

Document Pack



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County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

THURSDAY, 17 JANUARY 2019

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE **COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER, - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP.** AT **10.00 AM ON WEDNESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 2019** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA.

Mark James CBE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE



PLEASE RECYCLE

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YOUR COUNCIL **doitonline**
www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 MEMBERS

PLAID CYMRU GROUP – 6 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Ann Davies |
| 2. | Councillor | Handel Davies |
| 3. | Councillor | Jeanette Gilasbey |
| 4. | Councillor | Betsan Jones |
| 5. | Councillor | Gareth Thomas (Vice-Chair) |
| 6 | Councillor | Aled Vaughan Owen |

LABOUR GROUP – 4 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Deryk Cundy |
| 2. | Councillor | Sharen Davies (Chair) |
| 3. | Councillor | Shirley Matthews |
| 4. | Councillor | Louvain Roberts |

INDEPENDENT GROUP – 3 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Anthony Davies |
| 2. | Councillor | Irfon Jones |
| 3. | Councillor | Hugh Shepardson |

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.
3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).
4. UPDATE - LLANELLI LIFE SCIENCE AND WELL-BEING VILLAGE. 5 - 16
5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2018/19. 17 - 36
6. THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HOMES STANDARD PLUS (CHS+) BUSINESS PLAN 2019-2022. 37 - 104
7. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2018/19. 105 - 130
8. OUR APPROACH TO TENANT INVOLVEMENT. 131 - 142
9. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS. 143 - 144
10. FORTHCOMING ITEMS 145 - 146
11. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:
 - 11 .1 23RD NOVEMBER, 2018; 147 - 162
 - 11 .2 13TH DECEMBER, 2018. 163 - 168

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Community Scrutiny Committee 23 January 2019

LLANELLI WELLNESS AND LIFE SCIENCE POSITION STATEMENT

Purpose:

That Community Scrutiny Committee receives an update report on the Llanelli Life Science and Well-being Village in order to provide effective scrutiny and comment and ensure transparency and accountability.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- Progress of City Deal Business Case.
- The status of the reviews and the delivery of the Village project
- Assurance, through legal review, that a robust procurement process was undertaken.
- Assurance around the governance of the project.
- Termination of the Collaboration Agreement.

Reasons:

This update report is brought to the attention of Community Scrutiny to allow members to exercise their scrutiny function and provide due comment. The report aims to provide assurance on the governance of the Village Project both during the procurement process and following the signing of the Collaboration Agreement with Swansea University and Sterling Health Security Holdings Limited

Members are asked to note that a series of reviews have commenced:

- The independent review requested by Executive Board is being undertaken and is looking at the procurement process of the Village, the governance following signing of the Collaboration Agreement and the subsequent termination of this agreement. Scrutiny Committee is asked to note that the Business Case submitted to Executive Board on 3rd December may need to be revised following the outcome of this review.
- CCC have invited WAO to review the Wellness Project. WAO wanted emphasise that they are not undertaking the review because they have any concerns about the project, they are undertaking the review as a direct response to our request.
- A joint Government review of the arrangements for the delivery of the £1.3bn Swansea Bay City Deal.
- An internal review being carried out, led by Pembrokeshire County Council, on behalf of the Chair of the City Deal Joint Committee.

The above reviews are all currently in progress. Findings of these reviews will be shared once completed. In the case of this Authority independent review it is expected that findings will be reported to the Executive Board in coming weeks, following which these documents will be shared with all Members.

Scrutiny Committee is asked to note that although the Collaboration Agreement has been terminated a working relationship is required, and continues with Swansea University to ensure that the optimal benefits can be achieved. Extremely positive meetings continue to be ongoing and alternative working agreements are under development.

Project progress continues to be maintained with the aim of completing phase one of the Village in 2021.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Emlyn Dole, Leader of the Council with responsibility for Economic Development

01267 224816 / EDole@sirgar.gov.uk

Directorate: Regeneration & Policy

Name of Director:

Wendy S Walters

Report Author:

Sharon Burford

Designations:

Director of Regeneration & Policy

Project Manager, Wellness Village

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Executive Summary
Community Scrutiny
23 January 2019

LLANELLI LIFE SCIENCE AND WELLBEING VILLAGE
POSITION STATEMENT

Background / Context

The Llanelli Wellness Village (The Village) is a landmark development forming the largest single site development proposed for Carmarthenshire. In summary the Village will create:

- £199.5 million of infrastructure including research and business development facilities, a learning academy, a state of the art care home and assisted living and rehabilitation centre, a new leisure and aquatics centre with hydrotherapy pool, Wellness Hotel and outdoor leisure space
- A projected 1853 high value jobs plus community benefits defined within the procurement process
- £467 million GVA by Year 15
- A significant education, skills and training facility in partnership with Swansea University, University of Wales Trinity St David, Coleg Sir Gar and the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership
- A multidisciplinary community health and care facility linked to the health board services.

Partnership working is key to realising these project benefits, alongside Hywel Dda University Health Board a core partner throughout has been Swansea University. In November 2018, the University Vice Chancellor, Professor Richard Davies and the Dean of the School of Management, Marc Clement along with two other members of staff were suspended. The named individuals were the University representatives on the Wellness Village Collaboration Board. CCC have no further details regarding these suspensions or details regarding possible links to the Wellness Village.

Swansea Bay City Deal

The Village is one of eleven projects within the £1.3 billion Swansea Bay City Deal programme.

As required by the HM Treasury Green Book Model, a full five case business plan for the Well-Being Village has been developed for the City Deal funding. This comprises the following elements;

- **Strategic Case** – describes the status quo, case for change and expected outcomes. In doing so, it indicates the direction of travel and demonstrates project alignment with, and contribution to, key national, regional and local strategies/legislation, including the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- **Economic Case** – presents the economic rationale for developing the Life Science and Wellbeing Village, focusing on multi-sector job creation and Gross Value Added (GVA). This section also includes a detailed health outcomes appraisal and outlines how the project was determined.
- **Financial Case** - examines capital and revenue costs of the City Deal funding elements and their component parts, assumptions around space requirements and the projected occupancy and business needs over the 15 year period.
- **Commercial Case** - focuses on the competitive dialogue procurement exercise to identify development partner/s.
- **Management Case** - sets out the governance structure in place to deliver the Village.

The Joint Committee Agreement for the Swansea Bay City Deal which provides the legal framework for the Deal was unanimously approved by Full Council in July 2018. The agreement stipulates that in order to release City Deal funding for projects a full five case business plan, based on the HM Treasury Green Book Model, must be submitted to the UK and Welsh Governments for formal review and approval. This can only be done with prior approval of the lead Authority for the project, as stipulated in clause 12.3(a) of the Joint Committee Agreement.

The Full Business Case for the Village details the economic and social benefits that could be delivered through City Deal investment of £40m. This will provide capital for the Community Health Hub infrastructure which houses three critical elements of the Village namely:

1. An **Institute of Life Science** – bringing research and development expertise together with businesses specialising in innovation in clinical fields such as biomarkers and genes; patient and population health informatics; microbes and immunity; and medical devices
2. An **Joint Clinical Research Facility** - exploring innovation in broader health and wellbeing business and research and development activities
3. A **Wellbeing Skills Centre** – providing a skills, education and training facility linked to modern clinical practice and service delivery and business development activity in health and wellbeing

These three elements are targeted to be complete by September 2021.

The Business Case required a series of Critical Success Factors/ Economic Output to be determined which could be reasonably expected to be achieved through City Deal investment. These projections are based upon the most recent government guidance and specialist expert advice.

Critical Success Factors / Economic Outputs:

The Village proposes to deliver the following key economic outcomes / outputs;

- New infrastructure = £199.5m investment
- New jobs created = 1,853
- New enterprises created = 50
- Number of companies accelerated = 50
- Number of companies supported = 150
- New Intellectual Property (IP) created = 50 including patents, trademarks, registered designs and other IP
- Community groups actively participating in Village facilities = 50
- New skills development pathways for health and well-being workforce – 60
- Undergraduate places in related fields = 700 by 2021
- Postgraduate places in related fields = 400 by 2027
- Reduction in the number of young people in the adjacent Community First area, within the NEET category = 3%

In addition to the economic and social critical success factors a number of Health Outcomes Improvement & System Benefits were also identified.

Examples include;

- Reduced GP visits = 20% from the catchment area of the village
- Reduced hospital admissions = 20% from the target community facilities
- Improved rate of hospital return admissions for chronic conditions
- Improved mental health and wellbeing of local population through improved promotion, prevention and timely access to appropriate interventions
- Improved early detection and care of frail people including those with dementia
- specifically aimed at maintaining wellbeing and independence
- Encouraging and supporting people to make healthier choices and reduce the number of people who engage in risk taking behaviours.

Projections on the health economic benefits of the proposed Life Sciences & Wellness Village have a combined NPV of £54.4m over the agreed 15-year time period set by Welsh Government.

Full Business Case

On the 3rd December the Executive Board considered the Full Business Case of the Wellness Village. Executive Board determined that the 5 case Business Plan was robust and ready for submission to the UK and Welsh Government for approval and the subsequent draw down of £40m City Deal funding. Members however, and in order to provide assurance to the Authority, requested that officer's report back to Executive Board with the required reassurances that all due process and governance had been followed.

Accordingly, in December 2018 the Council asked Acuity Legal Limited to review the status of the Life Science and Wellbeing Village project. This includes a review of the public procurement process, the collaboration agreement and the Council's actions in the latter part of 2018 in relation to the collaboration agreement. This review is underway and the update will be shared with Members once the review has been considered by Exec Board.

Acuity has been asked to undertake a review of the status of the Llanelli Wellness Village Project at Delta Lakes. The review covers an outline appraisal of the key mechanisms through which the Council is protected in relation to the Project. These include its decision making process in the Public Procurement process, the terms of the Collaboration Agreement with Sterling Health Security Holdings Limited (Sterling) and Swansea University (University) and the Council's actions in the latter part of 2018 under the processes established within the Collaboration Agreement

Procurement and Collaboration Agreement

At its 3rd December meeting, Executive Board also heard that the Collaboration Agreement with Swansea University and Sterling Health Securities Holding Ltd was intended simply to try to prepare a Development Agreement to take the scheme forward. The Board were informed that a Development Agreement had not been reached. There was therefore no legally binding commitment or liability on the Council to maintain the arrangements of the Collaboration Agreement.

The Executive Board asked officers whether an alternative method to deliver this essential project could be found. Officers considered that this was entirely feasible. Executive Board therefore determined that "officers be requested to look at alternative delivery methods to ensure that this extremely important and much needed investment in Llanelli can be completed".

The County Council subsequently decided to implement clause 53 of the collaboration agreement and terminate the collaboration agreement with both Sterling Health Security Holdings Ltd and Swansea University.

The Authority has engaged an independent financial market consultant to develop a whole site business/financial plan for the Wellness Village, with a view to leveraging private sector investment. This work comprises detailed financial modelling and development appraisals of all elements to ascertain the investability of the Village.

It is concluded that, following review of the initial appraisals and potential rental income from various properties, subject to the financial structure being agreed, lot 1 (social housing, care, rehabilitation and assisted living) and lot 2 (Wellness Hub, Car Park and Life Sciences Building) would achieve a strong private sector financing commitment from a number of private sector investors. This would require an Information Memorandum to be sent to a pre-selected number of Investors outlining the project together with financial information and business plans. The aim of this would be to obtain best value for the Borrower, and best long- term Investor partner for the project. Such an exercise would take around 3 months to complete once the Information Memorandum is complete.

Summary:

In summary, it is recognised that the Wellness Village will deliver significant social, economic and environmental benefits at both a local and regional level. The importance of job creation, education/training programmes and health outcomes improvement, particularly within adjacent communities can not be underestimated. These areas are amongst the most deprived in Wales and, as indicated in public consultation, have low aspirations in respect of educational attainment and career progression. The Village is being developed with overwhelming support from the local community, whose input continues to shape the project.

The proposals are forward thinking and designed to catalyse investment and will see the region becoming a key participant within the UK life science and digital health care sectors. The Village has been identified by the Department for International Trade as a High Potential Opportunity project and will feature in a Welsh portfolio to be marketed across 108 countries. This evidences the viability and attractiveness of the Wellness Village and will further raise its profile, helping to attract inward investment.

Whilst we await the full outcome of the legal review, preliminary findings suggest that due process and governance has been fully observed throughout the procurement process and following the signing of the Collaboration Agreement A number of other reviews are expected to begin including at the Authority’s invitation, a Wales Audit Office to review project compliance, risk management and governance arrangements and management of public assets.

To maintain the project delivery plan, work continues to timescale to develop the design of phase 1 components; the Wellness Hub, Community Health Hub and primary infrastructure. Partnership working, vital to maximising the opportunities for the project, remains strong and all stakeholder partners are committed to ensuring its long-term success. To this end, the Council has taken expert legal advice on how best to retain a working relationship with Swansea University. The University are a key partner, having signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council and Health Boards in 2016, and have contributed to the ILS and education/training proposals, together with digital connectivity.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	No
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Wendy Walters

Director of Regeneration & Policy

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The report has been developed in line with a range of National and Local Strategies, these are detailed in section 5 of the report. In summary:

- A Strategic Regeneration Plan for Carmarthenshire 2015-2030 - Transformations
- Swansea Bay City Region – City Deal 2017
- The Strategy for Older People in Wales (2013-2023)
- The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- The Integrate Commissioning Strategy
- Carmarthenshire Corporate Strategy 2015 to 20120
- Carmarthenshire’s Vision for Sustainable Services for Older People for the Next Decade
- Carmarthenshire Integrated Community Strategy 2011 to 2016
- Carmarthenshire County Council Housing LIN
- Hywel Dda University Health Board’s Mission Statement and Strategic Objects
- The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

2. Legal

The infrastructure development will be carried out in line with planning guidance and associated legal requirements. Advice on the optimal arrangements for site development and operation will be provided through Carmarthenshire County Council Legal Team.

Independent legal advice has been taken throughout the procurement process, and the subsequent termination of the Collaboration Agreement. The review of the processes is similarly being undertaken by independent lawyers.

3. Finance

The basis of the City Deal funding for the 11 projects in the region, is that the funding from both Welsh Government and UK Government will be paid on equal instalments over a 15 year period.

Each of the Authorities in the City Region area will be required to undertake upfront borrowing to deliver their projects in advance of the funding being paid by the WG and the UKG.

The funding for this project (Llanelli Life Science and Well-Being Village) in total from the City Deal funds is £40m and the Authority will need to borrow part or all of these funds with the principal being repaid in full over the 15 year period. Interest accruing on this borrowing will be accommodated as part of the project cost (partly through the NNDR retention policy).

The level of borrowing will be dependent upon the draw down profile of the expenditure and the timing of other City deal projects within the region. The procedures around the management of the City Deal Funding is detailed within the Joint Agreement.

The borrowing requirement will be incorporated within the Annual Treasury Management Policy and Strategy as this and the other City deal projects develop. The effective draw down of this borrowing will then be reported through the quarterly Treasury Management monitoring reports.

To manage the funding of the project in the most effective way for the benefit of the Local Authority and the Project itself, delegated authority has been given to the Director of Corporate Services to manage the financial delivery including the borrowing draw down. This will be undertaken within the parameters laid down within the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy.

If any further funding conditions are to be imposed on the release of City Deal monies by UKG and WG these will be considered and separately reported to Executive Board / County Council (as appropriate) for approval. Likewise any further financial implications of this project including any budget implications that are not already incorporated within the County Council Revenue Budget or Capital Programme will also be separately reported back to Executive Board / County Council (as appropriate) for approval.

