

## **Regional Housing Support Collaborative Minutes**

November 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 10:00am – 11:40am

Meeting via TEAMS

### **Minutes**

#### **Attendees:**

Wendy Hughes – Chair	Jenni Griffiths – Flintshire
Sam Parry – Vice Chair	Jono Clarke – Probation
Lynne Evans – Provider Rep	Linda Hughes – Landlord rep
Abbe Harvey – Denbighshire	Lisa Pearson – Flintshire
Arwel Jones – Anglesey	Paul Firth – APB
Debbie Williams – Wrexham	Phil Forbes – BCUHB MH
Debbie Lambe – Conwy	Gwyn Roberts – Gwynedd
Diane Jones – OPCC	Shirley Jones – Wrexham
Elliw Llyr – Anglesey	Steffan L Williams – Provider Rep
Elwen Roberts – VAWDASV	Tomos Hedd – Gwynedd
Emma Wood – Provider Rep	Rachel Pierce-Jones - RDC

#### **Apologies:**

Received prior to the meeting from Martin Cooil FCC, Ann Lloyd DCC, Andy Jones PCC, Rhiannon Edwards VAWDASV, Ben Carter APB, and Dafydd Gibbard GCC.

#### **1. Welcome and Introduction and Declaration of interest:**

Welcome new chairing team: Wendy Hughes Chair, and Sam Parry Vice. Sam Parry is the local authority housing representative on the RP as well. Thanks was given to Lynne Evans for her role as vice chair for the former RCC.

#### **2. Previous Minutes and outstanding actions:**

September 4<sup>th</sup> minutes were agreed as an accurate record following one amendment to the incorrect spelling of member's organisation.

Rachel presented all the actions from the September meeting, actions still outstanding included Inductions for all members, and gaining confirmation from remaining authorities for regional commitment to the IDVA (Independent Domestic Violent Advisors) and Target Hardening fund.

### 3. Annual Statement Progress report:

An update on the progress against each priority area was circulated with the agenda. Rachel updated on each priority area. Main update from this item includes:

- Registered Sex Offender cases and MAPPA cases - A more effective specialist team to be explored.
  - This priority is currently being reviewed, it has come to light there has been an agreed North Wales reciprocal however it hasn't been widely shared and not all local authority members at the RHSCG were aware of this.
  - Now this reciprocal has been shared, Rachel is awaiting comments from each LA on the reciprocal and the content of the original priority for this. It may be that this has already been done.
- North Wales Assertive Outreach Programme
  - Paul Firth updated on the progress of this. All Coordinators are in post, so are the welfare officers and the CAIS staff. Paul will circulate to Rachel the contacts lists for each post so that we have the contact details for the key individuals across the region.
  - All the pathways are in place as well.
- Closer working with Mental Health and Homelessness
  - Rachel to arrange a meeting with Phil Forbes to discuss **(ACTION)**
- Regional Homelessness Strategy
  - Rachel was hoping to give an update today on the work plan of the Regional Homelessness Strategy however this has been delayed
  - Next meeting in January for the RHSCG Rachel to have as a separate agenda item to update on the work plan. **(ACTION)**
  - Possibly invite the researcher who has been regionally commissioned to do some of the work plan areas.
- RHSCG website
  - Rachel has gathered some initial costs
  - Rachel to do a recommendation paper to the RHSCG in the next few weeks for this. **(ACTION)**

### 4. Night Shelter alternatives and previous allocated funding for Night Shelters:

Discussion had following the message Night Shelters are no longer deemed acceptable measure of provision to accommodate rough sleepers. Prior to Covid there were 2 Night Shelters across North Wales, one in Denbighshire and one in Wrexham. Each LA updated:

- Denbighshire – Still using the night Shelter accommodation, however have had to reduce the numbers and manage it differently. There are also individual flats attached which Denbighshire are using differently.
- Conwy – In February prior to Covid Conwy had a pop up scheme pilot with local churches that was really successful and at that time were looking at incorporating it again next winter. However Covid hit and has not been continued. However the majority of people that used this pop up service gained emergency or temporary accommodation and have since been successful in staying in their accommodation.

- Wrexham – Night Shelter closed when the pandemic hit, and the Night Shelter will be redeveloped. Staff are currently being deployed in another project.
- Anglesey – Rely heavily on B&B and trying to move away from this, have the Bunkabins which have worked well. (Conwy have also used Cabins and have been overall successful)
- Flintshire – Did have a Night Shelter prior to Covid however this has not been used. Used the site for Cabins and purchased more for the county recently. Wallich staff offer support and is now a 24 hour provision.
- Gwynedd – Similar to Anglesey trying to move away from B&B provision. No Night Shelters in Gwynedd.

## 5. Rapid Rehousing:

This was on today's agenda as it is the new "buzz word" it is heavily being used by Welsh Government, and Cymorth Cymru recently held a webinar from Scotland's learning on their Rapid Rehousing approach. Rapid Rehousing was also a recommendation within the Homelessness Action Group.

