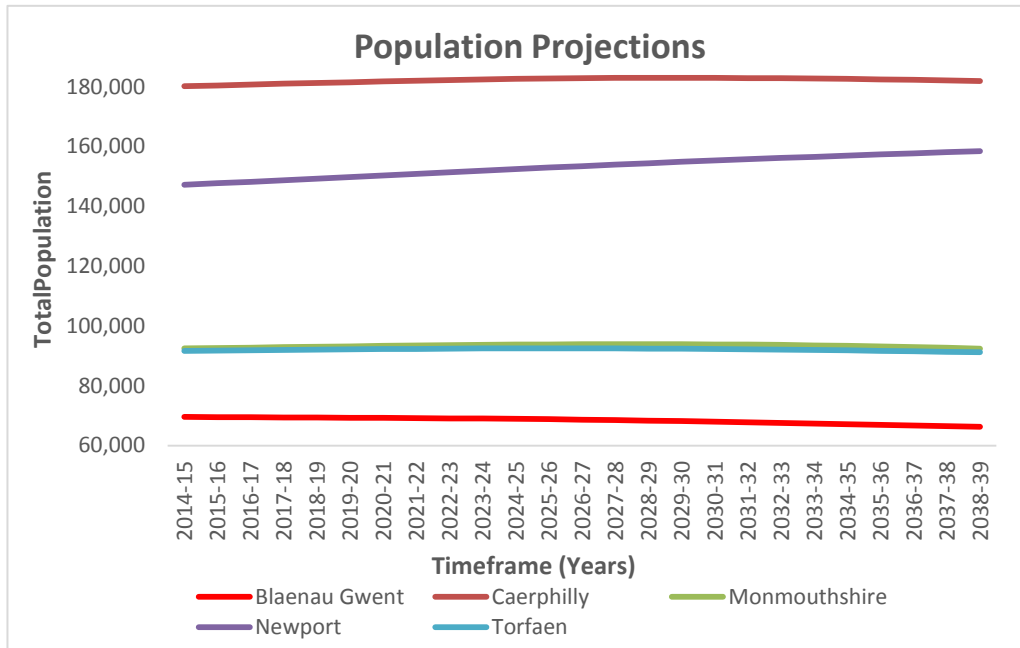
There are a number of supporting guidance documents available on the [Equalities and Welsh Language Portal](#) and the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language team can offer support as the EIA is being developed. Please note that the team does not write EIAs on behalf of service areas, the support offered is in the form of advice, suggestions and in effect, quality control.

Contact equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for assistance.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

1	<p>What is the proposal intended to achieve?</p> <p>The Gwent Homelessness Strategy is a requirement of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. This is a new strategy and has been developed on a regional basis unlike any previously published homeless plan. The strategy is underpinned by an extensive review of services, stakeholders and providers and this research has directed the development of regional and local actions for the forthcoming 4 years. The strategy, review and action plan will be publically available documents, available in English and Welsh, on paper and on line.</p> <p>Councils in Gwent have a statutory duty to give housing advice to all its residents and duties to provide temporary accommodation as required to homeless families, pregnant women, certain young people and vulnerable single people. The Gwent Homeless teams also have a duty to cooperate with the responsible authorities: the police, probation and prisons to help to house high risk offenders and under the duties to prevent crime and disorder.</p> <p>The four priorities of the strategy are to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help improve access to suitable and affordable housing • Offer fast and effective advice and support, working with partners to help vulnerable people • Minimise homelessness and prevent it through early intervention • Ensure fair, equal and person-centred homeless services 																																																	
2	<p>Who are the service users affected by the proposal?</p> <p>Homelessness or the threat of such a crisis can happen to any household at any time, regardless of socioeconomic status, household make-up or age. We know the profile of service users through the data that each organisation collects (WHO12). There is a range of publically available information which shows us who our services users might be in the future. The extensive consultation exercise undertaken to develop the strategy also provides us with good information so that we can design and develop services and actions appropriate to meet the identified need.</p> <p>Table 1 displays the number of persons per square kilometre, showing that Monmouthshire is by far the most rural area in Gwent.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of people per square kilometre</th> <th>Mid-year 2011</th> <th>Mid-year 2012</th> <th>Mid-year 2013</th> <th>Mid-year 2014</th> <th>Mid-year 2015</th> <th>Mid-year 2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Blaenau Gwent</td> <td>642.1</td> <td>642.2</td> <td>641.9</td> <td>640.8</td> <td>639.6</td> <td>640.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Caerphilly</td> <td>644.5</td> <td>645.4</td> <td>646.2</td> <td>648.7</td> <td>649.5</td> <td>650.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Monmouthshire</td> <td>107.8</td> <td>107.9</td> <td>108.5</td> <td>108.7</td> <td>108.9</td> <td>109.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newport</td> <td>765.2</td> <td>766.9</td> <td>769.2</td> <td>770.7</td> <td>775.6</td> <td>782.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Torfaen</td> <td>725.5</td> <td>726.9</td> <td>727.2</td> <td>728.8</td> <td>730.6</td> <td>732.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wales</td> <td>98.3</td> <td>98.5</td> <td>98.5</td> <td>98.6</td> <td>98.4</td> <td>98</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Table 1: National Statistics Local Authority Population Projections for Wales 2014</p>	Number of people per square kilometre	Mid-year 2011	Mid-year 2012	Mid-year 2013	Mid-year 2014	Mid-year 2015	Mid-year 2016	Blaenau Gwent	642.1	642.2	641.9	640.8	639.6	640.4	Caerphilly	644.5	645.4	646.2	648.7	649.5	650.6	Monmouthshire	107.8	107.9	108.5	108.7	108.9	109.3	Newport	765.2	766.9	769.2	770.7	775.6	782.8	Torfaen	725.5	726.9	727.2	728.8	730.6	732.3	Wales	98.3	98.5	98.5	98.6	98.4	98
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Population growth estimates in Graph 1 show that proportionally, the greatest population growth is projected to be in Newport over the next twenty years, with Caerphilly showing a small projected increase. Conversely, the population of Blaenau Gwent may decrease, whilst Torfaen and Monmouthshire reduce only slightly. It is fair to assume that Newport is likely to see more of a corresponding increase in the general demand for public services, compared to the other Gwent local authorities because of this.



