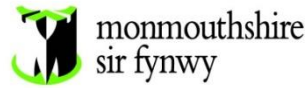


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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 12 October 2020

Notice of meeting

Adults Select Committee

**Tuesday, 20th October, 2020 at 10.30 am
Remote Microsoft Teams Meeting**

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for absence.	
2.	Declarations of Interest.	
3.	Public Open Forum.	
4.	Homeseach Allocations Review and Policy amendments - To review the allocations Policy.	1 - 30
5.	Homeless Briefing Report and Emerging Proposals for Future Delivery of Homelessness.	31 - 76
6.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting (to follow).	
7.	Adults Select Committee Forward Work Programme.	77 - 78
8.	Council and Cabinet Forward Work Planner.	79 - 90
9.	Next Meeting: Tuesday 15th December 2020 at 10.30am.	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

L.Brown
L.Dymock
R. Edwards
M.Groucutt
R. Harris
S. Howarth
P.Pavia
M. Powell
S. Woodhouse

C. Bowie
T. Crowhurst

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Watch this meeting online

This meeting can be viewed online either live or following the meeting by visiting www.monmouthshire.gov.uk or by visiting our Youtube page by searching MonmouthshireCC.

Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Committee Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve?
3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?
 - Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
 - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?
3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?
6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? Do they believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works?
6. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan?
7. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications been taken into consideration? For example, what are *the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?*
8. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
9. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated.

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...
- (iii) Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...

General Questions....

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?

Service Demands

- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?

Financial Planning

- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
- Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income? Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?

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SUBJECT:	PROPOSAL TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE HOMESARCH ALLOCATIONS POLICY.
MEETING:	ADULT SELECT COMMITTEE
DATE:	20TH OCTOBER 2020
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To consider proposed amendments and to the Homesearch Allocations policy following a review of the current policy and processes.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 To consider and comment on the proposed changes (**see Appendix 1**) giving regard to meeting the aims of the policy and contributing to the priorities of the Council.

2.2 Where applicable, consider the report in respect of the recent changes in Welsh Government homeless policy and homeless demand.

2.2 To recommend that the Cabinet Member adopts the proposed changes.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Under the Housing Act 1996 and Housing (Wales) Act 2014, the Council has a legal duty to run a housing register that manages the letting of social housing in Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire Housing Association (MHA) administers the register on behalf of the Council via Homesearch. There is a service level agreement in place with MHA to manage this service. Melin Homes and Pobl are also part of the Homesearch partnership. Each housing association let their affordable housing in line with the policy and associated procedures. To ensure an effective allocation policy that continues to meet the needs and priorities of Monmouthshire, reflects current legislation and case law, periodic reviews are undertaken as per the requirements of the Housing Act 1996. The previous review was 2016.

3.2 In addition to ensuring the policy continues to meet the Council's aims, the review considered feedback from consultation events with stakeholders such as staff, support providers and Social Care colleagues as well as applicants and those recently housed via Homesearch. The comments received were collated, placed into themes and used as starting point when considering the effectiveness of the current policy. The review panel also reflected upon best practice and have set out amendments that support the Council's aim of an allocations policy, which is flexible, fit for purpose and meets statutory obligations and operational requirements.

3.3 The main policy changes include:

- Local Connection. The criteria has been tightened and applicants must have resided in Monmouthshire for a minimum of 2 out of the past 3 years. This is to ensure that established residents of Monmouthshire are given more priority to meet their housing need.

- Banding. The number of bands has reduced from 7 to 5. This is to help simplify the process and help ease of understanding for applicants.
- Armed Forces Personnel/Veterans. Applicants are to be given high priority when they are leaving the armed forces and do not have accommodation on discharge. This is in response to the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- Lettings Quotas. This is being amended to include the introduction of flexible quotas which will allow the Homesearch Partnership to increase or decrease the number of properties available to each band. This will allow flexibility in the policy to respond to pressures and urgent need. e.g. increase the Homeless quota to meet statutory requirements.
- Rapid Rehousing Protocol. This is a requirement of Welsh Government's Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support and is an agreement between the Council and partner RSLs to minimise the time a homeless person spends in temporary accommodation before a move into permanent housing. This includes partnership working to identify suitable properties and the Council supporting move on into permanent housing with immediate intensive resettlement housing support. This will support the Housing Options Team in relation to their statutory obligations to ensure all homeless applicants have a move on plan and are supported in the transition to permanent housing and ending their homelessness.

3.4 In addition to the main policy changes detailed in **3.3**, the review also aimed to achieve business and organisation efficiencies together with improving the service user experience. These include:

- An upgrade of the Homesearch website, which is out-dated. No upgrades have been made since the current software and website were acquired over 10 years ago. Its functionality is minimal with little scope to make changes without paying a fee. One impact is a restriction on the ability to communicate with applicants.
- Customers and stakeholders have advised that the form is too long and time consuming to complete. It currently can take up to an hour to complete and it is known this impacts on more vulnerable applicants. The change also supports agencies who assist vulnerable applicants to apply for accommodation.
- Replacing paper based systems to a digital format e.g. medical/welfare. New facilities such as the ability to upload documents improves efficiency for staff and accessibility and convenience for service users
- Moving to a format that is mobile friendly. It is extremely difficult to use a mobile phone to make an application.
- The introduction of Auto-banding reduces the need for manual assessments. This will help to free Homesearch staff up from 'processing applications' to proactively engage with applicants.
- A new form to make it easier to apply for all tenures available through Homesearch, helping to increase housing options for applicants. The current form does not allow people to effectively register for intermediate accommodation. Nor is it easy to apply for low cost home-ownership properties.

- Enabling applicants to self-serve e.g. password re-set. This will reduce the need for applicants to contact staff, for example if they lose their details.
- Applicants have advised that they want to be kept informed on the progress of their application and have confirmation when documents are received. The new system will automatically send texts to applicants at each key customer contact point.
- The availability of Live Chat as an additional means of communication
- Improve transparency. Complaints from applicants aren't uncommon about perceived underhanded allocations. The new system will restrict the properties that customers see e.g. a person under 60 will not be able to bid on a sheltered property. This will alleviate the perception that the system is unfair and that applicants aren't cherry picked

4. **EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

4.1 There are no negative implications of the proposal. **See Appendix 2**

5. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

5.1 The following options are available:

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
Option 1: The <u>recommended option</u> is to agree to the proposed amendments and implementation of the revised policy.	<p>An allocations policy that is up to date and reflects current legislation and case law including the recent Welsh Government change in homeless policy through Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support</p> <p>An allocations policy that is robust and ensures the Council's statutory duties are met and can withstand any legal challenge. Again, this includes the new homeless responsibilities required by Welsh Government.</p> <p>An allocations policy that is flexible and able to respond to any challenges the Council may be facing.</p> <p>An allocations policy that supports Monmouthshire residents, particularly</p>	There are no risks to this proposal, although there are financial implications	<p>The review has been thorough and has included all aspects of Homesearch such as the application process, how we communicate with customers, eligibility/housing need, managing expectations and demotions/exclusions. The proposed amendments have considered all feedback received and officer experience and where appropriate led to amendments.</p> <p>There is a need for aspects of the revised policy eg Rapid Re-housing to be complemented by the future commissioning of the Housing Support Grant Programme, scheduled for April 2022.</p> <p>By way of example, the Council has recently received a legal challenge in respect of</p>

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
	<p>those in greatest housing need.</p> <p>Digital improvements provide costs benefits and keep operational costs to a minimum, which will benefit all Homesearch partners.</p>		<p>one aspect the Policy where an applicant considers that the Council may not be meeting its Equalities duties to all those with Protected Characteristics.</p>
<p>Option 2: Do nothing and rely on the existing policy.</p>	<p>The current policy is established and has been in place for the last 4 years.</p> <p>Staff, partners and customers have an understanding of the current policy. There would be no need for additional training or communicating changes with new applicants.</p>	<p>The current policy does not take into good practice that has been identified in the last 4 years.</p> <p>There is a risk that there could be gaps in the current policy or it is not as flexible as the Council would like to meet current challenges. Therefore, would not fully meet local need.</p> <p>The current policy doesn't reflect changes to Welsh Government homeless policy.</p> <p>This review has been undertaken in Partnership with Monmouthshire Housing, Pobl and Melin Homes. Should the Council not support the review this may impact detrimentally on this strategic partnership.</p>	<p>The council has a legal responsibility to review the allocations policy periodically and the review has identified areas where the policy would benefit from amendments.</p>
<p>Option 3: Implement some of the proposed changes.</p>	<p>This would see improvements in some aspects of the allocations policy.</p>	<p>This could leave gaps in the policy and leave the Council open to legal challenge if the policy doesn't properly reflect the current legal position.</p>	<p>The Council has a legal responsibility to review the allocations policy periodically and the review has identified areas where the policy would benefit from amendments.</p>

6. REASONS:

6.1 The Council has a duty to periodically review the Allocations Policy under the Housing Act 1996 and Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

6.2 Although this review was started during 2019, timing has allowed the requirements of Welsh Governments Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support to be incorporated into the changes. The proposed changes result in a better policy and system that strengthen delivery against the Council's objectives and better meets the needs of our customers.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 There will be resource implications associated with this proposal. These are:

£47,703 per annum This is the Council's annual contribution towards the Homeseach partnership which is shared with individual partners. This is budgeted from the Housing and Communities budget.

£15,000 one off fee This is the Council's contribution to upgrade the Locata IT system to implement the proposed changes. IT upgrades will include on line forms such as medical questionnaires and change of circumstances form, auto bid for low need applications, upgraded letters/templates, enhancements to Intermediate Housing side of Locata, better quality property adverts, push notification for applicants where suitable properties are available.

7.2 £2,000 one off fee This is for Welsh Language compliance plus £2,500 annual fee

7.3 Due to the Covid-19 circumstances and the impact on the Council's homeless budget, there is currently no budget provision. (The review has been in progress since 2019). However, efforts will be made to absorb the expenditure into the Housing budget. If we cannot fund the costs within the service budget then as they relate to service transformation and collaboration, permission will be requested to capitalise the expenditure under the capitalisation directive.

8. CONSULTEES:

8.1 Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways & Flooding; Chief Officer Enterprise; Housing & Communities Manager; Welsh Language & Equalities Officer; Disability Advice Project; U3A; Disability Wales; Stonewall Cymru; Race Equality First; Onyx Foundation, Melin Homes, Monmouthshire Housing Association and Pobl.

The review considered feedback from consultation events with stakeholders such as staff, support providers and Social Care colleagues as well as applicants and those recently housed via Homeseach.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Housing Act 1996
- Housing(Wales) Act 2014
- Welsh Government's Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness

- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility)(Wales) Regulations
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equalities Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Welsh Government Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support

11. **AUTHOR:** Louise Corbett, Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing

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Proposed Amendments to Homeseach Allocations Policy (change highlighted)

THEME	CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED AMENDMENT	REASON FOR CHANGE
<p>Local Connection</p>	<p>The applicant or a member of their household has lived in the County in accommodation of their choice for 12 out of the past 24 months or 3 out of the past 5 years.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household are employed within the County, where they work within the area and not where the employers head office is. Employment will be deemed to be work that is permanent or long term in nature and is for 15 hours a week or more.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household has a family association, (being mother, father, brother, sister or dependent children or adult children) who reside within the County and have done so for the past 5 years continuously. This includes step children and adopted children.</p> <p>There are special circumstances, for example, the applicant needs to be near special medical or support services that are only available in the Monmouthshire area. A local connection</p>	<p>The applicant or a member of their household has lived in the County in accommodation of their choice for 2 out of the past 3 years or 3 out of the past 5 years. For a local connection to apply, an applicant must have lived in Monmouthshire through their own choice.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household are employed within the County and they work within the area (i.e. not just where the employers head office is). Someone who is self-employed would need to show that they routinely work in Monmouthshire to qualify. Employment will be deemed to be work that is permanent or long term in nature and is for 15 hours a week or more.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household has a family association, (being mother or father (or a person who's acted in that capacity), brother, sister or dependent children or adult children) who reside within the County and have done so for the past 5 years continuously. This includes step children and adopted children. There will be no local connection where the relationship is estranged.</p> <p>There are special circumstances, for example, the applicant or their household needs to be near special medical or support services that are only available in the Monmouthshire area. A local connection established on these grounds is likely to be</p>	<p>The intention is to ensure that established residents of Monmouthshire are given more priority to meet their housing need than applicants who do not meet the defined local connection criteria.</p> <p>Applicants living in refuge in Monmouthshire will be considered as having a local connection; this is being proposed to support safe guarding objectives.</p>

	established on these grounds is likely to be exceptional.	exceptional. We would consider someone has a local connection where they are living in domestic abuse refuge accommodation in Monmouthshire and it is considered unsafe for them to return to the area that they have left.	
Page 8 Banding	<p>Band 1 Urgent Housing Need</p> <p>Band 2A High Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 2B Homeless Households</p> <p>BAND 3A Medium Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 3B Homeless Households</p> <p>BAND 4</p> <p>BAND 5 No Housing Need</p>	<p>Emergency Band - Urgent Housing Need</p> <p>Band 1 - High Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 2 - Medium Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 3 - Low Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 4 - No Housing Need</p>	Feedback received from service users stated there were too many bands and it was confusing. We are proposing to reduce the number of bands from 7 to 5 and rename them for ease of understanding.
Children in Flats	<p>BAND 3A - Medium Housing Need</p> <p>➤ Children in Flats</p>	<p>BAND 1 – High Housing Need</p> <p>Children Under 5 Years Old in a Flat and no Lift</p> <p>Applicants who have two or more dependent child (living with them full time) both under the age of 5 and live in a flat above ground floor will gain Band 1. Homesearch will review this once one child turns 5 years of age and applicants will then be placed into Band 2.</p>	Increase in banding to support a quicker move into more suitable housing.
Armed Forces Personnel/Veterans	<p>BAND 3A - Medium Housing Need</p> <p>➤ Leaving Armed Forces</p> <p>BAND 5 - No Housing Need</p>	<p>BAND 1 – High Housing Need</p> <p>Applicants will meet this category when leaving the Armed Forces and are in receipt of their Cessation of</p>	This supports the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and ensures those leaving the armed forces

<p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>Serving Armed Forces Personnel</p>	<p>Duty Notice or their Testimonial of Military Service Notice and they have a local connection to Monmouthshire. If the applicant has left the armed forces and secured alternative accommodation, they will be assessed on the accommodation they currently occupy. This band is awarded on basis the applicant doesn't own or lease their own accommodation and is threatened with/experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Applicants who are active participants in operations of the Territorial Army (TA) will not be given extra preference on the Homesearch Register.</p> <p>When assessing sufficient financial resources Homesearch would disregard financial resources connected with being in the armed forces.</p> <p>BAND 4 – No Housing Need</p> <p>Serving Armed Forces Personnel</p> <p>Applicants who are serving in the British Armed Forces can apply to join the Housing Register and will initially be placed into Band 4.</p>	<p>are given a priority for housing, if required.</p>
<p>Households with Children</p>	<p>Single applicants or couples, who do not have children residing with them on a full time basis, will only qualify for two bedroom accommodation providing they can supply written evidence that their child/children have an overnight stay on average at least two nights a week.</p>	<p>Single applicants or couples, who do not have their child/children residing with them on a full time basis, will qualify for an extra bedroom providing they can supply sufficient evidence that they have an overnight stay and providing those child/children are unable to share a bedroom with any other child/children residing at the property. NB: an applicant would only be allocated a general needs flat</p>	<p>Policy updated to consider households where children may have an overnight stay (rather than 2 nights a week) with a parent and households who have access to their children on a 50/50 basis.</p>

