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County Hall
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NP15 1GA

Tuesday, 17 November 2020

Notice of meeting

Children and Young People Select Committee

Wednesday, 25th November, 2020 at 10.00 am,
Remote 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.	Homeless Briefing Report and emerging proposals for future delivery of homelessness To consider a position report on homelessness – our demands, gaps and proposals to address them	1 - 46
4.	Additional Learning Needs Strategy Update on the progress of delivering the strategy.	To Follow
5.	Children and Young People Select Committee Forward Work Programme	47 - 48
6.	To confirm the date and time of the next meeting	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

L.Brown
M.Groucutt
L.Jones
D. Jones
M.Lane
M. Powell
T.Thomas
J.Watkins

**Added Members
Members voting on Education Issues
Only**

Vacant Seat (Roman Catholic Church)
Vacant Seat (Co-optee)
Elizabeth Thomas

**Added Members
Non Voting**

Fay Middleton (Trade Union)
Maggie Harris
Peter Strong NEU

Public Information

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Welsh Language

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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?

SUBJECT:	HOMELESS BRIEFING REPORT & EMERGING PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DELIVERY OF HOMELESSNESS – YOUNG PEOPLE
MEETING:	CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT
DATE:	25TH NOVEMBER 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 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.
- 1.2 The Adult Select Committee has also received a homeless briefing report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To receive a presentation on homelessness in Monmouthshire, with a focus on Young Persons homelessness.
- 2.2 To receive an update on the Housing Support Grant Programme.
- 2.3 In respect of young people, to consider the current risks, pressures and challenges relating to the current provision and range of homeless accommodation and housing support for homeless applicants.
- 2.4 To consider and comment on emerging proposals for the future delivery of homelessness in Monmouthshire, including young people, 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 in readiness for April 2023 and the homeless needs of young people.
- 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.

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 30th 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 policy, is ‘Rapid Rehousing’ and to provide long-term accommodation with support, if needed. 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 30th October there were 109 households (mainly single people) in temporary accommodation, that need moving to other accommodation. The Council has 60 households The number typically in temporary accommodation has quadrupled. This includes:
 - 16/17 year olds – 2 (1 pending)
 - 18-24 year olds – 29 (3 pending)
 - Young people in B & B – 15
 - Young people in Shared Housing - 15
- Many of the Council’s applicants have a need for both specialist accommodation and specialist housing support, which largely isn’t currently available. This is particularly relevant to young people who **are all** considered to need specialist and dedicated support.
- Arising issues with young persons 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 is scheduled for April 2023). Eg there is only one type of young persons supported accommodation available and this for young people with low needs.
- Supporting applicants has been compounded by Housing Option Team staff capacity issues over the last six months, making accommodation management a challenge. The recent appointment of three additional members of staff has improved the situation, but on-going issues relating to sickness, self-isolating and turnover impact on capacity.

- On the basis of current homeless needs and demands, anticipated future needs and the requirements of Welsh Government, the need for the following has been identified in respect of young people 16+ and families
 - **Additional dedicated Young Persons accommodation with 24 hour support** for those with higher needs that can't be accommodated in existing accommodation (not currently available).
 - **Emergency bed space** to avoid the use of B & B, which historically has been out of County. Although that is not a current issue.
 - **Move on accommodation for young people** as their needs reduce (which hasn't been available until the recently established Pobl Steps to Independence scheme)
 - Additional **Mental Health support**. 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).
 - **Self-contained emergency family accommodation** (not currently available, although approval has been given for the Council to enter into a lease for 4 units of emergency accommodation in the south provided by Monmouthshire Housing.
 - **Dedicated Move-on accommodation** to ensure the Council meets the 'rapid-rehousing' requirements. Not available beyond day to day turnover of social housing. This can be generally facilitated by the Housing Register policy and the use of flexible lettings quotas although it is dependent on vacancies.

- In addition the following is also required:
 - **Rapid Re-housing** for all homeless applicants (typically approximately 25% of vacant general needs properties have been made available to homeless applicants.

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

- **Housing First** support and accommodation for homeless people with chronic health & social care needs (has not been available in Monmouthshire, although a first let has been facilitated by Pobl).
- **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).
- **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 (including families) manage their accommodation and minimise placement breakdown. Previously there has been a reliance on floating support but there is an interim goodwill arrangement in place with a support provider. It is critical that support is available from the start of the accommodation provision and there is no delay in starting.