4. ICT

The integrated partnership working on site will be facilitated through linked ICT. Initial conversations have been held, links for both communications and performance management will be specified as service and infrastructure configuration progresses.

A Full Digital Strategy is in development and will set out how data assets and technology-focused initiatives (such as Digital Healthcare) will be maximised at the Village through utilisation of appropriate platforms and applications. As part of this process, data sharing initiatives will need to be agreed in line with legislation and policy.

ICT arrangements will be in accord with the digital strategy for the Swansea Bay City Deal programme and the deployment of digital infrastructure will, so far as is possible, complement and link to other City Deal projects,

5. Risk Management Issues

The responsibility for the development and management of the risk register including appropriate mitigations has been delegated by the Llanelli Wellness and Life Science Project Board to the Project Management Office which is managed by CCC. A detailed risk register is held and managed by the PMO. The principal risks are set out below, full risk mitigation strategies are in place to ensure that the project outcome can be achieved

- Appropriate working arrangements are not put in place to maintain dialogue with and input from Swansea University
- The series of reviews underway cause delay to the project
- The full financial envelope for the Village is not secured

In taking the Village forward, the development of the project delivery structure will be subject to legal scrutiny, minimising the Council's exposure to risk and challenge.

6. Staffing

The Wellness Village will bring about positive impacts on employment and staffing – it is projected to create 1,853 jobs by Year 15 across a range of key sectors such as health and care, leisure, tourism and hospitality/catering. Affiliated education, training and skills development programmes delivered at the Village will benefit local recruitment and retention. This will be a mixture of formal teaching and placement opportunities delivered in partnership with higher and further education providers across the region. To conclude, no adverse impacts are expected on existing staffing.

7. Physical Assets

The Llanelli Life Science and Well-Being Village will be based on Local Authority owned land at Delta Lakes, Llanelli. The £200m investment provides a 'once in a generation' opportunity to provide landmark facilities for community use and, as such, a significant enhancement of physical assets can be expected. In respect of council-owned stock, this is likely to include,

- A Wellness Hub, providing new, modern leisure facilities for the people of Carmarthenshire
- Nursing home and extra care facility in line with demographic demand
- Social and affordable housing
- Outdoor recreation and free-to-access open green space

The interconnectivity of physical assets, buildings and open space will significantly add the Council's physical assets and can help break the generational cycle of deprivation and improve the aspirations and opportunities of those within adjacent deprived wards.

The Outline Planning Application was unanimously approved at an extraordinary planning committee on Thursday 10th January, pending National Resources Wales Flood Consequences Assessment and Welsh Government approval

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COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23TH JANUARY 2019

Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2019/20

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That as part of the Budget Consultation process, the Scrutiny Committee considers the revenue and capital budgets of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and rent setting proposals for 2019/20 .This will be considered by Executive Board 04/02/19 and subsequently County Council on 20/02/2019

REASONS:

- To enable the Authority to set its Housing Revenue Account Budget and the Housing Rent levels for 2019/20.
- To formulate views for submission to the Executive Board / Council for consideration.

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: YES

Executive Board – 4th February 2019

Full Council – 20th February 2019

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr David Jenkins

<p>Directorate: Corporate Services Name of Director: Chris Moore</p>	<p>Designations: Director of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Tel No's / E Mail Addresses: 01267 224160 CMoore@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report Author: Andrea Thomas</p>	<p>Group Accountant</p>	<p>01267 228742 AndThomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
23RD JANUARY 2019**

**Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent
Setting for 2018/19**

This report has been prepared in conjunction with officers from the Communities Department and brings together the latest proposals for the Revenue and Capital Budgets for the Housing Revenue Account 2019/2022, which will be presented to the Executive Board on 4th February 2019.

The report is presented to the Community Scrutiny Committee as part of the budget consultation process and the Executive Board will consider any views expressed by this Committee when setting the Budget and Housing Rents for 2019/20.

The report has been prepared reflecting the latest proposals contained in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, which is the primary financial planning tool for delivering the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+) for the future. The proposed investment within the current business plan delivered the CHS by 2015 (to those homes where tenants agreed to have work undertaken), provides investment to maintain CHS+ and continues investment for our Affordable Housing Commitment.

The report also details how rents will increase for 2019/20:

- Appendix A provides the proposed Capital Programme for 2019/22.
- Appendix B of this report provides the proposed Revenue Account Budget for 2019/22.

The HRA budget for 2019/20 is being set to reflect:

- Interim Social Housing Rent Policy set by Welsh Government (WG)
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+)
- Affordable Homes Delivery Plan
- Removal of the HRA Borrowing Cap (recently agreed by WG)

Part of the agreement to exit the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy included LAs with retained stock were required to adopt the new Social Housing Rents Policy set by the WG. It aimed to develop a coherent and consistent rent policy framework that would apply to all social landlords, reflect local variations in affordability and housing market values, providing for a more equitable distribution of rents for social sector tenants across Wales, while at the same time ensuring the viability of individual social landlords. County Council approved the implementation of the policy on 24/02/15. This policy provided consistency for 5 years but ended in 2018/19. WG have provided an interim policy for 2019/20 while they await the results of the Affordable Housing Supply Review. This should result in the development of a new policy due for implementation in 2020/21.

The Interim WG Social Housing rents policy allows local authorities within their target rent band to increase rent by CPI only (the County Council is currently marginally within the target rent band). The increase in target rent for 2019/20 has been notified as 2.4%. The ability to progress rents for those properties below the target rent, a maximum of £2 per week increase until the target rent is reached has been removed, unless current average rent is below the target rent band.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Chris Moore

Director of Corporate Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES

FINANCE

The report details the HRA proposals to be considered by Executive Board. If the proposals are agreed the budget for the HRA will be set for 2019/20 with an expenditure level of £37.6M. The average rent will increase from £85.52 to £87.57 (2.4% or £2.05).

The proposed Capital Programme will be £30.9M for 2019/20, £30.8M for 2020/21 and £27.8M for 2021/22.

Physical Assets

The capital programme continues the works to maintain the Carmarthenshire Home Standard *Plus* and deliver the Affordable Homes programme as per the 30 year business plan.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Chris Moore

Director of Corporate Services

1. Local Member(s) - Not applicable
2. Community / Town Council – Not applicable
3. Relevant Partners - Not applicable
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Not applicable

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Social Housing Rents Policy		Financial Services, County Hall, Carmarthen
30 year Housing Business Plan		Financial Services , County Hall, Carmarthen

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23rd JANUARY 2019

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND HOUSING RENT SETTING 2019/20

- REVENUE AND CAPITAL

DIRECTOR & DESIGNATION.	DIRECTORATE	TELEPHONE NO.
C Moore Director of Corporate Services	Corporate Services	01267 224120
AUTHOR & DESIGNATION	DIRECTORATE	TELEPHONE NO
A Thomas Group Accountant	Corporate Services	01267 228742

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report explains the proposed 2019/20 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for both revenue and capital. It has been prepared in conjunction with officers from the Communities Department. This report is presented to this Community Scrutiny Committee as part of the budget consultation process. The views expressed by this Committee will be fed back to Executive Board for their consideration when they set the 2019/20 HRA budget and Housing Rents.

1.2. The HRA budget for 2019/20 is being set to reflect:

- Interim Social Housing Rent Policy issued by Welsh Government (WG) 12/12/2018
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+)
- Affordable Homes Delivery Plan
- Removal of HRA Borrowing Cap which has recently been agreed by WG.

1.3. The HRA budget is prepared to maintain the CHS(+) Business Plan, deliver our affordable homes aspirations and manage and maintain our homes on a daily basis. As a ring fenced account this expenditure is balanced by income primarily generated through rents charged to tenants. Supporting the CHS(+) Business Plan is a 30 years financial model which is submitted to and scrutinised/approved by WG annually (as part of the Major Repairs Allowance application).

Carmarthenshire County Council along with the other 10 local authorities (LAs) in Wales who retained their Housing Stock, exited the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy (HRAS) system on 1/4/15.

Part of the agreement to exit included LAs with retained stock were required to adopt the new Social Housing Rents Policy set by the WG. It aimed to develop a coherent and consistent rent policy framework that would apply to all social landlords, reflect local variations in affordability and housing market values, providing for a more equitable distribution of rents for social sector tenants across Wales, while at the same time ensuring the viability of individual social landlords. County Council approved the implementation of the policy on 24/02/15. This policy provided consistency for 5 years but ended in 2018/19. WG have provided an interim policy for 2019/20 while they await the results of the Affordable Housing Supply Review. This should result in the development of a new policy due for implementation in 2020/21.

1.4 Capital investment

A capital investment of £231m has been undertaken to deliver the CHS+ by 2015. This included £117million of unsupported borrowing. This investment was being funded by Major Repairs Allowance received from the WG, capital receipts from the sales of land and dwellings, HRA revenue funding, external grants and borrowing. This ensured the delivery of work programmes to all our tenants homes (with the exception of where the work was declined by tenants). Since achieving the CHS, a further £33M will have been spent on maintaining the standard and £20M on providing additional affordable homes in the HRA by the end of 2018/19.

The (CHS+) Business Plan 2019-22 highlights the approach that will be taken over the next three years and will be presented by the interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities in this meeting. It includes further investment over the next 3 years of £45million to maintain the CHS+ and £44million for our Affordable Homes programme. This will be supported by an on-going cost certainty exercise to ensure our investment is targeted to maintain the CHS+ and deliver our Affordable Homes targets.

The timing and method of sale of HRA land is being kept under review to ensure that receipts are maximised to support the Business Plan. It is recognised that CHS+ supports the building of new council homes and utilising existing Council land for future housing opportunities is a key

influence in whether the land is sold or retained, depending on housing demand for housing within that area.

The profile of capital expenditure required to maintain the CHS+ and invest in affordable homes is detailed in appendix A. The plan is extremely sensitive to change and is currently being fully reviewed every 6 months, with ongoing monthly monitoring to identify any potential issues.

2. BUSINESS PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

2.1. There are many assumptions within the Business Plan, including future rental levels, interest rates, inflation, pay awards etc. Business Plan guidance from the WG (received 21/12/18 for 2019/20) requires submission of a viable plan by 29/03/2019.

Underpinning the CHS(+) Business Plan is the 30 year financial model which has many assumptions including:

- **Rents** The WG Interim Social Housing rents policy allows local authorities within their target rent band to increase rent by CPI only (the County Council is currently marginally within the target rent band). The increase in target rent for 2019/20 has been notified as 2.4%. The ability to progress rents for those properties below the target rent, a maximum of £2 per week increase until the target rent is reached has been removed, unless current average rent is below the target rent band.
- **Major Repairs Allowance (MRA)** is a grant from WG which is provided to support our works in maintaining the standard and is audited annually. This has not been increased for future years, but has been varied for changing stock numbers. Our MRA is estimated to be £6million for 2019/20.
- **Capital Receipts** We have suspended our Right to Buy for tenants so there are no planned receipts from sales of houses. We expect receipts from the sale of land in the current year to be £75k, which can be used to fund capital expenditure. The programme of land sales was re-profiled in 2016 with fewer sales planned and none for the next two years. This strategy allows us to consider what is required for our Affordable Homes ambitions.
- **Void Loss** incurred on dwellings currently set at 2.9% in line with current performance. This has changed from 2018/19 due to the decision not to let specific properties while strategic plans are developed.
- **Central Support Costs** are based on services received by departments, these have been validated accordingly.
- **Stock Numbers** have been updated based on affordable homes delivery plan.
- **Interest on Balances** is estimated to be £102k based on an interest rate of 0.6% (average interest earned).

2.2.

Members will be aware as part of the HRAS exit agreement in 2015, Local Authorities were required to agree a Borrowing Cap, which was a requirement put in place by the UK Government. This restricted what a Local Authority could borrow in respect of the HRA, for this Authority the limit was set at £228M. The minister for Housing and Regeneration wrote to LA's 29/10/2018 detailing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had confirmed that the removal of HRA borrowing caps applied to Wales as well as England. This is a significant change in policy designed to encourage LA's to build at pace and scale and to deliver their affordable homes ambitions. This places a responsibility on LA's to develop Business Plans which are financially sustainable as well as ambitious. This has led to a review of how we fund our capital investment programme to release additional resources in a prudent manner.

However, although the borrowing cap has been released, it should be noted that there is a significant responsibility on the County Council to ensure any borrowing for the HRA is sustainable, prudent and affordable within the HRA financial business plan.

As most of the schemes delivering Housing projects have a significant lead in time, there will be an ongoing review of what is needed to maintain CHS+ and deliver our Affordable Housing ambitions, which will utilise the borrowing available as we develop our plans.

3. EXPENDITURE

The expenditure levels in the Business Plan have been set in anticipation of the Business Planning guidance.

Maintenance and Stock Improvement

Revenue repairs and maintenance expenditure is forecast to be £10.3million in 2019/20. This is an increase on the 2018/19 budget (£9.5million) which reflects local building costs, forecast outturn for 2018/19 changes in stock numbers and additional revenue costs relating to void properties.

The capital programme provides resources to:-

- maintain our stock to the CHS+ (including carrying out improvements to previously declined properties)
- deliver our Affordable Homes commitment

Maintain our Stock

For 2019/20 the capital programme to maintain the CHS(+) is £15.4million. This gives an overall spend of £25.7million on stock improvement and maintenance (the total for 2018/19 was £20million). This includes increasing capital resources available for works relating to major voids (£0.8million), structural works on estates (£0.7million), roofing works (£0.3million), investment in sheltered schemes (£1.7million), risk reduction measures (£0.25million) and sewerage treatment works (£0.19million).

Affordable Housing Commitment

WG have indicated the availability of Housing Finance Grant (HFG2) funding for new affordable housing. This will provide £6.9million extra funding for the county, which is planned as part of the 5 year programme. The anticipated funding will be provided as a revenue source, requiring the authority to borrow the money and WG repaying the capital charges. Further clarification on how the resources will be given to LA's is outstanding from WG.

We have set aside £44million over the next three years as part of the capital programme to increase the supply of affordable homes. Within 2019/20 £15.5million has been identified for the Delivery Plan (including development costs).

The capital programme and funding sources for this programme up to 2021/22 are detailed in Appendix A.

Validation

The proposed Business Plan includes the following validations for 2018/19, which is in line with the proposed budget strategy:

- general payroll costs are +3.5% (average) with a greater uplift on the lower pay bands (as per the current national employers pay offer).
- general inflation has been accommodated at +2.4%
- Electricity, gas & oil at +5%.
- Increased pension costs from 17.8% to 18%

Capital Financing and Subsidy

The capital financing costs reflect the borrowing requirement inclusive of the exit from HRAS.

Details of the budget for Housing Revenue Account for the period up to 2021/22 is shown in Appendix B.

4. INCOME

4.1. Previously we have applied the WG Social Housing Rent Policy to progress to the mid-point target rent (County Council approved on 24/02/15). This policy ended in 2018/19.

A one year policy of maximum of CPI only has been issued by WG for 2019/20, with no discretion to apply 'progression' for those tenants below target rents if an LA's current average rent is within the target rent band. Rent increases could be set at lower than 2.4% but as there is no certainty over future rent levels applying the interim policy seems the most prudent approach for 2019/20. Setting at a lower level than 2.4% rent increase will also impact of the current proposed Business Plan.