	<p>An affordability assessment will be carried out prior to an offer of accommodation being made to ensure that the applicant can afford the rent</p>	<p>and not a house and this would also be subject to the applicant(s) being able to afford the property.</p> <p>Applicants applying with a household where they are responsible for a child/children on a shared 50/50 basis with an ex-partner will be placed into the household type and band they would be if the child(ren) lived with them on a full time basis.</p>	
<p>Sufficient Financial Resources</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>We will take into account an applicant's financial resources in determining whether an applicant would qualify for reasonable preference or whether their preference should be reduced. Regard will be given to any resources wherever in the world they are situated. This category applies to households whose gross income from all sources exceeds the threshold for the higher rate of income tax (currently calculated at £34,371 for single applicants or £50,000 for joint applicants) or whose household's capital assets or savings exceeds £50,000. Such applications will be placed into Band 5 and are unlikely to receive an offer of accommodation.</p>	<p>Income/money received as a result of leaving the armed forces or from welfare benefits will be excluded when Homesearch considers financial resources. If a single applicant or joint applicants earn more than £45000.00 per year, they will be placed into Band 4. If cash investments/savings exceed £16,000.00 or if capital assets exceed £50,000.00 they will also be placed into Band 4. The only exception to the above criteria is if applicants are eligible for medical priority.</p>	<p>The amended threshold for sufficient financial resources has been calculated using a Monmouthshire average property price for purchase and rent and consideration of the income required to obtain one of these properties off the open market.</p>
<p>Lettings Quotas</p>	<p>To help ensure that all groups of applicants are given an opportunity to move under this scheme, (based on housing need) and to further promote sustainable communities, letting quotas may be applied if deemed necessary. If applied, quotas will be advertised based on applicant type and quotas periodically reviewed by the MHR partners. Where quotas are applied, property adverts will be used to inform applicants of the quota criteria relating to the individual letting. Where a quota is applied, all appropriate applicants will be considered on the shortlist for bands 1 to 4 (irrelevant of quota) before applicants in band 5 are considered. This criteria,</p>	<p>To help ensure that different groups of applicants are given an opportunity to move and to support sustainable communities, Homesearch reserves the right to use flexible letting quotas to allocate social housing. A letting quota may also be used in exceptional circumstances in response to an emergency e.g. large-scale flooding. Where lettings quotas are used it will be made clear in the Homesearch property adverts.</p>	<p>Includes the use of flexible quotas, which allows us to increase or decrease the number of properties available to certain groups in exceptional circumstances.</p>

	may however, be circumvented where a local lettings plan is applied		
Applicants who Fail to Bid	<p>Homesearch will review non-bidder applications periodically.</p> <p>For applicants in higher bands, partners may instigate assisted bidding. Homesearch reserves the right to reduce priority</p>	Homesearch will regularly review all Emergency Band and Band 1 (high welfare need only) non-bidder applications. If an applicant with this banding fails to bid after 3 months and a suitable property has become available during that time, Homesearch may reduce an applicant's priority/banding. If any applicant no longer wishes to remain on the Homesearch register their application will be cancelled	Homesearch is a needs based system and the expectation is for applicants with a recognised high housing need to bid for all suitable properties to ensure move on.
Automatic Bid for Homeless Applicants	Homeless applicants will be supported in accordance with the relevant Code of Guidance and within the procedures of MCC. Homeless applicants owed a Section 75 duty will generally be expected to bid for advertised properties in the same way as other applicants, although bids may be submitted for suitable properties on their behalf. If within 13 weeks of the date of acceptance of the homeless duty, no suitable offer has been made, MCC may place a bid. If Successful this would discharge the Council's final offer under Section 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. An applicant's banding would then be re-assessed as per the allocations policy, dependent on their new circumstances	Homeless applicants owed a full homeless duty (as per Section 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) will generally be expected to bid for advertised properties in the same way as other applicants. However, MCC reserves the right to bid on behalf of any Homesearch applicants with a full homelessness duty who do not express an interest in a suitable property when it becomes available.	This allows the Housing Options Team to bid on behalf of any full duty (S75) homelessness applicants who may not be bidding. This supports the aim of rapid rehousing for homeless households and assists their move from temporary to permanent housing.
Withdrawing Offers	<p>Where the applicant's circumstances have changed, or new information comes to light and this changes their priority or makes them ineligible for the property or makes them ineligible to appear on the Housing Register.</p> <p>Where the property fails to become vacant e.g. withdrawal of notice</p>	<p>Where the applicant's circumstances have changed, or new information comes to light and this changes their priority status for social housing or makes them ineligible for the property or makes them ineligible to appear on the Homesearch Register.</p> <p>Where the property fails to become vacant e.g. withdrawal of end of tenancy notice by the current tenant(s).</p>	Supports efficient management of social housing.

		<p>Where an applicant is transferring from one Homesearch partner's tenancy to another Homesearch partner's tenancy and the property they are vacating fails a property inspection or debts are connected to the old tenancy and they are not properly addressed.</p>	
<p>Rural Allocations Policy</p>	<p>The Rural Allocations Policy will be used to allocate the first 10 homes on all new housing sites and on all subsequent lettings of these properties (once identified via the first round of lettings) in rural areas.</p> <p>Priority order: Priority will be given, in the first instance, to (a), with (b), (c)</p> <p>(a) Applicants with a housing need who have lived in the community (defined as the Community Council area) for a period of at least 5 years at the time of application, or in the past.</p> <p>(b) Applicants who need to live in the community in order to provide support to a dependent child or adult or to receive support from a principal carer.</p> <p>(c) Applicants who are principally (>20 hours per week) employed in the community (defined as the Community Council area).</p>	<p>The Rural Allocations Policy will be used to allocate the first 10 homes or 80% of the available properties (whichever is greater) on all new housing sites and on all subsequent lettings of these properties (once identified via the first round of lettings) in rural areas.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances where the number of properties available exceeds those covered by the Rural Allocations Policy, the Local Authority reserves the right to choose which properties that will be eligible for the Rural Allocations Policy. This decision will be made having due regard to the housing need and preferred mix of available properties to meet that need.</p> <p>Priority order: Priority will be given, in the first instance, to (a), with (b), (c) and (d) having equal priority.</p> <p>(a) Applicants with a housing need who have lived in the community (defined as the Community Council area) for a period of at least 5 years at the time of application, or in the past.</p> <p>(b) Applicants who need to live in the community in order to provide support to a dependent child or adult or to receive support from a principal carer.</p>	<p>This proposal supports residents living in rural communities being prioritised over those who do not live in the area for affordable housing.</p> <p>Increasing the number of properties covered by the rural allocations policy and allowing the council to determine which property mix best meets need, contributes to the resilience of rural communities.</p>

		<p>(c) Applicants who are principally (>20 hours per week) employed in the community (defined as the Community Council area).</p> <p>(d) Applicants who have left the rural area to access housing, but rely on immediate family members for child care (where family members have lived in the community (defined as a community council area) for a period of at least 5 years).</p>	
<p>Suspensions/Demotions</p> <p>Page 13</p>	<p>We may exclude someone from the Housing Register if it is considered proportionate and reasonable to do so, as a result of unacceptable behaviour. We will take into account relevant factors when making these decisions</p>	<p>We may prevent an applicant from bidding for social housing via Homesearch (for a period of time), if it is considered proportionate and reasonable to do so as a result of their unacceptable behaviour. We will take into account relevant factors when making such a decision. We may also demote an applicant's banding (again for a period of time) because of their behaviour. This would mean that they are less likely to be able to secure social housing through Homesearch. Homesearch partners will seek to minimise suspensions and demotions and provide advice and support or facilitate appropriate support in order to do so.</p> <p>To suspend an applicant the following 3 stage test criteria must be met. This test will be applied by the Suspension Panel (a panel of Homesearch landlord's representatives) to determine if the unacceptable behaviour warrants suspension (all answers must be yes):</p> <p>i) Was the applicant's (or household member's) behaviour serious enough to entitle a local authority</p>	<p>Ensures the policy is adhering to current legislation and good practice and offers transparency regarding decisions about suspensions and demotions.</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 14</p>		<p>to obtain a possession order on a secure tenancy in the same circumstances? Normally an outright order should be expected.</p> <p>ii) Was the behaviour serious enough to render the applicant or a household member unsuitable to be a tenant?</p> <p>iii) Is the behaviour still relevant/unacceptable at the time of application (meaning the applicant is still unsuitable)? NB: It is not necessary for an applicant to have actually been a tenant of one of the Homeseach partners when the unacceptable behaviour occurred to warrant suspension.</p> <p>Demotions can be applied where:</p> <p>The circumstances aren't serious enough to meet the three stage test. Alternatively demotion can also take place where an applicant refuses a certain numbers of offers.</p>	
<p>Bypassing Policy & Procedure</p>	<p>Policy Principles:</p> <p>Blanket bans will not be used.</p> <p>A decision to bypass an applicant will only be taken according to the criteria set out in this document.</p> <p>Any local letting agreement must be agreed by all partners and adhere to this document.</p> <p>If a Monmouthshire Homeseach partner wishes to retain bypassing rules outside of the Common Allocation Policy and Procedures e.g. rules relating</p>	<p>Bypassing means that in some limited situations a Homeseach partner/landlord can 'bypass' the highest banded applicant who has bid on a property so an applicant won't receive an offer for that particular property.</p> <p>Where there is evidence an applicant does not have the mental capacity to understand a tenancy agreement, for a property allocated via Homeseach (also see the Mental Capacity Act 2005), a Homeseach partner will enact the Bypass Policy and Procedure</p>	<p>Setting clearly defined reasons for bypassing will support transparency and ensure accurate data collection for monitoring purposes. If an applicant is to be bypassed for a reason other than those listed, it must be agreed by all partners beforehand.</p>

	<p>to the size of the accommodation to be offered, or offers where there are rent arrears or unresolved unacceptable behaviour – these rules will be recorded as an appendix to the Common Allocation Policy and Procedures. They will be transparent, so it is clear when a partner will bypass an applicant and why.</p> <p>All parties have agreed, as far as possible, to set a common set of rules and to keep exceptions to a minimum. All Monmouthshire Homesearch Partners also recognise the need for each body to manage their dwellings appropriately.</p> <p>It is not possible to describe every situation where an applicant may be bypassed. The following list describes the most common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant not suitable for social housing allocation with communal entrances/facilities. • Applicants who are vulnerable and have high support needs or applicants who require a sensitive letting such as MAPPA case. • Current arrears/former tenancy related debt. • The property is not suitable for a disabled applicant’s long term needs. • Medical needs. • Pending information. • Wrong banding. • Pre void inspection. • Affordability. • Senior Officer Discretion. 	<p>Bypassing Reasons</p> <p>Ineligible for the Property: A household doesn’t meet the criteria outlined in the property advert such as the household size not matching the property size; not meeting an age restriction requirement to live in the property or not requiring disabled adaptations present in the property. We may also bypass because there are reasonable grounds for believing that false information has been given to try and obtain a tenancy.</p> <p>Rural Allocation Policy/Local Letting Plans Applicants may be bypassed where they do not match specific criteria set out via either of these. Both can be adopted for specific areas/homes to ensure social housing is accessible to those who need it in the local community and that communities are as balanced and sustainable as possible. Properties subject to the Rural Allocation Policy/local letting plans will be clearly advertised and priority will be given to those that meet the criteria set out within those.</p> <p>Change in Applicant’s Circumstances: There has been a recent change in their circumstances which makes someone unsuitable or ineligible e.g. banding has changed, change in medical situation, financial situation or a change in the number of bedrooms needed.</p> <p>Property Unsuitable: An applicant is considered not ready to move or to live independently due to social or medical reasons (the support available will also be considered). Or the Homesearch landlord/Occupational Therapist recognises the</p>	
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		<p>property is not suitable for their support/medical/mobility needs (including longerterm needs) e.g. the property they have bid for cannot be adapted to meet their needs or it has unsuitable communal facilities or they are likely be too vulnerable (e.g. lack mental capacity) or pose a risk to themselves or others (e.g. MAPPA case). Another reason could be a recent history of significant anti-social behaviour (from the applicant or their household members) which would make them unsuitable for the property.</p> <p>Rent Arrears/Debt: Applicants can be bypassed where they have current or recoverable (non-stature barred) former debt with a Homesearch partner (which they can't pay in full). This would be where the arrears/recoverable debt are above £500. We would exclude arrears included in a Debt Recovery Order as applicable.</p> <p>Affordability: Where it cannot be proved that welfare benefits will be paid to an applicant to sustain a tenancy or a person hasn't been employed for a minimum of three months (with an income sufficient to sustain a tenancy) or does not have sufficient enough savings to sustain a tenancy for at least 12 months, an applicant will be bypassed.</p> <p>Information is Pending: Homesearch partners have not received information requested from an applicant in conjunction with the Homesearch Allocation Procedures.</p> <p>Property Advert Withdrawn: Some properties advertised for letting may need to be withdrawn for</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>		<p>example because it is urgently needed for an emergency (e.g. a tenant has lost their home due to fire) or because the previous tenant has decided not to leave their tenancy and retracted their notice to end their tenancy.</p> <p>Condition of Tenancy: Where an applicant is transferring home and an inspection is carried out and the current property they are leaving has been damaged/neglected.</p> <p>Applicant Leaving the Armed Forces – an applicant would be bypassed (if they bid on a property) up to 2 months prior to discharge from the army. Homesearch will notify applicants leaving the armed forces when they are able to bid.</p> <p>Exceptional circumstances/Discretionary Decision: Cases that fall outside the above criteria will need to be discussed by the Suspension Panel; discussions may have to be conducted via email as the panel only meets once a month. The application of a discretionary decision for exceptional circumstances will need to be approved by all partners (via email).</p>	
<p>Rapid Rehousing (Agreement in principle - subject to partner approval)</p>	<p>Not in current policy.</p>	<p>It is a requirement of Welsh Government, as per the Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Related Support, for the Council to have a 'move-on protocol with rapid re-housing at its heart' for re-housing those in emergency/temporary homeless accommodation into suitable permanent accommodation.</p> <p>The Council is required to minimise the number of placement moves for any individual or family that experiences homeless. Settled permanent</p>	<p>This supports the Council in meeting its obligation to provide those in homeless/emergency accommodation with move on into suitable permanent housing as soon as possible.</p>

		<p>accommodation following a short period of time in emergency accommodation is the desire for all partners when working together to eradicate homelessness and promote sustainable tenancies.</p> <p>MCC will work closely with the Monmouthshire Housing Partnership to facilitate adequate availability of social housing stock through local housing associations to help meet local homeless need through the flexible quota arrangement within the existing Monmouthshire Homesearch Housing Allocation Policy. The Council is committed to RSL's having the guarantee of immediate Intensive Resettlement Housing Support for those needing to be accommodated via the homeless route. In the short-term this will be provided through an interim reconfigured Housing Support Grant funded service provided by Pobl. It is acknowledged that not all applicants may be suitable for all vacancies and there may be occasions where an allocation is considered as too high risk. In these rare circumstances the applicant can be bypassed, however, all such bypasses and the reasons why, must be reported to the Council at the time of bypass for monitoring purposes.</p> <p>Should this support not be available this may prevent the Council from moving some applicants on to permanent accommodation.</p> <p>On a homeless determination and a 2B Banding status assessment under the Homesearch Allocation Policy, Housing Options Officers will work closely with Homesearch Officers to ensure registration of housing applications and minimise delays in</p>	
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		<p>processing applications. The allocated Support Worker will be involved by providing individual support plans to illustrate the intensity of support to be delivered, as well as the individual's commitment to working towards a successful tenancy.</p> <p>Any barriers to an offer of accommodation, such as previous rent arrears, will be negotiated by this triage, and if necessary, the Council will utilise the Homeless Prevention Fund to reduce/refund arrears. Any support issues such as previous behaviour or substance misuse issues which could inhibit an offer being successful, will be addressed via the support plan and evidenced by the involvement of the Substance Misuse Assertive Outreach Worker (also part of MCC bid), and Mental Health services.</p> <p>To further support individual clients, the Council or support providers will refer clients into the multi-agency Housing Intervention Panel to consider and identify solutions. The Council, housing associations and support providers are committed to both referring clients and attending meetings.</p> <p>As the Temporary Accommodation and Resettlement Support Service are delivered through the same Providers, there will be a seamless move with support during the resettlement process. High-intensity flexible, client-led support will be provided for between 12 to 16 weeks, with ongoing support being provided via the RSL or generic floating support service after this period.</p>	
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Intermediate Housing Framework	Not in current policy.	The framework sets out what type of housing is intermediate housing, the eligibility for each type and the how the scheme will be administered.	Sets out the overarching principles and ensures consistency in relation to allocations.
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APPENDIX 2



monmouthshire
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Equality and Future Generations Evaluation