Graph1: National Statistics Local Authority Population Projections for Wales 2014. *Assumptions about births, deaths, and migration are have also been incorporated into the figures by the Welsh Government

In Table 2 below, we see the range and levels of diversity across the region as a whole, broken down to the individual local authority level.

Table 2

Percentages of the Population:	Blaenau Gwent	Caerphilly	Monmouthshire	Newport	Torfaen	Wales
Aged 16-24*	10.8	10.4	9.2	11.1	10.6	11.6
Aged 25-44*	24.6	25.1	19.9	25.9	23.9	23.8
Aged 65 plus*	19.8	18.8	24.1	17.4	20.1	20.4
Working age adults that are disabled**	25.4	26	21.4	23.7	23.3	22.5
Male*	49.3	49.0	49.4	49.1	48.7	49.3
Female*	50.7	51.0	50.6	50.9	51.3	50.7
Identifying as other gender ***	There is a widely acknowledged gap in statistical data on gender identity in the UK, which it is anticipated the 2021 Census will address.					
From Non-white Background****	2	2	1.4	8	2.5	4.7
From White Background****	98	98	98.6	92	97.5	95.3
Gypsy and Irish Traveller*****	0.1	0.02	0.01	0.06	0.2	0.1
Asylum Seekers*****	0	0	0	18.32	0	-
Refugees*****	1.7	3.7	4.0	2.5	3.0	-
Household Language*****	0.7	0.5	0.6	2.9	0.5	1.7
Heterosexual*****	-	96.4	98.7	95.4	97.7	95
Identifying as Gay or Bisexual*****	-	1	0.7	1.9	1	1.5
1 Person Household*****	33	28	28	32	30	32
1 Adult with Child(ren)*****	7.8	8.0	4.6	8.1	7.1	6.8
2 Plus Adults and Child(ren)*****	19.8	22.3	21.3	22.2	22.1	20.3
2 Plus Adults no Children*****	39.8	41.9	45.8	37.8	41.0	41.3
No Religion*****	41.1	40.9	28.5	29.7	35.8	32.1
Christian*****	49.9	50.7	62.5	56.9	55.4	57.6
Buddhist*****	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
Hindu*****	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3
Jewish*****	0.01	0.04	0.1	0.1	0.02	0.1
Muslim*****	0.3	0.2	0.3	4.7	0.3	1.5
Sikh*****	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other Religion*****	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4
Pregnant (aged 19 and under)*****	11.8	11.7	7.9	9.6	11.7	11.9
Children looked after by local authority (aged 0-15)*****	17.3	18.9	16.5	20.2	18.4	17.9

Table 3 displays the number of households presenting to local authority homeless services throughout three financial years, compared to the duties owed:

Household Numbers Not Percentages	Blaenau Gwent			Caerphilly			Monmouthshire			Newport			Torfaen		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Total Household Numbers (Total Outcomes Only)	552	651	668	672	1581	1972	591	744	584	2154	2532	2142	780	1053	1116
Ineligible Homeless Assessment Applications	-	3	-	-	36	18	-	60	31	39	33	26	-	72	80
Eligible but not Homeless or Threatened with Homelessness	129	108	48	21	249	816	195	240	7	858	339	107	186	150	23
Eligible and Prevention Assistance Provided (section 66)	267	303	289	249	609	571	249	183	255	393	537	461	333	432	427
Eligible and Duty to help to Secure (section 73)	132	198	263	288	525	410	96	216	228	537	1107	968	147	315	395
Eligible, Homeless but not in Priority Need	9	18	32	45	54	19	6	9	19	114	321	294	24	6	129
Eligible, Homeless and in Priority Need, but Intentionally so	-	-	-	18	24	4	9	-	12	15	15	8	21	12	23
Eligible, Unintentionally Homeless and in Priority Need (section 75)	12	21	36	54	81	134	39	36	32	204	180	278	69	66	39
Total Section 66, 73 and 75 Duties	411	522	588	591	1215	1115	384	435	515	1134	1824	1707	549	813	861

Table 3 WHO12 Data Collected by Local Authorities. Numbers of presenting homeless cases and type of assistance given. Hyphen means zero figure was submitted to Welsh Government

IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

3	<p>Does the proposal ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available or proposed, or benefits equally from the proposed changes, or does not lose out in greater or more severe ways due to the proposals?</p> <p>A wide ranging consultation exercise took place to ensure we consulted as broadly as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A desktop review of key literature, statistical data and samples of homelessness cases from each of the five councils.• Focus groups and group discussions with key staff in the five councils (from departments relevant to the preparation and implementation of homelessness planning). Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and political, economic, social, technology and legislation (PESTL) analyses and semi-structured interviews were used.• Focus groups with Supporting People providers using SWOT and PESTL analyses and themed group discussions.• A regional event to collect feedback from service providers, partners and other stakeholders (over 400 individuals from representative organisations across Gwent were invited and 140 people attended the event. Representatives covering 25 themes• The themes we explored included gender, LGBT, domestic violence, gypsy and traveller communities, older people, young people and care leavers, mental health, drug and alcohol use, armed forces, offenders, disability, cultural diversity, ethnicity, refugee and asylum seekers, health and social care service users.• Surveys with people who have experienced homelessness and related services first hand across Gwent – factoring in equality and diversity, vulnerabilities and varying support needs (there were 165 respondents).• Direct engagement with different service user groups. <p>Homelessness services are provided by both statutory and voluntary agencies and must be built around the needs and preferences of service users, as much as reasonably possible. Consultation and partnership working has therefore been central to the development of the homelessness review and strategy. This will continue to be a very important element, as homelessness action plans develop in each of the five local authorities over the coming years.</p> <p>The data collected from service users has been anonymised. Statutory and voluntary agencies that helped to carry out the surveys were all provided with a brief to help make sure service users' consent was fully informed and everyone participated consensually.</p> <p>All the information collected has been analysed with fundamental elements being drawn out, to structure the reviews (and strategic action plans) and address the points outlined in the introduction. This work has then been condensed into the themes embraced within the homelessness strategy, in the form of a vision, mission,</p>
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	values and strategic objectives, with greater specific detail in the action plans.
	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the equalities monitoring data returns; make sure we consult with Tai Pawb. • Take advantage of the Street Homeless Information Network to gain detailed insight into the support needs and homeless interventions required for this hard to consult group. • We need to improve our engagement with hard to reach homeless from home individuals and others such as sofa surfers. • Rolling service user surveys?