Carmarthenshire's current average rent is £85.52 per week, which leaves us between the low-end WG target rent level of £85.27 and the mid-point target £89.76. Housing Association rents in Carmarthenshire average £91.29 for 2018/19. In the private sector median rents for 2 bedrooms are £106 and 3 bedrooms are £121 as at June 2018. At the present time there are 12 homes above target rent, 3186 homes below this level with the remainder at target rent.

When setting rents for 2019/20 the WG interim policy will need to be applied.

For those properties below and at target rent the increase will be:-

Consumer Price Index (CPI for September 2018) = 2.4%.

Those rents above target are frozen until such time that they meet the target, there are only 12 of these properties remaining. When a property becomes empty it is placed in the target rent band.

Based on applying the above for 2019/20 at 2.4% rent increase this would produce an average rent of £87.57 (increase of £2.05).

Details of the rent increases on individual households are below :-

Receive an increase of :-	2.4% increase
No increase	12
up to £1.00	17
£1.00 to £1.99	1,368
£2.00 to £2.99	7,692
	9,089

Table 2 : No .of Householders affected by average increases.

Currently 38% of tenants are on full Housing Benefit (HB), 27% are on partial HB and 35% in receipts of no HB.

4.2. Target Rents for Carmarthenshire

Target rents and forecast rents for 2019/20 are set out below:-

	Houses and Bungalows (£)					Flats (£)				Bedsits (£)
	1Bed	2Bed	3Bed	4Bed	5+Bed	1Bed	2Bed	3Bed	4+Bed	
Target Rent (mid-point) 2019/20 as notified by WG	81.51	90.57	99.63	108.68	117.74	73.75	81.94	90.14	98.33	65.55
Actual Rent 2019/20 with 2.4% increase	79.80	88.66	97.52	106.38	115.26	72.18	80.22	88.23	96.27	64.17

WG policy rent band, 2019-20		
Low end	Mid point	High end
(£ per week)	(£ per week)	(£ per week)
86.67	91.23	95.79

Table 3 : Comparison of Forecast Average Weekly Rents to Target Rents over 52 weeks and Rent Bands

For Carmarthenshire our average target rent for 2019/20 is £91.23 (mid point) with the all Wales average being £96.00 .Carmarthenshire’s 2018/19 actual rent is the 2nd lowest of eleven stock retaining authorities.

WG have advised LA’s that a 2.4% increase should be the maximum applied in 2019/20, however for Carmarthenshire our target rents have only increased by 1.6% due to changes in indices. This restricts authorities at the high end of their target rents but does not affect Carmarthenshire.

The proportion of dwellings below target rents is 35% as a result of the £1.62 progression implemented last year and the target rent being charged as a result of properties becoming vacant. This was over 85% when we began the harmonisation process.

4.3. Garage Rental Income

The HRA currently receives a net rental income of £125k per annum. This equates to a weekly charge of £9.00 per week. It is proposed that garage rents are maintained at £9.00 per week. Garage bases will similarly remain at £2.25 per week.

4.4. Service and Heating charges

Service charges are calculated in line with the policy adopted in 2011. These charges are made to cover the additional services we provide as a landlord that are not covered within the rent and to ensure that all communal areas are kept in a good condition.

These charges will vary annually as they are based on actual expenditure from the previous financial year. By implementing the Service Charge Policy we are ensuring that tenants who receive additional services pay for them in a fair and transparent way.

4.5. Sewerage Treatment Works

We have 15 pumping stations serving approx. 154 properties, the cost of running and maintaining the stations falls on the HRA. We also have 8 cesspits. It is proposed for 2019/20 that current charges are increased as per our rent increase. In the meantime Officers are reviewing the future use and running of the Works as part of the Asset Management Plan.

4.6. Commission on Collection of Water Rates

In addition to the rent collection process we act as an agent on behalf of Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water, which generates an income of £400k in the form of commission. The implementation of the HelpU scheme for tenants has reduced this commission receivable by approximately £100k. The HelpU tariff assists tenants with low household income (less than £15k per annum) by reducing their water bills by nearly £200 per annum.

4.7. Universal Credit

The roll out of universal credit will impact on tenants and residents of Carmarthenshire. From a business plan point of view, evidence from the pilots has shown that rent arrears will increase in the short to medium term and we have allowed for this within this plan in terms of our bad debt provision. Currently there is a working group of officers from communities department, corporate services as well as department of works & pensions and job centre plus mapping the potential impact and how to best support our tenants. Also officers are investigating the information technology solutions on the market to aid welfare reform impact analysis, poverty tracking and aiding front line staff to give best advice.

The CHS+ Business Plan presents more detail on this, including the actions that are being undertaken to mitigate the impact for Council tenants.

5. BALANCES

5.1. A rental increase is set at 2.4% the overall proposed budget will result in a surplus on the Housing Revenue Account of £6.1million for the year. It should also be noted in Appendix B that balances are required to support the current strategy of funding our capital expenditure and continue to make our business plan affordable over a 30 year period.

6. PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

- **To increase the average housing rent as per the WG Interim Social Housing Rents Policy.**

Properties at target rents will increase by 2.4%

Those rents above target are frozen until such time that they meet the target.

This will produce an increase on the average housing rent of 2.4% or £2.05

- **This will produce a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+, resource our Affordable Homes programme and is supported by the CHS+ Steering Group.**

- **To maintain garage rents at £9.00 per week and garage bases at £2.25 per week.**
- **To apply the service charge policy to ensure tenants who receive the benefit from specific services pay for those services.**
- **To increase charges for using our sewerage treatment works in line with rent increases.**

7. RECOMMENDATION

That as part of the budget consultation process, Community Scrutiny Committee consider and comment on the Revenue and Capital Budget of the Housing Revenue Account and rent setting proposals 2019/20. This will be considered by Executive Board on 4th February 2019 and subsequently County Council on 20th February 2019.

Department for Communities
Homes and Safer Communities
HRA - Capital Programme Budget 2019/20 - 2021/22
Appendix A

CAPITAL SPENDING TO:-	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Maintain the standard:			
Internal works - kitchens, bathrooms, electrics, heating etc.	1,178	998	1,066
EWI, Render and Fascia (inc. gardens)	1,770	3,478	3,652
Roofing	1,292	1,086	1,140
Boiler replacements	680	563	941
Structural works - Estates and boundary walls (inc. identified structural works)	1,704	600	600
Voids and Major Works to homes	4,014	2,000	2,000
Support Tenant and Residents:			
Sheltered Scheme Investment(boilers)	499	714	0
Sheltered Scheme Investment	1,500	3,000	3,000
Adaptations	1,700	1,500	1,500
Environmental works	303	309	309
Provide more affordable homes:			
Housing Development Programme	15,452	15,952	13,000
Support the delivery of CHS+:			
Programme management	198	200	201
Stock condition information	150	100	100
Risk Reduction Measures	254	258	261
Sewerage treatment works & associated costs	184	0	0
TOTAL	30,878	30,758	27,770

CAPITAL FUNDING FROM:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Welsh Government Grant-MRA	6,190	6,190	6,190
Housing Finance Grant	3,452	3,452	0
External Borrowing	21,236	21,116	21,580
TOTAL	30,878	30,758	27,770

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Department for Communities
Homes and Safer Communities
Housing Revenue Account 2019/20 - 2021/22
Appendix B

REVENUE SPENDING TO:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Repair and maintain homes	10,288	10,623	10,897
Supervision and management	10,189	10,402	10,574
Support services e.g. legal and finance	1,620	1,620	1,620
Provision for Bad debts	585	770	1,110
Capital charges	14,941	15,822	16,770
TOTAL	37,623	39,237	40,971
REVENUE FUNDING FROM:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Tenant rents	41,390	42,150	43,863
Service charges	706	720	734
Interest received	102	136	168
Housing Finance Grant 2	124	247	247
Water rates commission	401	409	417
Grants / Other	1,001	898	913
TOTAL	43,724	44,560	46,342
HRA END OF YEAR POSITION:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Balance brought forward from last year	-14,002	-20,103	-25,426
HRA budgeted surplus (-)/ deficit (+)	-6101	-5,323	-5,371
Balance Carried Forward	-20,103	-25,426	-30,797

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 23RD JANUARY, 2019

THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HOMES STANDARD PLUS (CHS+) Business Plan 2019-22

Purpose:

- To explain the vision and detail of the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus over the next three years, and what it means for tenants.
- To confirm the financial profile, based on current assumptions, for the delivery of the CHS+ over the next three years.
- To produce a business plan for the annual application to Welsh Government for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) for 2019/20, equating to £6.1m

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- To confirm the vision of the CHS+ and the financial and delivery programme over the next three years.
- To confirm the submission of the plan to Welsh Government.

Reasons:

- To continue our CHS+ vision to deliver what really matters to tenants.
- To continue to support tenants by maintaining and further improving the CHS+, with an overall investment of £45m over the next three years.
- To build on our successful Affordable Homes Plan by introducing a very ambitious Transformational Plan that will deliver over 900 Council homes within the next 10 years with a total investment of over £100m. The investment, already confirmed, over the three years of this plan will be nearly £44m.
- To make members' aware that the delivery of the Plan is dependent on an average rent increase of 2.4% for 2019/20.
- To enable submission to the WG to access £6.1m of MRA for 2019/20.

To be referred to the Executive Board/Council for decision: YES

Executive Board Decision Required: Yes- 4th February, 2019
 Council Decision Required: Yes- 20th February, 2019

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Linda Evans (Housing Portfolio Holder)
 Cllr Hazel Evans (Environment Portfolio Holder)
 Cllr David Jenkins (Resources Portfolio Holder)

Directorate: Communities	Designations:	Tel Nos./ E Mail Addresses:
Name of Head of Service: Jonathan Morgan	Acting Head of Homes and Safer Communities	JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk (01267) 227285
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE: 23RD JANUARY, 2019

THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HOMES STANDARD PLUS (CHS+)
Business Plan 2019-22

What is the purpose of the plan?

- To explain the vision and detail of the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus over the next three years, and what it means for tenants.
- To confirm the financial profile, based on current assumptions, for the delivery of the CHS+ over the next three years.
- To produce a business plan for the annual application to Welsh Government for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) for 2019/20, equating to £6.1m.

What is the context?

Since 2006, we have been working to deliver the published work programmes to our tenants' homes. We called this the CHS+ and achieved this to homes where tenants agreed to have the work done during 2015. We fully acknowledge, however, that this is not the end of the journey and want to do more. This plan sets out how we will do this, confirming the financial and delivery programme over the next three years.

Our commitment to CHS+ remains firmly on track, building on what has already been achieved and trying to be as ambitious as we can.

We continue to challenge and review the stock information we hold and how it is collated. The importance we place on our strategic asset management arrangements enables us to provide the foundation for our investment plans. It also confirms the future expenditure needed to maintain the standard, and what money will be available for our affordable homes delivery programme. Nearly £45m has been set aside to maintain the CHS+ for existing tenants over the next three years.

Additionally, through careful programme management and taking opportunities, we are able to spend nearly £44m over the next three years on building more council homes. This is part of our very ambitious 10 year transformational new build plans to deliver over 900 new Council homes, with a total investment of nearly £150m. This programme will align with our existing plans, Cartrefi Croeso delivery and wider regeneration initiatives across the County.

This year, we are also proposing that keep the average rent increase for 2019/20 to **2.4%**.

Supporting Tenants and Residents

As part of the CHS+, we continue to support tenants and residents in everything we do. We believe we should give our tenants the opportunity to influence decisions about their homes, the area they live in and ensure the services they receive are value for money. Tenants have told us that they would like us to focus on providing more advice and support for them with bills and benefits, which will help them to maintain their home. As a result:

- We will change the current structures of tenant involvement to encourage more involvement from under-represented groups. We will also improve systems for gathering and acting on tenant feedback, and continue to use 'Planning for Real' as a method of engagement and consultation on estate issues. We plan to increase the use of digital services, survey our tenants (STAR Survey) to establish baseline information, re-survey every three years and periodically on single issues;
- We will focus on providing more advice and support to tenants in managing their monthly budgets. We will also deliver a range of support and services to help tenants cope with the cultural change of Universal Credit, and mitigate the impact as much as we are able;
- We will continue to expand the pre-tenancy service to provide support and training to applicants and potential new tenants before a tenancy begins. We will also focus on pre-tenancy work to minimise rent arrears, maximise income for both us and tenants and improve tenancy sustainability; and
- We will continue to work with tenants to see what improvements they would like to see to CHS+ in the future.

Two key themes have been identified in terms of future investment. These are:

THEME 1- Investing in our Homes' and the Environment.

This plan confirms work that will be undertaken to maintain the standard and what our key principles are to support our future approach to managing the homes and gardens, land, garage areas and the environment. Over £45m will be invested.

We will:

- Make sure our stock information is as good as it can be, and fill in any existing gaps, in order that we know where we need to maintain and improve the CHS+;
- Continue to identify homes where tenants have refused part or all of the intended CHS+ works, and agree with them when works are to be programmed;
- Continue to review and update our annual work programmes based on evidence and need, only replacing components nearer to the time of failing and not time;
- Install low carbon technologies on a small number of our homes, and analyse the results in terms of costs, benefits to tenants and ease of use. This will enable us to better understand the potential for helping tenants to reduce their energy bills, improve the comfort of their homes and reduce carbon emissions to levels set by Welsh Government;
- Continue to make void properties available for letting as quickly as possible, minimising rent loss and maximising the housing available, whilst striving to meet CHS+;
- Continue to provide a customer focussed responsive repairs service, which achieves high levels of performance, customer satisfaction and good value for money;
- Continue to provide homes better suited to tenants needs by:
 - investing in adapting homes;
 - understanding the future investment needs for our sheltered housing stock; and
 - completing option appraisals on sites that may need changing/ converting into homes that can better meet housing need.

THEME 2 - Providing more Homes.

We are well on our way to delivering our initial 1,000 additional affordable home target by 2021 through our current planning- but we want to do more!

We plan to further increase the supply of affordable housing, building on what has already been achieved. We have recently announced plans to build 900 Council homes over the next 10 years with a total investment of nearly £150m.

Over the next three years, an additional 250 Council homes will be built with an investment of nearly £44m. This programme will further support the current earmarked developments of the recently established housing company 'Cartrefi Croeso'. The Company will not only deliver a mix of new affordable homes for sale or rent, but will also offer families additional choices as alternatives to social housing.

Through careful financial planning in terms of borrowing we have been able to open up some exciting opportunities for Carmarthenshire in terms of building more Council homes. This will enable the Council and its housing stock to play a pivotal role in not only developing much needed social housing but also delivering wider Council priorities to grow the economy.

As a result, this plan will now be able to:

- Continue to provide a range of solutions to deliver more affordable homes, including building new homes, purchasing private sector homes to increase the Council's housing stock in the areas of greatest housing need; and managing private sector homes through the 'Simple Lettings Agency';
- Align our 10 year ambitious new build programme with Cartrefi Croeso plans to develop new build homes, in order to maximise future opportunities; and
- Use our new build programme to further support wider regeneration initiatives, including rural areas.

On a wider scale we also want to maximise the impact of the Swansea Bay City Region Deal 'Delivering Homes as Power Stations' project. We see this as a huge opportunity for Carmarthenshire as the project will create a new industry in the region which will develop and build innovative energy technologies.

Finally we set out what the key assumptions are to make sure the plan remains viable, what we will spend the money on and how it is funded.