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<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Louise Corbett</p> <p>Phone no: 07970957039 E-mail: louisecorbett@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>It is a legal requirement for Monmouthshire Council to run a Housing Register that manages the letting of social housing in Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire Housing Association (MHA) administers the common housing register on behalf of the Council via Homesearch. There is a service level agreement in place with MHA to manage this service. Melin, Pobl and United Welsh are also part of the Homesearch partnership and use it to let their affordable housing in Monmouthshire to applicants in line with this policy and accompanying procedures. To ensure an effective allocations policy that is fit for purpose and reflects current legislation and case law, periodic reviews are undertaken and amendments to the exiting policy proposed.</p>
<p>Name of Service area</p> <p>Housing</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>18/05/2020</p>

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The revised Homeseach policy should bring positive benefits to Monmouthshire residents of all ages. Households from the age of 16 and above are able to register on Homeseach. 16/17 year olds are granted a tenancy in trust until they reach 18. There is no upper age limit as to who can register for Homeseach and there a range of housing options available to meet need e.g. older persons housing.	Applicant could be assessed as adequately housed and therefore not in housing need.	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.
Disability	The Homeseach policy administers the allocation of a range of properties including those that meet accessible housing requirements. Each household who registers on Homeseach has their circumstances considered on a case by case basis. Where an applicant might have disabilities, supporting medical information and/or occupational therapy assessments will be considered when determining their application and suitability of accommodation.	Applicant could be assessed as adequately housed and therefore not in housing need.	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.
Gender reassignment	None.	None.	N/A.
Marriage or civil partnership	None.	None.	N/A.
Pregnancy or maternity	None.	None.	N/A.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Race	None.	None.	N/A.
Religion or Belief	None.	None.	N/A.
Sex	None.	None.	N/A.
Sexual Orientation	None.	None.	N/A.
Welsh Language	None.	None.	N/A.
Poverty	None.	None.	N/A.

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2. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	<p>Positive: The policy sets out our commitment to make best use of resources and ensure affordable housing is allocated in the most appropriate way. Affordable housing helps the overall prosperity of neighborhoods and residents (eg a stable home to access employment) and contributes towards balanced and resilient communities that are sustainable.</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Positive: N/A Negative: N/A	N/A
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Positive: The policy seeks to prioritise those who are assessed as having a housing need, this includes those who have physical health issues, mental health issues or other welfare needs. The provision of suitable housing can assist in promoting good health, independence and well-being. Negative: None.	There is ongoing dialogue between the Council, Monmouthshire Homesearch and partner agencies to encourage clients who may have a housing need to register onto the waiting list. During the application process their housing need is assessed on a case-by-case basis and the appropriate banding is given to their application.
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Positive: Affordable housing makes an important contribution to the sustainability and cohesiveness of our towns and villages by providing homes that local people can afford to live in and helps to mitigate against the need to move away. Negative: None. Positive: The Policy provides provision for local letting policies that can help to address localized issues, eg anti-social behavior. Negative: None	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homesearch Partnership where performance will be monitored.
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local	Positive: N/A. Negative: N/A	N/A.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
social, economic and environmental wellbeing		
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Positive: The policy applies to housing in rural areas and includes a Rural Allocation Policy which sees new homes allocated to local people who are able to evidence a long standing connection to village. This contributes to and supports the heritage and culture of our rural communities.</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	<p>Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.</p>
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Positive: The policy aims to allocate affordable housing equitably and in a transparent manner regardless of an individual's ethnic origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. The policy is a means for the Council's partner Registered Social Landlord's (RSL) to allocate properties and once someone becomes a tenant they are able to access a range of support such as financial inclusion or education and employment opportunities - all of which contributes to empowering people and helps them fulfil their potential.</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	<p>The agreed policy will be subject to regular monitoring and periodic review, in line with the Code of Guidance.</p>

3. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The policy is the framework for managing the Homesearch waiting list and sets out how we will manage applications and allocate properties. The waiting list is a live database and changes continuously with applicants registering, cancelling applications or notifying of a change in their circumstances – it is the measure of need at that point in time. The policy is reviewed periodically to ensure it reflects current legislation, good practice and is fit for purpose.</p> <p>The database is used for future planning when assessing housing need and feeds into an evidence base that is used for a range of Housing and Planning policies such as Local Housing Market Assessment and replacement of Local Development Plan. The data also influences decisions as to where Welsh Government funding should be allocated as well what specialist housing provision is required i.e. social services/health need.</p>	<p>As part of the review and proposed changes the Locata IT system will be upgraded. This will ensure the database captures all the relevant information for housing needs mapping, the data can be obtained easily and that it can be interpreted effectively.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>To effectively review the policy a review group was set up and key partners were invited to participate. In addition to the allocation of social housing the policy also seeks to support wider priorities, such as those relating to Social Care, Community Safety etc. Our partners and effective joint working are essential for us to be successful in the implementation of the policy and deliver outcomes.</p>	<p>The Monmouthshire Homesearch Partnership will meet quarterly to review implementation of the policy and its effectiveness.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p>Involvement</p>	<p>The policy amendments have been agreed in liaison with Homesearch partners. At the beginning of the review process consultation and engagement events were held with stakeholders, staff and applicants of the waiting list. The final policy has also been made available for consultation with Shelter Cymru, U3A, Disability Wales, Stonewall Cymru, Race Equality First and Onyx Foundation.</p>	<p>Feedback and comments have been considered and fed into the review.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p>Prevention</p>	<p>The policy seeks to assist applicants with a housing need and supports the Council in its statutory duties with regard to those who are threatened with homelessness or who are actually homeless. Applications are banded according to need and priority is given to those who have the most urgent requirements, the allocation of suitable housing should prevent problems getting worse and contribute to improvements in people's health and well-being.</p>	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="349 371 521 635">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="544 256 1328 754">Affordable housing makes an important contribution to the sustainability of our towns and villages by providing homes that local people on low incomes can afford to live in. The policy seeks to support those in housing need and vulnerable households, the housing application assessment considers a range of needs including medical and welfare needs and banding is awarded in line with someone's circumstances. An allocation of affordable housing is often a betterment to an individual's circumstances. RSL partners offer a range of support to their tenants such as financial inclusion, advice in relation to fuel poverty/energy efficiency or advice around education and employment all of which help the individual as well as the economy and environment.</p>	<p data-bbox="1350 256 1413 284">N/A</p>

Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Social Justice, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Social Justice	N/A	N/A	N/A
Safeguarding	The policy supports households and agencies in relation to safeguarding issues e.g. domestic abuse.	None.	N/A.
Corporate Parenting	The policy supports the Corporate parenting and allows for care leavers and child in need cases to be awarded priority banding.	None.	N/A.

5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Evidence has been gathered in the following ways:

- Consultation with a range of stakeholders including staff, councillors and partner agencies.
- Surveyed existing Homesearch applicants, analysed feedback received by the Homesearch team in range of ways such as complaints, compliments, customer satisfaction surveys and new tenant feedback.
- Consultation with the Council's Equality Officer.
- Consultation with Shelter Cymru, U3A, Disability Wales, Stonewall Cymru, Race Equality First and Onyx Foundation.
- Housing register data
- Local Housing Market Assessment (September 2018)

The legislation and good practice which have informed the policy revisions are:

- Housing Act 1996
- Housing(Wales) Act 2014
- Welsh Government's Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness
- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility)(Wales) Regulations
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equalities Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018

6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

Positive -

The positive benefits of this proposal will allow us to:

- Allocate affordable housing fairly, consistently and transparently
- Fully adhere to legislation and the Welsh Government's regulatory framework
- Provide a service that is easy to access, responds to changing demands and gives high customer satisfaction
- Work to support sustainable and resilient communities, the prevention of homelessness and help to support vulnerable people.
- Make best use of housing stock
-

Negative – None.

7. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Proceed with upgrades to the Locata IT system to respond to policy changes.	September 2020	Strategy and Policy Officer – Affordable Housing
Implement and publicise changes and make amended policy available.	September 2020	Strategy and Policy Officer – Affordable Housing

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VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
0.0	Adult Select Committee	16/06/2020	
1.0	ICMD	24/16/2020	

SUBJECT:	HOMELESS BRIEFING REPORT & EMERGING PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DELIVERY OF HOMELESSNESS
MEETING:	ADULT SELECT
DATE:	20TH October 2020

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 This report is subsequent to the report received by Cabinet on 27th May 2020. The report will be the first of two reports. This first report provides a briefing on the current homeless situation in Monmouthshire, advises of new Welsh Government homeless guidance (which includes the requirements to establish a Homeless Transition Plan) and how the Council has and is proposing to respond. The briefing updates on current priorities and considerations for the future delivery of homelessness to meet both existing and anticipated future homeless need.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To receive a presentation on homelessness in Monmouthshire.
- 2.2 To receive an update on the Housing Support Grant Programme
- 2.3 To consider the current risks, pressures and challenges relating to the current provision and range of homeless accommodation and housing support homeless applicants.
- 2.4 To consider and comment on emerging proposals for the future delivery of homelessness in Monmouthshire that will meet the requirements of the proposed Phase 2 Transition Plan. **See Appendix 1.**
- 2.5 To consider the proposals in relation to the re-commissioning of the Housing Support Grant programme
- 2.6 For officers to continue to develop the evolving Phase 2 Transition Plan and proposed individual initiatives within the Plan, including identifying the necessary resources.
- 2.7 To receive a second follow up report at the next committee report with a finalised Transition Plan for pre-Cabinet scrutiny.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the Councils legal duties in respect of homelessness. Due to the Covid-19 circumstances, Welsh Government issued supplementary homeless guidance requiring the Council to house those who are rough sleeping or displaced as a result of the emergency for public health reasons. The Council has implemented the guidance and an overview of the position at 2nd October 2020 is provided in **Appendix 2.**
- 3.2 Welsh Government have subsequently issued **Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support.** This sets out Welsh Governments future homeless policy, which will be delivered through a three-phase plan:

- Phase 1: March to August 20 – Current Covid-19 crisis management
- Phase 2: July 20 to March 21 – Response to crisis and transition
- Phase 3: January 21 to March 22 – Move to ‘New Norm’ (WG Vision)

3.3 The ‘New Norm’ continues to require homeless prevention to be the priority. But where prevention isn’t achievable, homelessness should be **brief** and **non-repeated**. The core of the Welsh Government policy is Rapid Rehousing and to provide long-term accommodation with support if needed, to help people retain it and to thrive. The Phase 2 Guidance requires the Council to:

- Continue to support those placed in temporary accommodation and anyone still to be placed
- Prepare a Transition Plan setting out the provision of more sustainable accommodation.
- Improve the quality and availability of temporary, permanent, semi-permanent and supported accommodation. There is an emphasis on the provision of self-contained accommodation and a range of types. **See Appendix 3** sets out Welsh Governments accommodation standards for accommodation provided through Phase 2 Grant funding.

Welsh Government policy discussions are increasingly making reference to *‘temporary homes’* rather than temporary accommodation.

3.4 A summary overview of the current situation is:

- At 2nd October there were 102 households (85 single people) in temporary accommodation, that need moving to other accommodation. The number typically in temporary accommodation has quadrupled.
- Many of these applicants have a need for both specialist accommodation and specialist housing support, which largely isn’t currently available.
- Arising issues with placements is not un-common and the risk of placement breakdown is relatively high. Unfortunately, not all support needs can be currently met through the existing Housing Support Grant Programme (there is a need to re-commission, which isn’t scheduled until April 2023). This has been compounded by Housing Option Team staff capacity issues over the last six months, which have impacted upon temporary accommodation management. The recent appointment of a temporary Senior Accommodation Officer has helped to improve the situation. helpful but management challenges continue and two temporary Accommodation Assistants started on 1st October 2020.
- On the basis of the current situation, anticipated future needs and the requirements of Welsh Government the need for the following has been identified:
 - **Rapid Re-housing** for all homeless applicants (currently approximately 25% of vacant general needs properties are made available to homeless applicants)

In the short to medium term the proportion of lets to homeless applicants needs to increase.

- **Housing First** accommodation for homeless people with chronic health & social care needs (not currently available)

- **Emergency Multiple Needs supported accommodation** in the North and South (interim arrangement in the North in place, facilitated by a non-specialist concierge type supervision)
- **Dedicated Young Persons supported accommodation** for those with higher needs that can't be accommodated in existing accommodation (not currently available)
- **Step-down accommodation for young people** as their needs reduce (not currently available)
- **Self-contained emergency family accommodation** (not currently available)
- **Dedicated Move-on accommodation** to ensure the Council meets the 'rapid-rehousing' requirements. Not available beyond day to day turnover of social housing
- **Assertive Outreach** (often referred to as Critical Time Intervention) support for those without accommodation eg sofa surfing (interim arrangement in place)
- **Dedicated temporary accommodation support** to help applicants manage their accommodation and minimise placement breakdown (an interim goodwill arrangement is in place with a support provider).
- **Intensive Re-settlement support** to help applicants to move into permanent accommodation and provide reassurance to landlords (an interim goodwill arrangement is in place with a provider).
- **Substance misuse support** (not currently available through the homeless service). Substance misuse is often a factor relating to placement breakdown.
- **Mental health support** (not currently available through the homeless service). Mental health is often a factor relating to placement breakdown.
- The need for the homeless service delivery to be based on a **Psychologically and Trauma informed** service (not currently in place).
- With the exception of the emergency family accommodation in Monmouth (currently being used as Multiple Needs accommodation), the Council's temporary accommodation has a generic designation. Nor is it supported.
- There is a need to provide **self-contained accommodation**. Much of the accommodation is shared as oppose to being self-contained
- There is no consistent standard applied to homeless accommodation.

3.5 The Council's emerging and evolving Phase 2 Transition Plan and recommendations, as detailed in **Appendix 1**, which *will aim* to address the identified issues listed above in **3.4**. A request for homeless grant funding was made to Welsh Government to meet the homeless needs identified. The outcome of the bid was the following funding, which is available until 31st March 2021.

Revenue

- Substance misuse liaison worker - £19,000 [Partnership with Gwent Drug & Alcohol Advisory Service]. This project has started.
- Accommodation Assistants x 2 - £30,736 [MCC]. These staff started 1st October 2020.
- Housing First support - £32,460 [Partnership with Pobl]. This ppproject has started

- Assertive Outreach workers x 2 - £48,000 [Partnership with Llamau]. One appointment has been made.
- VAWDASV Crisis worker x 0.5 - £12,000 [Partnership with Cyfannol]. This project has started.

Capital

- Contribution to the development of Emergency Young Persons supported accommodation - £298,464 [Partnership with Melin

Unsuccessful Bids

- Private sector landlord incentives - £30,000 [MCC]
- Contribution to additional costs relating to re-modelling of existing floating housing support contracts to create Temporary Accommodation & Intensive Re-settlement Support - £40,000 [Partnership with Pobl]
- Temporary Trauma Informed Worker x 0.5 £12,000 [Partnership with suitable provider]
- Conversion of family hostel to self-contained accommodation - £90,000 [MCC]
- Purchase of property to provide additional homeless accommodation - £125,000 [MCC]

3.6 Whilst this funding is welcomed, its availability only supports the Council until 31st March 2020. There is no assurance of Welsh Government funding for 2021/22. This is particularly relevant in respect of the revenue funded support arrangements which will cease on 31st March 2021.