4	<p>What are the consequences of the above for specific groups?</p> <p>The benefits of cross boundary working across the region will provide us with the opportunities to provide wider ranging and more inclusive services: Savings may be achieved by jointly commissioning services (e.g. a cross boundary rough sleeper hostel, a cross boundary gypsy and traveller support service) however; working as individual authorities, the cost: benefit of providing a new service would be difficult to demonstrate. The regional strategy approach provides a much needed partnership funding opportunity to provide services we can ill afford as individual local authorities.</p> <p>Equality and fair access to services are essential components of the new homelessness strategy. All of the Gwent local authorities have statutory duties contained in the Equality Act 2010 and each of the Gwent local authorities Strategic Equality and Diversity Plans/Policies for further information have been referenced in the strategy. There are a number of policy documents around equality, diversity and fairer access to services that have strategic links with homelessness. Examples include: The completion of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, to identify housing needs amongst the Gypsy and Traveller community; older people strategies and plans; SP strategies and plans; younger people's strategies and plans, housing adaptation and disabled facility grant policies and procedures and also plans connected to refugee and asylum seekers.</p> <p>We are aware that individually, authorities within the region have variations in terms of diversity: Newport for example, being a city authority, demonstrates a wider range of ethnicity, refugee/asylum seekers and religious variation amongst its homeless presentations. In Blaenau Gwent there are a higher proportion of single homeless presentations compared to the rest of the region and given that it is the smallest of the council areas within the region, this represents a difficulty in terms of assisting single homeless people.</p> <p>Through adopting a regional consultation approach and comparison of historical and more recent data, the regional homeless strategy approach provides us with a wider range of opportunities to address imbalances of service across the region for homeless people who are not currently in receipt of the most appropriate services.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain equalities data monitoring and analysis throughout the period of the

	<p>strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually review the strategy action plan where changes in equalities monitoring data have been identified. • Ensure the strategy action plan continues to be relevant and positive for all service users.
<p>5</p>	<p>In line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. (No.1) Regulations 2015, please note below what effects, if any (whether positive or adverse), the proposal would have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>All documentation associated with the development and preparation of the regional strategy has been undertaken in accordance with Welsh Language Standards 88 to 93. All published documentation will be available in English and Welsh, on paper and online.</p> <p>All services available in English will also be available in Welsh, whether spoken or written. This will apply to all services such as the provision of advice and assistance, the provision of legal documentation such as personal housing plans and, correspondence confirming the duties under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, monitor and review the demographic spread of Welsh language speakers amongst service users • If possible, utilise the 2021 census data on Welsh language and demographic spread across the region • Conduct an annual Welsh skills audit of housing advice staff and available referral services • Continue to promote and encourage Welsh language learning opportunities within homeless and associated services for homeless service users • Promote services in Welsh alongside all existing and planned homeless service user communications

INFORMATION COLLECTION

<p>6</p>	<p>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available?</p> <p>We are satisfied that all the available information from service users, stakeholders, officers and staff has been taken into account in the preparation of the 4 year strategy. We are also aware that data capture limitations do exist, such as that for rough sleepers. A new and interactive information collection exercise is planned for the whole of Wales in 2019 known as SHIN (the Street Homeless Information Network). This project will provide detailed information on this service user group, to assess need and improve service planning mechanisms for rough sleepers. This will assist us with the Gwent regional approach to assisting rough sleepers throughout the term of the strategy</p> <p>There will always be under reporting of some forms of homelessness by certain service users and these are issues largely outside of the remit of the strategy. However, where wider information and data collections from other partner agencies permits data sharing, we will work as closely as possible to be as inclusive as possible with service provision. Examples of potential under-reporting are hate crime incidents and domestic violence, where the barriers to reporting and seeking homelessness service assistance lies with the service user not the service.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all our homeless service partnership work includes confidential routes and pathways for diverse groups.

CONSULTATION

<p>7</p>	<p>What consultation has taken place?</p> <p>Guidance and advice in the preparation and undertaking of this assessment has been sought from:</p> <p>Anwen Cullinane Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language) Public Protection, Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach, CF82 7PG Tel: 01443 864404 Email: equalities@caerffili.gov.uk</p> <p>Vicki Doyle Policy Officer: provision of advice on census data capture and planned changes for 2021 Corporate Policy Unit, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach, CF82 7PG Tel: 01443 866391 Email: doylevm@caerphilly.gov.uk</p> <p>Lisa Rawlings Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer: additional survey data provision Tel: 01443 864447 Email: rawlil@caerphilly.gov.uk</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p>