Recommendation to Executive Board:

1. To confirm the vision of the CHS+ and the financial and delivery programme over the next three years.
2. To confirm the submission of the Plan to Welsh Government for the 2019/20 MRA Application.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES – Carmarthenshire Homes Standard PLUS (CHS+) Business Plan 2019/2022

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Jonathan Morgan

Acting Head of Homes and Safer Communities

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES

1. Policy, Crime and Disorder and Equalities

The CHS+ will act as the framework for policy development across housing services delivery and will contribute to wider agendas and programmes.

2. Legal

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out our statutory duty to maintain the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (our version is the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *PLUS*) in our existing stock.

3. Finance

Delivering the CHS+ will continue to present significant financial challenges and risks to the County Council.

We have spent over £240m to achieve and maintain the standard, with nearly £120m of this spend has been funded through a prudential borrowing programme.

Through careful management, the financial model remains viable to not only maintain the CHS+, but also deliver more affordable homes. A summary of costs over the next three years is included in the plan.

A general rent increase of 2.4% for 2019/20 is also assumed in the plan.

4. Risk Management

The CHS+ programme is identified as moderate risk in the Council's Risk Management Plan. A risk management plan has been developed to mitigate and review all risks associated with the programme.

Failure to deliver a viable Business Plan to Welsh Government by the end of March 2019 will mean the MRA of £6.1m for 2019/20 being withdrawn.

5. Physical Assets

The CHS+ will involve the management, maintenance and improvement of the Council's housing stock. This will be carried out within the context of our asset management principles which are defined within the plan. Any decision to acquire, convert or dispose of homes, land and/or garage areas will be considered in line with these principles.

This plan will also result in an increase in the Council housing stock through the new build and purchasing homes in the private sector.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Acting Head of Homes and Safer Communities

1. Local Member(s)

n/a

2. Community / Town Council

n/a

3. Relevant Partners

Engagement with stakeholders and partners has taken place in order to develop this Plan, including stakeholder events, 1-2-1 interviews and various meetings.

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Engagement with tenants, has taken place in order to develop this Plan, including stakeholder events, 1-2-1 interviews, visits and events in communities, and various meetings.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of document	File Ref No.	Location that the file is available for public inspection
Carmarthenshire Homes Standard PLUS (CHS+) Business Plan 2019/2022	Housing General Files	Council website- Democratic Services

*Carmarthenshire
Homes Standard
PLUS (CHS+)
Business Plan
2019/2022*

January 2019

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Foreword by our Executive Board Members

We are pleased to introduce our Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *PLUS* (CHS+) Business Plan 2019-2022, which sets out our priorities, plans and actions for council housing for the coming years.

Through careful financial planning, this Plan will not only allow us to continue to maintain the standard but will provide a real boost to our ambition to build even more affordable homes.

We plan to continue to invest over £45m in maintaining tenants' homes over the next three years. We know from the recent publication of our major Health Impact Study, in conjunction with Cardiff and Swansea Universities, that our investment has had a really positive impact on our tenants' health and well-being. We will continue to prioritise this investment.

Also, three years into our promise to deliver 1,000 more affordable homes by 2021, we have already passed the half-way mark, with nearly 650 households benefitting from the Council's £25million investment to provide more good quality low-cost homes.

Demand for social housing remains high, but we are aware that there are information gaps about housing need, particularly rural parts of the County. Our recent needs survey has resulted in over 5,000 responses and will help us to further plan the right type of homes in the right areas.

Last year we also established Cartrefi Croeso, our local housing company, to open up new opportunities, offer families an alternative to social housing and to take advantage of the skills of local companies. We are hoping the first development will be on site in spring 2019.

We want to do more, however. We are developing a 10 year council housing new build programme that will enable us to play a pivotal role in developing additional affordable homes and support wider Council priorities. Nearly £44m has been set aside for the next three years and it is planned to invest nearly £150m and deliver 900 new council homes over the next ten years, in addition to what is already planned. It will also allow us to not only align with Cartrefi Croeso delivery but significantly contribute to key Council developments and regeneration initiatives to grow the economy across the County.

Finally, we know that the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) last year presented a cultural change for many tenants in managing their monthly budgets. This is going to be a major challenge for us in terms of future income and, more importantly, for tenants. We have recognised this by implementing an action plan to reduce the impact as much as possible for tenants across all tenures.

These are exciting times, but we know that this is also a time of uncertainty for our tenants.

As a result, we have been able to keep the rent increase for 2019/20 at an average of 2.4%, whilst still maintaining the standard and building more homes. This achievement should not be underestimated.

We are so proud to be delivering on our promise to local families, and we are very confident that we can do more. This will be achieved by continuing to work together and making a real difference in our communities and to the local economy.

Linda Davies Evans Executive Board Member for Housing	Cllr Hazel Evans Executive Board Member for Environment	Cllr David Jenkins Executive Board Member for Resources
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Introduction

Introduction

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is the Welsh Government (WG) standard of social housing quality. The WHQS was first introduced in 2002 and aimed to ensure that all homes are of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents. WG set a target for all social landlords to improve their housing stock to meet the WHQS as soon as possible, but in any event by 2020.

Carmarthenshire's tenants developed their own standard, called the CHS+, and this was successfully delivered in 2015, well in advance of the WG timescales.

Purpose of the CHS+ Plan

The purpose of this Plan is to explain the vision and detail of the CHS+, and what it means for tenants. It also confirms the financial profile, based on current assumptions, for the delivery of the CHS+ over the next three years. The approved Plan enables us to submit our annual application to WG for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) for 2019/20, which amounts to £6.1m.

Development of the CHS+ Plan

Tenants and stakeholders have been consulted through the Tenant Consultative Forum and by face to face interviews and their views taken into account in preparing this Plan. The Plan is updated annually taking into account these views, the latest stock condition information, updated financial information, WG Guidance and any revised Council policies.

All actions in this Plan will be monitored every two months by the CHS+ Steering Group. This group provides strategic direction and corporate leadership to ensure progress is made on the initiatives in the Plan. The CHS+ Steering Group is also responsible for monitoring progress, reviewing and managing the overall 30 year financial plan that supports our planned investment.

How this plan links with our corporate priorities, together with the overall governance structure is set out in Appendix A.

Achievements and Priorities

The previous CHS+ Business Plan 2018-2021 has achieved a number of notable successes over the last 12 months:-

2018/19 main achievements:

- Over £19m spent to maintain the CHS+ in tenants' homes;
- Over 240 additional affordable homes delivered during our third year of delivery;
- Over 530 adaptations completed, with over £1m being invested to ensure tenants' homes meet their needs;
- Over £285,000 spent on 35 Environmental Improvement Projects (plus £60,000 on improving garage plots, demolishing garages, clearing areas and creating car parking spaces);
- Managed improvements and lettings of 900 homes, including new homes added to our stock;
- Started development on two sites for 48 new affordable homes in Llanelli and Pembrey;
- Continued our time-banking initiative, Spice, with over 57,970 of total volunteer hours being given. Over 1,800 tenants and their family members took part;
- Housed over 40 households who have specific needs through our Accessible Housing Register (AHR);
- Introduced a Choice Based Letting scheme, Canfod Cartref, that gave tenants more choice and which will make tenancies more sustainable ;
- The findings of our Health Impact Study with Swansea University showed the positive impact on health of investing over £200m in tenants homes since 2007. This investment also brings social, economic and environmental benefits for all;
- Shortlisted for CIH Cymru Wales Housing awards recognising our work on improving tenants' homes;
- Over 250 people attended 23 comprehensive consultation events using "Planning for Real" to engage with residents of Tyisha ward in Llanelli;
- Taken on three apprentices in Property Maintenance;
- Re-let the gas servicing contract for tenant homes;
- Set up a new minor works framework with up to date Schedules of Rates to ensure value for money for housing repairs; and
- Started to realign our Property Maintenance section to improve arrangements for future lettings and maintenance of Council homes.

Roll out of Home Checker visits:

In 2018/19 we carried out basic checks to all Council homes (where we gained access) through servicing contractors, repair visits and tenancy support calls. As a result of these visits about 5% of homes were identified as requiring a more in-depth visit by a housing officer.

Some issues identified and attended to in terms of preventative maintenance, included:

- Leaking showers;
- Loose tiles and guttering;
- Broken windows;
- Window locks and handles not working;
- Plugs and sockets loose;
- Toilet leaks;
- Extractor fans not working;
- Damp; and
- Condensation.

The continuation of our Home Checker visits will enable us to identify specifically what help tenants want, such as support with Universal Credit and household budget management. This will enable us to plan for the future and identify preventative maintenance and component failure.

What did the tenants think of the service provided?

During 2018/19 we have continued to engage with tenants and other stakeholders in a number of ways. One of the key questions we asked during our Home Checker visit was “How happy are you with the service we provide?” The results are provided in Appendix B.

2019/20 priorities:

From carrying out this initial work on Home Checker we will:

- Continue with Home Checker and look at ways to improve how we capture data from the visits;
- Further improve our approach to preventative maintenance in next year’s CHS+ Business Plan;
- Develop and encourage tenants to take a proactive approach in maintaining their homes to a high standard;
- Make our services more effective and responsive by tailoring them more closely to the needs of our tenants;
- Help more tenants with a range of issues including saving money on fuel bills, budgeting and financial assistance and housing support; and
- Further develop our approach to tenant feedback in order that we analyse trends over time.

Health Impact Study

During 2018/19 we also published the results of our major health impact study (in conjunction with Swansea and Cardiff Universities funded through Public Health Research programme).

The findings of the study demonstrates that by bringing our housing stock up to CHS+ we are improving people's lives and well-being, achieving outcomes that will benefit generations to come. The study tracked tenants' health and well-being while we were carrying out the investment programmes to homes. We assessed the health outcomes for over 32,000 residents living in 8,558 Council homes, which were compared to a control group of residents who did not receive housing improvements.

The health evaluation results and study recommendations identified a number of key priorities:

- Preventative maintenance;
- Reducing the risk of trips and falls inside and out of homes;
- Making sure our homes are warm; and
- Improving air quality by installing extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms.

We have used this information to update our development plans. Our CHS+ programme is addressing the findings raised in the report, particularly around energy efficiency by bringing homes up to CHS+ where the tenant had previously declined the works. The report itself encourages the adoption of the recommendations by local authorities around the UK and further afield.

The following sections will provide the context to, and detail of, what we plan to deliver over the next three years, including how we intend paying for it, the community benefits and verifying what we have done.

The importance of strategic asset management in providing the foundation for our investment plans, as well as the central role of supporting tenants and residents in everything we do, is also highlighted. Leading on from this, we will cover two key themes that have been identified in terms of future investment. These are:

- 1. THEME 1- Investing in our Homes' and the Environment.**
- 2. THEME 2 - Providing more Homes.**

Context

The CHS+ Business Plan

This Plan covers all housing services and assets in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It sets out the objectives of the CHS+ and what this means for tenants and leaseholders across a range of housing activities.

The Council has:

- Over 9,000 homes;
- Over 1,400 garages (including bases); and
- Areas of land.

Details of our housing assets and the profile of our tenants and applicants are provided in Appendix C.

This Plan confirms the delivery programmes of repair, maintenance and improvement, as well as setting the framework for the potential redevelopment of some of the most uneconomic stock. This is set in the context of maintaining our 100% compliance with WG's WHQS, and we will continue to do this through the CHS+.

This Plan demonstrates our commitment to sustained investment and shows how the investment in the existing stock is delivered, as well as an ambitious affordable homes programme. We have also ensured a balance of investment across the entire housing stock so that our capital and revenue spend is complementary, enabling tenants to receive best value services.

We will invest nearly £45m in our existing homes over the next three years. This is based on current assumptions, together with a three year revenue provision of £10m a year for planned and responsive repairs and maintenance. We have also identified a further £44m to build more Council homes, aligning with our wider delivery ambitions.

The delivery of the above investment, however, must be built on a robust approach to managing our housing assets.

Our approach to managing assets

Managing housing assets goes beyond just investing in good repair and improvements. Asset management is also about reviewing and potentially changing the asset base to end up with the right homes in the right location, supported by excellent, flexible services for our tenants. It must consider quality and value for money, particularly the whole life of a home and how running costs will affect tenants.

By applying an effective asset management strategy to our 9,000 plus homes, it will also enable us to meet our legal requirement of maintaining the CHS+ in the future.

Consequently our approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Carrying out regular stock condition surveys to assess condition, use and required investment;
- A planned maintenance programme achieving value for money by replacing components such as kitchens and bathrooms based on need, not time;
- A regular cyclical maintenance programme for certain components in a home e.g. heating appliances, electrical upgrades and external painting;
- A continual programme of works to meet health and safety requirements e.g. asbestos removal and structural repairs ;
- A maintenance service to respond to unplanned failures in homes and to prevent deterioration in their condition, such as boiler replacements;
- An efficient and effective voids repair service, helping to quicken the repairs process and save money by carrying out CHS+ works when a home becomes empty;
- A programme of environmental estate improvements that is strategically targeted;
- A basic check to all homes on an annual basis through our existing visits;
- A more in-depth visit to homes where there are potential issues in terms of condition, tenancy or welfare issues;
- Continuing to invest in adapting homes to suit the needs of tenants;
- Understanding the future investment needs for our sheltered housing stock;
- Completing individual options appraisals if homes are no longer fit for purpose to determine the best course of action, including considering demolishing homes, or disposing of them;
- Completing options appraisals on sites that may need converting into homes that can better meet housing need; and
- Delivering the targets within the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan.

When considering the above we will:

- Engage with tenants, stakeholders and Members using new ways of participation and challenge;
- As far as is possible, meet tenants' aspirations and priorities;
- Maximise our assets and minimise liabilities;
- Seek value for money in all investment decisions and contract procurement;
- Comply with current and future regulations;
- Create good neighbourhoods for Council tenants and their neighbours; and
- Provide assurance to the Council's auditors and regulators that our housing service is well managed.

We fully recognise that in order to achieve the above we must ensure that:

- The right structures, skills, resources and capacity are in place to manage future programmes, procurement and contract management effectively;
- Robust stock condition information, data and analysis is in place to produce programmes of investment that will appropriately maintain and improve standards, as well as services to tenants;

- Our data is further enhanced and regularly validated by feedback from all programmed and cyclical repairs, and maintenance activities; and
- We complete our cost certainty exercise for our overarching 30 year financial plan.

Over the next 12 months we will continue to focus on ensuring that asset management resources, both people and systems, are challenged to make sure they are in the right areas for the future. Our joined-up approach will enable us to:

- Commence a rolling programme of stock condition surveys to verify our cost certainty business plan, identify gaps and provide independent verification;
- Understand why work has not been completed within the stock, such as when the tenant has requested that no work be carried out. These are called 'acceptable fails' (see Appendix D); and
- Review our asset management systems and strategy to ensure all stock is fit for both current and emerging needs.

Ensuring our assets are economical to maintain and meet our strategic objectives

Homes

Every year there are a small number of homes that need major work. Generally these are homes where the previous tenants have declined the CHS+ works, or where structural works are identified in tenanted homes.

Before committing to do the work we need to ensure that the level of expenditure, and the housing need can be demonstrated. This is important to avoid major investment being made in a home that could remain empty longer than we would expect. It is necessary to have a consistent approach, and this is known as an MSCA (Most Satisfactory Course of Action).

Similarly, when we identify a number of similar repair issues in homes, in a particular area, we will consider whole site appraisals. This enables us to gather whole life costs for our homes in a defined area so that we can consider longer term solutions. Where high investment is required and there is low demand for homes in the area, tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders will be involved in the option appraisal process.