Housing Support Grant

3.7 As mentioned in **Paragraph 3.4**, the Council's Housing Support Grant Programme is highly relevant in relation to both helping to meet the needs of homeless applicants and meeting the Guidance of Welsh Governments Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support. In March 2020, due to the current COVID pandemic, it was agreed at Programme Board that the planned review of HSG services and subsequent re-commissioning of HSG services, should be initially delayed until 2021/22. But with a view to keeping a watchful eye on the consequences of the ever changing landscape due to the current unpredictable situation caused by the pandemic. The review is important to ensure current contracts are aligned with current needs and priorities of the citizens of Monmouthshire.

3.8 In light of the increased COVID infection rate and the fact that Welsh Government Administration is due for re-election in 2021, this leaves a high degree of uncertainty in respect of the new Administration's policy and financial envelope for the HSG programme.

3.9 Furthermore, from a Housing Support Grant commissioning perspective, it is felt that the current need does not reflect what is believed will be the future need for Monmouthshire when the current situation has become more stable. Following consultation with WG Official it was agreed in their view that 2021/22 would not be an appropriate time to undertake a full re-commissioning of Monmouthshire's HSG Programme. It was felt that the level of uncertainty with a new Administration taking into account both the unrealistic demands on current providers to complete a full tender process in the midst of the pandemic and the desire to issue five year contracts with an option to extend by two years(WG

Guidelines) would be currently untenable. It is therefore proposed that the new re-commissioning schedule be set to issue contracts from 1st April 2023.

- 3.10 This proposal will ensure that the HSG programme is fully appropriate to the needs of Monmouthshire and its citizens. As mentioned above the proposed timescale will also align with Welsh Government elections and it is considered this will provide greater certainty around policy and future funding intentions.
- 3.11 In order to support the Homelessness Agenda and WG Guidelines following a review of current service provision it is proposed that the Council continue to deliver the current model as adapted to meet the additional needs created by the pandemic. Providers from a number of projects have worked alongside their existing clients to provide support to clients' housed in Temporary Accommodation throughout a number of properties in Monmouthshire eg B & B's, hotels etc
- 3.12 To be able to support the HSG 'Remodelling of HSG Services' to service homelessness, four projects would be amalgamated to provide two different types of service:
- Temporary Accommodation & Resettlement Team – this is a floating support service which will support all clients in temporary accommodation and Move On properties to sustain their tenancy
 - Tenancy Support Team – this is a floating support service which will initially support all the existing clients from all four projects, Gateway referral clients and may have capacity to support any overspill from Temporary Accommodation & Resettlement Team.
- 3.13 However, to be able to deliver this service from April 2021, HSG have to manage a shortfall in funding of over £66k. HSG can cover this deficit by de-commissioning one service within HSG and are currently seeking advice from legal to ensure the de-commissioning process is followed correctly.
- 3.14 In addition to the general operational and strategic issues raised in **Paragraph 3.4**, the increased need for homeless accommodation has and continues to significantly impact on Options Team staffing. As the level of accommodation increases together with the needs of residents, housing management responsibilities have also increased eg sign-ups; inspections; support visits; resident welfare; voids; rent arrears; repairs; maintenance; responding to complaints etc.
- 3.15 Staff are operating at capacity and there is a need to ensure staff are fully supported in relation to the change in need and nature of the working environment, which at present is highly demanding and reactive. (The situation has been compounded by the need for some staff to self-isolate and work at home). The issue of staff capacity and the change in the working environment is presenting challenges such as:
- Maximising homeless prevention and minimising the numbers needing to be offered temporary accommodation
 - Keeping on top of day to day priorities and maintaining procedures
 - The ability to working pro-actively and plan, particularly in relation to proposed initiatives.

- The ability to react at pace and making appropriate judgements
 - Asking staff to work flexibly and outside of their substantive roles
 - The ability to respond quickly eg to complaints and increase on site management. There is a need for accommodation staff to increase their presence at accommodation
- 3.10 This increases risks relating to tenant welfare, safeguarding, property condition and neighbour/community issues.
- 3.11 It is, therefore, considered appropriate to review the current staffing structure to ensure that it fully meets the homeless needs of the Council. The focus will be to ensure homeless prevention is operating to maximum effect to minimise the number of people coming through that need accommodation. A focus will also be to ensure that sufficient capacity and flexibility within the Options Team to meet the current and projected needs of the service.
- 3.12 The staffing review is also relevant in relation to both the new Welsh Government policy and the expected down-turn in the local economy. The projected demands on the service are expected to increase, particularly in relation to families as the UK Government Furlough scheme ends and private sector evictions and the on-going need for accommodation.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 There are no negative implications with this proposal. However, should it not be possible to implement all of the proposed recommendations it could possibly impact on the Council's abilities to meet its safeguarding responsibilities. **See Appendix 4.**

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 The following options are available:

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
<p>Option 1: The <u>recommended option</u> is to continue to develop the Phase 2 Transition Plan, identify resources and to continue to develop individual proposals to increase the scope and quality of the Councils homeless service which meet the requirements of Welsh Government.</p> <p>This option includes the proposal to re-commission the Housing Support Grant Programme in 2023</p>	<p>The benefits include aiming to:</p> <p>Support Welsh Government policy</p> <p>Contribute to the well-being of applicants</p> <p>Increase the range and number of units of temporary accommodation including the provision of on-site support</p> <p>Introducing designated/ring-fenced permanent move-on accommodation.</p>	<p>The main risk is financial risk due to additional expenditure that the Council will need to incur to help fund the changes. This, however, will be mitigated against through the use of existing funding sources and where possible/appropriate, claim back expenditure from Welsh Government. Although, there is no guarantee that claims will be successful.</p> <p>Welsh Government funding has been secured for a number</p>	<p>It is likely that some of the proposals may be delayed or not be viable to implement due to funding implications.</p> <p>The need for appropriate housing support services to be in place is critical. These are needed immediately.</p>

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
	<p>Increasing the type of specialist housing support for homeless people.</p> <p>Increasing other specialist support eh health related, in addition to housing support</p> <p>Strengthening the management of placements and reduce the risk of placement failure. This will also benefit the priorities of other statutory agencies.</p> <p>Supporting the well-being of staff.</p> <p>Some proposals will provide cost benefits and help to mitigate against particular areas of expenditure eg B & B use.</p>	<p>of proposals until 31st March 2021, but at present there is no funding for 2021/22.</p> <p>Potential opposition from the local community in respect of some proposals</p> <p>There may be a 'second wave' of homelessness relating to a down-turn in the economy and possible unemployment relating to issues such as relationship breakdown and rent/mortgage arrears.</p> <p>The Housing Support Grant needs to be re-commissioned to ensure it meets the needs of the homeless service and local support needs. Re-commissioning is currently scheduled for April 2023. One provider is supporting the Council through a goodwill arrangement</p>	
<p>Option 2: To develop the Phase 2 Transition Plan but not to pursue with proposals that don't attract external homeless related grant funding</p>	<p>The Council will be able to make some changes and improvements to homelessness, but the impact and benefits would be limited.</p>	<p>Whilst there would be changes and improvements made to the homeless service, there would continue to be gaps in service provision and the needs of certain groups would not be met</p> <p>The risk of placement failure will be high</p> <p>Potential impact on the community</p> <p>Potential impact on staff well-being</p> <p>The Housing Support Grant needs to be re-</p>	<p>Whilst seeking to support local authorities as much as possible with grant funding, Welsh Government expectation is that local authorities explore the use of all other funding options</p> <p>The need for appropriate housing support services to be in place is critical. This is needed immediately</p>

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
		<p>commissioned to ensure it meets the needs of the homeless service and local support needs. Re-commissioning is currently scheduled for April 2023.</p>	
<p>Option 3: Do nothing and continue with the existing accommodation and housing support arrangements</p>	<p>There are no benefits to this option in the knowledge that the needs of existing homeless clients will not be adequately met. Nor will the needs of future applicants.</p>	<p>The Council won't be meeting the requirements of Welsh Government as per recent policy guidance</p> <p>There will be a high risk of placement failure, which potentially impacts on staff time, lost income, other agencies and the local community.</p> <p>Long-term the well-being of applicants and assistance to live independently will not being adequately supported</p> <p>The risk of placement failure will be high</p> <p>Potential impact on the community</p> <p>Potential impact on staff well-being</p> <p>Potential impact on other agencies, such as the Police</p>	<p>This is not considered an option</p>

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 The Council has a duty to prevent and respond to homelessness under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
- 6.2 The Council is expected to support and comply with Welsh Government Guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): local authority support for rough sleepers April 2020 and Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 There no resource implications with this report per se due to its status of being a briefing report for Adults Select Committee. The report does, however, seek to highlight there will, however, be potential resource implications with the finalised Phase 2 Homeless Transition Plan and individual projects currently being considered. These are highlighted in the presentation and **Appendix 5** and are the subject of on-going discussions. The follow up report to this report will provide an opportunity for the Committee to fully scrutinise final proposals and associated resource implications
- 7.2 The overview of grant funding in **Paragraph 3.5** is only available until 31st March 2021. There is a risk that all of these projects may not be able to continue into 2021/22. It, however, would be appropriate to review the position nearer the time.
- 7.3 There are current resource implications relating to Covid 19 and homelessness, such as B & B expenditure and the need to meet the requirements of Welsh Government. The current in year budget projections are not reflected in this report as they have been reported separately through the Council's Month 5 budget monitoring procedures.
- 7.4 The current demand and requests on the Housing Support Grant are exceeding the WG Grant allocation of £2.1 million and prioritisation and short/medium/long term plans need to be in place. There is concern that the Council's Housing Support Grant Programme will not be able to meet all of Monmouthshire's housing support needs and the Council may my not be able to fund all services required.
- 8. CONSULTEES:**
- 8.1 Chief Officer Enterprise; Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways & Flood; Families First Programme Manager; Housing Options Team Manager Flexible Funding Strategic Manager; Finance Manager; Cabinet Member for Community Development & Social Justice; Cabinet Member for Enterprise & Land Use Planning; Homeless Relationship Welsh Government
- 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Welsh Government; Coronavirus (COVID-19): Local Authority Support for Rough Sleepers; Welsh Government Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support.
- 10. AUTHOR:** Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
- 11. CONTACT DETAILS:** Ian Bakewell **Tel:** 01633 644479 **E-mail:** ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Appendix 2

Overview of Use of Temporary Accommodation in Monmouthshire – 2nd October 2020

Current Temporary Accommodation Placements

At present the Council is providing temporary accommodation for 102 households (mainly single people under pensionable age), all of whom need to be moved-on and re-housed as soon as possible

Nos. in temporary accommodation at 2nd October 2020 needing move-on - 102:

- **In temporary accommodation** – 102 (85 singles – mainly single males)
 - Includes 17 families
- **Nos in B & B** – 49. (46 – single people)
 - Plus 2 - Night-Shelter
- **Young People 16-24** – 39
 - 4 x 16/17 year olds: 1 in B & B; 1 in shared; 2 x NFA
 - 14 in B & B.
 - Mental health issues – 33 (85%)
 - Pending x 10
- **Multiple needs**
 - Housing First need - 6
 - B & B – 29
 - Shared – 11
- **Pending cases** and awaiting accommodation (effectively a waiting list)
 - 46

In addition to the 102 needing temporary accommodation, the Council continues to provide accommodation to other households who have been prevented from becoming homeless using the Council's private leased, managed and shared accommodation.

The Council is currently in discussions with local housing associations about the possibility of securing additional temporary accommodation

Social Housing

Since March 2020, the level of housing association vacancies has dropped significantly due to tenants not moving and the availability of operatives to prepare voids ready for re-letting. The few vacancies arising have helpfully been prioritised for homelessness by the housing associations. This has facilitated a small number of move-on. The level of vacancies, however, has been, limited and has effectively resulted in clients bottle-necking in temporary accommodation.

The back-log of housing association voids as now been cleared and properties are now beginning to be advertised through Monmouthshire Homesearch. The number of social housing voids coming through and the rate of move on continues to be extremely low.

The Council is currently in discussions with local housing associations about the possibility of new social housing being ring-fenced as new permanent accommodation.

Emergency Family Accommodation

At the start of the crisis, the Council was able to move on families and a decision was made to use the Council's emergency family accommodation in Monmouth as multiple needs accommodation for single people. In order for the property to operate appropriately it was necessary to establish 24 hour supervision. The supervision provided effectively operates as a concierge service.

The property continues to operate temporarily as a multiple needs hostel for four residents under the said supervision.

The Council also has a 6 person property in the South of the County which has been acquired for the Council by Monmouthshire Housing for use as Emergency Family Accommodation. It, however, hasn't been possible to sign up to a lease with Monmouthshire Housing and use the property due to on-going discussions with local residents. A meeting, however, is scheduled for 20th August 2020 to progress this.

B & B

Historically the Council has struggled with Monmouthshire based B & B. Pre-Covid 19 the Council was using four out of County B & B's plus two in Monmouthshire.

The current situation is:

- Thirteen B & B's have been secured in total.
- Discussions are currently in progress in relation to a potential new B & B in the south of the County.
- An on-going risk is that as Covid-19 restrictions start to ease, owners may want to revert back to their normal use, typically tourism. Owners, however, have informally indicated that they are all willing to continue supporting the Council until at least November 2020.

Whilst the above is relatively good news in terms of B & B, they are operating at capacity and the ability to place people sensitively can be challenging.

There has been a need to deliver meals to some applicants in B & B due to the proximity being away from supermarkets or due to the lack of food preparation facilities. This has been funded by Welsh Government Homeless Hardship Grant.

Private Leased

The Council has secured four additional units of leased accommodation from private landlords and a housing association.

Unfortunately, five landlords have given notice and the Council will need to hand back 5 units in the near future.

An increasing risk is that private landlords are approaching the Council about additional rent payments similar to a local market rents. There is concern that further landlords may give notice.

The Council is in discussion about additional leasing schemes through local housing associations

Shared Housing

The Council has secured an additional shared property from Monmouthshire Housing Association providing 5 units of accommodation.

Monmouth Market Hall

This office space has been earmarked to provide emergency night-shelter accommodation, equipped with camp-beds as a contingency measure. This is currently in use for two applicants under 24 hour supervision. The expectation of Welsh Government is that such accommodation is no longer appropriate or acceptable.

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Appendix 1

Monmouthshire County Council Homeless Transition Plan – August 2020

1. Have a move-on protocol in place with rapid re-housing at its heart

Current Situation

It is a requirement of Welsh Government, as per the Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Related Support, for the Council to have a 'move-on protocol with rapid re-housing at its heart' for re-housing those in emergency/temporary homeless accommodation into suitable permanent accommodation.

At present the Council does not have a move-on protocol per se, although the Homesearch Housing Register policy facilitates the re-housing of homeless households through the use of quotas.

It is proposed to request the Homesearch partners to sign up to the draft protocol below, which is currently being consulted upon:

The Council is required to minimise the number of placement moves for any individual or family that experiences homeless. Settled permanent accommodation following a short period of time in emergency accommodation is the desire for all partners when working together to eradicate homelessness and promote sustainable tenancies.

MCC will work closely with the Monmouthshire Housing Partnership to facilitate adequate availability of social housing stock through local housing associations to help meet local homeless need through the flexible quota arrangement within the existing Monmouthshire Homesearch Housing Allocation Policy. The Council is committed to RSL's having the guarantee of immediate Intensive Resettlement Housing Support for those needing to be accommodated via the homeless route. In the short-term this will be provided through an interim reconfigured Housing Support Grant funded service provided by Pobl.

Should this support not be available this may prevent the Council from moving some applicants on to permanent accommodation.

On a homeless determination and a 2B Banding status assessment under the Homesearch Allocation Policy, Housing Options Officers will work closely with Homesearch Officers to ensure registration of housing applications and minimise delays in processing applications. The allocated Support Worker will be involved by providing individual support plans to illustrate the intensity of support to be delivered, as well as the individual's commitment to working towards a successful tenancy.

