



NORTH WALES REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE

Annual Review 2018-19



SUBMITTED TO WELSH GOVERNMENT JULY 31ST 2019

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Chair's Foreword

It has been a pleasure to take on the role of chairing the North Wales RCC this year. I am proud of the commitment and passion members have shown for the programme, and how the RCC has embraced new ideas and challenges.

This report demonstrates the continuing progress being made in North Wales and it is pleasing to see that individual members feel the group has been effective. It is clear that the partnership between Supporting People and other programmes is strengthening and the contribution of Supporting People to reducing demand on statutory services is being recognised. This will be important as we face the change introduced by the transition of Supporting People to the Housing Support Grant.

The views of our service users continue to be important in shaping our services. The introduction of the on-line questionnaire provides a continuous opportunity for service users to tell us how we are doing, what a difference we make to their lives, and how we can do even more to improve services.

The RCC has given a warm welcome to Homelessness representatives invited to join the RCC in preparation the Housing Support Grant, and members have taken an active role in consultation events to shape the arrangements for implementing the new grant. The regional commissioning for domestic abuse services and prison leavers is now coming to fruition enabling more consistent services to be available across North Wales.

Over the coming year we must build upon our work and focus on introducing the new governance put forward for the Housing Support Grant. We must also continue to demonstrate how the grant transforms lives, maintains people's independence, and prevents homelessness. The case studies included highlight the important role services make to people's lives.

I hope the RCC can continue to play an important role providing a good example of regional commissioning and governance. It is important that the message about the value of services also highlights the risk any reduction in funding to services will have in terms of homelessness and the Tackling Poverty agenda.

I would like to thank members for their continued support and I look forward to continuing to work with them on the important projects that have been started in what I expect will be another challenging year.

Enid Roberts

Assistant Director Customers and Communities, Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd

Chair of the North Wales Regional Collaborative Committee

Timeline of the Housing Support Grant

IN 2018-19 a new grant arrangement was tested with 7 local authorities called the 'Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder'

Pathfinders had 100% flexibility across 10 funding programmes (with a caveat for Supporting People being protected till 2019-20)

The ten funding programmes nicknamed the 'Super Grant' were:

1. **Supporting People**
2. Flying Start
3. Families First
4. Legacy Fund
5. Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People
6. Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)
7. **Homelessness Prevention**
8. **Rent Smart Wales Enforcement**
9. St David's Day Fund
10. Communities for Work Plus

Ministerial Announcement on October 3rd 2018, two separate grants from April 2019:

- Children and Communities Grant
- Housing Support Grant

The Housing Support Grant includes the 3 highlighted programmes; Supporting People, Homeless Prevention, and Rent Smart Wales.

The remaining 7 became the Children and Communities Grant.

- December 2018 First meeting for the WG Housing Support Grant Steering Group.
- February 2019 North Wales Engagement Event
- June 2019 All Wales Engagement Event
- Draft guidance due autumn 2019.

Introduction

This review of the Regional Collaborative Committee (RCC) covers the period from March 2018 to April 2019. During this time the RCC has continued to meet on a quarterly basis and the words "Funding Flexibilities / Super Grants / Pathfinders" have been at the forefront of these meetings.

In 2018, Welsh Government proposed to accumulate ten grants together, which at that time was known as the "Super Grant" and this grant included the listed ten early intervention and prevention grants (to the left), with the focal outcome of this grant being that local authorities will be able to deliver in a more collaborative and integrated way with ultimately more flexibility to deliver services without grant mechanisms being a hindrance.

In addition to the 'Super Grant' we also had the Pathfinders, Conwy were the only Pathfinder in North Wales. Conwy presented regular updates at the RCC and have recruited a Funding Flexibilities Manager for this area.

October 2018 the Minister announced a two grant approach that Supporting People, Homeless Prevention and Rent Smart Wales funding will become one grant; the Housing Support Grant (HSG), with the remaining seven grants becoming the Children and Communities Grant.

The RCC continues to be dedicated to the Housing Support Grant evolution and Homelessness leads have been co-opted on to the RCC to ensure we are delivering on our priorities with all key partners under the HSG.

During the past year, Welsh Government have announced that the Redistribution will be consulted on. This has been a worrying announcement for North Wales. Applying redistribution means that North Wales is very likely to have its funding reduced which would destabilise services, impact on vulnerable households, and inevitably, cuts to frontline services will occur.

There would be a rise in unemployment across North Wales and a cumulative risk where a provider has several schemes across authorities in the region. For example, one Provider has detailed; should they lose their Supporting People funding, the redundancy costs associated with decommissioning the service would be over £98K with the loss of 13 jobs. This is for just one provider.

The RCC has been very committed to this agenda, the RCC has written to Karl Thomas leading on this work in Welsh

Government. The RCC has outlined their concerns and the detrimental effect this will have on Supporting People services in North Wales.

Given the past twelve months and the changes coming to the RCC under the new grant, the RCC has done its best to continue to strategically inform the region on the delivery of the Supporting People programme and regionally work together. In the past year we have strengthened our links with the Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Board and have jointly commissioned a regional Independent Domestic Violence Advisor's service and regionally part funded the Target Hardening with this Board, which is set to commence in autumn 2019. Our RCC continues to seek opportunities for regional working with the latest push to work closely with the actions set out in the Regional Homelessness Strategy and the North Wales group originally leading on this. Now that Homelessness leads are on the RCC membership it has been discussed that the Regional Homelessness Strategy is best placed at the RCC for reporting.

Our Regional Strategic Plan for 2017-20 has seen some excellent outcomes for North Wales particularly with the recruitment of three Prison Resettlement Officers, which was an outcome from the research the RCC commissioned in 2016 to see how our provision for prison leavers could be improved.