Garages

We will continue to actively gather information on the types of agreements used and the condition of garages, in order to:

- Repair and maintain existing garages which are in-use and/or vacant. An assessment will be made, and if any are unsafe and need demolishing on health and safety grounds, we will:
 - Establish who uses garages and bases;
 - Standardise agreements and charges; and

- Consult on future options for garage sites. In areas where there is limited parking we would aim to replace any demolished garages with parking bays.

Land

We have areas of land across the County. As part of our commitment to affordable housing we have identified areas of land that could be used for development, prioritising those in areas of greatest need.

Where we have identified areas, however, which have no use and cost us to maintain we shall include them in a programme for sale. The receipts from sale contribute to maintaining the CHS+.

Sewer Treatment Works

We currently have 15 sewer treatment works and 8 septic tanks. Over the last 12 months we have reviewed the charging arrangements and monitored the ongoing maintenance of these facilities in order to consider future options and arrangements for all tenures. We will develop a programme and consult with residents on the future strategy for maintaining and charging for sewer treatment works.

Supporting Tenants and Residents

The commitment and support of our tenants' and Members' continues to be important to us to ensure that we maintain and improve on the CHS+ in the future.

Tenant and residents' engagement and communication

Tenant and community engagement has always underpinned the delivery of the CHS+, but we want to do more. We want to get better by engaging as widely as possible and maximising opportunities to help build stronger communities.

We asked TPAS Cymru to conduct an independent report into tenant participation and involvement with our tenants. As a result, we identified there was a lack of diversity and a low number of tenants who engage with tenant networks. These issues are not unique to Carmarthenshire and can be demonstrated across Wales.

We also believe we should give our tenants the opportunity to influence decisions about their homes, the area they live and ensure the services they receive achieve value for money. Our vision is:-

“To make it easy and inviting for tenants to get involved in shaping strategic decisions and improve services through meaningful involvement by ensuring residents have the relevant skills”.

In order that our vision for participation fully reflects the work we undertake and for us to be consistent with other social landlords, we believe our vision should be set out along the following key principles:

- **Improving communities** – Ensuring that our communities are positive places to live by fostering a sense of community and ensuring that estates are well maintained;
- **Improving services** – Ensuring that services delivered by us are those that tenants wish to receive, and that these are delivered to the highest standards;
- **Improving accountability** – Ensuring that the views of our tenants are heard when decisions are made at all levels, and that these decisions are communicated to tenants in a transparent manner; and
- **Improving resident skills** – Ensuring that tenants have the relevant skills to take part in managing their homes and providing broader support to tenants within the community to develop their skills.

We have reviewed the participation techniques we currently use, and it showed that newsletters are by far the most popular means of communication for tenants. There are three further methods of participation that we can use to improve the way that tenant participation is undertaken. These are:

- More use single issue meetings;

- Increased use of digital participation; and
- Strengthening challenge and responsibility.

We aim to deliver on these principles by introducing the following new activities:

- Changing the current structures of tenant involvement to encourage more involvement from under-represented groups;
- Improving systems for gathering and acting on tenant feedback;
- Using 'Planning for Real' as a method of engagement and consultation on estate issues;
- Increasing the use of digital services to reach out to under-represented groups and to those who do not want to attend meetings;
- Putting forward proposals for a challenge panel for our tenants;
- Holding single issue meetings; and
- Surveying our tenants (STAR Survey) to establish baseline information, and re-survey every three years and periodically on single issues.

As well as giving their views on general engagement activities, tenants and residents have also highlighted other priorities in terms of supporting them. They have told us that they would like us to focus on providing more advice and support for them with bills and benefits that will help them to maintain their homes. We will be addressing these priorities in a number of areas.

Responding to Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) is a new monthly payment for people who are either unemployed, or working, but on a low income. It will eventually replace six legacy benefits, including Housing Benefit.

In December 2018 Carmarthenshire became a full service UC area. We have over 3,000 tenants below pensionable age in receipt of Housing Benefit that would naturally migrate to UC if they have a qualifying change of circumstances. A managed migration programme will then begin to move all remaining claimants over to UC by 2024. This will mean that for any tenant claiming UC, payments for their housing support will be paid directly to them as opposed to it automatically being paid into their rent accounts.

Experience from the UC pilots has identified it is a huge cultural change for many tenants in managing their monthly budgets and we must support as much as we can. We know that our tenants have a negative view of UC, and the current 4-8 week delays in processing and receiving payments can cause significant anxiety.

Private sector tenants who go onto UC are also likely to require support and may face issues with their landlords due to length of time taken to assess claims.

From a business point of view, evidence from the pilots has shown that rent arrears will increase in the short to medium term and we have allowed for this within this plan in terms of our bad debt provision.

In order to mitigate the impact we have put in place an action plan which has involved:

- Ensuring that tenants are aware of what help we, or our partner organisations, can offer;
- Visiting tenants we believe may be affected;
- Continuing to work with housing providers to ensure that they are ready to provide support to our tenants;
- Increasing the range of Direct Debit (DD) payment dates available to tenants; Tenants will be able to choose any date within the month between 1 and 28;
- Enabling tenants to use the new 'My Account' facility to view their rent balance and recent rent transactions. It will also allow them to pay their rent, order a new payment card and request a direct debit form;
- Working closely with Welsh Water to encourage tenants to make an application under the 'HelpU' tariff which helps low income households to reduce their water bill;
- Targeting our prevention fund to help the most vulnerable tenants;
- Developing guidance documents and procedures to assist in staff training;
- Introducing payment reminder e-mails and texts for individual tenants; and
- Building close partnerships with Housing Benefit, Job Centre Plus and DWP staff.

Focusing on Pre tenancy work

A review carried out by the Housing Quality Network (HQN) recommended that more detailed pre-tenancy work should be carried out with tenants to minimise rent arrears, maximise income for both us and tenants and improve tenancy sustainability. We have supported this recommendation by creating a pre-tenancy service as part of our Homes and Safer Communities realignment.

We know that at present tenants are allocated homes with no prior insight into what a tenancy actually involves. Many are young, with no previous experience of running a home, living on a small budget. Unsurprisingly some end up going into rent arrears, cause noise or disturbance to their neighbours and ultimately lose or end their tenancy within the first year or two.

We have set up 'The Home Ready' project which provides support and training to applicants and potential new tenants of the Council before a tenancy begins. The project aims to:

- Provide applicants with the most relevant and tailor made training to make them more confident and knowledgeable in gaining and sustaining their tenancy;
- Ensure that applicants will be more financially aware in their future day to day lives such as learning how to live on a budget; understand the benefits of their local credit unions; be more aware of what running and maintain a home and tenancy involves and the benefits of saving; and
- Provide applicants with training that will focus on understanding the terms of their tenancy, being a good neighbour and the importance of paying their rent.

Whilst the project remains in its initial stages progress to date involves:

- The appointment of a project officer; and
- 216 new tenants have had training or one-to-one support.

The aim is that further resources will be allocated to this work and all new tenants will have pre-tenancy training or one-to-one support.

Our approach to this year's rent increase

For 2019/20, through careful financial planning, we have been able to keep the average rent increase to 2.4%.

Theme 1 – Investing in Homes’ and the Environment

Maintaining the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+)

In 2015 we achieved the CHS+ to homes where tenants have agreed to have work completed - well before WG’s target of 2020. This is in line with our agreed assumptions that the standard of our homes will be to the CHS+ and replacement programmes will be based on condition, not time.

Tenants tell us that getting repairs done on time and maintaining homes to a good standard is important to them. Maintaining the standard is now a statutory duty, and the Council has made a commitment to achieve and maintain the CHS, which states that all homes will be:

- in a good state of repair;
- free from damp;
- free from significant condensation;
- structurally stable;
- in safe and attractive environments;
- suitable for the household; and
- managed to the CHS+

Our on-going consultation with tenants has identified five key themes in this area in terms of ***“What a good housing service looks like?”***

- **Repairs and Maintenance** - proper and timely maintenance, consistent service, maintain homes to a high standard and continue to improve the housing stock;
- **Internal Works and Servicing** – heating, bathroom and kitchens, soundproofing in flats, removal of old plumbing and electrics and options of a newer kitchen;
- **External Works and the Environment** - roofs, removal of moss, rendering, tackling dampness, paths, solar panels, responding to requests for paths, provide a home that is secure, fencing, painting of outside of houses, garden walls and improve communal areas;
- **Voids** - standards to be applied to every home and finish the CHS programme; and
- **Improving Standards** - improvements which result in tenants maximising their income/saving money on utilities, a standard that doesn't stand still and provides service improvement.

The actions identified to address these themes are set out below. The resultant investment requirements have been built into the HRA Capital Programme 2019/2022 (set out in our capital spend table on page 26)

Repairs and Maintenance: The responsive repairs service has more contact with tenants and customers than any other maintenance service, and is therefore used as an important

measure of how effective both the Housing and Property services are by the majority of customers.

The objective of the repairs service is to provide a customer- focussed responsive and cyclical repairs service, which achieves high levels of performance, customer satisfaction and good value for money. We will continue to achieve this by:

- Advising tenants when they report minor repairs how quickly we can carry out the repairs. We will always prioritise emergency and urgent repairs. For larger repair requests, we will often assess the problem first before letting tenants know how long the works will take;
- Carrying out repairs in the timescales we have set out or at a time that is more convenient for the tenant. Sometimes, however, there may be delays because we cannot get materials, we need to carry out further investigations or the work is dependent on the weather;
- Introducing an appointments system for our urgent responsive repairs service, using mobile technology to make appointments with tenants at a time convenient for them, and evaluating the effectiveness of this service; and
- Introducing automatic scheduling of repairs to ensure efficient and timely use of our in-house repair teams.

Internal Works - For internal components such as kitchens, bathrooms, electrical upgrading and central heating, we replace components nearer to the time of failing. We will achieve this by:

- Contacting tenants who have previously declined CHS+ works to discuss any issues they have and agree with them when works are to be programmed; and
- Ensuring homes have the appropriate smoke alarms, heat detectors or carbon monoxide devices, and discuss with tenants how we can upgrade these to improve the fire safety within their homes.

Servicing – The objective of the servicing process is to assess the condition both correctly and consistently of our gas, oil, electric and solid fuel appliances. Our cyclical servicing contract ensures that this assessment is carried out annually and enables us to replace components nearer to the time of failing. We have recently reviewed our approach to fire safety across all our stock, and our approach to when tenants have requested not to have work carried out.

We believe that it is in the best interest of tenants, and to protect our investment, that tenants will no longer have the option to decline electrical works including the installation of hard wired smoke detectors and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors. We will achieve this by:

- Continuing our annual programme of safety checks on gas fires, and gas or oil boilers, and only replace boilers with energy-efficient condensing boilers, when defective and no longer economical to run; and
- Checking homes have the appropriate smoke alarms, heat detectors or carbon monoxide devices, and discussing with tenants how we can upgrade these;

- Gain access to ensure that the necessary works are completed; and
- Install servicing timers when we gain access (where a tenant repeatedly does not give us access), to help tenants understand and manage their responsibilities under their tenancy agreement and help us to protect the lives of tenants.

External Works and the Environment: - whilst it is known that our homes are generally in good condition and meet the CHS+, our objective is to achieve economies of scale by only replacing components nearer to the time of failing; and thus saving tenants money. We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to review and update our annual programme of roof and render component replacement including providing exterior wall insulation (EWI), based on evidence and need, and not time;
- Working with a range of partners to identify opportunities to install low carbon technologies to our housing stock to try to save tenants money on their energy bills, improve the comfort of tenants' homes and reduce pollution in the environment;
- Continue our programme of replacing structural boundary and retaining walls; and
- Ensuring sheds and outhouses, gardens, paths and fencing meet the CHS+ standard where reasonably practicable, where we carry out planned external works.

Empty homes (voids): The objective of the void process is to make void homes available for letting as quickly as possible, striving to meet customers' expectations. We will achieve this by:

- Completing individual options appraisals if homes are no longer fit for purpose to determine best course of action, including considering demolishing homes, or disposing of them;
- Making sure that homes are maintained to our standards and any repairs from previous tenants have been carried out before a new tenant moves in, together with making sure gardens are clear of rubbish and safe to use;
- Bringing all homes up to the CHS+, except in exceptional circumstances, such as people fleeing domestic violence, flood or fire (this list is not exhaustive);
- Ensuring every new tenant receives a home information pack, to include information on boiler inspections, asbestos advice, Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), electrical tests, recycling and service charges if applicable; and
- Providing additional investment to bring the "back-log" of major works voids back into use.

Improving Standards - Tenants have told us they do not want a standard that stands still. We will achieve this by:

- Giving tenants a say through single-issue meetings, digital participation and challenge panel;
- Developing a programme to ensure we have robust and up to date Energy Performance Data (EPCs) to better inform future planned programmes which includes energy saving measures;

- Continuing our programme of providing adaptations for our tenants to ensure that our homes meet their needs;
- Continuing to utilise our stock in an efficient manner through the Accessible Housing Register (AHR), where a void property with existing adaptations is matched to a client on the AHR whose needs will be met;
- Piloting a bio-degradable soft wash treatment to treat the effects of lichen and algae growth on affected properties and evaluate its impact over a 12 month period; and
- Investigating the potential costs and benefits of undertaking external works such as gutter clearance and external high-level cleaning on homes.

Type of work to be completed in 2019/20

We know the following work may be required to maintain the standard in 2019/20.

Type of work/components	Target homes to be completed in the full year 2019 – 2020
Kitchens	108
Bathrooms	99
Central heating Systems	52
Electrical Systems	70
Mains Powered Smoke Detectors	70
Roofs	126
Render and Fascia	142
Gardens and outhouse planned programme	142
Retrofitting Low Carbon Technology (increasing SAP rating 65+)	6

The above figures represent target homes to be completed through the planned programme of works. Additional works to homes will also be completed throughout the year as part of void and capital minor works delivery.

Further development and new opportunities

Health & safety - approach to fire management

We have now further reviewed the fire risk assessments on all of our purpose built blocks of flats, including sheltered schemes. Our approach has been to assess the likelihood of fires occurring, and any person(s) who may be put at risk from a fire. When carrying out the assessment we have also taken into consideration that fires can be started accidentally, through carelessness or started deliberately.

For each block of flats, where we have identified improvements to be made and an action plan has been developed. This provides a record of present risks, together with an indication of the scope of the changes and/or improvements which need to be provided to minimise the risks present. The risk assessments are monitored by the 'Investing in our Homes' Group, as set out in our governance structure.

Investing in sheltered housing

Demand for our sheltered housing remains high generally, but we need to ensure that the right type of support is in the right schemes. Some schemes are very popular whilst others less so because of things like their location and/or access to amenities.

During 2018/19 we assessed the current standards and condition of our sheltered housing schemes and started a pilot programme of upgrading. As part of our programme we will continue to challenge whether schemes will meet the expectations of future residents over the next 10 to 20 years.

We will also continue our annual sheltered housing scheme programme of:

- Communal boiler replacement/upgrades making boilers more energy efficient with the ability to regulate temperatures on site;
- Maintaining and servicing lifts;
- Upgrading aerial and satellite infrastructures and connections to enable tenants to access digital TV and internet services; and
- Transferring lifelines to our Telecare service, giving our tenants a person-centred approach which can adapt to their needs in later years.

Assisting with regeneration plans

The Council has been working with local residents, and other key stakeholders, to develop a masterplan for the potential regeneration of the Station Road area in the Tyisha ward, Llanelli. Station Road is located between Llanelli Town Centre and the proposed Well-Being village in Machynys. There are ambitious and exciting plans for both areas and we want to make sure that the Station Road area benefits from sustainable change that will have an impact into the future.