Rapid Rehousing is essentially the approach we are all trying to take, to move people on quickly to longer term accommodation and not use B&B's and other emergency accommodation. Rachel suggested the meetings she has attended recently she is hearing a lot of authorities refer to their approach as a Rapid Rehousing approach, so today's agenda item was an opportunity for each authority to share what they are doing in relation to this Rapid Rehousing agenda: main issue for all authorities will be the lack of one bedroom provision.

- Wrexham – Internal Local Lettings agency, Wrexham HSG team have been closely working with this agency and looking at funding opportunities for this. Reconfigured HSG team to have Rapid Rehousing staff working with the local lettings agency.
  - Last week Wrexham did a media shout out to landlords and this was really successful, team overwhelmed by landlords coming forward to help.
- Gwynedd – Using private sector and private sector leasing scheme
- Anglesey – Variation on the Housing First model
- Flintshire – Phase 2 had funding for Rapid Rehousing pilot. Have two Rapid Rehousing officers and with the SARTH there was an agreement for 50% of properties to come to homelessness. This was really successful however finding now the properties are drying up. Flintshire housed 28 people through that approach.
- Denbighshire – Money from Phase 2, similar to Flintshire with the SARTH had 57 households moved on however still have 175 in B&B, and around 90 of them are single people. Denbighshire in Phase 2 have Homelessness Practitioner officers who take a whole wellbeing assessment and involve all partners necessary. Looking to adapt on this further.
- Conwy – always trying to keep people in emergency accommodation as short as possible and if not at all and straight into long term accommodation, however until the stock is available can't have an efficient rapid rehousing model. Conwy have over 100 in emergency accommodation and majority are single people.

Agreed to keep Rapid Rehousing as a standard agenda item (**ACTION**)

## 6. Planning for a spike in demand for services:

Wendy introduced this agenda item, explained the Bevan and Rowntree research has been shared with all members by email this week, and what is it the RHSCG should do to ensure we are prepared for when this spike is more than likely to happen.

Rachel explained that this is more than likely going to be a priority for the Regional Homelessness Strategy and that the RHSCG could put that recommendation forward to the Regional Homelessness Strategy that this is something we would like the researcher to look at. No objections at the meeting for this. **(ACTION)**

Paul Firth stated Potential spike in demand is also being looked at by the APB from a substance misuse/alcohol perspective. And Diane Jones commented so were OPCC with all our services especially in respect of Mental Health.

Paul Firth also commented the new north Wales Alcohol Harm Reduction strategy includes links to Domestic Violence. Potential to join up some work on this to access additional funding. LA community safety leads have more information.

Wendy also mentioned an opportunity to utilise funding from the lottery here as well. Link to the funding here: <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/helping-end-homelessness#section-1>

Was agreed for Rachel to send the link to all members and have comments by Tuesday to see what the next steps are for this available funding. **(ACTION)**

## 7. Housing Support Grant Spend Plan:

Rachel had pulled an analysis of the Housing Support Grant spend plan for information. This paper was circulated with the agenda. Any questions or further analysis wanted on the spend plan to contact Rachel **(ACTION)**.

## 8. Redistribution:

Rachel had pulled a paper together to show the timeline for redistribution and presented the table showing what the grant will look like if the proposed funding formula is approved by the Minister. There were concerns from the RHSCG members as expected. The main points were:

- To continue to lobby this
- Cymorth Cymru offered to have North Wales paper / toolkit
- Sam Parry commented that she Chair's the Housing Leadership Cymru (Heads of Housing across Wales) and they have a meeting next week which WG officials will be attending. HSG will be on the Agenda.
- Lottery funding shouldn't be missed with vast reductions on the horizon.
- What is happening in the south was asked in the chat bar – the all wales picture for redistribution is included in the paper sent with the agenda, shows what other areas are set to gain.
- Should do a press release for this

- Agenda item for next RHSCG Sub group
- Develop a communication plan around this
  - This was a liked option and will be on the RHSCG sub group agenda for December (**ACTION**)

### **9. Recovery Coordination Group – Second Update Paper:**

Rachel presented the draft Recovery Coordination Paper to the group, and asked for comments on the key risks section, these had been collated from all Local Authority Cell Leads. No further comments were added to the key risks section other than to emphasise the staff pressures are also on the voluntary sector as well (**ACTION**).

There was also a comment raised for feedback from the RCG on this paper. (**ACTION**)

### **10. Any Other Business:**

Membership –

- Probation - Rachel stated we are awaiting Probation rep from Andy Jones, thank you Jono Clarke for attending today
- Private Rented Sector – need a member on the RHSCG from this sector. Who can we approach? Shirley stated there is a Housing Standards regional team that we could ask who could attend?
- It was suggested could we approach the National Landlords Association?
  - Rachel to continue this action outside of the meeting (**ACTION**)

Translation –

- Do we want a translator at these meetings was asked and are we happy with the papers that are translated? It was discussed that as long as the papers that go to the public domain are translated then we are complying with the Welsh Language Standards. Which we are.
  - In relation to translator at the virtual meetings, Debbie Lambe stated it needs to be via zoom and this is something we could hopefully set up. (**ACTION**)

**Date of next meeting – January 22<sup>nd</sup>**