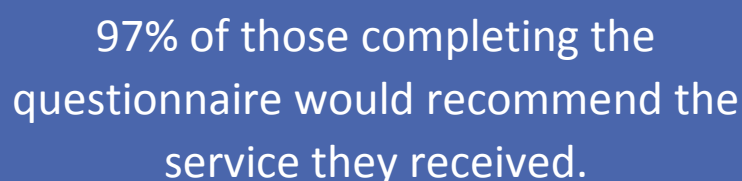
The RCC now has its own Online Questionnaire for service users receiving a Supporting People service to give feedback and the analysis of the responses to date powerfully demonstrates the importance of the Supporting People programme and the positive impact the programme has on people's lives.

For 2019-20 the RCC will continue to deliver its priorities outlined within its plan and once the RCC has more detailed information regarding the consultation of the Housing Support Grant; such; that the guidance is set to propose that the RCC becomes a sub group of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB). The RCC can focus on ensuring links are made with the RPB and other regional partners to ensure effective delivery of the HSG Grant.

RCC Case Study

Service User Involvement

In 2018 the RCC sub group worked on developing a North Wales Online Questionnaire for service users to complete who are receiving or have received a Supporting People service. This was based off the best practice from Anglesey's online questionnaire. The questionnaire went live in December 2018 and in the first month 140 people completed the questionnaire to give their feedback on the service they had received.



97% of those completing the questionnaire would recommend the service they received.

This task was directed from the RCC to ensure service user voices were being heard. The first analysis covering December 2018 demonstrated the need to include the question "Who is there Provider" as

so many people completing the form were using the “any other comments” space to name the service and support worker(s) to express their gratitude to them. This has also meant that by including Provider name any negative feedback can be passed on to the relevant Local Authorities to act upon the information, but more importantly best practice can be shared across North Wales and back to the Provider. It is pleasing to report that the comments to date have been very heart-warming to read.

The Questionnaire continues to be live and hosted by Conwy County Borough Council. The Regional Development Coordinator monitors the responses and produces the analysis for the RCC. The analysis has been positive and continues to be used to promote and demonstrate the work that Supporting People is achieving across North Wales.

Part of the Supporting People Programme Grant Guidance is for each RCC to have a service user involvement framework, we asked “Should the RCC hold a service user event?” to gauge what interest there would be for this. As we had expected, the majority have stated they would not be interested and gave reasons we would have anticipated such as feeling anxious to give feedback in a large setting. However around 30% were interested in attending an event. The Provider Representatives on the RCC have agreed to hold focus groups to capture further feedback on the service they have received, and the RCC will continue to monitor the response rate to this question.

We asked ‘where would you be if it wasn’t for this service’. And they said:

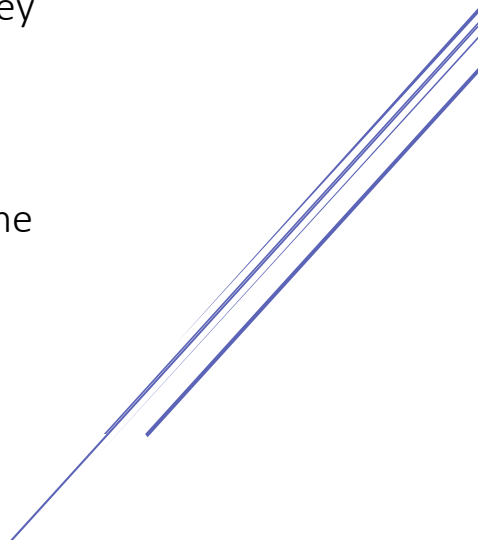
15 people out of the 102 that gave an answer to this question said they would be **dead**,

8 said they would be in **prison**,

39 said they would still be on the streets or homeless,

10 would still be sofa surfing,

And **4** would still be in a **B&B**.



It is these figures and bold statements which have meant this piece of work to be the most “stand out” the RCC has done as the analysis speaks for itself and the impact the programme has.

The RCC has asked that the analysis be shared with the Minister as an appendix to the Redistribution paper the RCC sent. As previously detailed if the Redistribution of the grant goes ahead, North Wales will be forced to close some of their services, and the domino effect this will have on other services is going to be detrimental. The following page outlines the answers that were repeatedly given when asked where would you be without this service, again evidencing the impact and good work from the providers in North Wales.

"Where would you be without this service?"

"Back on the street or back in jail or dead"	"Cold and Lonely"	"Drinking heavily and isolating myself"	"Homeless"
"In addiction, or dead"	"I had no accommodation, or a home, just a hotel room"	"I don't know I was at breaking point at home"	"I would be homeless and still accepting the abuse in my previous relationship"
"I would be homeless, destitute and probably dead"	"I would be sleeping on people's sofas and not feeling safe or supported"	"I'd be taking drugs and drinking"	"I would have been killed by my ex-partner or would be living a sad life and living a domestic violent life"
"I would still be estranged from my family and probably homeless and if not, then dead"	"I'd still be in a B&B"	"I'd have bad mental health and unable to continue with my education"	"I'd be in a Mental Hospital"
"I'd be in the gutter or in the graveyard"	"I'd probably be in more debt and at risk of eviction"	"Still in a tent"	"I would have lost my home and not wanted to carry on"
"After a mental breakdown and move to a new area on health grounds... at worse dead at best homeless"	"All alone and struggling"	"I'd be at home but very unhappy"	"I'd be dead"
"In prison"	"In a deep dark hole with little hope for the future for me I had no confidence, and thinking life was not worth living"	"I would still be sofa surfing"	"Stuck in a depressed circle"

The RCC will continue with the online questionnaire, as though it is still in its infancy, the analysis it is producing is influential for promoting the work of Supporting People.