We have adopted the “Planning for Real” approach, which is a nationally recognised community planning process which uses a 3D model to enable residents to put their views forward under a range of themes. It then goes on to work together to identify priorities, and in partnership with local agencies develop an action plan for change. Over the summer months a programme of 15 events was organised with a total of 253 people taking part.

From this information we have been developing our masterplan for the area, and delivery options, which will be presented to the community in the spring 2019.

Retrofitting our existing housing stock with low carbon technology

We are working with the Welsh School of Architecture at Cardiff University as part of its Low Carbon Built Environment project to install low carbon technologies on a small number of our homes. We have identified a small scheme for which we will receive support for the cost of technologies from the SPECIFIC 2 LCBE project which is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Wales European Funding Office.

The 'systems-based approach' combines renewable energy supply, energy storage and energy demand reduction technologies creating a holistic approach to retrofitting. The solutions proposed are:

- External wall insulation (EWI);
- Loft insulation;
- LED lighting;
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR);
- High efficiency gas boilers;
- Solar PV (location dependent on the orientation of each house); and
- Lithium ion batteries.

Where tenants have agreed to participate in this scheme, discreet monitoring equipment has been installed to measure the environmental conditions and energy use in the homes before and after the work has been carried out.

We shall be analysing the results of the installation of low carbon technology in terms of costs, benefits to tenants and ease of use. This will enable us to better understand the potential for helping tenants to reduce their energy bills, improve the comfort of their homes and reduce carbon emissions to levels set by Welsh Government.

Homes as Power Stations

We also want to maximise the impact of the Swansea Bay City Region Deal 'Delivering Homes as Power Stations' project which will:

- Carry out an extensive new house build and retrofit programme which integrates new technologies to allow buildings to generate, store and release energy;
- Develop and seek to attract new sector supply chains incorporating leading research and high value manufacturing and construction operations;
- Help to generate sustainable and affordable homes and address fuel poverty; and
- Focus on smart technologies in relation to energy demand management.

We see this as a huge opportunity for Carmarthenshire and are currently working up a detailed business plan to confirm what delivery will look like, across tenures, over the next five years.

Theme 2 – Providing more homes

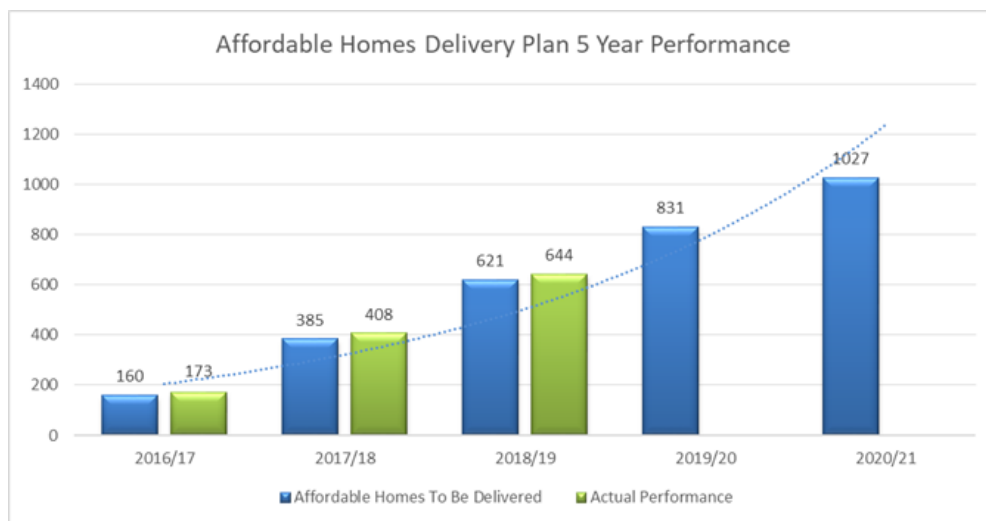
Affordable Homes

HRA Business Plan - Affordable Homes

We began our journey to increase the supply of affordable homes in March 2016 with the creation of our first Affordable Homes Delivery Plan. Our original plan aimed to deliver over 1,000 affordable homes by 2021. We are well on course to exceed this target and increasing the supply of affordable homes is now a core part of our business.

The Affordable Homes Delivery Plan – Our story so far.....

We are about to begin our fourth year of delivery. The first three years have been very successful with over 640 affordable homes being delivered.



Our first delivery plan has focused on increasing the supply of homes through a variety of innovative solutions which provide value for money and create quality homes in our communities. Examples of our approach to date includes:

- managing homes in the private sector through our Simple Lettings agency;
- bringing empty homes back into use and helping to create attractive sustainable communities;
- buying private sector homes and increasing the Council's own housing stock;
- working with partner housing associations (HA) to maximise all external funding opportunities and increase the number of HA homes in the County for rent and low cost home ownership; and
- working with private developers and their Section 106 planning obligations.

We will continue with this approach but we want to do more through an ambitious new build programme.

We have recently announced plans to build 900 Council homes over the next 10 years with a total investment of nearly £150m.

Over the next three years, an additional 250 Council homes will be built with an investment of nearly £44m. This programme will further support the current earmarked developments of the recently established housing company 'Cartrefi Croeso'. The Company will not only deliver a mix of new affordable homes for sale or rent, but will also offer families additional choices as alternatives to social housing.

Through careful financial planning in terms of borrowing we will be able to open up exciting opportunities for Carmarthenshire in terms of building more Council homes. This will enable the Council and its housing stock to play a pivotal role in not only developing much needed social housing but also delivering wider Council priorities to grow the economy.

As a result, this plan will now be able to:

- Continue to provide a range of solutions to deliver more affordable homes, including building new homes, purchasing private sector homes to increase the Council's housing stock in the areas of greatest housing need; and managing private sector homes through the 'Simple Lettings Agency';
- Align our 10 year ambitious new build programme with Cartrefi Croeso plans to develop new build homes, in order to maximise future opportunities; and
- Use our new build programme to further support wider regeneration initiatives, including rural areas.

On a wider scale we also want to maximise the impact of the Swansea Bay City Region Deal 'Delivering Homes as Power Stations' project. We see this as a huge opportunity for Carmarthenshire as the project will support the creation of a new industry in the region which will develop and build innovative energy technologies.

Funding for this ambitious new build programme will come from HRA borrowing but we will also making sure we maximise external funding opportunities. The following funding has already been confirmed to support the wider programme

- Affordable Housing Grant (WG) £4.7m;
- Innovative Housing Programme Funding (WG) £4m;
- Social Housing Grant and Housing Finance Grant £29m;
- Housing association private finance £21m; and
- Section 106 commuted sums £11m.

We are confident more funding opportunities will arise and our ambitious programme will ensure that we will have "on the shelf" developments to take advantage of opportunities as they become available.

Community Benefits and Procurement

Community Benefits

The Council is committed to:

- Contributing to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the wider community;
- Asking tenderers to deliver community benefits in our tendering activities through the delivery of the contracts or frameworks awarded;
- Maximising the value for every pound we spend, applying a community benefits approach to any tender valued over £1million; and
- Capturing and recording community benefits utilising WG's community benefits measurement tool.

For contracts completed in 2017/18, three contractors were used through the South West Wales Contractors Framework. Approximately £1.8m of CHS+ works were carried out in total, achieving the following results:

- For every £1 spent, £1.78 was reinvested into the Welsh economy;
- 75% of the total expenditure was spent on businesses based in Wales
- £43,777 was contributed to the Welsh economy in the form of cash donations
- £18,025 was contributed to the Welsh economy in the form of in-kind donations of labour, goods and services during the period covered by this submission
- 14 people were hired during this period who were previously unemployed, and who will continue to be employed;
- Over 280 weeks of training was provided, including:
 - 7 apprenticeships started and over 122 weeks carried out; and
 - 6 traineeships completed amounting to over 112 weeks in total.
 - 3 work experience / internship opportunities were started and completed with over 36 weeks completed in total
 - 5 work trials were completed with over 10 weeks in total

Since June 2017, Carmarthenshire County Council and Pembrokeshire County Council entered into a joint procurement shared service for a period of two years. The aim of the shared service is to deliver regional benefits and efficiencies through shared use of resources.

Funding and Risk Management

Removal of the HRA Borrowing Cap

The Welsh Government Minister for Housing and Regeneration provided written confirmation (29/10/2018) that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had agreed in his budget statement, that the removal of the borrowing cap for HRA's applied to Wales as well as England. This significant change in policy will provide the opportunity for local authorities to deliver their Affordable Homes ambitions at pace and scale. We were already on this journey in Carmarthenshire and this plan has been developed with this new freedom to borrow at an affordable level as a key driver.

Major Repairs Allowance

Every year we receive £6 million from Welsh Government to support our capital investment. The grant comes with clear guidance on what it can and cannot be used for. The main condition is that it must be spent on property within the HRA. It cannot be used for revenue repairs or maintenance, demolition costs, repayment of borrowing etc. A full breakdown can be found in our MRA acceptance letter issued by Welsh Government.

The MRA makes a significant contribution towards achieving and maintaining the CHS. It is currently reviewed annually by Welsh Government and, as such, it is regularly under scrutiny. A reduction or end of the MRA could have a significant impact on our future investment plans.

Planning Assumptions

To help us plan our investments, we must make certain assumptions. Changes to our assumptions may mean that we have to re-visit the objectives included in this plan.

INCOME

Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) <i>i.e. the amount of capital funding we get from the Welsh Government</i>	£6m each year. This is on the basis that we receive £673 for each home.
Rent increase 2019/20	2.4% average
Future rent increase levels <i>Based on Welsh Government Policy</i>	Consumer Price Index increases only. Welsh Government will be producing a new policy from 2020/21 financial year.
Borrowing i.e. the amount we need to borrow to support our investment	£64m over next 3 years to maintain the CHS+ and deliver our Affordable Homes ambitions.

OTHER

Expenditure/income inflation	Employees' pay at 3.5% for 2019/20 then 2% per year for the next two years (as per assumptions for Council Fund).	
Right to Buy receipts i.e. Money we get from tenants' buying their home	No receipts from 1 st April 2015 following suspension of Right to Buy	
Balances on the revenue account i.e. the amount of money we need to keep in reserve	Minimum of £1.359m (based on £150 per property)	
SPENDING		
Assumed Borrowing costs i.e. the amount it costs to borrow money	Cost of existing and new debt: 2019/20: 4.57% 2020/21: 4.41% 2021/22: 4.41%	Cost of exiting HRAS: Average of 4.57%
Provision for Bad debt i.e. debt that we will be unable to recover	2019/20: £585k 2020/21: £770k 2021/22: £1110k	

Delivering efficiencies

This current business plan is supported by a drive to improve value for money over the next three years and enhance service delivery.

Over the next 12 months we will develop measures to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated in terms of cost and quality, whilst striving to meet tenants' expectations on service improvements.

CAPITAL SPENDING TO:-	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Maintain the standard:			
Internal works - kitchens, bathrooms, electrics, heating etc.	1,178	998	1,066
EWI, Render and Fascia (including gardens)	1,770	3,478	3,652
Roofing	1,292	1,086	1,140
Boiler replacements	680	563	941
Structural works - Estates and boundary walls	1,704	600	600
Voids and Major Works to homes	4,014	2,000	2,000
Support Tenant and Residents:			
Sheltered Scheme Investment (communal boilers)	499	714	0
Sheltered Scheme Investment	1,500	3,000	3,000
Adaptations	1,700	1,500	1,500
Environmental works	303	309	309
Provide more affordable homes:			
Housing Development Programme	15,452	15,952	13,000
Support the delivery of CHS+:			

Programme management	198	200	201
Stock condition information	150	100	100
Risk Reduction Measures	254	258	261
Sewerage treatment works & associated costs	184	0	0
TOTAL	30,878	30,758	27,770

CAPITAL FUNDING FROM:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Welsh Government Grant-MRA	6,190	6,190	6,190
Housing Finance Grant	3,452	3,452	0
External Borrowing	21,236	21,116	21,580
TOTAL	30,878	30,758	27,770

REVENUE SPENDING TO:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Repair and maintain homes	10,288	10,623	10,897
Supervision and management	10,189	10,402	10,574
Support services e.g. legal and finance	1,620	1,620	1,620
Provision for Bad debts	585	770	1,110
Capital charges	14,941	15,822	16,770
TOTAL	37,623	39,238	40,970
REVENUE FUNDING FROM:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Tenant rents	40,557	43,012	43,863
Service charges	706	720	734
Interest received	100	134	168
Housing Finance Grant 2	124	247	247
Water rates commission	401	409	417
Grants / Other	1,001	898	913
TOTAL	42,889	45,420	46,342
HRA END OF YEAR POSITION:	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Balance brought forward from last year	-14,002	-19,268	-25,450
HRA budgeted surplus (-)/ deficit (+)	-5,266	-6,182	-5,372
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	-19,268	-25,450	-30,822

Risk Management

Each year, as part of the HRA business planning process, we identify, assess and prioritise potential risks and consider the likelihood and impact of each. This exercise is carried out by each service delivery area. Once this has been done, we identify ways in which we can reduce or manage the potential risk and impact. These are recorded corporately and monitored regularly.

Three of the greatest risks identified in delivering this plan are:

- Maintaining up to date asset information about our stock;
- Uncertainty of the impact of market conditions with regard to inflation, pricing and availability of workforce, to inform the 30 year cost certainty exercise; and
- The impact of Universal Credit on tenants' ability to maintain their responsibilities and obligations to pay their total rent in advance for the week ahead.

All risks will be monitored by the CHS+ Steering Group on a regular basis.

Compliance, Verification and Monitoring

Compliance and Acceptable Fails

Recording compliance and acceptable fails is not a simple collection of condition information for things like kitchens, bathrooms, electrics and so on. It is a combination of occupancy and property condition information. Surveying of homes, collating of information, how we manage our data, and the ability to report 100% accurate information, are all data-hungry activities. The details of our compliance are set out in Appendix E, our full CHS+ compliance document is set out in Appendix F.

Acceptable Fails

An acceptable fail occurs when an individual component e.g. a kitchen or bathroom, has not been completed for one or more of the following reasons:

- Cost of remedy;
- Timing of remedy;
- Resident's choice; and
- Physical constraint

Energy Efficiency

We have had a number of different programmes running to improve the energy efficiency of homes. These programmes have helped save tenants money on their heating costs and improve the SAP rating of our homes. The average SAP across our stock is 65 out of 100.

Independent Verification

We believe that we report compliance accurately in achieving and maintaining the CHS+, and we will continue to do so. We will also back this up with further verification by:

- Demonstrating compliance by ensuring there is a clear separation of duties between CCC staff reporting compliance and those staff responsible for delivering the CHS+;
- Using internal staff in conjunction with Internal Audit to undertake desktop reviews;
- Agreeing and commencing a sample programme of stock condition visits every year, carried out by an independent verifier;
- Asking tenants how they would like to be part of the process of verification;
- Continuing to use service reviews to assess compliance. Some data is already independently collected, e.g. boiler inspections, EPCs and electrical tests; and
- Introducing Home Information packs for all new tenants, informing them of boiler inspections, asbestos advice, Energy Performance Certificates, electrical tests and when any outstanding CHS+ work will be carried out.