MONITORING AND REVIEW

8	How will the proposal be monitored? All service user data collection systems are set up to record and monitor equalities data. The assessment of the homeless duties local authorities are required to make go a stage further: the homeless assessment has to take into consideration an applicant's particular circumstances. Examples of this will be whether an applicant is fleeing domestic violence, is experiencing hate crime, has vulnerability or other special reason determining them as vulnerable for that reason. This type of detail is recorded within the statutory homeless returns required by Welsh Government.
	Actions required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor the statutory WHO12 data sets specifically tables 3 and 4a to 4d
9	How will the monitoring be evaluated? We will use the collected equalities monitoring data to examine the efficacy of the strategy action plan to ensure that it remains representative of the various and diverse groups we have identified across the region. How and when will you do this?
	Actions required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include the requirement to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of equalities monitoring in the homeless strategy action plan annual review.
10	Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? As expressed in the WG's 10 year Homelessness Plan 2009-19 it remains important to maximise opportunities for training and employment for vulnerable people, as " <i>engagement with training and employment creates the foundation for stable tenancies</i> ". The WG's New Employability Plan launched March 2018 provides four updated actions for improving employability in Wales. Understandably the WG's Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2018 and National Principles for Housing First 2018 make strong strategic links with employment, education and training and these themes are all connected with the new homelessness strategy. Staff training and the need for continual professional development (CPD) is connected to significant amount of the consultation feedback. For example, customer service skills, managing expectations, managing confrontation, working with private landlords, legal knowledge, proficiency tests, psychologically informed practice, ensuring refresher training and good training for new staff and apprenticeship schemes were all mentioned during the Welsh Homeless Network meeting on 16.01.18. In the Wales Audit Office report How Local Government manages demand –

	<p>Homelessness 2018, recommendation 1 supports staff being “<i>sufficiently skilled to deal with the new demands of mediating, problem solving, negotiating and influencing</i>”. Training was brought up a number of times during consultation (e.g. Welsh Homeless Network meeting 16.01.18 and Caerphilly Council Staff Focus Group meeting 24.01.18). However, it remains a concern that training could become increasingly limited due to council capacity/cost (e.g. Monmouthshire County Council Local Authority Staff Focus Group 13.02.18). Further, there are concerns that homeless legislation is being interpreted differently (e.g. Stakeholder Engagement Event on 28.02.18) and this could impact on the accuracy of the data capture for certain client groups.</p> <p>Prison leavers and those leaving institutions or care are consistently at risk of homelessness and should be focused upon, with prison leavers particularly at risk of rough sleeping. Exploring specialist recovery and rehabilitation programmes, community payback unpaid work, education, training and employment, mentoring and working with families of offenders etc. can be an effective approach to take. I think this paragraph is in the wrong section.</p>
	<p>Actions required:</p> <p>There are certain areas we have identified that are not overly resource intensive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Rent Smart Wales to promote and improve awareness of equality and diversity in the private rented sector (the highest growth area of housing supply in Wales). standards/educate landlords in the sector e.g. offer free training and support for landlords • Lack of training among statutory and 3rd sectors on modern day slavery and risks of exploitation to vulnerable, including those homeless, with mental health and substance misuse issues: work with Supporting People to promote training opportunities • Gypsy and Traveller cultural awareness training is required by all agencies: arrange a regional training and awareness raising event • The provision of council staff training could be opened up to agency staff to ensure consistency of and maximise resources. • Participate in the Integrated Offender Management group which has been established to take an holistic approach to the wellbeing of offenders, their families and reduce the re-offending rate.

<p>11</p>	<p>Where you have identified mitigating factors in previous answers that lessen the impact on any particular group in the community, or have identified any elsewhere, please summarise them here.</p> <p>Consultation with hard to reach groups such as street homeless rough sleepers has the potential to radically improve through the SHIN project. This project will be hosted by the Wallich and will manage the collection of rough sleeper information across Wales. The benefit of this data collection is that it will link in with the Supporting People outcomes data. Supporting People and Homelessness services are intrinsically linked partners.</p> <p>All of the homeless teams in the region operate the Abritas housing management system, which will enable consistency and accuracy of our equalities data collection.</p>
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	A Gwent wide Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer is in post to ensure forces leavers are not disadvantaged because of the time spent away from the region on military service. The post holder has successfully achieved changes in housing policy in two of the local authorities in Gwent: this is a significant achievement and addresses a major area of housing disadvantage.
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12	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment?</p> <p>The practice of undertaking an EIA on a regional basis has provided us with the assurance that the five authorities have considered the equalities agenda in a consistent manner. The overarching themes identified in the consultation process have been developed into actions that are underpinned by themes and wider strategic actions to encompass equal access to all. Where the strategic action plan contains local actions, the relevant local authority will incorporate the local standards of their equality and diversity policies.</p> <p>The EIA will be used when we need to respond to emerging trends and changes in regional and area specific population demographic over the term of the strategy action plan. This EIA will also be used to support regional and local proposals for new schemes and support commissioning with partner agencies.</p>
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	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include EIA within the Regional Homeless Strategy document set for publication • EIA, when completed, to be returned to equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for publishing on the Council's website.
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Completed by:	Suzanne Cousins
Date:	18 th October 2018
Position:	Housing Solutions Manager
Name of Head of Service:	Shaun Couzens