Case Study 2

Regional Working directed by the RCC

Caroline Humphreys and Tamsin Stirling were commissioned by the North Wales Supporting People Regional Collaborative Committee to undertake research into the support services provided to people leaving prison to the six local authorities that make up North Wales. The specification for the research directed by the RCC identified the following areas for investigation:

- **The provision and nature of the support services accessed by people leaving prison, any duplication and gaps in provision and effectiveness of services**
- **Numbers of people leaving prison accessing support services and numbers of people leaving prison on licence and to which local authorities**
- **The experience and opinions of service users**
- **Information sharing procedures when a person leaves prison**
- **The impact of the withdrawal of transitional funding, including on Prison Resettlement Officer posts within local authorities and how these might be funded in future**
- **Good practice and innovative models of support services to people leaving prison from across the UK**
- **Consider how support services within North Wales might be developed in the future**

In the summer of 2017 the final report was presented to the RCC. Throughout 2018 the RCC sub group and the RCC focused on the recommendations outlined within the report, and focused on the Prison Resettlement Officers.

At that time in 2017, Gwynedd and Anglesey each had a Prison Resettlement Officer and Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham shared a Prison Resettlement Officer. The research report outlined there is a clear logic for these roles as they have detailed knowledge about the range of housing and support options available which staff within the other organisations won't necessarily have and relationships with landlords and providers. The local authority resettlement posts therefore play a vital role in ensuring this knowledge is taken account of and can also provide a bridge between prison and the accommodation that is secured, whether this is temporary or permanent.

The post holders can ensure that people in prison pre-release get information about housing options specific to them, (i.e. given their particular support needs, level of risk they present, where they would like or not like to live etc). This requires that they can communicate directly with people in prison within the resettlement period, once a referral is received from the Offender Manager in the Community.

Following this piece of work Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham went on to recruit a Prison Resettlement Officer. The Anglesey resettlement post was acknowledged by the North Wales local authorities and a number of external agencies as being effective. In January 2019 all local authorities had appointed a Prison Resettlement Officer, Though not all are Supporting People funded and some

are based in the Housing Option team, others within Supporting People team's, this piece of work showed the willing and commitment from each authority to recruit this position.

The RCC has recently invited all Prison Resettlement Officers to the next sub group to re-address the remaining recommendations within the report and to discuss directly with the officers doing the work on the ground. The RCC has also made links with the National Probation Service Accommodation Pathway Coordinator for North Wales who will be joining us at this meeting as well as the continued commitment from the Community Rehabilitation Company RCC Rep.

Authorities have detailed the impact this position has had:

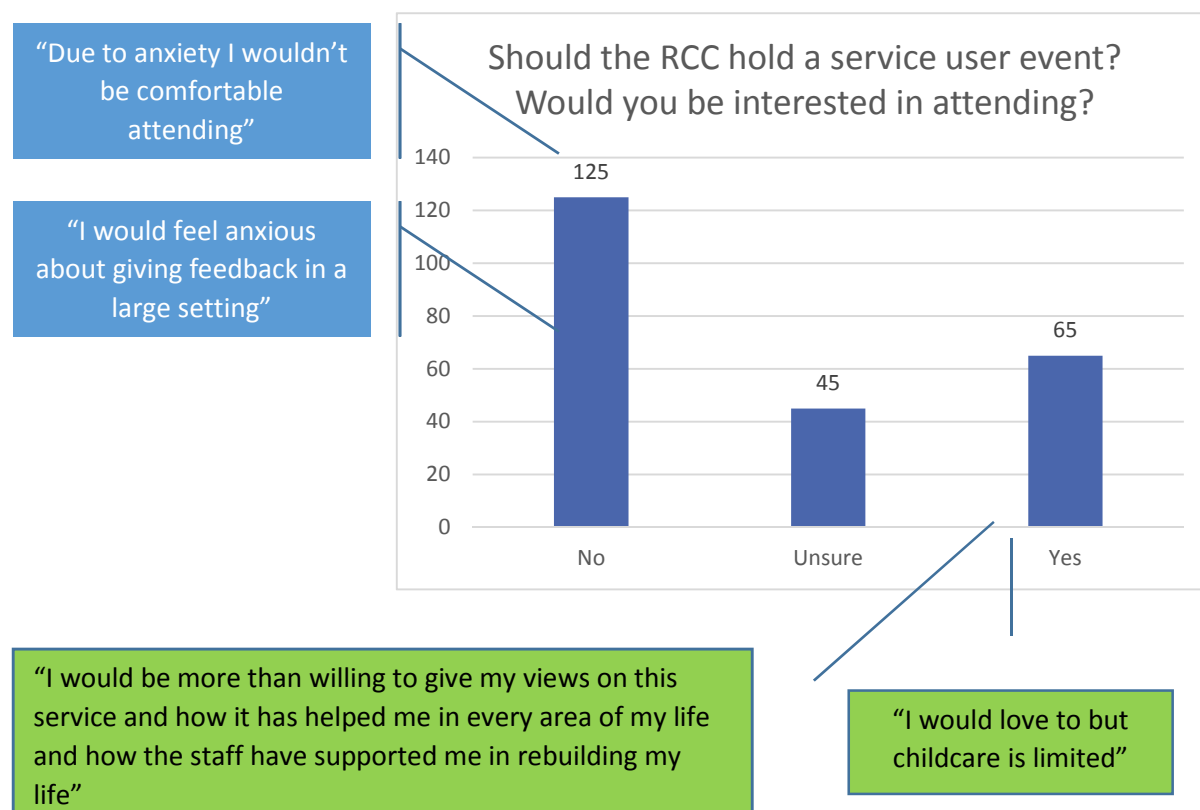
- Reduction in demand on B&B and rough sleeping
- Homeless and Housing applications to Housing Options received.
- Avoid stress and anxiety prior to release as they will be aware of where they are going
- Better and more positive working relationship with client
- Client more likely to re-build relationships with families and children when accommodation is provided.
- Less stressful due to having Personal Housing Plan and being fully informed of Local Authority duties before release.
- Not having to relate their history over and over again, which is important when they have suffered a trauma.