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Carmarthenshire Homes Standard+ (CHS+) HRA Business Plan

Appendices A-E

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Appendix A: *The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*

We are committed to delivering the CHS+ in a sustainable way as outlined in the Well-being Act. We do this by:



Looking at the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

- The Business Plan contributes to this by planning for the next 3 years and also over the longer term of 30 years. We do this by analysing our asset data and market conditions to enable us to maintain our existing stock, and plan our affordable housing delivery. We set out our plans to deliver a pre-tenancy service to enable tenants to sustain their tenancies as long as possible.



Understanding the root causes of the issues to prevent them reoccurring

- The Business Plan identifies the key issues that tenants have highlighted to us. We also monitor the demand for reactive repairs. All this information enables us to plan programmed works to resolve issues and prevent them reoccurring.



Taking an integrated approach so that we look at all well-being goals and objectives of other services and partners

- The Business Plan highlights how we contribute to the well-being of our tenants. Examples of this include delivering adaptations to meet the needs of tenants, re-housing tenants through the adapted home register to more suitable accommodation, working with Swansea and Cardiff University to carry out a health impact study, and carrying out estate improvement works to the local environment.



Collaboration - Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions

- The Business Plan is delivered in a Partnership approach between Housing and Property Services. It sets out our ambition to work with partners locally and regionally to deliver energy efficiency measures to existing and new homes to reduce fuel poverty for our tenants. Our procurement process is delivered through a collaborative approach ensuring community benefits are maximised.



Involving a diversity of population in decisions that affect them

- Tenant involvement in the delivery of the Business Plan is an overarching principle. We have set out our plans to produce a tenant engagement strategy and widen our support and advice services for both preventative services and to mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform. Tenants will continue to contribute to the development of both the CHS+ and the Environmental Improvement Programme.

The CHS+ business plan contributes to the seven Well-being goals under the sustainable development principles in the following way:

A more prosperous Wales
1
A resilient Wales
2
A healthier Wales
3
A more equal Wales
4
A Wales of cohesive communities
5
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
6
A globally responsible Wales
7

A Prosperous Wales

Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy:

We will focus on:

- Ensuring long-term economic and social benefits for Carmarthenshire through the Swansea Bay City Region and future European and external funding avenues.

A Healthier Wales

People in Carmarthenshire are healthier:

We will focus on:

- Increasing the availability of rented and affordable homes to support the needs of local people by building new homes, bringing empty homes back into use and ensuring an allocation of affordable homes on new developments;
- Mitigating the local impacts of welfare reform by supporting affected residents through the changes;
- Supporting residents suffering from fuel poverty and introducing renewable energy technology to our tenants’ homes in order to save them money on energy costs.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

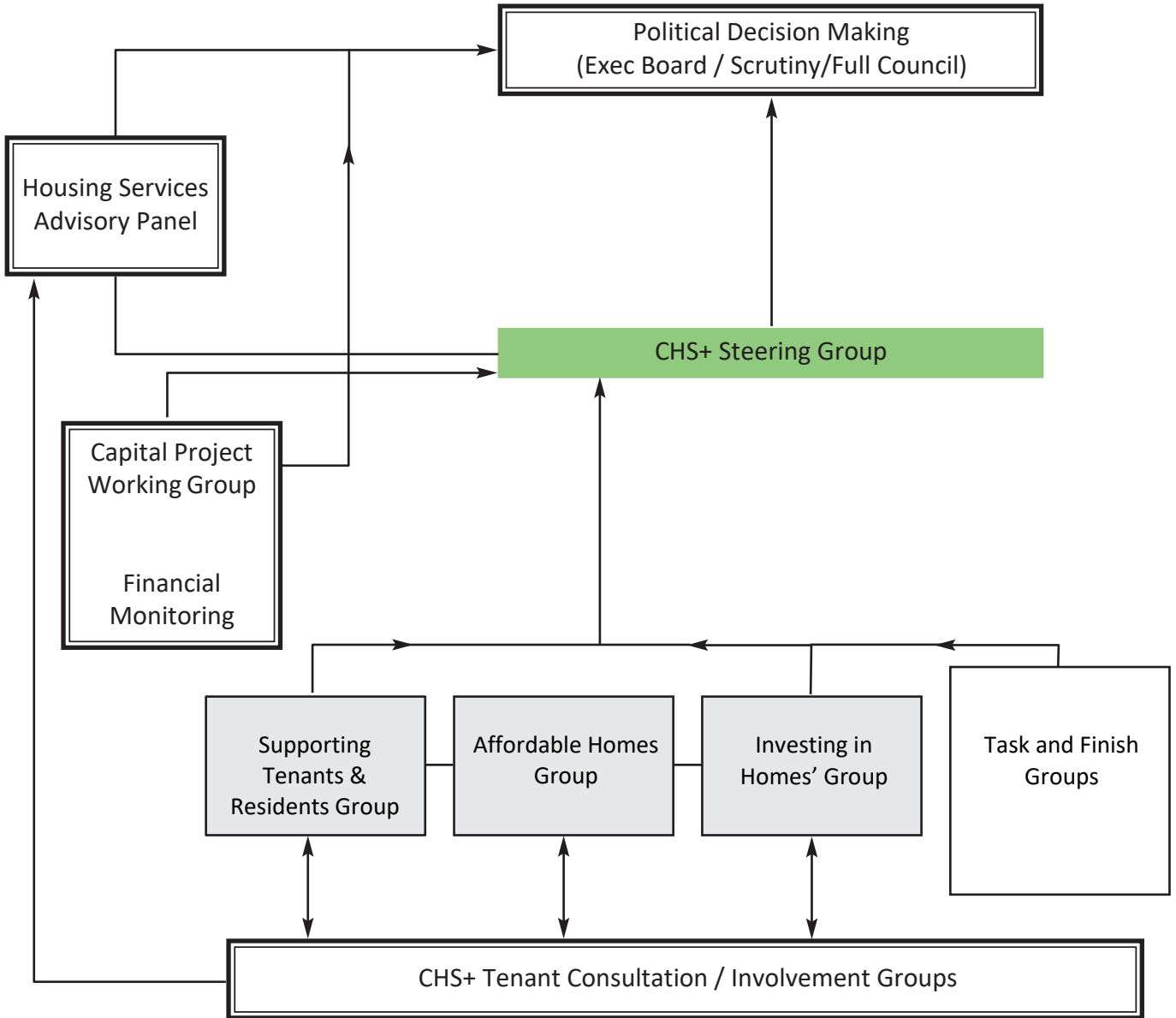
People who live, work and visit Carmarthenshire are safe and feel safer:

We will focus on:

- Reducing anti-social behaviour by working in partnership with other agencies and communities to tackle local problems.

Governance Structure

All actions in this Plan will be monitored on a bi-monthly basis by the CHS+ Steering Group. This group provides strategic direction and corporate leadership to ensure appropriate progression on the initiatives included.

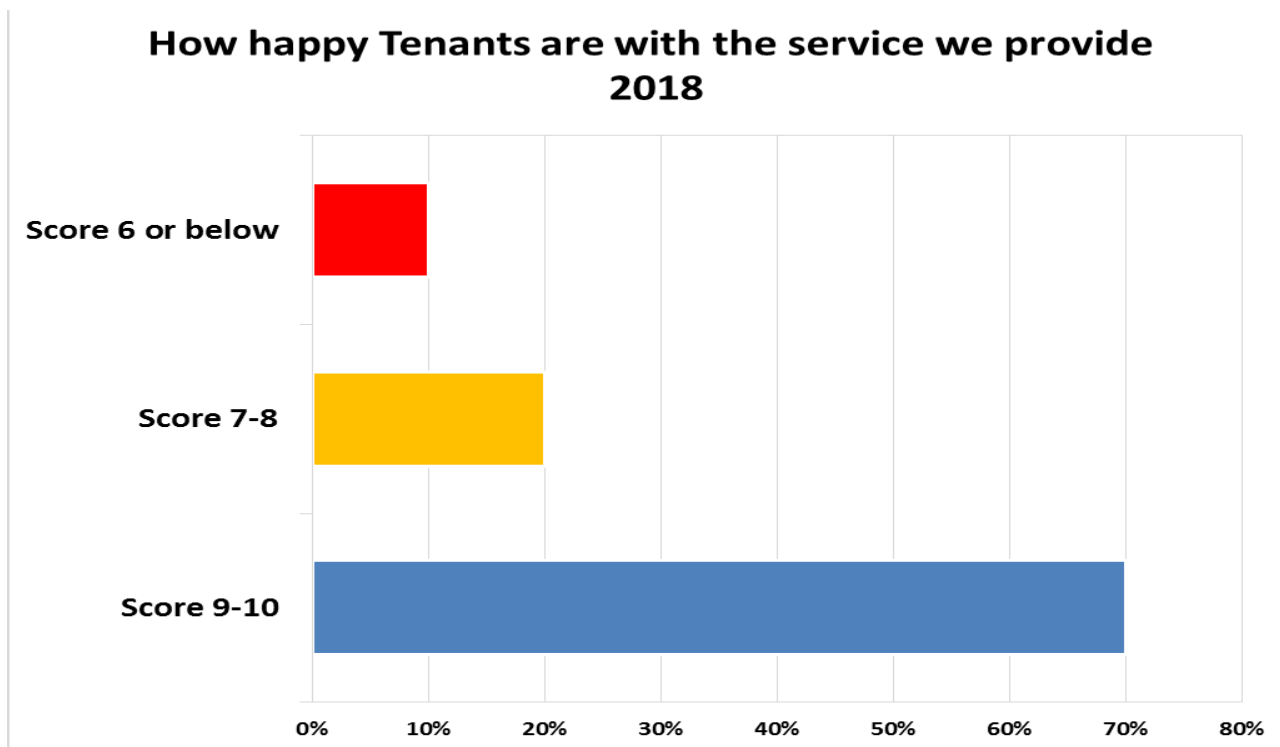


Appendix B: How Happy Tenants are with the Services we Provide

During 2017/18 we have continued to engage with tenants and other stakeholders in a number of ways. One of the key questions we asked throughout the year was “How happy are you with the service we provide?”

90% of tenants rated us with a score of 7 or above.

The results are provided below:



Appendix C: Stock, Tenant and Housing Choice Register Profile

Stock 01/11/18 Stock Return

Type	No. of Homes	Sheltered Homes
House	4968	
Bungalows	2164	
Flats	1935	509
Maisonettes	40	
Bedsit	21	
Total	9128	

Stock Make Up

Carmarthenshire County Council's HRA stock (as set out below) comprises 9,128 homes, including 509 sheltered homes, and an additional 221 leasehold homes.

The following table sets out the HRA housing stock by Ward:

Ward	Homes	Ward	Homes
Abergwili	40	Llandybie	210
Ammanford	150	Llanegwad	43
Betws	76	Llanfihangel Aberbythych	20
Bigyn	387	Llanfihangel Ar Arth	123
Burry Port	161	Llangadog	46
Bynea	262	Llangeler	180
Carmarthen Town North	404	Llangennech	245
Carmarthen Town South	159	Llangunnor	173
Carmarthen Town West	139	Llangyndeyrn	193
Cenarth	59	Llannon	262
Cilycwm	26	Llansteffan	46
Cynwyl Elfed	62	Llanybydder	138
Cynwyl Gaeo	13	Lliedi	274
Dafen	225	Llwynhendy	614
Elli	58	Manordeilo & Salem	22
Felinfoel	254	Pembrey	224
Garnant	140	Penygroes	74
Glanamman	151	Pontaman	143
Glanymor	516	Pontyberem	185
Glyn	105	Quarter Bach	204
Gorslas	240	Saron, Ammanford	259
Hendy	102	St Clears	102
Hengoed	227	St Ishmael	50
Kidwelly	198	Swiss Valley	17
Laugharne	90	Trelech	29
Llanboidy	19	Trimsaran	207
Llanddarog	81	Tycroes	91
Llandeilo	103	Tyisha	298
Llandovery	123	Whitland	86

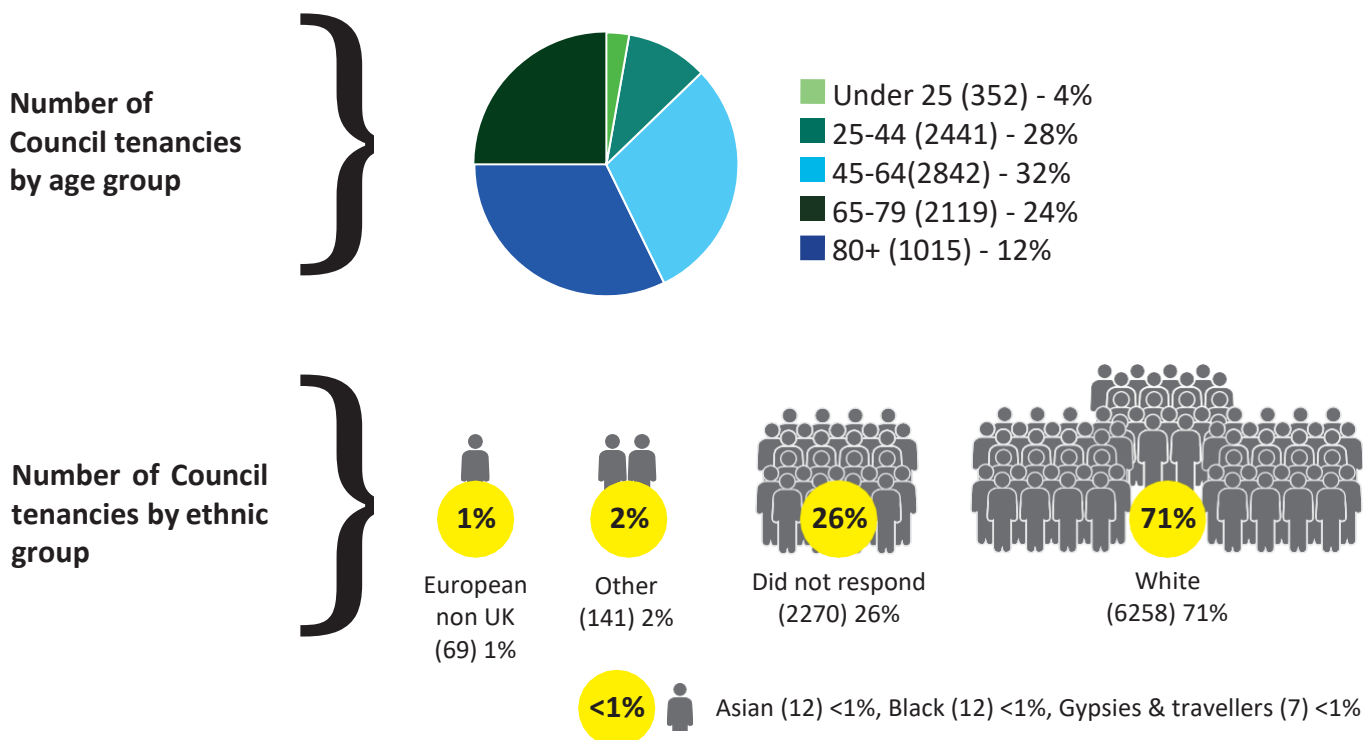
The housing stock comprises 4,968 houses and 2,164 bungalows, with the remainder made up of 1,487 flats, bedsits and maisonettes. The majority of the stock is 2 and 3 bedroom homes. 104 of the homes have 4 bedrooms, and only two, are 5 and 6 bedrooms.