- **Re-Settlement Support** to help applicants move-on and transition into permanent accommodation. Ideally this should be linked to 'Temporary Accommodation' support. When an applicant moves their support will 'follow' them to their new accommodation and will remain in place as required. This is important not only for applicants but also prospective landlords. An interim goodwill arrangement is in place.
- **Substance misuse support** (not currently available through the homeless service). Substance misuse is often a factor relating to placement breakdown.
- 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, which is available until 31st March 2021, is listed below:

Revenue (all projects are underway)

- Substance misuse liaison worker - £19,000 [Partnership with Gwent Drug & Alcohol Advisory Service].
- Accommodation Assistants x 2 - £30,736 [MCC]. Started 1st October 2020.
- Housing First support - £32,460 [Partnership with Pobl].
- Assertive Outreach workers x 2 - £48,000 [Partnership with Llamau].
- VAWDASV Crisis worker x 0.5 - £12,000 [Partnership with Cyfannol].

Capital

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

An initial proposal and the basis of the capital bid to WG has regrettably fallen through. The Council is actively seeking to identify an alternative to utilise the funding and is in discussions with a local housing association in this regard.

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 - £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 Housing Support needs to be a critical element of the Council's homeless prevention toolkit and 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. It is also relevant in meeting the Guidance of Welsh Governments 'Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support.'
- 3.8 Amongst other requirements, Phase 2 Guidance is explicit in requiring the Council to:
- 'Provide support for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.'* It is known the current support provision does not meet the Monmouthshire need.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 In light of increased COVID infection rates and that the Welsh Government Administration is due for re-election in 2021, this leaves a degree of uncertainty in respect of the new Administration's policy and financial envelope for the HSG programme.
- 3.10 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 However, as an interim measure it is proposed to support the need for 'Remodelling of HSG Services' to service homelessness. Through 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 propose to cover this deficit by de-commissioning existing services 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 pro-actively 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 maximise a 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 recommended option 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Welsh Government policy Contribute to the well-being of applicants Increase the range and number of units of temporary accommodation including the provision of on-site support Introducing designated/ring-fenced permanent move-on accommodation. Increasing the type of specialist housing support for homeless people. Increasing other specialist support eh health related, in addition to housing support Strengthening the management of placements and 	<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 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</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>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>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-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>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>
<p>Option 3: Do nothing and continue with the existing accommodation and</p>	<p>There are no benefits to this option in the knowledge that the needs of existing homeless clients will</p>	<p>The Council won't be meeting the requirements of Welsh Government</p>	<p>This is not considered an option</p>

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
housing support arrangements	not be adequately met. Nor will the needs of future applicants.	<p>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>	

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, due to its status of being a briefing report for Children & Young People 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 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 & Homeless Services for Young Persons – 30th October 2020

Current Temporary Accommodation Placements

At present the Council is providing temporary accommodation for 109 households (mainly single people under pensionable age), all of whom need to be moved-on and re-housed to alternative temporary accommodation and/or permanent accommodation.

Nos. in temporary accommodation at 30th October 2020 needing move-on - 109:

- **In temporary accommodation** – 102 (85 singles – mainly single males)
 - Includes 17 families
- **Nos in B & B** – 56 (mainly single people)
 - Plus 2 - Night-Shelter
- **Young People 16-24** – 31 in temporary accommodation
 - 16/17 year olds x 2 - 1 in B & B; 1 in shared;
 - 18-24 x 29 - 14 in B & B; 14 in shared
 - Mental health issues – 27 (87%)
 - Pending x 4 (16/17 year old x 1)
- **Multiple needs**
 - Housing First need – 4 (was initially six but two have recently been accommodated)
 - B & B – 29
 - Shared – 11
- **Pending cases** and awaiting accommodation (effectively a waiting list)
 - 46

In addition to the 109 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.

Current Accommodation & Support Provision for Young People

- **MCC Young Persons Accommodation Officer**
 - dedicated post to prevent homelessness for young people and identify alternative accommodation.
 - HSG funded
 - 19/20 referrals – 64; 20/21 referrals – 22
- **Llamau Family Mediation**
 - dedicated post to prevent homelessness and to help keep young people living at home
 - post is co-located with Housing Options Team
 - Welsh Government funded

- **Solas Young Persons Hostels** (low needs only)
 - 21 units across Woodstock House, Abergavenny & Hill House, Chepstow
 - HSG funded
 - 20/21 referrals – 21
 - Referrals refused - 6

- **Llamau Emphasis Housing Support – Young Person Support Worker x 1**
 - 20/21 referrals – 3
 - Open case load – 9

- **MCC Compass – Young Persons**
 - Provides the link between accommodation and homelessness with education, training, employment, physical and mental health, positive relationships, outside interests etc
 - Youth Support Grant funded
 - Referrals – 48 since June 2019
 - Open case load – 21 x 16-24 year olds (at end of Q2)

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 Councils 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 in respect of a Management Plan for the property. This is currently progressing through the Planning process.

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:

- Fourteen new 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. Until recently, this has been occupied by two applicants under 24 hour supervision. There is currently one resident. The expectation of Welsh Government is that such accommodation is no longer appropriate or acceptable.