How have people who access services been involved and shaped decisions?

What changes have resulted from their involvement and how has this been fed back to them?

The RCC has introduced the North Wales online questionnaire for service users to give feedback on the service they have received. This online questionnaire is being imitative off the good practice in Anglesey, Anglesey has an online questionnaire for service users to complete which informs commissioning decisions and allows service users to say what they like, do not like about the service they have received.

The RCC has done an analysis of the first quarter and the responses have been extremely positive. The RCC continues to have the questionnaire up online and will do a further analysis in September 2019. As previously mentioned Providers on the RCC have agreed to run focus groups with service users to gain further feedback particularly following where the RCC has asked the question "should the RCC hold a service user event? Would you be interested in attending?"



Local Authorities continue to update on service user involvement at the RCC and as per the following continue to include services users in shaping decisions.

Anglesey have a designated Service User sit who sits on their Tender Evaluation Panels, which in 2017/18 was used for evaluating the client groups Vulnerable Young People Service and Single People with Support Needs aged 25-54.

Gwynedd continue to interview service users and their feedback has continued to influence and change services in Gwynedd. Minor changes with big impacts has included improved internet access to a shared housing project, ‘key fob’ style entry to another shared housing project, and Freephone numbers for out of hour’s services. Service users in Gwynedd have also produced the Christmas newsletter for Gwynedd, and new handbooks and Move-On packs have been produced for projects.

Conwy continue to use data from the Outcomes, Pathway and Performance Monitoring Return forms to inform decisions on projects. Conwy continue to seek feedback from service users through the review process and review meetings. This is very similar to the processes in Wrexham, service users are involved in service planning reviews at all stages including consultation events, and face to face interviews.

Denbighshire has implemented a Lived Experience Advisory Board which meets every 4-6 weeks. This Board is closely linked to Denbighshire’s Homelessness Prevention Planning group, ensuring that people with lived experience have a strong and meaningful voice in the homelessness prevention planning process.

Denbighshire is also using this board to upskill , build confidence and ensure they are co-designing and co-producing initiatives / plans that Denbighshire Homeless Prevention are focusing on.

Flintshire continue to fund ODEL Involve who are Flintshire's service user involvement project, ODEL Involve remit includes completing service user feedback as part of all service user reviews. ODEL Involve has presented to the RCC and it has been agreed when we have a regional commissioned project to work on for ODEL Involve to be included in the process to bring in the voice of service users.

The October 2019 RCC will receive the next analysis of data from the online questionnaire.

Service Development

How have decisions been shaped by spend plan, needs analysis, outcomes and other sources of data? What changes have resulted?

Supporting People teams across North Wales make their commissioning decisions largely based on the findings of service reviews and through strategic discussions both within the local authority and with key external partners in related fields such as health, social services and the third sector. The RCC in the past twelve months have influenced a major change across North Wales ensuring each authority has a Prison Resettlement Officer. This post has vast benefits for prison leavers, Anglesey have commented:



"Prisoners have commented, that being told prior to their date of release about the homeless assessment decision has eased their anxiety of being released as they have time to digest this information and proactively look for alternative temporary or short term options If necessary. Meeting the offender before release has also been proven instrumental to engagement after release. The PRO has also worked closely with the Housing Services' Private Landlord Liaison Officer, to build a strong relationship with local landlords and is therefore up to date with current vacancies. Offenders often find it difficult to access and keep suitable accommodation due to offending history, licence restrictions and behaviour. We currently have several landlords who will now consider offenders for their accommodation knowing that the PRO is providing additional support".

Anglesey Supporting People Lead Officer



There was no new data looked at by the RCC during the past 12 months, as the RCC were only expected to update on the priority areas of the Regional Strategic Plan for 2019, mainly due to the changes in the grant now being under the HSG and awaiting the new guidance for regional working from Welsh Government.. **Nonetheless there has still been work commissioned**, priorities completed such as the Prison Resettlement Officers, regionally commissioned IDVA service and Target Hardening funding with the VAWDASV Board (set to commence Autumn 2019) and the regional commitment from each authority for providers to be ensuring service users are aware of the Online Questionnaire to give feedback. Local authorities have continued to ensure decisions are shaped by spend plan, outcomes and other sources of data.

In Anglesey, all services are strategically commissioned via a needs led approach. Anglesey have seen a significant shift over the past year, from a service which often supplemented care provision by promoting independent living across a range of long term services such as learning disabilities and older people, this has resulted in a change in the priorities. The priorities where emphasis is clear placed first and foremost upon homeless prevention, Anglesey have seen the following being developed:

Housing First provision for those with mental health needs or present as street homeless	Two hostels for young people aged 16-24 with complex needs	Ongoing floating support service for people who remain vulnerable past two years of continued housing related support
Outreach support for up to 40 people who present to housing options where there is a duty to assist	An older people service which now allows people to receive short term periods of support to prevent homelessness or admission to more institutional settings.	The SPOA - Supporting People Single Point of Access has assisted in reducing gaps in both service and accommodation needs.

In Gwynedd, commissioning decisions have continued to be shaped and informed using a combination of performance monitoring returns, annual and strategic reviews which has led to the decision to expand the complex needs project in South Gwynedd. Has also led to remodelling of services to meet the changing needs of young people and the decision to extend some short term projects for a further year.