Any barriers to an offer of accommodation, such as previous rent arrears, will be negotiated by this triage, and if necessary, the Council will utilise the Homeless Prevention Fund to reduce/refund arrears. Any support issues such as previous behaviour or substance misuse issues which could inhibit an offer being successful, will be addressed via the support plan and evidenced by the involvement of the Substance Misuse Assertive Outreach Worker (also part of MCC bid), and Mental Health services.

To further support individual clients, the Council or support providers will refer clients into the multi-agency Housing Intervention Panel to consider and identify solutions. The Council, housing associations and support providers are committed to both referring clients and attending meetings.

As the Temporary Accommodation and Resettlement Support Service are delivered through the same Providers, there will be a seamless move with support during the resettlement process. High-intensity flexible, client-led support will be provided for between 12 to 16 weeks, with ongoing support being provided via the RSL or generic floating support service after this period.

Of relevance to the above, the Council does not have any formal Housing Support Grant Contracts in place to provide Re-settlement Support to facilitate move on to permanent accommodation.

There is, however, currently an informal interim arrangement in place (which also provides Temporary Accommodation Support) through an existing Provider that has effectively temporarily re-modelled an existing generic floating support contract. This interim arrangement is relying on the goodwill of the Provider. There is a need to formalise the arrangement to provide certainty going forwards. There, however, is an additional annual cost of £66,000 to facilitate this. There is currently no funding capacity within the existing Housing Support Grant Programme, which is not scheduled to be re-commissioned until April 2023. An application to the Welsh Government Phase 2 grant programme was unsuccessful.

Consideration is currently being given to de-commissioning existing projects in order to potentially formalise this goodwill arrangement from April 2021 through four existing projects being amalgamated to provide to provide a Temporary Accommodation and Re-Settlement Service and a Tenancy Support Team.

Recommendation

- To establish and agree a Move-On Protocol between the Council and Homeseach partners.
- To underpin the proposed Move-On Protocol, continue to give consideration to de-commissioning and amalgamating four existing HSG projects to provide Temporary Accommodation and Re-Settlement Service and a Tenancy Support Team.
- To provisionally aim to fund Intensive Re-Settlement and Temporary Accommodation Support from the Housing Support Grant Programme from April 2022, subject to a review assessment.

2. Improve the quality and reduce the dependency on emergency/ temporary accommodation solutions

Current Situation

As at 1st October 2020 there were 49 people (mostly singles) accommodated in B & B, plus two in the MCC Nightshelter. In addition the Council's other homeless accommodation (eg shared, private leasing and managed accommodation) is occupied at capacity. The historical reliance on Generic Floating Housing Support has highlighted the deficiencies both, in the diversity and range of the Councils temporary accommodation together with the type of housing support provision available.

There is a need, therefore, for the Council to increase the diversity and range of temporary accommodation. Some accommodation should have dedicated and specialist support.

The dispersed nature of Monmouthshire also impacts on the accessibility to this accommodation. Often there is a need to displace applicants from their home communities in order to access temporary accommodation.

Furthermore, Welsh Government policy (Annex D) has now determined minimum accommodations standards for Phase 2 onwards. In summary these are:

- Minimum standards – eg self-contained and suitable for independent living; appropriate location
- Homes should be of high quality, innovative and sustainable
- Homes should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the occupants
- Homes should be safe and secure.

Welsh Government are also advising that they no longer expect local authorities to use night-shelter type accommodation. This has implications on the Council currently using on office space for temporary accommodation, although every effort is being made to cease this arrangement.

There is a need to assess the Council's accommodation against these standards.

The following are types of accommodation are needed in Monmouthshire:

- **Emergency Family Accommodation**

- **Current Situation**

- At present the Council's only emergency family accommodation is a 5 bedroomed shared emergency accommodation situated in Monmouth. (This is temporarily being used as multiple needs accommodation).

In addition, a 6 person property was purchased in Caldicot in 2019 by Monmouthshire Housing on behalf of the Council for use as shared emergency family accommodation. The property hasn't come into use as yet due to opposition from the immediate local community. For Planning purposes there is a need for the Planning Committee to agree to a management plan after consultation with the immediate local community.

Further to the above, further opportunities to provide emergency family accommodation through the Social Housing Grant Programme have arisen in Abergavenny and Caldicot, providing 8 units of self-contained accommodation. The Abergavenny scheme will be cross funded by Welsh Government homeless capital grant. This will effectively double the availability of emergency family accommodation (which will be self-contained) and provide provision in both the North and the South.

- **Recommendations**

- To cease using the emergency shared accommodation in Monmouth for families and utilise for an alternative homeless purpose eg Multiple Needs accommodation.
- In respect of the proposed emergency shared family accommodation in Caldicot, consult on the draft management agreement and submit to Planning Committee for final planning approval and on acquiring final planning approval, sign up to the lease agreement with Monmouthshire Housing. This proposal is cost neutral.
- Through the Social Housing Grant programme, continue to explore the possibility of providing emergency self-contained family accommodation in Abergavenny (4 units) and Caldicot (4 units) under lease arrangements with the developing housing associations.

The Abergavenny units x 4 would also have a potential flexible and dual use to provide step-down accommodation for young people.

At the time of writing, there is a level of risk that the Abergavenny project may not proceed.

- **Self-Contained Temporary Family Accommodation**

- **Current Situation**

- The Council currently has a portfolio of family accommodation which is made up of:

- Private leased units x 49 (which includes a number of RSL properties)
- However, 1 is rolling on during COVID and is likely to end, 2 terminate on 31st December 2020, 2 terminating on 30th September 2020 and 1 is on a monthly rolling lease with an RSL.
- Managed units (on behalf of private landlords) x 33
- MCC low cost home ownership unit x 1

Subject to landlord approval and financial sustainability, the aim is to continue with the existing portfolio and proactively seek to identify additional properties using the Monmouthshire Lettings Service branding.

Running alongside recruiting private landlords there is also a proposal to target private sector tenants who may be starting to experience problems with sustaining their accommodation but as yet may not have reached out to the Council for assistance. Perhaps due to rent arrears, unemployment, debt etc

Recommendation

- Under the Monmouthshire Lettings branding, to continue to engage with private landlords and promote landlord incentives, to seek to identify private sector accommodation. This will be funded through existing resources
- Seek to engage with private sector tenants and/or landlords who may be experiencing as an approach to providing an early intervention and minimise the possibility of tenants presenting as homeless.
- **Housing First**
Current Situation
At present a Housing First scheme available in Monmouthshire. There is a current need of 6 people in Monmouthshire who have extremely high support needs and there is no suitable support or accommodation available to them.

A Housing First scheme currently operates in Newport and there is the opportunity to extend into Monmouthshire through the existing provider. The provider will provide the support and identify accommodation which could be from any source, but will include housing association stock. There is a cost of £32,000 to provide this until April 2021 and Welsh Government homeless grant has been secured to fund this service. At present, however, there is no funding currently available for 2021/22. Again there is no current funding capacity through the Housing Support Grant Programme.

Recommendation

- For the Council to support the Housing First proposal by potentially assisting with acquiring/providing accommodation alongside Pobl, Monmouthshire Housing and Melin Homes.
- To identify options for securing £36,000 to facilitate the continuation of the Housing First project after 31st March 2021, subject to need.
- Subject to on-going need, provide evidence on the need for the Housing First project to continue to inform re-commissioning of the Housing Support Grant Programme from April 2023.
- **Emergency & 24 Hour Multiple Needs Accommodation**
Current Situation
There is no emergency specialist multiple needs accommodation in Monmouthshire beyond the current interim provision of 4 units of shared accommodation in Monmouth under the supervision of security. Temporary Assertive Outreach support x 0.5 has been established to support 4 residents in this accommodation. 11 applicants with high needs are currently being supported through the Assertive Outreach.

Historically the Council's shared housing supplemented by generic floating support. Placement breakdown was common-place. The Council currently has approximately 26 people who have multiple needs in B & B and 33 people in shared accommodation.

The Council submitted a provisional scheme for Welsh Government homeless grant to convert the existing shared accommodation in Monmouth to self-contained

accommodation and acquire an additional property that is currently on the market. The bid totalling £215,000 was refused.

Recommendation

- To work towards establishing a scheme to cover the North and a scheme to cover the south.
- For the north, continue to explore the feasibility and costs of potentially converting/reconfiguring the existing family hostel to achieve 3-5 units of self-contained accommodation and purchasing an additional property that has recently come on to the market.
- To explore and identify opportunities to establish a scheme to cover the south of the County.

- **Young Persons Accommodation**

Current Situation

There are currently 21 units of supported accommodation across two separate schemes in Abergavenny and Chepstow. Being dedicated accommodation for young people this is extremely important accommodation. The schemes, however, are for young people with low needs and aren't suitable for all young people, particularly those who are more vulnerable and with higher needs. It is not un-common for either the Housing Options Team or the Through Care Team to be unable to place in this accommodation. As a result, young people on occasions may need to be placed in B & B or the Council's shared housing with floating support, although there is a interim Temporary Accommodation Support in place.. Such accommodation and support (generic floating support) doesn't adequately meet the needs of such young people

There is no step-down accommodation in Monmouthshire for those young people who make good progress towards independent living, but aren't quite fully ready.

An opportunity, however, has arisen through one of the housing association partners to establish five units of emergency self-contained accommodation for Young People with provision for specialist on-site support. The capital costs will be jointly funded through the Social Housing Programme and Welsh Government homeless capital grant. Until April 2022, the support will be provided through existing Housing Options Team staffing.

Recommendation

- To continue to develop the proposed 5 self-contained units of Young Persons accommodation in the North of the County with facility for on-site support.
- Subject to need, utilise the proposed 4 units of emergency family accommodation flexibly and also use for step-down accommodation for young people.
- As an interim arrangement, identify an appropriate shared housing property that can be re-designated to provide a temporary scheme for young people utilising an existing shared property.
- Seek to identify interim funding for a dedicated Young Persons Accommodation Support Officer of £36,000 until April 2022.
- To potentially aim to fund dedicated young persons accommodation support through the Housing Support Grant Programme from April 2022, subject to a review assessment and need.

- **Low Need Single Persons Accommodation**

Current Situation

The Council currently has 70 units of shared accommodation (which is expected to reduce by 5/6 units to facilitate for the proposed interim Young Persons Accommodation). There will be a need for the Council to continue with the portfolio of shared housing for the short to medium term. However, there will be a need to review the future of this accommodation in the context of Welsh Governments quality standard.

Recommendation

- Undertake an options appraisal against Welsh Government 'Annex D' Quality Standard of the existing shared to inform the future use of the accommodation eg improvements, possible disposal etc. The options appraisal will also be used as an opportunity to identify potential improvements to the service provided and the general standard of accommodation provided
- **Self-Contained Temporary Family Accommodation**

Current Situation

The Council currently has a portfolio of family accommodation which is made up of:

- Private leased units x 49 (which includes a number of RSL properties)
 - However, 1 is rolling on during COVID and is likely to end, 2 terminate on 31st December 2020, 2 terminating on 30th September 2020 and 1 is on a monthly rolling lease with an RSL.
- Managed units (on behalf of private landlords) x 33
- MCC low cost home ownership unit x 1

Subject to landlord approval and financial sustainability, the aim is to continue with the existing portfolio and proactively seek to identify additional properties using the Monmouthshire Lettings Service branding.

Recommendation

- To continue to engage with private landlords to seek to identify private sector accommodation, using Monmouthshire Lettings Service branding. This will be funded through existing resources

Domestic Abuse

Current Situation

The Council will provide homeless accommodation directly for victims of domestic abuse and specialist housing support is available through Cyfannol and the Llamau Modas service.

Cyfannol Womens Aid provides a five unit refuge in the County and the service of one crisis worker. In addition, a Gwent wide sexual violence service is available in Monmouthshire. Cyfannol are currently experiencing a 50% increase in the need for their crisis service.

Cyfannol have acquired direct funding to establish 2 dispersed properties in the south of Monmouthshire which will be available shortly.

In addition, the Council has acquired Welsh Government homeless grant for Cyfannol to enable them to extend their crisis service. They will be appointing an additional part time Crisis Worker until April 2021. No funding is available after April 21 should this additional resource be needed.

The Council has met with Cyfannol to ensure that both services are working closely for mutual benefit, particularly in respect of homeless prevention.

Recommendation

- To continue to work closely with Cyfannol and ensure the service is fully utilised by the Housing Options Team to support victims of domestic abuse.
- To provisionally aim to fund an additional Cyfannol Crisis Worker 0.5 wte through the Housing Support Grant Programme from April 2022, subject to a review assessment.

3. **Put rapid re-housing at the heart of services and utilise a range of support models (i.e. Housing First, CTI, floating support, assertive outreach) for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.**

Current Situation

At present the Council does not have a Rapid Re-housing mechanism that will apply generally apply to all homeless applications.

The Council will seek to establish 'rapid re-housing' through the mechanisms of the Rapid Re-housing Protocol detailed previously in this report. There will be a need to monitor this.

In addition, it is proposed that the Rapid Re-housing principal will also be supported by a proposed relaxation of housing register exclusion criteria and an introduction of designated and ring-fenced 'move-on' permanent social housing. The intended availability of Intensive Resettlement Support will also contribute to Rapid Re-Housing by providing reassurance to housing associations. The Re-Settlement Support will provide the following benefits:

Resettlement Support is linked to Temporary Accommodation Support. Support, therefore, will in effect have started prior to an offer of accommodation:

- No waiting list for support
- Assurance to RSL that intensive work to sustain tenancy is in place prior to sign up
- Support is tailored to the individual's needs over a 12 week period with scope for extension in 6 week periods under agreement from Gateway Assessment Officers.
- No 3 missed appointments and closure.
- Workers are expected to explore ways to engage the individual on their terms i.e. evening / weekend appointments if necessary.
- Support can be daily/intensive/ flexible from the start of tenancy and will tail off as needs are met and client is supported to engage in substance use / mental health services.
- No set hours per individual
- If it is agreed that support is needed to sustain tenancy going forward (identified at 12 weeks) steps are put in place to facilitate a move to a step down provider.
- Named support provider/work given to RSL for liaison.

Welsh Governments expectations are that Councils utilise a range of support services through the Housing Support Grant programme to meet local homeless need. The current availability of types of services is limited and is heavily reliant on generic floating support, which is more appropriate for low level and short-term support needs. Whilst it is considered there continues to be a need for generic floating support and it has the advantage of providing flexibility, it is considered it will not meet the higher needs or specialist requirements relating to the need in Monmouthshire.

The following are models of support needed in Monmouthshire:

- **Housing First** - the Council currently as at least four applicants that need this type of support including two applicants occupying vacant MCC office space. The Council has acquired funding to extend an existing service in Newport into Monmouthshire. There is no funding to extend this to beyond April 2021.
- **Temporary Accommodation Support & Intensive Re-Settlement Support** – This has been established as an interim arrangement to align with the Councils shared housing and B & B and to assist people to move on to permanent accommodation. The current arrangement is a good-will arrangement with one of the Councils Providers. It is considered that the arrangement needs to be formalised. However, there will be a cost of £20,000 for the remainder of 2020/21 and £40,000 for 2021/22. The Council will seek to recover the £20,000 from Welsh Government emergency homeless Covid-19 funding. This service is critical due to the high needs of many residents to minimise placement breakdowns and to provide assurances to landlords.
- **Young Persons Accommodation Support** – at the end of July 20 there were 25 young people (eg under 25) in temporary accommodation and a further three are expected to need accommodation imminently. This includes 3 x 16/17 year olds who

are in B & B, all of whom are considered at risk of Sexual Exploitation' and have needed to be moved due to behaviour issues. Such cases need to be appropriately accommodated and going forwards such cases will benefit from the proposed dedicated young persons accommodation with specialist support.

Currently no funding has been identified for the dedicated support, until such time it can be potentially factored into re-commissioning of the Housing Support Grant Programme in 2022.