Appendix 1

Monmouthshire County Council Homeless Transition Plan – October 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 30th October 2020 there were 56 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 bedrooled 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. This should be completed by December 2020.

Further to the above, further opportunities to provide emergency family accommodation through the Social Housing Grant Programme have arisen in Caldicot and potentially Monmouth, providing 10 units of self-contained accommodation. In addition a potential scheme was identified in Abergavenny which would have been cross funded by Welsh Government homeless capital grant. Unfortunately, the land owner decided not to sell.

- **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 Caldicot (4 units) and Monmouth (6 units) under lease arrangements with the developing housing associations.
- **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 initial opportunity arose to establish five units of emergency self-contained accommodation for Young People with provision for specialist on-site support. The capital costs were to be funded through the Social Housing Programme and Welsh Government homeless capital grant. Unfortunately, this project didn't progress as planned due to the housing association being unable to purchase the site in question.

As an alternative option the Council is now working with a local housing association on developing a medium to high needs young persons scheme with 24 hour on site support and with move on accommodation. The scheme is owned by the housing association and will involve re-modelling existing provision. The project will be a partnership between Housing & Communities; Children's Services, Housing Support Grant Commissioning and the said housing association.

The number of units at the scheme is yet to be confirmed, but architects have been appointed to develop initial designs, which are expected to be available mid November 2020. The number of medium to high needs units is expected to be approximately six, with four or five move on units. All will be self-contained units.

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.
- 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 homelessness. 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 can 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 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 January 2021.
- 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 Council's 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 receive 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	

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"> • 6 x Units of emergency family accomm (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 £9,000 Nil Nil Nil Nil	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	£391.863	

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		

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 ??



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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


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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.
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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	

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2020-21

Children and Young People's Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
13 th October 2020	Social Services Support for Vulnerable Children	To provide members with an update of the impact of covid and the support being provided to vulnerable children during the Covid 19 pandemic.	Jane Rodgers	Performance Monitoring
	School-based Support for emotional Well-being	Discussion with our lead Educational Psychologists on the support being provided in schools to assist emotional wellbeing during Covid 19 pandemic.	Will Mclean	Performance Monitoring
	Blended Learning in Schools	To report on the Local Authority and Education Achievement Service A support for blended learning and to discuss the quality assurance processes in place.	Will Mclean Sharon Randall Smith	Performance Monitoring
Special Meeting in November 2020	Homeless Briefing Report and Emerging Proposals for Future Delivery of Homelessness"	To consider a position report on homelessness ~ our demand, gaps and proposals to address them.	Ian Bakewell	Position Paper
	Additional Learning Needs Strategy	Update on the progress in delivering the strategy.	Will Mclean Sharon Randall Smith	Performance Monitoring
8 th December 2020	Review of Play Provision	To consider the findings of an assessment of play areas in Monmouthshire and to consider the way forward.	Mike Moran Matthew Lewis	Policy Development
	Siting of a Welsh Medium School	TBC	Nikki Wellington	TBC
19 th January 2021	Budget Scrutiny	Scrutiny of the budget proposals for 2021/22.	Peter Davies	Budget Scrutiny
9 th March 2021				
20 th April 2021				

Future Agreed Work Programme Items:

Schools items:

- Mounton House School Update

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2020-21

- **Welsh Medium Education ~ Welsh Education Strategic Plan** – annual update. New school in Monmouth.
- **Additional Learning Needs** and financial pressures
- **Inclusion updates** – wellbeing/attitudes to learning/supporting the pupil voice
- **Post 16 education provision/Apprenticeships/Engagement and progression and support for those Not in Education or Employment**

Non-education issues:

- **Support for Foster Carers** ~ Edge of Care Team and BASE. Bringing in Foster Carers
- **Engage with the Youth Forum** ~ Discuss their priorities and key concerns
- **Young Carers Strategy Update**
- **Childcare sufficiency** – annual update
- **Well-being reporting (obesity, eating disorders etc)**
- **Family Support Services ~ Young People's Mental Health Support in Schools:** Chair to liaise with Chief Officer
- **Children with Complex Needs and play provision.**

Suggestions from the Chief Officer:

- **ADL Transformation** ~ new legislation and practice early next year. Regional leads to provide and input. Readiness assessments
- **Ongoing Transformation** between health board and regional partnership boards. Intermediate Care funding and in particular, supporting wellbeing needs.
- **Inclusion in schools (primary and secondary), Behaviour policy.** CAMS support ~ early presentation.
- **Risk areas, financial position and budgetary pressures, Schools Finance Forum work**
- **2 years' delivery plan for Children's Services** ~ understanding good practice and the significant drivers on schools and social services
- **Chief Officer Annual Reports and Corporate Parenting**