Denbighshire have continued to look at data collected by the Homeless Prevention Pathway with regard to referrals for housing related support. Denbighshire have prioritised referrals for service users in emergency and temporary accommodation so they are supported to more appropriate accommodation as soon as possible.

Denbighshire have also embraced the Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) approach. The training Cymorth Cymru delivered to North Wales in the winter in 2018 was greatly received and well attended by authorities and providers. Denbighshire have set up regular multi-agency, meetings for supported housing providers who have moved to this approach to ensure citizens are benefiting from this style.

In Wrexham, to facilitate provision of accommodation and support in response to emergencies such as extreme weather, a clause is now included in the service specification of all new Supporting People contracts requiring the Provider to work with the Council and other agencies to meet the needs of those affected. One of Wrexham's providers in consultation with the Supporting People team has recently reconfigured part of their service to provide dedicated hostel accommodation for prison leavers and homeless couples, and an emergency bed for vulnerable adults, all in response to identified local need.

What Regional and Sub regional (for RCCs with more than 2 local authorities) work is commissioned and how have services improved since the last Annual Review Report?

At the RCC, Outcomes monitoring continues to be undertaken by Conwy County Borough Council on behalf of all six authorities. Conwy County Borough Council as of 2018 now host the North Wales Online Questionnaire for service users receiving or received a Supporting People service. The RCC has worked with the VAWDASV Board to jointly commission the regional IDVA and Target Hardening, tendering for the regional service has commenced and hopefully the regional service will be in place by April 2019

At the RCC sub group, recommendations have been made to commission a full cost benefit analysis of the Supporting People programme on a regional basis, this is yet to be formally tendered.

Local authorities that have joint contracts include:

- Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy have a joint contract for Night Stop / Supported Lodgings
- Conwy and Denbighshire continue to jointly commission the project 'Doorstop'
- Denbighshire and Flintshire continue to jointly commission Keyring floating support
- Denbighshire and Flintshire continue to jointly commission Local Solutions Lodgings.
- Flintshire and Wrexham continue to jointly commission Asterhope Domestic Abuse Floating Support project.

The RCC also has regular updates from Conwy and Denbighshire's joint pilot project for Housing First. This is a standing agenda item at the RCC.

Conwy and Denbighshire Housing First Project

Conwy County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council jointly commissioned Imogen Blood and Associates (IBA), using Welsh Government Transitional Homelessness Prevention Grant funding, to inform and begin to develop an integrated Housing First Project across their joint regions. A feasibility study was developed to inform on topics such as how cost effective Housing First would be for Denbighshire and Conwy.

During 2018, a project board was set up with key partners to aid delivery and provide a governance structure to the project. The board meet on a quarterly basis for an update on current delivery and project milestones.

Recruitment of the Housing First Team Manager has taken place along with a team of support staff. Denbighshire and Conwy aim to have the whole team in place during July 2019 and will be ready to work with participants in the summer of 2019.

Denbighshire and Conwy have taken a measured approach to the setting up of this project. This has meant the commissioning of the feasibility study and using different recruitment methods. Conwy's and Denbighshire model is seen as best practice and have been asked to take part in a presentation at the Housing First conference in Cardiff in July 2019.

The RCC will continue to receive updates.

How can you demonstrate a more early intervention and preventative approach to homelessness is being delivered? How is this being addressed on a regional basis?

The proposals within the RCC people leaving prison research will ensure that the Supporting People provision is configured to meet the requirements of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and early intervention will prevent the need to use temporary accommodation for those homeless on release. This review has previously outlined the benefits of the Prison Resettlement Officer (PRO) posts and after the September RCC sub group meeting with the PRO's we can see what statistics can be gathered to demonstrate the preventative agenda.

The majority of the local authorities across North Wales have a pathway in place for at risk or potentially homeless, or street homeless. The pathways ensure that service users receive the earliest possible intervention, to a range of directed targeted support. Anglesey's pathway has outreach intervention attached which includes pre-tenancy work where appropriate. This has seen a considerable improvement in people in gaining quicker access to housing benefits, improved tenant relationships with the landlord and has also mitigated the risk of landlords evicting vulnerable individuals and families due to non-payment of rent.

In Denbighshire, the restructure of the housing teams which introduced the newly merged Homelessness Prevention Team, this team continues to work towards prevention rather than crisis. New posts in Denbighshire have been extended till 2020 including the Homeless Triage Officer and

the Homeless Prevention Assistants who are responsible for carrying out prevention tasks. These posts have proved valuable to the team in reducing HPO caseloads.

Denbighshire have also changed their drop in times to ensure a preventive approach is taken. Drop in times were changed in the Homeless Prevention Team to ensure citizens not 'homeless tonight' were booked in for appointments with the Triage Officer to ensure more planned work. People who are 'homeless tonight' are seen between the hours of 1pm and 4pm every weekday by the Triage Officer and then a Homeless Prevention Officer.

Denbighshire's funding for the homelessness prevention community navigator, whose role is to focus on early intervention in relation to Universal Credit issues has been extended. Between April and December 2018 - 683 referrals were received.

Denbighshire Young Person Positive Pathway has been extended till 2020 and continues to work closely with homeless prevention officers and the prevention pathway. In Conwy the Young Persons Homeless Prevention Officer has prevented young people going into emergency accommodation and helped the young person to remain in their accommodation or move to more appropriate accommodation.

Flintshire' Housing Intervention Team has been developed to prevent the escalation of rent arrears resulting in possession and eviction procedures. This is a pilot project to evaluate if this early intervention can reduce / prevent possessions and evictions.

