

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Social Housing Grant Programme</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Adult Select Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> July 2019</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief the committee on the completion of the Social Housing Grant Programme for 2018-19 and the new SHG Programme for 2019-20.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To consider the Social Housing Grant programme completions for 2018/19 and the associated benefits and whether services are effectively addressing local needs in relation to the Well-Being priorities for Monmouthshire and the Council's responsibilities.
- 2.2 To consider the proposed programme for 2019/20.
- 2.3 To recommend that Cabinet adopt the programme for 2019/20.

## **3. KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 It is recognised in Monmouthshire that house prices have risen to a level beyond that which is affordable to many local people. The average house price is currently £301,901 (Source: Hometrack 31<sup>st</sup> April 2019). The Monmouthshire average house price compares to a Wales average house price of £185,529 and the lower quartile affordability ratio is 9:1. Therefore, the provision of affordable housing is one of the Council's more pressing concerns, in both urban and rural areas.
- 3.2 The number of applicants on the Common Housing Register was 3269 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Overall, these figures show a slight increase in the number of households registered on Homesearch over the last 5 years.
- |         |                            |
|---------|----------------------------|
| 2014/15 | 2867 registered households |
| 2015/16 | 2619 registered households |
| 2016/17 | 3253 registered households |
| 2017/18 | 3019 registered households |
- 3.3 During 2018/19 the Housing Options Team received 835 enquiries from households threatened with homelessness. They determined 307 households as having a Section 66 duty. S66 is the duty to prevent an applicant from becoming homeless and applies to households at risk of homelessness within 56 days. 244 households were determined as having a S73 or S75 duty. A S73 obligation is the duty to help secure accommodation for applicants who are homeless and applies to those who are eligible for assistance and homeless. A duty under S75 means the duty to secure accommodation for homeless applicants who are in priority need at the end of S73. This applies to applicants who are eligible, homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless.

- 3.4 We work very closely with our RSL partners to try to find enough sites to build up a healthy reserve scheme list for new development, however, going into the future this is proving difficult due to land availability.

#### **4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 The following options are available:

- **Option 1** – Implement the Programme Delivery Plan (PDP) as recommended in this report.
- **Option 2** – Not to have a Programme Delivery Plan to enable the provision of affordable housing. However, it is the policy of the council to maximise both delivery and spend of any available funds.
- **Option 3** – Support alternative schemes within the Programme Delivery Plan. However, there are no other viable schemes that could come into the programme this year but new schemes are being worked on for 2020/21.

#### **5. OPTIONS EVALUATION**

- 5.1 The SHG Programme will be constantly monitored by the Strategy and Policy Officer, and evaluated on a quarterly basis with a quarterly return submitted to Welsh Government as detailed in Appendix 1.

#### **4. REASONS:**

- 4.1 The Social Housing Grant allocation for Monmouthshire for 2018/2019 was:

- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| • SHG Only                | £4,369,317 |
| • Housing Finance Grant 2 | £1,037,615 |
| • Total                   | £5,406,932 |

The final figure drawn down from the Welsh Assembly Government was £5,212,623.

- 4.2 This has been a difficult year with some schemes dropping out of the programme. This resulted in an underspend of £194,376. In 2018-19 we delivered 112 affordable homes:

- 84 new build homes
- 10 DIY Homebuy
- 17 Ex-council house buy back properties
- 1 Rent to Own

- 4.3 The Welsh Government made a significantly larger amount of funding available for 3 years to help deliver their target of 20,000 affordable homes. Monmouthshire benefited from this by receiving allocations of:

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| • 2018/2019 | £5,406,932 |
| • 2019/2020 | £1,966,257 |
| • 2020/2021 | £1,684,333 |

2019/20 will see the end of Housing Finance Grant. This will result in social housing grant allocations dropping down to past levels.

- 4.4 The Programme Delivery Plan for 2019 - 2022 showing the potential spend of our allocation is appended to this report (appendix 2). We work very closely with our RSL partners to trying to find enough sites to build up a healthy reserve scheme list, however, going into the future this is proving difficult due to land availability.

**5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 None

**6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 There is no negative impact to the delivery of affordable housing. Affordable housing benefits residents of Monmouthshire and makes an important contribution to the sustainability of our towns and villages by providing homes that local people can afford to live in. The delivery of affordable includes social rent properties and low cost home ownership opportunities for first time buyers. As well as enabling the provision of specialist schemes such as OAP and adapted housing which improves the lives of those with protected characteristics.

**7. SAFEGUARDING & CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS:**

- 7.1 The policy supports both safeguarding and corporate parenting through the provision of affordable housing and suitable housing options for those with a housing need.

8. **CONSULTEES:** Cabinet Member For Enterprise and Land Use Planning; Senior Leadership Team; Head of Planning, Housing & Place-Shaping, Housing and Communities Manager and Housing Senior Management Team.

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None

10. **AUTHOR:** Louise Corbett, Strategy and Policy Officer – Affordable Housing.

11. **CONTACT DETAILS:** E-mail: [louisecorbett@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:louisecorbett@monmouthshire.gov.uk)  
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## Appendix 1

### Evaluation Criteria – Cabinet, Individual Cabinet Member Decisions & Council

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Social Housing Grant Programme</b>
<b>Date decision was made:</b>	<b>19.07.19</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Louise Corbett, Strategy &amp; Policy Officer</b>

#### **What will happen as a result of this decision being approved by Cabinet or Council?**

Approval will enable the delivery of affordable housing in Monmouthshire. It will allow us to utilise Social Housing Grant allocated by Welsh Government and contribute towards the development of 26 new homes, assist 14 applicants to purchase a property off the open market and the provide 4 units of supported living accommodation for Social Care clients.

Regularly monitored with returns submitted to Welsh Government every quarter.

#### **What benchmarks and/or criteria will you use to determine whether the decision has been successfully implemented?**

The following benchmarks will be used to assess whether the decision has had a positive or negative effect:

- Using up to date information to ensure that the schemes supported are meeting housing need.
- The number of units delivered.
- Achieving full spend of our allocation of Social Housing Grant.

12 month appraisal

**What is the estimate cost of implementing this decision or, if the decision is designed to save money, what is the proposed saving that the decision will achieve?**

It is not anticipated there will be any costs associated with the Social Housing Grant programme. The Strategy and Policy Officer will undertake managing the programme and any other associated works as part of the job role and responsibilities.

12 month appraisal

Any other comments