- **Assertive Outreach** - the Council currently has a temporary part-time arrangement with a Provider for a part time worker to support high need applicants such as rough sleepers and sofa surfers. This support is also currently supporting clients who are accommodated in the Councils hostel. The Council is seeking to recover the costs from the Welsh Government emergency homeless Covid-19 grant.

The Council has successfully secured further Welsh Government homeless grant funding to extend this provision to two full time posts until March 2021.

It is anticipated that there will be a need for this type of support beyond March 2021. However, at present there is no funding in place for 2021/22.

- **Floating Support** – there will be a need to continue with generic floating support, albeit with a lower capacity than currently to support people with lower needs and those who are able to move from specialist support due to their needs declining. This support is currently in place and Housing Support Grant available
- **Domestic Abuse** – the Modas service had 168 referrals last year and there are currently 32 open cases. In addition Cyfannol Womens Aid have seen referrals increase by 50% on 2019/20 demand. Abergavenny is a particular hotspot.

In addition to the above there is a need for specialist substance misuse and mental health support. In this regard, the Council has

Recommendation:

- Subject to on-going need, identify funding for the following for 2021/22
 - The continuation of Housing First - £36,000
 - A dedicated Young Person Accommodation Support Officer - £36,000
 - Temporary Accommodation & Intensive Re-settlement Support - £40,000
 - The continuation of Assertive Outreach Support - £72,000

4. Increase the availability of social housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Current Situation

The broad approach to making social housing available for homeless people is:

- The operation of lettings quotas for the allocation of vacant units of social housing. Over recent years a fixed quota hasn't been utilised because natural turnover has facilitated a 20-25% allocation of accommodation to homeless applicants. But a fixed, higher or lower, can be set if required. This is monitored on an on-going basis in relation to homeless demand.
- Increasing the development and availability of social housing is a priority for the Council. This is facilitated through the annual development programme, the core focus of which is Social Housing Grant funded accommodation. Typically, the programme provides additional General Needs accommodation which in benefits all Housing Register applicants including homeless applicants.

Due to the numbers of households currently in temporary accommodation, increasing the availability of social housing for homeless people will be achieved by:

- Continuing with working with the Homesearch Housing Register Partnership in respect of flexible quotas in respect of homeless applicants. This will continue to be monitored on a weekly basis.
- A current review of the Homesearch Allocation Policy is proposing that higher thresholds will apply for exclusion triggers meaning that there is expected to be a reduction in clients excluded from the Housing Register. It is anticipated that the Policy will be considered by Cabinet in September/October 20.
- It is anticipated that there will be a need to specifically factor homeless accommodation into the development programme on an annual basis. This will be reviewed annually and will be subject to need.
- Consider designating specific pending social housing development schemes as ring-fenced move on, permanent accommodation.

Recommendation

- For the Housing Options Team to liaise closely with the Homesearch Partnership in respect of all social housing vacancies and where appropriate, ring-fence to homeless applicants, particularly in the short-term.
- Reflect the requirement in the Homesearch Allocation Policy and continue with the review of the Policy, with the aim of completing in October 2020.
- Homelessness needs and requirements to be routinely considered in the annual development programme
- Liaise with RSL partners about potentially designating new social housing grant schemes as homeless move-on accommodation.

5. Increase the availability of private rented housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Current Situation

Access to the private rented sector in Monmouthshire is challenging for both housing applicants and the Council due to:

- The level of market rents in relation to the local housing allowance is high and that the percentage of properties let at local housing allowance levels is low. This is estimated at about 6%
- Recent research has identified that the rental market in Monmouthshire has contracted by approximately 50%
- Landlords and estate agents can be reluctant to take low income households and reliant on benefit. Homeless people are regarded as a risk.
- Landlords are able to easily find professional tenants. Monmouthshire is a commuter area to employment hubs such as Bristol (increasingly because of the Bridge tolls going), Cardiff and Birmingham.

To mitigate against the challenges, the Council has established Monmouthshire Lettings Service as arms-length branding under which to encourage private landlords to make available properties to the Housing Options Team. This is a 'no fee' service, which seeks to offer a range of flexible options for landlords such as property leasing; room leasing and a management service and bespoke solutions for individual landlords.

It is considered that this approach has been extremely successful and it is appropriate to continue to build upon this success. The Council's portfolio of accommodation is currently.

- 33 managed properties
- 49 leased self-contained properties (the number of leased properties has previously been higher but has needed to be reduced due to the loss of the temporary accommodation management subsidy.
- 70 leased rooms in shared houses

- 1 supported lodgings host

To continue to develop Monmouthshire Lettings it is considered that the timing is appropriate to refresh the approach to promoting/marketing and seek to develop further options to encourage landlords to engage with the service.

In recognition that the rental market in Monmouthshire is not only small but has also contracted, in developing Monmouthshire Lettings it is also considered that in addition to recruiting vacant private sector properties there should also be a focus on recruiting landlords who are already have tenants, but those tenants who may be starting to experience problems maintaining their tenancy. The approach, therefore, would also be recruiting landlords whose tenants may already be on the road to potential homelessness. This is very much a preventative and early intervention approach that it is hoped, would reduce the need for the Council to provide accommodation.

Recommendations

- To implement the following:
 - Survey all landlords and establish annual satisfaction and exit surveys to identify opportunities for service improvement.
 - Consider new incentive options eg 'buying' rent arrears of households at risk of homelessness in return for use of accommodation; finders fee etc
 - Explore good practice
 - Make greater use of social media and the Council's Communications Team
 - Improving Google search provision
 - Consider how MLS and work in collaboration with the Bond Scheme
 - To develop a dual approach and target existing landlords whose tenants may be starting to experience tenancy difficulties.

6. Bring empty properties back into use to house people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Current Situation

Bi annual letters are sent to positively encourage all empty property owners to contact the Council and discuss their property and options available to bring properties back into use and sign posting them accordingly, particularly in relation to promoting Monmouthshire Letting Service.

In addition the Council adopts a 'targetted approach', ie, long term empties (over two years) within in or around the town centres. This approach will then involve a yearly 2nd stage letter, property visits and photographs. This would build up a representation of a property which would document it's deterioration over time. This would then provide evidence should further enforcement action be needed.

Housing & Community Services liaise with Environmental Health in respect of complaints about properties or those that require their involvement and the possible use of their enforcement powers where there is sufficient evidence to warrant their intervention.

A survey of empty space above shops was undertaken in Abergavenny last year. Although this did identify a small number of shops where the space above was not being used, due to the current availability of resources, there was limited opportunity to convert and utilise such space as homes. However, it is considered appropriate to undertake similar surveys in the other main towns.

Recommendation:

- Continue with the above routine to engage with empty homes owners
- Subject to being safe to do so, undertake High Street surveys of space above shops for Monmouth, Usk, Caldicot and Chepstow with a view to identifying potential accommodation opportunities.

7. Provide Support for Young People experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Current Situation

It is a priority of the Council to strengthen both the homeless prevention and support roles of available staffing as well as increasing accommodation and support resources. The current dedicated support available is:

- **MCC Young Persons Accommodation Officer x 1:** To prevent homelessness and where not possible, find alternative accommodation. Housing Support Grant funded
- **Solas Young Persons Supported Hostel Accommodation – 21 units in Chepstow & Abergavenny:** To meet low level need. Housing Support Grant funded. This is currently the only dedicated provision in Monmouthshire.

This will be reviewed by the Partnerships Team to inform the future commissioning of Housing Support Grant from April 2022.

- **Solas Hostel Move On Accommodation – 3 units in Chepstow.**
- **Llamau Family Mediation Service** – To prevent homeless for young people aged 18-24 who are at risk of having to leave home or to support young people to return home. Welsh Government funded
- **Llamau – EMPHASIS Housing Support** – To support ‘non-engaging’ young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) / homeless or at risk of becoming NEET / homeless. Target group are young people aged 16 – 21. Housing Support Grant funded.

This will be reviewed by the Partnerships Team to inform the future commissioning of Housing Support Grant from April 2022.

- **Supported Lodgings Hosts x 1:** Accommodation for a young person in someone’s home.
- **MCC Compass x 1.5:** Provides the link between accommodation and homelessness with education, training, employment, physical and mental health, positive relationships, outside interests etc. Youth Enterprise funded

This is an extremely valuable additional resource. There is a need to ensure that the project is fully integrated with both the Housing Options Team and other homeless services, such as housing support, to ensure that it fully aligns with the Council’s statutory homeless responsibilities and there is effective partnership working and no duplication.

- **Pobl ‘Steps to Independence’ Young Persons Shared Accommodation:** This is a Gwent project. It is Welsh Government funded.

As yet there no shared accommodation under this scheme. It is hoped that when accommodation is sourced that homeless young people are accommodated.

As previously mentioned in this report there is a need for additional temporary accommodation for young people of a different type to the existing Solas Young Persons Accommodation. As stated, a proposal to establish this accommodation is being taken forward. There is, however, currently a funding gap in terms of on-site support provision.

A further gap identified is the level of support for young people with health needs, including mental health issues. The Council, therefore, has started to engage with Health to identify additional support that can possibly be facilitated for young people. Some provisional opportunities have been identified for 16/17 year olds and care leavers

Recommendation

- Liaise with the Compass Youth Homeless project to ensure that the service is fully integrated into The aim is to maximise the staffing resource available to support homeless young people.
- Liaise with the 'Pobl Steps to Independence' project to identify homeless young people that to be accommodated.
- Partnerships Team to undertake a review of young persons Housing Support Grant Services to inform future re-commissioning of the HSG Programme.
- Identify £36,000 to fund a Young Persons Accommodation Support Officer.
- To potentially aim to fund dedicated young persons accommodation support through the Housing Support Grant Programme from April 2022, subject to a review assessment and need.
- Establish bespoke homeless information for young people
- Continue to engage with Health to facilitate the provision of health related support that will operate alongside housing support.

8. Multi-agency involvement at a strategic level and in the delivery of support.

This will be facilitated by the existing and emerging partnership arrangements.

9. The full adoption of a psychologically-informed (PIE) and trauma-informed approach to commissioning and service delivery within local authorities, housing and support providers.

Current Situation

Although some PIE or trauma informed practice is currently delivered by the Council's homeless service, such an approach isn't being delivered in a structured way nor has it been formally adopted. However, work has started in this regard, which was unfortunately was disrupted by Covid-19.

The Council has started working to develop a PIE and trauma informed service. An external agency has been commissioned to provide a two stage programme of training and service planning over five sessions to Housing staff. This started on 16th March 20 but remains incomplete due to Covid-19 restrictions. This will hopefully be resumed perhaps in October 2020.

The Council is keen that the delivery approach of homeless service is one that is good at listening, is sensitive, is sympathetic and offers empathy. Essentially, it is a priority that the service is regarded as kind and caring.

In addition to training, it was proposed to second an 'expert' from another organisation, to embed themselves within the team to fully understand the current method of delivery to and identify potential opportunities for change and improvement. A key priority is to enhance the service user experience for the homeless assessment part of the service and the living experience in relation to the Councils temporary accommodation. A bid to Welsh Government to fund the said secondment was, however, unsuccessful.

In addition, the findings of a Shelter Take Notice project and the pending link with the Gwent Community Psychology Team are further opportunities to identify changes.

It was proposed to second an expert in PIE into the team to identify opportunities to change the way the service is delivered and to support staff implement changes. The proposal was to utilise Welsh Government homeless grant funding, but unfortunately this request wasn't successful.

Recommendations

- Resume PIE training as soon as safe to do, aiming for October 2020.
- On completion of training, use the training to inform service planning, giving particular attention to temporary accommodation.
- Utilise Shelter 'Take Notice' recommendations to inform future service planning

10. The appropriate combination and safe delivery of remote and face to face support.

Current Situation

As part of working towards adopting a Psychologically and Trauma service, face to face support is considered fundamental.

Prior to the Covid-19 crisis the Council had started working towards a model of an area/community based approach to managing temporary accommodation. The Council recognises the importance of engaging positively and proactively with residents to achieve the best outcomes for both the Council and residents.

Each Accommodation Assistant has a 'patch' of accommodation that they are directly responsible for. The expectation is that staff will have a regular and sustained presence on their area 'patches.' As close as possible to daily. The Council is keen that staff get to know both residents and any support workers together will having a good all round understanding of their support need together with a good knowledge of their patch as a whole. This helps the Council to be more responsive to situations eg ASB and intervene early. It also helps the Council to liaise closely with other agencies, particularly support providers, Social Services and the Police. Being familiar with and having good relationships with neighbours is also a priority.

Some properties have empty rooms, that can be used as informal/casual 'stopping-off' points from which Accommodation Assistants can utilise to base themselves for short periods of time. This accommodation can also provide 'hub' type locations to easily access other nearby accommodation.

The Council already uses CCTV to support the management of accommodation and will regularly engage with residents via personal mobile video apps. The Council is keen to develop this further to maximise networking with residents.

The current access arrangements to the Housing Options Team and homeless assessments is through a centralised telephone arrangement. The Council is keen to review this to achieve more face to face contact. Possible options being considered are a return to using surgeries, home visits, joint meetings with other agencies and the use of video technology, including equipment being available in the Council's four area Hubs.

Recommendations:

- Implement an area and patch based approach to managing accommodation
- Identify opportunities to maximise face to face contact with a particular focus on persons needing homeless advice or making homeless applications.

Recommendations

- To identify opportunities to increase face to face interaction with Housing Option Team service users, including exploring the use of technology.
- As soon as safe to do so, implement a 'patch and area based approach to housing management.

11. Up-skill and empower local volunteers and community assets to help deliver a strategic, coordinated response to ending homelessness.

Current Situation

The use of volunteers and community assets currently isn't part of the Council's homeless service, although the Council has used Monmouth Churches to provide a winter night-shelter for the last two years.

This Transition Plan currently doesn't include any proposals in relation to links with local volunteers or community assets.

However, the Council has close and established links with Monmouth Churches Partnership with whom the Council has worked closely with over the last two years in respect of winter night-shelter arrangements. Monmouth Churches also provides informal support to one of the client currently occupying the Councils vacant office space in Monmouth.

Also, the Gateway Church, Abergavenny has provided 'drop-in' space for the Gwent Drug & Alcohol Advisory Service until very recently.

It is, however, expected that the Council will engage closely with these organisations going forwards.

12. A collaborative approach to planning and delivery.

The Council is committed to the collaborative development of homeless services in Monmouthshire. A particular priority is to work in partnership with other agencies to particularly identify and maximise opportunities that strengthen prevention, facilitate additional accommodation and increase support to applicants. Some of the existing and emerging partnership arrangements include:

Emerging partnerships include:

- MCC Partnerships – Housing Support Grant Programme
- Housing Associations – permanent and temporary accommodation
- Gwent Community Psychology – mental health services for young people (16 & 17 year olds)
- Skills for Living – mental health services for Care Leavers
- Gwent Substance Misuse & Alcohol -
- Pobl – Steps to Independence shared living service. Pobl are due to acquire a property in Abergavenny which it is hoped can be used for homeless young people
- Cyfannol – acquiring two units of dispersed accommodation in the South. It is hoped that through closer links with Cyfannol this will benefit victims of domestic abuse.

13. Solutions for people with No Recourse to Public Funds.

Presentations from this group are extremely rare in Monmouthshire. Only one presentation has been received in the last few years. It is, therefore, anticipated that this is likely to be the case going forward. However, in the unlikely event of such a presentation, the Council would received any approach sensitively.

14. Housing Options Team

Current Situation

In addition to the Welsh Government policy themes, it is also appropriate to give focus to give consideration to not just service delivery of the homeless service by the Housing Options Team but also ensure staff are fully supported in the context of a change in the nature of the demand.

Due to additional homeless need caused by Covid 19 it has been extremely challenging for staff to manage both the demand of applicants presenting and the need to provide accommodation. It has been extremely difficult to prevent homelessness due to the 'actual homeless' status of many applicants together with less availability of prevention 'tools,' such as letting agencies. It is considered though that there is a need to review arrangements to minimise the number of people coming through who may need accommodation.