Flintshire continue to part fund with CAB the Flintshire Local Advice Gateway (FLAG) which accepts referrals from a wide range of organisations both statutory and non-statutory. The main enquiry areas covered are housing, welfare benefits and debt. Flintshire have also commissioned an Outreach Worker as a pilot project to link in with the emergency bed provision.

Like Denbighshire, Wrexham are undergoing a restructure, which will bring together Housing Options and Housing Allocations team under the management of the Housing Support and Local Lettings lead. The team will continue to work closely together on initiatives to prevent homelessness, and reduced repeat homelessness by enabling people to sustain their accommodation once housed.

The inclusion of an Allocations team within Wrexham's Housing Options will help to ensure that people are rehoused appropriately, preventing future homelessness due to tenancy failure.

The RCC will continue to work towards demonstrating a more early intervention and preventative approach through the development of the Housing Support Grant and the priorities outlined in the Regional Strategic Plan.

What links does the RCC have with Social Services and Health Services in the region? Have there been any joint service commissioning or pooled resources? If so, can you give details of the project(s).

During the evolution of the Housing Support Grant and the engagement events that the RCC has attended, the draft proposal for regional working detailed the RCC will become a sub group of the Regional Partnership Board and inform the Housing Reps on the Regional Partnership Board. In

September 2018 the Chair of the RCC attended the Regional Partnership Board' Collaboration Team meeting and presented to the audience what Supporting People is, who the RCC is and the RCC's agenda. The update of the Regional Strategic Plan was also later shared with the Regional Partnership Board.

The RCC now has a Public Health, Health and a Mental Health rep. The Regional Development Coordinator attends the BCUHB LITs across North Wales. These are the Local Information Teams led by Health. The Regional Development Coordinator is currently working with the Mental Health rep to map Mental Health provision across North Wales for the LITs agenda.

At local authority level, planning groups across the region will include a representative from Health and Social Services. Health and Public Health and a Mental Health co-opted representative are also represented on our RCC.

Anglesey have pooled resources for Learning Disabilities and Mental Health. The peripatetic floating support service for older people, provides a targeted delivery for circa 180 people aged 55 and above. This service on Anglesey has a close working relationship with Adult Social Care. Anglesey has developed in conjunction with health and social care partners a housing pathway for people with mental health needs.

Anglesey have also taken steps to remodel the provision of domestic abuse in conjunction with partners with Children, Adult Services, Health, North Wales Police and Community Safety Partnerships.

Gwynedd continue to have a joint contract with adult services for Learning Disabilities. Gwynedd's Complex Needs project that has been extended was developed with Health, Social Services and Homelessness. The contract was awarded to an external organisation Gorwel and Gorwel will work closely with the Homelessness Team and the Mental Health Team at Ysbyty Gwynedd. The project is now being rolled out to the South of Gwynedd.

Joint tendering also takes place in Gwynedd between Supporting People and Adult Services for the provision of domestic abuse services. Conwy continue to jointly fund projects for clients with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Young People with social services.

Flintshire fund a support worker within the Young Integrated Service team with Children Social Services who works with 16/17 year olds. Wrexham contribute funding to Adult Social Care Extra Care Scheme for housing related support elements. The Gateway officer for Wrexham attends Extra Care allocations panel meetings to ensure that new tenants support needs are met as they move in.

The RCC continues to monitor its membership, Mental Health was a co-opted representative onto the RCC and this action has proven instrumental to the RCC. The Mental Health rep attends each authorities Planning Groups and continues to keep the RCC up to date on any new initiatives that the BCUHB is working on that links with the agenda of HSG and the RCC.

What links have been made with other regional strategic/planning groups and what joint commissioning work has been undertaken with other key partners/programmes?

The RCC has developed a good working relationship with the Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Board. The Chair of the RCC attends this board, and the Regional Domestic Abuse Coordinator attends the RCC sub group.

The Regional Strategic Plan priority areas is a standing agenda item on both RCC and RCC Sub group and the updates from the VAWDASV are shared at both meetings. Through the links we have developed with the VAWDASV Board joint commissioning of the Regional IDVA service which will be in place by April 2020. A regional contribution to the current IDVA services and Target Hardening were agreed for 2019-20. .

The Regional Partnership Board continues to have our Regional Strategic Plan presented to them annually. Following on from the draft guidance proposals presented at the Housing Support Grant engagement event in June 2019 introducing the proposal for the RCC to become a sub group of the Regional Partnership Board with the function to support the Housing reps on the Regional Partnership Board. The chair of the RCC has been in contact with the housing reps for their feedback on this proposal and this has also been discussed at the July 2019 RCC with all members for commenting. All comments received will feed into the Welsh Government consultation on the guidance set to be out end of August 2019.

Links have also been made with other key partners on the RCC. As previously detailed all Prison Resettlement Officers have now been recruited and are in post. This action the RCC completed has been shared at multi-agency meetings / forums and the RCC Sub group has invited the National Probation Pathway officer to the next RCC sub group to ensure all key partners are involved whilst discussing people leaving prison and the service they receive once released. Our Community Rehabilitation Company representative on the RCC will also be attending this meeting.

As previously mentioned, BCUHB have set up three LITs (Local Implementation Teams) across North Wales, East, West and Central LIT. The LITs are led by Health and have multi-agency membership including third sector, police, fire, social services and housing. The Regional Development Coordinator also attends each LIT to update to and back to the RCC and sub group.

The Regional Development Coordinator has met with the coordinators of each of the Public Service Boards as well as with the coordinators of VAWDASV and Regional Partnership Boards. These meetings and the exchange and discussion of Regional Strategic Plans and work plans of each board has allowed for both boards to identify overlaps in priorities and more importantly raise the agenda of the RCC and show other boards across North Wales what we have been working on.

