

## Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group Minutes

Date of Meeting – September 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 10:00am – 11:30am

Via Microsoft Teams

### In attendance:

Debbie Lambe – Chaired	Lisa Pearson – Flintshire
Rachel Pierce-Jones – Regional Development Coordinator	Diane Jones – OPCC
Ann Lloyd – Denbighshire	Elwen Roberts – VAWDASV Regional Officer
Arwel Jones – Anglesey	Ben Carter – Area Planning Board
Carys Fon Williams – Gwynedd	Steffan Llyr Williams – GISDA Provider Representative
Gwyn Roberts - Gwynedd	Linda Hughes – Clwyd Alyn Provider Representative
Shirley Jones – Wrexham	Emma Wood – Hafan Cymru Provider Representative
Debbie Williams – Wrexham	
Sam Parry - Conwy	
Martin Cooil – Flintshire	

### 1. Apologies:

Elliw Llyr – Anglesey, Dafydd Gibbard – Gwynedd, Abbe Harvey and Claire Owens – Denbighshire, Phil Forbes – Mental Health, Lynne Evans – NWH, Wendy Hughes – Digartref, Andy Jones – APB, Jono Clarke – Probation

### 2. Welcome and Introductions and Declaration of Interest:

For the first meeting virtually for this group introductions were done. Declaration of interest forms will be sent out after this meeting for everyone to complete and return to the RDC. Debbie Lambe chaired this meeting, the first meeting as the newly formed Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group.

### 3. Regional Development Coordinator Update

For future meetings this standard agenda item will be the RDC updating on progress made within the Annual Statement work plan, however as this is our first meeting and the agenda today is to agree a work plan, the RDC introduced her role and the role of this group.

Rachel added that the RDC post is WG funded, and hosted by Conwy County Borough Council. The RDC will support the administration of the RHSCG and support the delivery of regional planning and commissioning.

The RDC will strengthen links with other regional boards in particular the Regional Partnership Board. The RDC will prepare with members an Annual Statement and the RDC will then push these priority areas forward, arrange meetings, gather information for the purpose and provide update reports to the RHSCG.

The role of the RHSCG is expected to work on the following four key bullet points that WG see as regional working. These bullet points are the work plan areas in which we will agree priorities for each task.

- Development of specialist services for which there is not a critical mass locally
- Development of regional services where justified by economies of scale
- Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration
- Collaboration with other public services.

The RHSCG will ensure there is effective delivery of the Housing Support Grant and make improvements where need be.

The RDC also updated that all new members to the RHSCG will receive an induction, Rachel to have all new members inducted by the next meeting.

The RDC explained following on from Gwynne Jones departure as Landlord Rep on the RHSCG we still have six provider and landlord representatives to equal the six authorities and asked if the group are happy that we do not go to CHC for another rep. RHSCG were happy with this suggestion. The provider and landlord reps had also agreed this prior to the meeting.

#### 4. Previous RCC minutes

Debbie Lambe summarised the minutes from the last RCC meeting back in January 2020. Paul Webb in Welsh Government who was at the time leading on the Housing Support Grant implementation attended and gave an update on the movements of the Housing Support Grant Guidance. Paul Webb is now leading on the Children and Communities Grant.

Redistribution also took a lot of the meeting, with Paul Webb being in attendance it was vital we got the issues North Wales face from redistribution widely communicated. Rachel explained Redistribution will be on the next RHSCG meeting agenda to ensure all new members are aware of the reduction in funding implications.

#### 5. Chair and Vice Chair Update

The RHSCG Sub Group has received two nominations for chairing the RHSCG one nomination for chair and another for vice chair. At the meeting today and over the summer holidays this was widened out to all RHSCG to put forward nominations for Chair and Vice Chair.

It was agreed if anybody would like to be chair to put their name forward to Rachel, and if anybody wants to nominate someone as chair please make sure they are aware before doing this and again send to Rachel. Deadline September 18<sup>th</sup> 2020.

#### 6. Terms of Reference

Both the RHSCG and RHSCG Sub Group terms of reference were circulated with the papers and shared with the group over the summer holidays for any final comments. All comments received to date have been reflected in the changes. Any final comments on the Terms of References to Rachel by September 18<sup>th</sup> 2020.

#### 7. Annual Statement

Rachel presented the draft RHSCG Annual Statement. Rachel explained to the group this is an annual statement that outlines the work plan of the RHSCG that must be submitted to Welsh Government. Usually the calendar year would run from April to April, however due to Covid-19 the work plan will

cover from September to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. Rachel explained Welsh Government see regional working as those four key bullet points mentioned earlier in the meeting, being:

- Development of specialist services for which there is not a critical mass locally
- Development of regional services where justified by economies of scale
- Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration
- Collaboration with other public services.

Rachel explained our work plan will be sectioned under each of these headings as well as work bought forward from the former RCC work plan.