Equally, although the Council has been relatively successful in acquiring additional Accommodation, the additional accommodation acquired together with the proposed temporary accommodation changes detailed in this report means that the Housing Options Team management responsibilities have increased such as sign-ups, voids, rent arrears,

tenant welfare and support, health and safety and anti-social behaviour.

Discussions are well advanced with staff to identify issues and opportunities. Key areas emerging include:

- Identifying opportunities to improve service efficiencies and streamline procedures to enable staff to dedicate more time to homeless prevention, the priority being to minimise those applicants coming through who would need temporary accommodation.
- Closer working with partner agencies, such as support agencies and housing associations, but also private landlords
- Closer working with individual applicants to help facilitate the Trauma Informed approach
- Use the Monmouthshire Lettings Service (eg to support landlords) as a mechanism to seek to facilitate more households to remain in their current accommodation in anticipating that households may have fallen into arrears or lost their employment during the last few months and there may be an increase in landlords wanting to gain possession.
- Greater team involvement in supporting the development of Monmouthshire Lettings
- Maximising team flexibility to ensure there is adequate cover across all functions in the event of sickness, annual leave or the need to quickly respond to arising issues.
- Reviewing the staffing needs of the team.
- Reviewing staff training needs
- Ensuring staff are fully supported in the context of the change in the working environment and it being increasingly reactive and challenging. Keeping on top of day to day priorities and maintaining routine procedures is. This is currently facilitated by a temporary Senior Accommodation Officer post, which is working very well.

Recommendation

- Establish an action plan specific to the needs and priorities of the Housing Options Team, including a review of the existing team structure to particularly focus on homeless prevention.

Appendix

Summary of Proposals

Proposal	Funding 20/21	Funding 21/22	Funding 22/23	Comments
Housing Support				
Interim Remodelling of Existing Contracts x 3 to Create Temporary Accommodation & Intensive Re-Settlement Housing Support	£20,000 needed. No funding identified	£40,000 needed No funding identified	Potentially Housing Support Grant, subject to needs assessment and approval	Application to Welsh Government for £40,000 for 2020/21 was unsuccessful. Important to under-pin the principal of Rapid Re-housing and the Rapid Re-housing Protocol
Housing First Housing Support	£32,000 WG Homless Grant	£xxxxxx needed No funding identified	Potentially Housing Support Grant, subject to needs assessment and approval	
Family Accommodation				
Establish 4 units of self-contained family accommodation in Abergavenny	Social Housing Grant identified	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Establish 4 units of self-contained family accommodation in Caldicot	Social Housing Grant identified	Not applicable	Not applicable	

Finalise the Planning approvals and leasing arrangements in respect of emergency family accommodation in the South	No capital funding required. Property was purchased in 2019.	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Multiple Needs Accommodation				
Explore feasibility and viability of converting existing shared Family accommodation in Monmouth to self-contained accommodation and changing use to Multiple Needs	Feasibility and costs being determined by Property Services No funding identified. Grant application to Welsh Government unsuccessful.	No funding identified	No funding identified	
Develop five units of young persons accommodation in Abergavenny with on-site support	Capital - Social Housing Grant plus £298,464 Welsh Government homeless grant funding. Revenue - No funding has been identified for on-site support	On-site support – no funding identified	Revenue – Potentially Housing Support Grant, subject to needs assessment and approval	
As an interim arrangement (pending the development of 5 units of young persons accommodation) re-designate a shared property	No funding necessary for accommodation On-site support - no funding identified	On-site support – no funding identified	Revenue – Potentially Housing Support Grant, subject to needs assessment and approval	

as dedicated accommodation for young people with on-site support				
Provide an Assertive Outreach Service	£48,000 Welsh Government Homeless Grant	£72,000 needed No funding identified	Revenue – Potentially Housing Support Grant, subject to needs assessment and approval	
Housing Options Team				
Under the branding of Monmouthshire Lettings continue to engage with private landlords to either identify opportunities to access accommodation or to enable tenants at risk of becoming homeless to remain in their accommodation.	Housing Options Team Prevention fund	Housing Options Team Prevention fund	Housing Options Team Prevention fund	

Annex D Requirements for homes built with WG Phase 2 investment

Part 1

LAs are expected to use the most appropriate solution for individual local circumstances. This can be:

- a) Remodelled temporary accommodation
- b) Semi-permanent MMC/modular options which can be potentially repurposed
- c) Increasing local housing supply with MMC/modular or traditional construction and conversion.

Or ideally, a mixture of all of the above.

The responsibility for producing high quality homes is in the hands of housing providers. This guidance can only provide the basic building blocks and therefore client organisations and the consultants they employ should exercise their responsibility and take a critical interest. As for all housing, providers should respect the dignity of residents and ensure high quality.

A) Temporary Accommodation

Existing Triage Solutions, such as hostels and dormitory standards are outside the scope of this annex, as WG will not use current pandemic related housing funding for building this type of accommodation. The funding can be used to remodel existing provision to ensure it meets Phase 2 standards below.

This [code](#) historically sets out the minimum quality requirement in law for emergency temporary accommodation. Whilst extant, the quality of immediate temporary provision set out is no longer appropriate in a post pandemic Wales.

In order to facilitate the potential for lockdown and shielding adherence in future, the standards in Part 2 of this annex will apply to all types of provision associated with Phase 2 funding.

In addition to the Part 2 standards in this annex, when remodelling or developing new temporary accommodation, accommodation must include a living area where meals can be taken and spare time can be spent inside the home. Authorities will need to take a case by case decision on the value in the purchasing of TV equipment and/or Wi-Fi, etc.

B) Semi-permanent MMC/modular options which can be potentially repurposed

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and in particular modular construction, is recognised as a means to efficiently provide new homes, particularly as an emergency response to house people currently living in temporary accommodation due to the pandemic. Further advice on MMC definitions can be found [here](#).

Modular accommodation comes in many different shapes and sizes and the purpose of this annex is to provide some guidance around Welsh Government minimum expectations about appropriate types of accommodation.

Whilst MMC solutions may be one of the most effective ways to provide new accommodation quickly, it is recognised that there may be other acceptable options where for example “off the shelf” or the re-purposing of other properties may meet the need.

Welsh Government is committed to providing high quality homes and will shortly be consulting on new simplified design standards to replace the current Development Quality Requirements (DQR). The new standards which focus on space, building quality and flexibility will be launched following the consultation. The current DQR may be accessed [here](#).

Compliance with the current Development Quality Requirements (DQR 2005) or its replacements (when published) is a requirement. However, in view of likely changes to DQR in the near future, we are prepared to take a pragmatic approach to certain elements of the current DQR 2005 in accordance with Part 2 below, until such time as the new standard is adopted.

This guidance is not applicable to “container” or portable housing solutions such as mobile homes or caravans.

The minimum Gross Internal (floor) Area (GIA) of a one bedroom modular property provided as emergency accommodation shall be 24m².

Interim emergency MMC housing solutions must (as a minimum) provide semipermanent accommodation that is capable of being re-purposed at a future date.

C) Increasing local housing supply with MMC/modular or traditional build

To support rapid rehousing and Housing First approaches to tackling homelessness, more permanent homes are required. For expediency, some schemes which are currently ‘oven ready’ with traditional construction planned on site, may be realised more rapidly if replaced with a MMC/modular approach. Regardless of the chosen building method, the standards in Part 2 of this annex apply.

Welsh Government is committed to providing high quality homes and will shortly be consulting on new simplified design standards to replace the current Development Quality Requirements (DQR). The new standards which focus on space, building quality and flexibility will be launched following formal consultation. The current DQR may be accessed [here](#).

Part 2

Minimum requirements

Homes should be self-contained and suitable for independent living.

Consideration must be given to the most appropriate location for the accommodation. Experience is showing that there is more engagement and fewer failed tenancies where accommodation is co-located with other homelessness services to ensure easier access to support.

All living accommodation shall meet the current building regulations in Wales and new build MMC proposals shall have enhanced thermal efficiencies to deliver near zero carbon solutions which can also demonstrate how zero carbon ambitions may be achieved economically. The Welsh Approved Documents can be found [here](#).

2.2 Homes should be of high quality, innovative and sustainable

Solutions must demonstrate that they represent value for money and “whole life cost” analysis should be a material consideration when assessing future maintenance costs against initial capital cost.

Modern Methods of Construction should be embraced for new build, adopting best practice in utilising a “circular economy” process, for example by;

1. Choosing materials that are capable of being recycled and maximising the use of timber in construction to help Wales meet its carbon reduction targets.
2. Ensuring there is sufficient provision for the collection of key recyclables and storage of food waste in homes.
3. Reducing embodied carbon by utilising carbon sink and low carbon materials, processes and products in buildings.

2.3 Homes should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the occupants

Homes should be of sufficient size to meet the needs of occupants, have a convenient layout for everyday living and have adequate circulation space and storage.

Accommodation must include a form of heating, ventilation and lighting, including the provision for natural light to access the living area.

A bedroom of sufficient size for the intended occupancy must be provided separately from other accommodation.

The accommodation must include bathroom facilities, specifically a toilet, bath or shower, sink and hot and cold running water.

Where practicable in new build solutions, make internal walls non load bearing to enable future flexibility / adaptability and consider provision for potential “sleep over”.

Accommodation must include a kitchen area suitable for food preparation which must not be shared with or have a direct access to (or have door opening directly onto) toilet facilities.

Rooms must be large enough to take all the furniture occupants can reasonably be expected to need.

Accessibility requirements will be need to be satisfied. For example consider the principles embodied in the Lifetime Homes Standards as published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation – [link here](#).

2.4 Homes should be safe and secure.

Developments are to achieve the “Secured by Design” (SBD) standard – [link here](#).

Kitchens and bathrooms must be functional and designed to reduce the risk of accidents.

The accommodation must have sufficient, well located and convenient electrical socket outlets.

Carbon monoxide detectors to be fitted.

Part 3

Welsh Government technical scrutiny for emergency provision

To ensure quality and in order to assist housing providers to correctly interpret the requirement to comply with Part 2 above, Welsh Government will undertake technical scrutiny Concept and Pre-Planning stage evaluations of all proposals at the appropriate stage. The scrutiny process is further explained [here](#).

APPENDIX ??



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Equality and Future Generations Evaluation

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Ian Bakewell Phone no: 01633 644479 E-mail: IanBakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal Future Homeless Delivery & Phase 2 Homeless Transition Plan
Name of Service area Housing & Communities	Date 8 th July 2020

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Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	This proposal affects people of all ages from 16+ including older persons.	None	None
Disability	The service will be available for those with disabilities. Specific provision will be made	None	None
Gender reassignment	None	None.	N/A.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Marriage or civil partnership	None.	None.	N/A.
Pregnancy or maternity	None.	None.	N/A.
Race	None.	None.	N/A.
Religion or Belief	None.	None.	N/A.
Sex	None.	None.	N/A.
Sexual Orientation	None.	None.	N/A.
Welsh Language	None.	None.	N/A.
Poverty	None.	None.	N/A.


2. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!




Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Positive: Positively contributes to increasing housing options in Monmouthshire. Some of the proposals create job opportunities Negative: None	The Council will continue to look for other more suitable types of accommodation. Homeless prevention work will continue


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Positive: N/A Negative: N/A	N/A
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Positive: Positively contributes to the health of homeless persons. Negative: None.	The proposals are linked to the Housing Support Grant programme in order for residents to both access housing support but also helped to maintain their accommodation
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Positive: Positively contributes by helping applicants remain close to their home communities Negative: None	The proposals are linked to the Housing Support Grant programme in order for residents to both access housing support but also helped to maintain their accommodation
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Positive: Positively contributes to the health of homeless persons Negative: N/A	N/A.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Positive: N/A Negative: N/A	N/A
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Positive: The proposals both strengthen the provision of homeless accommodation and support as well as permanent accommodation. This helps to increase the stability in peoples lives improving	N/A

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>opportunities in respect of personal finances; employment; training etc</p> <p>Some of the accommodation can be used a stepping stone into more permanent housing for residents and move on and support strategies can be put into place.</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	

3. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The service seeks to provide both short-term housing interventions and solutions but is under-pinned by rapid re-housing to long-term housing solutions. Some of the short-term options provide stability from which plans can be made for longer term housing needs to be met e.g. move on and permanent accommodation.</p> <p>The proposal is about sustainable solutions and minimising the potential to set people up to fail</p>	<p>Other accommodation elsewhere in the County has been sourced and continues to be sourced.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>This proposal is all about working with Welsh Government to implement Welsh Government homeless policy.</p> <p>The proposal is very much about working in partnership with agencies and providers such as housing associations, housing support providers, private landlords; Gwent Community Psychology; Gwent Drug & Alcohol Advisory service etc. Regional work with neighbouring Councils is also relevant</p>	<p>Arrangements already exist with housing associations and private landlords and links are in place with the Police and Probation.</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p>Involvement</p>	<p>The Council is liaising closely with Welsh Government on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Some of the projects will most definitely need to be consulted upon</p>	<p>Arrangements already exist with housing associations and private landlords and links are in place with the Police and Probation.</p> <p>The Council also participates with other Gwent housing authorities in respect of the Covid 19 crisis.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p>Prevention</p>	<p>The proposal is about strengthening housing support which will help people to tackle barriers to independent living</p>	<p>Resources are already being directed towards mitigating against homelessness through trying to prevent homelessness and acquiring accommodation elsewhere in Monmouthshire.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>The service positively impacts on any household threatened with homelessness or actually homeless</p> <p>It will also benefit local health services and agencies such as Social Care and the Police</p>	N/A

4. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Social Justice, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

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	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Social Justice	N/A	N/A	N/A
Safeguarding	The proposal supports households where there could be safeguarding issues by providing safe and secure temporary accommodation.	None.	N/A.
Corporate Parenting	The proposal supports Corporate Parenting by providing safe and secure temporary accommodation.	None.	N/A.

5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

<p>Evidence has been gathered in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with a range of stakeholders. • Consideration of current pressures being faced by Housing Options as a result of the statutory duty to accommodate all homeless households. • Strategic overview of the temporary accommodation available and gaps in current provision.

The legislation and good practice which have informed the policy revisions are:

- Housing Act 1996
- Housing(Wales) Act 2014
- Welsh Government's Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness
- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility)(Wales) Regulations
- Welsh Government; Coronavirus (COVID-19): Local Authority Support for Rough Sleepers;
- Welsh Government Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support.
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equalities Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018

6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

Positive -

The positive benefits of this proposal are:

- Additional housing options in terms of numbers of properties and type to assist homeless households.
- Better quality accommodation
- Provides a settled period for applicants to access help and support
- A wider range of housing support
- It contributes to the health and well-being of the homeless persons

Negative – None.

7. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
--------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------

Continue to work up proposals	Between now and 31 st March 21. Some actions, subject to feasibility and/or funding may need to be re-timetabled	Housing & Communities Manager
Continue with homelessness prevention work to prevent temporary accommodation placements wherever possible.	On-going. This is a priority to minimize the numbers of people approaching the Council who need accommodation	Housing & Communities Manager

8. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

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Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
0.0	Adult Select Committee	N/A	Unfortunatly due to the emergency nature of this proposal, it wasn't possible to agenda this proposal to any Select Committee prior to going to Cabinet. However, it is anticipated that as and when Adult Select Committee resumes, there will be periodic scrutiny of the proposals and progress
1.0	ICMD	N/A	
2.0	Cabinet	29 th July 2020	

Appendix 5 – Approximate Current Funding Requirements & Current Short-Falls

Revenue	Estimated Cost		Comment
	2020/21	2021/22	
Young Persons Accommodation Support Officer for dedicated young persons accommodation	£12,000	£36,000	The need for this service will be a consideration for Housing Support Grant Re-Commissioning from April 2023 and will be subject to evidence of need alongside other priorities.
Reconfigure existing Floating Support Contracts x 3 to Temporary Accommodation & Re-Settlement Support	-	£66,000	At present this service is being provided through the goodwill of a Provider. The aim is to regularise the arrangement in readiness for April 21 through the current HSG programme. The on-going need for this service will be a consideration for Housing Support Grant Re-Commissioning from April 2023 and will be subject to evidence of need alongside other priorities.
Continuation of Temporary Snr Accommodation Officer from 7 th January 2021 to 31 st March 2021	£12,670*	50,680	This is a temporary post that has been created for up to six months, to help manage the current accommodation challenges. *To be funded from Welsh Government Homeless Hardship Grant
Offers of Leased Accommodation from Housing Associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 x 1 Bed units of temp accomm – low need (south) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x Units of emergency family accomm (north) • 5 x units of Medium to High Young Persons Accom (north) • 6 person emergency family accommodation (south) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x units of emergency family accomm (south) • 6 x 1 bed units of temp accomm – low need (north) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 x 1 & 2 bed units (south) 	£2,056 - Nil Nil - -	£11,683 £6,000 £9,000 Nil Nil Nil Nil	MCC estimate – proposed leasing rents to be confirmed MCC estimate – proposed leasing rents to be confirmed Cost neutral Cost neutral MCC estimate – proposed leasing rents to be confirmed MCC estimate – proposed leasing rents to be confirmed
WG Funded Services Until March '21			

HOT Accommodation Assistants x 2	-	£64,000	The on-going need for these posts will be reviewed prior to April 21.
Continuation of Housing First Support beyond 31 st March 2021, subject to need	-	£36,000	The need for this service will be a consideration for Housing Support Grant Re-Commissioning from April 2023 and will be subject to evidence of need alongside other priorities.
Continuation of Cyfannol VAWDASV Crisis Worker beyond 31 st March 2021, subject to need	-	£18,000	The need for this post will be a consideration for Housing Support Grant Re-Commissioning from April 2023 and will be subject to evidence of need alongside other priorities.
Continuation of Assertive Outreach Outreach Support beyond 31 st March 2021, subject to need	-	£72,000	The need for this post will be a consideration for Housing Support Grant Re-Commissioning from April 2023
Continuation of Substance Misuse Worker beyond 31 st March 2021, subject to need	-	£28,500	This post does not provide housing support and, therefore, wouldn't be eligible for Housing Support Grant. Discussions with Health are currently being undertaken.
Estimated Funding Short-Fall	£26,726	£397,863	

Capital	Estimated Cost		Comment
	2020/21	2021/22	
Purchase of additional property for Multiple Needs Accommodation	£149,000		To meet the known need and demand from high needs single people
Conversion of Cinderhill Street hostel to self-contained accommodation	High level estimate £285,000		To meet WG Annex D accommodation standards. Property Services currently designing a proposal
Estimated Funding Short-Fall	£434,000		

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2020-21

Adults Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
29th September 2020	Monmouthshire Track, Trace and Protect Service position report	Scrutiny of a position report following scrutiny on 2 nd July.	David Jones Gill Dicken Richard Drinkwater	Policy Development/Performance Monitoring
	MCC's Public Protection response to the Covid-19 pandemic – April to September 2020	Scrutiny of the progress report and any implications arising.	David Jones Huw Owen Linda O’Gorman Gill Dicken Gareth Walters	Performance Monitoring
20th October 2020	Homesearch Allocations Review and Policy Amendments	To review the allocations policy.	Louise Corbett	Policy Development/Performance Monitoring
	Homeless Briefing Report and Emerging Proposals for Future Delivery of Homlessness”	To consider a position report on homelessness ~ our demand, gaps and proposals to address them.	Ian Bakewell	Briefing Paper
15th December 2020	Gypsy and Travellers Assessment	To be confirmed	Steve Griffiths Ian Bakewell	Policy Development/Performance Monitoring
26th January 2021	Budget Scrutiny			
16th March 2021	To be confirmed			

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2020-21

Future Agreed Work Programme Items: Dates to be determined

- ✓ Mental Health Services ~ Jointly with Children and Young People's Select Committee (ABUHB and Eve Parkinson)
- ✓ **Community Development and Well-being ~ results of most significant change ~ possible workshop**
- ✓ **Market place for social care ~ better understanding of services, play space community staff, integrated workspace, hub services, Turning the world upside down. Housing element.**
- ✓ **Performance reporting (normal plus other things Homefirst)**
- ✓ **Annual Complaints Report for Social Services**
- ✓ **Housing register allocations policy ~ Nov/December**
- ✓ **Housing Support Grant ~ replaces the supporting people grant (children and communities grant ~ Sharran Lloyd) ~ how is the money used (homeless prevention ~ difficult places) ~ homelessness ~ late autumn (discussion with Sharran Lloyd)**

Joint Scrutiny with Children and Young People's Select Committee:

- ✓ **Mental Health Capacity Act and Learning Disabilities ~ linked to implications of the DOLS (Deprivation Liberty Safeguards) Grant**
- ✓ **Adults Carers Strategy and Children and Young People's Carers Strategy.**
- ✓ **Safeguarding Performance Reporting and Progress of Regional Safeguarding Boards ~ Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015**
- ✓ **Regional Integrated Autism Service**
- **Regional partnership boards and integrated care fund transformation funding and impact, risks associated with funding stream**

Cabinet, Council and Individual Cabinet Member Decisions (ICMD) Forward Plan

Monmouthshire County Council is required to publish a forward plan of all key decisions to be taken. Council and Cabinet items will only be considered for decision if they have been included on the planner no later than the month preceding the meeting, unless the item is considered urgent.

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Subject	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner	Date item originally scheduled for decision
Council	01/10/23	LDP for Adoption		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/02/23	LDP submission for examination		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/07/22	LDP Deposit Plan endorsement for consultation	Endorsement of Deposit Plan	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Cabinet	01/09/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement post consultation		Mark Hand	20/05/20	
Cabinet	02/06/21	Budget Monitoring report - month 12 (period3) - outturn	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	01/05/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement for consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Council	15/04/21	Draft revenue and capital budget proposals for consultation		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 9 held on 4th March 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	

Council	04/03/21	Council Tax Setting		Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Cabinet	03/03/21	•EAS Business Plan		Sharon Randall Smith	21/09/20	
Cabinet	03/02/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 8 held on 14th January 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
ICMD	15/01/21	Museum Service Collection Review	To propose the deaccessioning of and disposal actions for the proposed items in line with Section 4 of the Museums Association Disposal Toolkit	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Council	14/01/21	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	07/04/20	
Council	14/01/21	Annual Safeguarding Report		Jane Rodgers	21/09/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance	To clarify how S106 contributions are calculated	Mark Hand	01/05/19	
Cabinet	06/01/21	Review of Monmouthshire's Destination Management Plan 2017-2020	Purpose: to approve the revised Destination Development Plan	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	06/01/21	Play Area Assessments and Future Play Area Policy	to advise members of play area assessments carried out last year and suggest a rationalisation of provision	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
ICMD	23/12/20	Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2020-2025	To approve the review of the Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2020-2025	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	

Cabinet	16/12/20	•Draft revenue and capital budget proposals for consultation		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 7 held on 3rd December 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
IMCD	09/12/20	Council Tax base and associated matters	To agree the Council Tax Base figure for submission to the Welsh Government, together with the collection rate to be applied for 2021/22 and to make other necessary related statutory decisions	Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Council	03/12/20	Updated Asset Investment Policy		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Council	03/12/20	Statutory Director of Social Services annual report		Julie Boothroyd	14/08/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	Growth Options to Cabinet for endorsement for non-statutory consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	S106 Funding, Cae Meldon		Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	Social Justice Strategy Update		Cath Fallon	17/09/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	Budget Monitoring Report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year.	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
ICMD	11/11/20	Housing Register Review		Mark Hand	23/06/20	

Cabinet	04/11/20	Public Service Ombudsman's annual letter	To provide Cabinet with a copy of the Public Service Ombudsman's annual letter to inform understanding of the council's performance in handling complaints	Matt Gatehouse	09/09/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Local Housing Market Assessment Update		Mark Hand	04/11/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Welsh Church Fund working group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting x held on x x 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Clydach Ironworks Enhancement Scheme Revision		Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Land at Knollbury, Undy		Mike Moran	26/08/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Coronavirus Strategic Aims: Progress and Next Steps	To provide an overview of progress against the strategic aims set by Cabinet in July, and communicate an updated version of the plan on a page	Matt Gatehouse	26/08/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Longterm Homelessness Solutions	Deferred from 2/9/20	Mark Hand	07:00	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2020		Mark Hand	23/06/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Section 106 Funding – The Hill, Abergavenny		Mike Moran	20/02/19	
Council	22/10/20	Corporate Plan Annual Report 2019/20		Richard Jones	25/08/20	

Council	22/10/20	MCC Audited Accounts (formal approval)	To notify Council of completed Audit process and resultant accounts - To go to Audit Committee	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	22/10/20	ISA 260 report - MCC Accounts - attachment above	Deferred from september	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	22/10/20	Future Data Hall and Data Hosting Arrangements		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Council	22/10/20	LDP revised Delivery Agreement including LDP timetable and community involvement strategy		Craig O'Connor	03/07/20	
Cabinet	21/10/20	Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2020/21 Forecast Outturn Statement – Month 5		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Cabinet	21/10/20	MTEP and Budget Process 2021/22 to 2024/25		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Cabinet	21/10/20	Review of Garden Waste Service		Laura Carter	23/07/20	
ICMD	14/10/20	PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION - GRANTS TO LOCAL COUNCILS AND FUTURE PROVISION IN ABERGAVENNY	DEFERRED	Roger Hoggins	25/09/20	
ICMD	14/10/20	Closure of Capita Gwent Consultancy and distribution of Reserves		Roger Hoggins	25/09/20	
ICMD	14/10/20	Extension of PSPO	To seek approval to extend three Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) in respect of Bailey Park,	Andrew Mason	23/09/20	

Cabinet	07/10/20	Future Data Hall and Data Hosting Arrangements		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 2 held on 28th July 2020 and meeting 3 held on 10th September 2020.	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Future Provision of HWRCs including the closure of Usk recycling centre		Carl Touhig	14/09/20	
ICMD	23/09/20	SCM Collaboration with TCBC Heritage Services		Amy Longford	24/08/20	
ICMD	23/09/20	SCM Collaboration with TCBC Heritage Services		Amy Longford	24/08/20	
Council	10/09/20	Audit Committee Annual Report		Philip White	11/08/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Digital Infrastructure Action Plan		Cath Fallon	08/07/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	'Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2020/21 Forecast Outturn Statement – Month 2		Jonathan S Davies	12/06/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Coronavirus Risk Management Update'		Peter Davies	10/07/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 1 held on 30th June 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	

Cabinet	29/07/20	Outdoor Education - Service Update		Marie Bartlett	09/07/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Public Toilets				
Cabinet	29/07/20	5G Rural test bed		Cath Fallon/Frances O'Brien		
Council	16/07/20	Climate Emergency Update		Hazel Clatworthy	10/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	CEx Report		Matt Phillips	18/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	Cabinet decision re Gilwern		Matt Phillips	27/05/20	
ICMD	08/07/20	Archaeology Planning Advice	Adoption post-guidance	Mark Hand	19/09/19	Deferred
Cabinet	01/07/20	COVID-19 Evaluation of Recovery Phase and Establishing Aims for Response Stage			17/06/20	
Cabinet	01/07/20	Home to School Transport Policy	Deferred		20/05/20	
Cabinet	01/07/20	Household Waste Recycling Centres	Deferred		20/05/20	

Cabinet	17/06/20	Revenue and Capital Monitoring Outturn	To provide Members with information on the outturn position of the Authority for the financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/02/20	
Council	04/06/20	Licensing Act Policy		Linda O'Gorman		
Council	04/06/20	Estyn Report		Will Mclean		
Council	04/06/20	Safeguarding Covid19 Position Statement		Julie Boothroyd		
Council	04/06/20	Chief Officer, CYP Annual Report'		Will Mclean	11/03/20	
Council	04/06/20	Refit Programme		Ian Hoccom	28/02/20	
Cabinet	27/05/20	Safeguarding		Julie Boothroyd		
Cabinet	27/05/20	Active Travel and Town Centres		Paul Sullivan		
Council	14/05/20	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Cabinet	06/05/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 1 held on 2nd April 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	

ICMD	08/04/20	GUARANTEED INTERVIEWS FOR CARE LEAVERS		Gareth James	23/03/20	
ICMD	08/04/20	Momouthshire Registration Service Collaborative Working Agreement		Jennifer Walton	23/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	Staffing re-alignment: Community Hubs and Contact Centre		Matt Gatehouse	11/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	EAS Business Plan		Will Mclean	04/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Care Leavers		Gareth James	28/02/20	
ICMD	25/03/20	Non Domestic Rates: High Street and Retail Rate Relief 2020/21	for approval of the adoption of a High Street and Retail Rate Relief Scheme for 2020/21, in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.	Ruth Donovan	12/02/20	
ICMD	25/03/20	Contract Extension		Tracey Harry	14/02/20	
Council	05/03/20	Pay Policy		Sally Thomas	23/01/20	
Council	05/03/20	Annual Safeguarding Report		Julie Boothroyd	06/02/20	
Council	05/03/20	Strategic Equality Plan		Alan Burkitt	26/09/19	

Council	05/03/20	LDP Preferred Strategy	Endorsement to consult on Preferred Strategy	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	05/03/20	Council Tax Resolution	To set budget and Council Tax	Ruth Donovan	18/04/19	
Council	05/03/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Matt Gatehouse		
Cabinet	04/03/20	Investment Committee		Peter Davies	13/02/20	
ICMD	26/02/20	CHARGING APPLICANTS FOR THE MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS		Phil Thomas	06/02/20	
ICMD	26/02/20	Non Domestic Rates - Application for Hardship Relief		Ruth Donovan	14/01/20	
Cabinet	19/02/20	2020/21 Education and Welsh Church Trust Funds Investment and Fund Strategies	The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet for approval the 2020/21 Investment and Fund Strategy for Trust Funds for which the Authority acts as sole or custodian trustee for adoption and to approve the 2019/20 grant allocation to Local Authority beneficiaries of the Welsh Church Fund.	Dave Jarrett	18/04/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Matt Gatehouse		
Cabinet	19/02/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2019/20, meeting 7 held on 5th December 2019	Dave Jarrett	18/04/19	

Cabinet	19/02/20	Consideration of Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals		Peter Davies	03/10/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Proposal to change the school funding formula.		Nikki Wellington		
Cabinet	19/02/20	Strategic Review of Outdoor Education		Marie Bartlett	18/10/20	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) review/ Policy Statement - Results of statutory consultation and proposed Final Plan	To seek approval of the Review of the ROWIP and associated policies	Matthew Lewis	18/07/19	
Cabinet	17/02/20	•Final revenue and capital budget proposals		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
ICMD	29/01/20	Various roads, county wide Amendment No. 1 of consolidation order 2019 (part 2)		Paul Keeble	13/01/20	
Council	16/01/20	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	18/04/19	
Council	16/01/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Peter Davies	26/09/19	
Council	16/01/20	Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy		Mark Hand	06/09/19	

Council	16/01/20	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Council	16/01/20	Safeguarding - Annual Report to Council		Jane Rodgers	20/06/19	
Council	16/01/20	Proposed Development Company		Deb Hill-Howells	16/09/19	Deferred
Cabinet	08/01/20	Ethical Employment code of practice - Approval Paper Draft		Scott James	08/11/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Budget Monitoring report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2019/20 financial year.	Mark Howcroft	18/04/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Redundancy implications within MonLife		Marie Bartlett	07/11/20	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Homelessness Report		Deb Hill-Howells	07/11/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Primary School Places Reiview in Caldicot		Matthew Jones	02/10/19	
Cabinet	06/01/20	Fixed Play Provision		Mike Moran	26/08/20	