The introduction of the Housing Support Grant (HSG) and the Children's and Communities Grant (CCG) in 2018 has given the strong message of alignment between the two grants and local authorities have continued to work on this message. Conwy as a Pathfinder have recruited a Funding Flexibilities Manager. In Conwy a delivery group has been set up to look at the spend across all ten grants and mapping of monitoring information from providers from the ten grants has been gathered to look at where there is possible duplication. Following on from this piece of work, Conwy have set up a Monitoring and Finance group where the mapping and financial returns will be looked

The Delivery Group will oversee the work of the Monitoring and Finance Group and report to the Funding Flexibility Board.

To conclude, it has been quite a difficult 12 months to further develop strategic relationships as the future of the RCC has not been made clear, nevertheless the RCC has continued to raise the profile of the Supporting People programme where we can. The RCC has shared papers we have developed widely across North Wales to the different strategic platforms as well as the Supporting People provider forums across the board.

The RCC has updated and shared “Our People’s Stories” in 2018. This document is used in most inductions to the RCC as it shows the benefits of the programme and the preventative agenda it holds to escalation to other services. A case study is also included from each authority. The analysis of the service user questionnaire has also been widely circulated.

All new members on the RCC continue to receive an induction, however the issue during the past 12 months has been the uncertainty to state what the future of the RCC is to new members and whilst having strategic conversations with other regional boards being unable to state whether we are required to submit a regional plan next year has also been an obstruction to working together on future priorities.

Housing Support Grant

How has the RCC informed/participated in the stakeholder engagement for the development of the Housing Support Grant?

The RCC has been pro-active in ensuring all messages received on the Housing Support Grant is shared with all members and to the wider networks and any consultations regarding the Housing Support Grant that the RCC participates in. During the past twelve months each RCC meeting has had the Housing Support Grant at the forefront of its agenda, at the September 2018 RCC, Conwy County Borough Council presented to the RCC their presentation on the work they had done to date as a Pathfinder. The Regional Development Coordinator presented a paper to the RCC on the comparisons of the guidance to further inform the RCC.

At the November 2018 RCC, Paul Webb was in attendance from Welsh Government and gave an update on the Housing Support Grant. This RCC was timely as this followed on from the Ministers two grant approach announcement in October. The upcoming Development Day for the Supporting People National Advisory Board was discussed at this RCC and the RCC have also fed into this.

The January 2019 RCC, Welsh Government were unable to attend. Nevertheless, the Regional Strategic Plan update was presented to the RCC which detailed that the RCC would be focusing on the evolution of the Housing Support Grant. At this RCC members were asked to attend the February Housing Support Grant engagement event for North Wales.

The February Engagement Event was well attended by representatives across North Wales. The Regional Development Coordinator also attended and the messages from the day were shared with members and more widely following the event.

At the March 2019 meeting, Welsh Government were in attendance, Paul Webb attended to update on the Housing Support Grant, Karl Thomas gave an update on Redistribution and Liz Cook gave an update on the Learning Disabilities agenda. Liz Cook had also attended the February RCC sub group to discuss the possibility that the Learning Disability money will go across to Social Services. The Regional Development Coordinator and the Supporting People lead officers have updated the 2014 work the RCC produced on the eligibility criteria for Learning Disabilities. This was later sent to Liz Cook.

Karl Thomas' update regarding the redistribution understandably was a worry to the RCC. The RCC arranged an additional meeting in March to focus solely on redistribution with Karl Thomas, this meeting went ahead and Karl heard first-hand our concerns for this agenda. A letter was later developed by the RCC and has gone with the advice collated by Welsh Government to the Minister.

At the March RCC, members agreed to invite Homelessness leads from each authority to ensure all under the Housing Support Grant were involved at the RCC. Currently there is no representation at the RCC to cover Rent Smart Wales Enforcement grant. The membership of the RCC will be monitored.

All Housing Support Grant Steering Group messages have been shared with all RCC members, and the Regional Development Coordinator has kept all members up to date following the Network meetings for Regional Development Coordinators.