#### Work carried across from RCC

- Regional Homelessness Strategy
  - Rachel explained the Regional Homelessness Strategy for North Wales was adopted by the former RCC and once this group meet on the 24<sup>th</sup> September to confirm their work plan this will report to the RSHCG.
- Online service user feedback questionnaire
  - Agreed the online questionnaire developed by the RCC is to remain online. This is a key mechanism to get feedback from service users and the analysis to date has been powerful.
- Our People's Stories
  - Another former RCC product, a document updated annually to present cost saving case studies from each local authority. Agreed for this to continue.
  - Cost benefit analysis case studies – was discussed at today's meeting that we need to have a formula for doing this going forward.

It was also agreed that we need to promote the Housing Support Grant and get our name as the Regional Group for housing support out there. A North Wales RHSCG website is to be scoped further.

This website will hold information such as each LA's contact details, contact details for making referrals, the Pathways / Gateways, a place to host regional documents, and minutes. Was discussed it could be developed to be a place for the Private Rented Sector to refer to for information, having the link to Rent Smart Wales. Street Link information on the website. Rachel will present a draft plan for a website at the next meeting. (

#### Work Plan actions under each key heading for regional working:

- **Development of specialist services for which there is not a critical mass locally**
  - Domestic Abuse Refuge (substance misuse / mental health)
    - A specialist refuge for dual diagnosis
    - Elwen Roberts VAWADSV and Diane Jones PCC agreed to be the lead for this action.
  - MAPPA and RSO cases
    - A specialist key group for these referrals
    - Debbie Williams and Shirley Jones agreed to be the lead for this action.
  - Private Rented Sector
    - This was picked up by Rachel as a common theme in each Phase 2 Plan around improving communication, information and where Landlords can turn to.
    - Discussed this could be picked up with the work of the RHSCG website
  - MMC Units
    - Within the Phase 2 Plans 4 out of the 6 Local Authorities are pursuing MMC

- Rachel to arrange a group for this task
- Sam Parry agreed to lead on this priority area.
- **Development of regional services where justified by economies of scale**
  - Data Analysis – what is the future demand?
    - Is there anything we can do research and data wise to try and better understand the changes in accommodation and support needs as a result of Covid.
    - Homeless Link – Rachel to look at this
- **Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration**
  - NW Assertive Outreach Project
    - Each local authority within their Phase 2 Plans have contributed around 9K to an additional Mental Health Officer for the Outreach Project that will work directly with their authority 2.5 days a week.
    - Paul Firth and Ben Carter are the leads for this action
  - VAWDASV
    - Former RCC contributed to a regional contribution for a Regional IDVA service.
      - If LA's aren't intending on contributing to this in next financial year to let Debbie Lambe know.
- **Collaboration with other public services**
  - NW Recovery Coordination Group
    - Covered in Item 8 in Minutes
  - Regional Partnership Board RPB
    - Covered in item 9
  - Closer working with Health
    - Rachel asked for further clarity on this suggestion and also suggested would meet with Phil Forbes to discuss.

Next steps – Rachel will re draft the work plan following comments today. Deadline for comments 11<sup>th</sup> September. Final version needs to be with WG by September 30<sup>th</sup> 2020.

## 8. North Wales Recovery Coordination Group

Rachel explained a piece of work has been directed to the RHSCG from the Recovery Coordination Group (RCG). Judith Greenhalgh CEO Denbighshire and chair of the RCG wrote to the RCC Vice Chair and RDC in July 2020.

This was following on from a workshop the RCG held with some members of the Regional Partnership Board. At the workshop a number of service areas were identified as requiring a regional approach, and Housing / Homelessness and Prevention being one of the themes which the RHSCG has been asked to report on.

The RHSCG needs to draw together a plan outlining the recovery activities required in the short, medium and long term for Covid-19. Rachel has sent out the baseline report and this was presented at the RHSCG for discussion. Rachel presented this to the Regional Cell Leads meeting this week and this group agreed it need to be more high level. Rachel has asked for comments against the short, medium and long term and key risks for this report.

Rachel will redraft the report following comments today and resend, final comments need to be sent to Rachel by September 10<sup>th</sup> as the first report is due to the Regional Partnership Board on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Rachel also explained that the All Wales Housing Network are doing a piece of work on lessons learnt of Covid-19, Rachel will send the request for what they are after to all RHSCG members so we can use this as a North Wales document that can also feed in to the All Wales document. Rachel to send request, deadline for comments September 11<sup>th</sup>.

### 9. Regional Partnership Board Update

Debbie Lambe updated that the Chair of the RPB will be writing to the Heads of Housing group to request a nomination to be on the RPB as the Housing Local Authority Lead. It was discussed that this representative from the chosen authority should be an authority that doesn't have its own stock to make the balance fair on the RPB to represent authorities not RSL.

Sam Parry attends the Heads of Housing meeting and will ensure our concerns aired today are shared at that meeting when nominating a representative for the RPB.

This will be on the next agenda for a further update.

### 10. Any Other Business

None today.

**Date of next meeting November 6<sup>th</sup> 2020.**