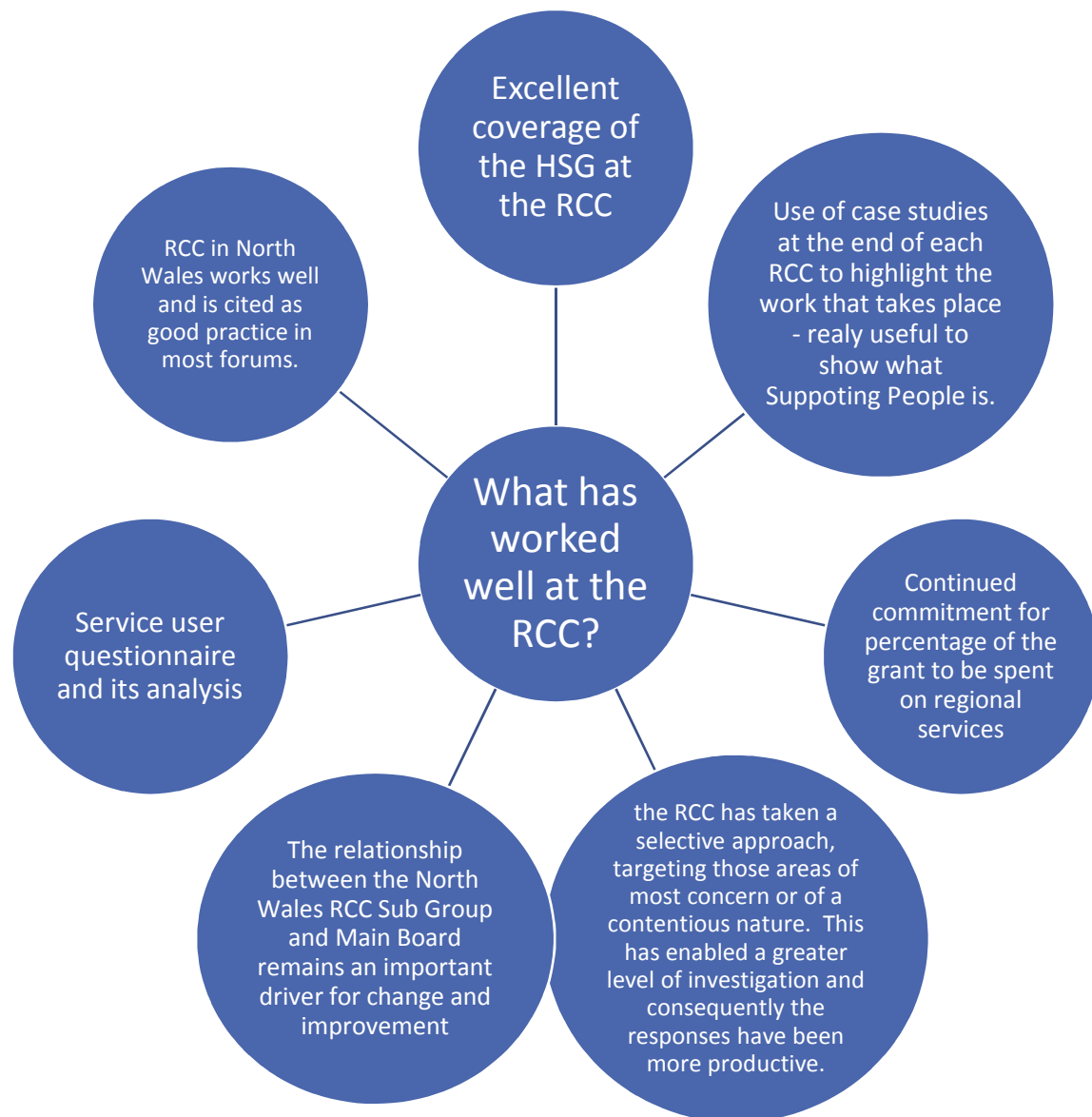
Though not in this calendar year for reporting, the RCC was also invited to the June Engagement Event in Cardiff which was attended by each authority and providers across the region, again with all messages promptly fed back to all members of the RCC.

Local authorities Supporting People teams have had and continue to have in house meetings to discuss the changes of the new grant and how to manage these changes. Local authorities are continuing to proactively work together to align Housing Support Grant funding streams and plan for future commissioning.

To summarise, all messages regarding the Housing Support Grant have been quickly shared with all RCC members. Other meetings which the Regional Development Coordinator has attended where the Housing Support Grant has been discussed these discussions have been summarised and shared to all members. RCC members been forthcoming to share any information they have received / read regarding the Housing Support Grant developments.

RCC Members Appraisal/Feedback

What did the North Wales RCC members have to say about the RCC?



What needs to be progressed over the coming year?

- How the RCC responds to the redistribution agenda from Welsh Government
- Identify linkages / opportunities for more regional / sub regional joint working.
- Link with and work with the North Wales Regional Homelessness Strategy.
- Clarity on RCC's ask of Mental Health.
- The RCC needs to redefine its purpose as the main strategic board which oversees and scrutinises performance and expenditure, following the introduction of the Housing Support Grant.
- More specific work around aligning the HSG element following the new guidance (when it comes).

- Specific initiatives to be reported to the RCC (e.g. Bangor homeless centre; Flintshire and Wrexham's Community Care Hub – both set to launch January 2020)
- More work on evidencing the value of Services to very vulnerable Service users
- Look at how we can ensure the Regional Provider Forum has more presence across North Wales.

The RCC to continue to demonstrate to the Minister the impact Redistribution will have if the redistribution of funds go ahead. Elected Councillors on the RCC to raise to Local AM's, All members need to be instrumental in campaigning this agenda forward.

Governance

Housekeeping of the RCC

- a. Does the RCC have an up to date Memorandum of Understanding signed by all members? **NO – pending from some new members**
- b. Do all RCC members have an up to date Declaration of Interest form? **NO – pending from some new members.**
- c. Has the RCC published its latest regional Spend Plan and Spend Plans for each local authority in the region? **YES**
- d. Has the RCC published its latest Regional Strategic Plan? **YES**
- e. Has the RCC published last year's Annual Review Report? **YES**
- f. Has the RCC published the minutes of its meetings? **YES**

What's next for the RCC?

Usually our Annual Review will conclude with a summary of what we have begun to collect from our workshops for next year's Regional Strategic Plan. However as detailed the RCC is currently awaiting the new guidance for the Housing Support Grant. This is due to be shared by Welsh Government end of August 2019. The June HSG Engagement Event has proposed that the RCC is to become a sub group of the Regional Partnership Board to inform the two housing reps on that board. We are still unaware of the future strategic workings of the RCC, unsure whether we are expected to have a Regional Strategic Plan in place, whether governance arrangements such as this review will continue etc.

However, at the last RCC meeting there was positive discussions about the RCC being the platform for the Regional Homelessness Strategy to be progressed at our meetings and there was a desire for

this to be progressed. The RCC also has its online questionnaire, so service user feedback will remain key over the next coming months.

The RCC will continue to ensure members are involved in the consultation of the HSG particularly to the area of redistribution and will continue to widely share messages across the networks in North Wales. The RCC still has its strategic priority areas set out in the 2017-20 plan to deliver on, all of which have been outlined in this review and will be continued to be driven through to 2020.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this report, please contact the Regional Development Coordinator:

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