Type of Home	Bedrooms							Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	
Flats		643	775	7				1425
Bedsits	21	1						22
Maisonettes			9	31				40
Bungalows	1	362	1770	30	1			2164
House	3	19	1136	3706	102	1	1	4968
Sheltered flats		460	42	6	1			509
Total	25	1485	3732	3780	104	1	1	9128

Tenant Profile

We know that 12% of our lead tenants are aged 80 or over and a further 24% are aged 65 to 79. As a result, 36% of our lead tenants are 65 or above. Only 4% of our lead tenants are under 25. Furthermore, 28% of our lead tenants are aged 25-44 with the remaining 32% are aged 45 to 64.

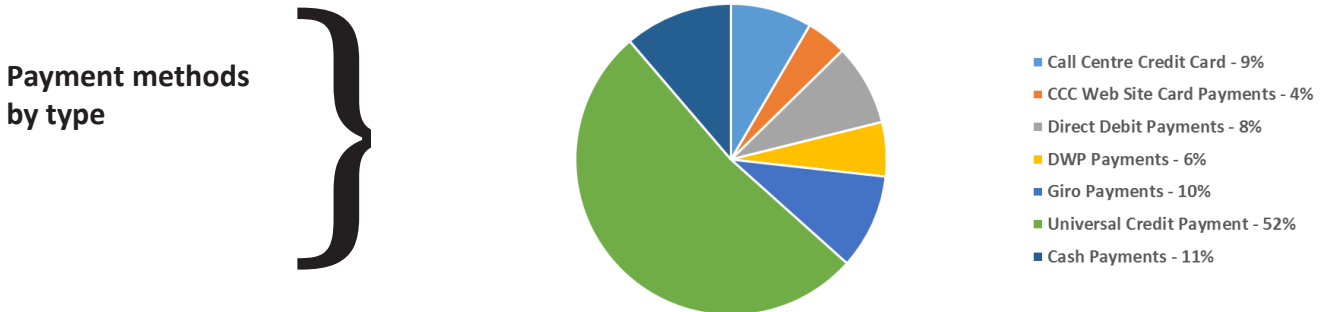
We know that 71% of our lead tenants are white British. A further 26% did not provide information about their ethnic group.



Universal Credit Tenant Payment Profile

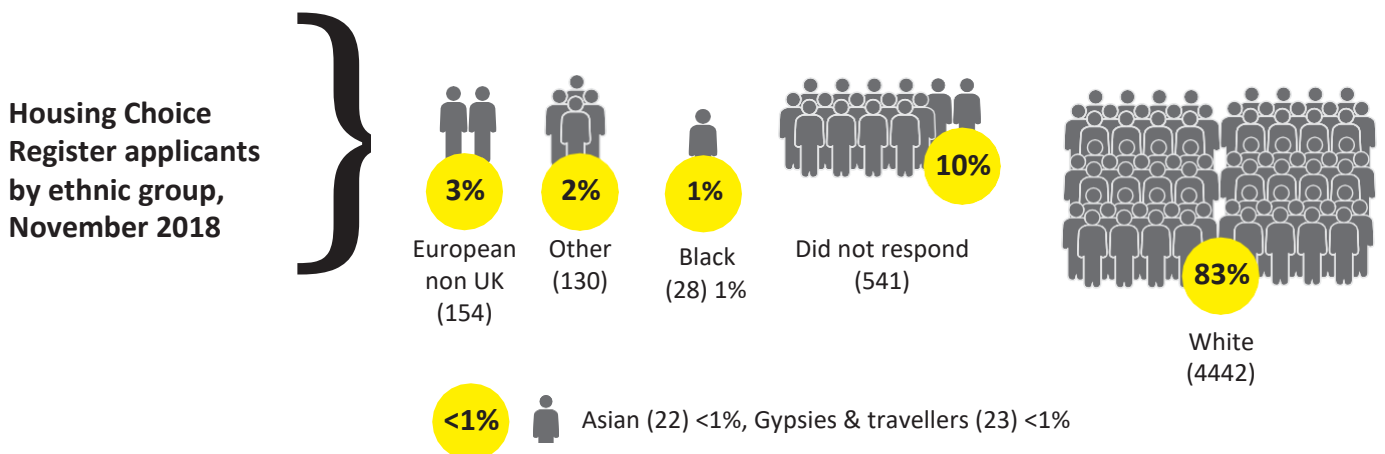
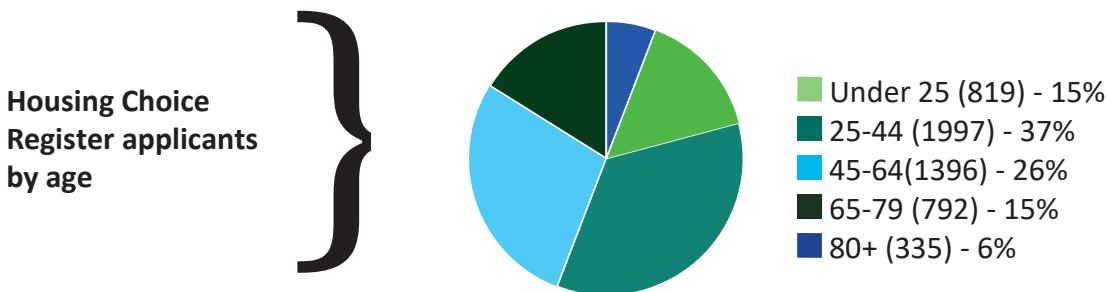
For tenants currently claiming Universal Credit, we know that only 8% are paying their rent by direct debit. A further 6% are still receiving DWP direct payments and 52% are receiving Universal Credit Payments direct to CCC.

TENANT Payment METHODS



Housing Choice Applicants Profile

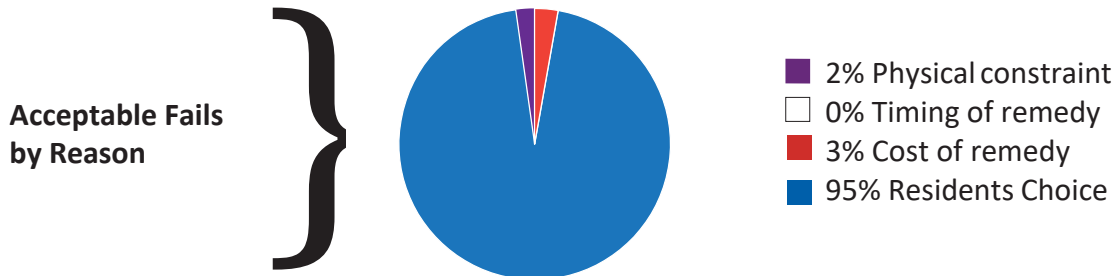
We know that 37% of our lead applicants are aged 25 to 44 with a further 15% aged under 25. 6% are aged 80+ and the remaining 42% are aged 45 to 79. We know that 83% are white British and a further 10% of our lead applicants did not provide information about their ethnic group.



Appendix D: Acceptable Fails

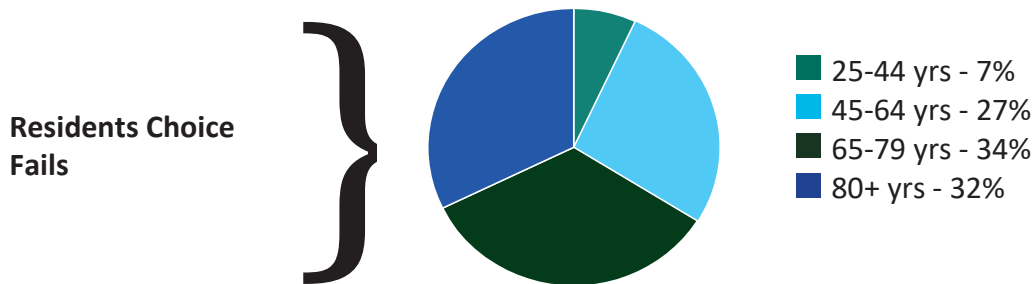
The Welsh Government Outlines ‘acceptable fails’ as a home which meets the standard but has not had all works carried out to make it full compliant. There are different reasons for why these acceptable fails would occur.

Some tenants have chosen not to have the work done (Residents’ choice) because they were happy with their homes, have made their own improvements or some, particularly older tenants, do not want the disruption. This is, by far, the main reason why homes do not currently meet the standard.



We know that 95% of our acceptable fails are as a result of residents’ choice. The remaining 5% being the cost of the remedy or physical constraints.

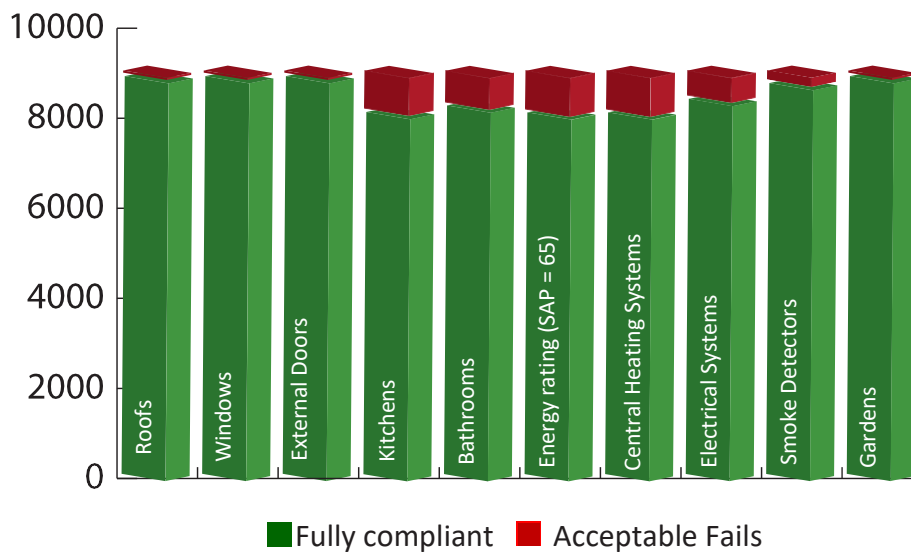
We also know that 32% of the residents who chose not to have the CHS+ works completed are aged 80 or over and a further 34% are between the age of 65 and 79.



Appendix E: WHQS Compliance

The following tables set out our achievement of meeting the CHS+ in 2015 by components, together with the annual programme to maintain compliance of the CHS+.

WHQS Compliance by Component



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*Achieving and
Maintaining the
Carmarthenshire
Homes' Standard +*

*Compliance Policy
Appendix F*

February 2019

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2. The context.....	2
3. Our approach to achieving and maintaining the CHS+ in the future	3
• What is our policy statement?	
• How have we developed the approach?	
• How are we interpreting the CHS+ and what have we done to achieve it?	
• Further development and new opportunities.	
• What has been achieved to date?	
• What have been the wider benefits of delivering the CHS+?	
• How will we go about maintaining the CHS+ in the future?	
• How will we deal with homes that do not meet the CHS+?	
• Have we any plans to improve the CHS+?	
• How do we go about monitoring progress on the CHS+?	
• How do we prepare our financial plan to deliver our work programmes to maintain the standard?	
• How do we manage the stock information to inform future planning to maintain the CHS+?	
• How do we link with Welsh Government reporting with our business and asset plans?	
• How will we go about verifying progress in the future?	

1. The purpose....

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to confirm our approach in achieving and maintaining (and further improving) the Carmarthenshire Homes' Standard (CHS). It takes account of the guidance produced by the Welsh Government in 2015 in terms of compliance and verification.

2. The context....

- 2.1. Carmarthenshire has been committed to achieving the CHS by providing homes for council tenants that are modern, safe, fuel efficient, situated in well maintained neighbourhoods and are well managed.
- 2.2. The CHS is an amended version of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard that has been defined by the tenants themselves. In 2006, the Council started its ambitious programme to achieve the CHS by the end of 2015.
- 2.3. We are pleased to say that we have delivered this programme, on time, to homes where tenants have agreed to have the work carried out. Even though these programmes have been delivered, this does not mean the end of the CHS. There remains much more to do.
- 2.4. During 2015, we introduced the concept of the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+), building on the success of the CHS and extending to ensure we maintain and improve on what has been achieved.
- 2.5. We have acknowledged the importance of strategic asset management in providing the foundation for our investment plans, as well as the central role of supporting tenants and residents in everything we do, is critical to the delivery of the plan. The 2019/22 business plan covers two key themes that have been identified in terms of future investment. These are:
 1. **THEME 1- Investing in our Homes' and the Environment.**
 2. **THEME 2 - Providing more homes.**

3. Our approach to achieving and maintaining the CHS+ in the future

3.1. The following table will confirm our approach in achieving and maintaining (and improving) the CHS+ in the future. Where appropriate, it will confirm policy decisions that have already been made e.g. through documents like our CHS+ Business Plan 2018-21. It will also identify any current gaps, and how they will be addressed, to deliver the standard in the future.

<p><i>What is our policy statement?</i></p>	<p>In 2015 we achieved the CHS+ to homes where tenants have agreed to have work completed - well before WG’s target of 2020. This is in line with our agreed assumptions that the standard of our homes will be to the CHS+; and replacement programmes will be based on condition, not time.</p> <p>Tenants tell us that getting repairs done on time and maintaining homes to a good standard is important to them. Maintaining the standard is now a statutory duty, and the Council has made a commitment to achieve and maintain the CHS, which states that all homes will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a good state of repair; • free from damp; • free from significant condensation; • structurally stable; • in safe and attractive environments; • suitable for the household; and • managed to the CHS+
<p><i>How have we developed the approach?</i></p>	<p>The commitment and support of our tenants’ and Members’ continues to be important to us to ensure that we maintain and improve on the CHS+ going forward.</p> <p>Tenant and community engagement has always underpinned the delivery of the CHS+, but we want to do more. We want to get better by engaging as widely as possible and maximising opportunities to help build stronger communities.</p> <p>Tenants and stakeholders have been consulted through the Tenant Consultative Forum and by face to face interviews and their views taken into account in preparing this Plan. The Plan is updated annually taking into account these views, the latest stock condition information, updated financial information, WG Guidance and any revised Council policies.</p> <p>All actions in this Plan will be monitored every two months by the CHS+ Steering Group. This group provides strategic direction and corporate leadership to ensure progress is made on the initiatives in the Plan. The CHS+ Steering Group is also responsible for monitoring progress, reviewing and managing the overall 30 year financial plan that supports our planned investment.</p>

During 2018/19 we have continued to engage with tenants and other stakeholders in a number of ways. One of the key questions we asked during our Home Checker visit was “How happy are you with the service we provide?”

From carrying out this initial work on Home Checker we will:

- Continue with Home Checker and look at ways to improve how we capture data from the visits;
- Further improve our approach to preventative maintenance in next year’s CHS+ Business Plan;
- Develop and encourage tenants to take a proactive approach in maintaining their homes to a high standard;
- Make our services more effective and responsive by tailoring them more closely to the needs of our tenants;
- Help more tenants with a range of issues including saving money on fuel bills, budgeting and financial assistance and housing support; and
- Further develop our approach to tenant feedback in order that we analyse trends over time.

The commitment and support of our tenants’ and Members’ continues to be important to us to ensure that we maintain and improve on the CHS+ in the future.

Tenant and community engagement has always underpinned the delivery of the CHS+, but we want to do more. We want to get better by engaging as widely as possible and maximising opportunities to help build stronger communities.

We asked TPAS Cymru to conduct an independent report into tenant participation and involvement with our tenants. As a result, we identified there was a lack of diversity and a low number of tenants who engage with tenant networks. These issues are not unique to Carmarthenshire and can be demonstrated across Wales.

We also believe we should give our tenants the opportunity to influence decisions about their homes, the area they live and ensure the services they receive achieve value for money. Our vision is:-

“To make it easy and inviting for tenants to get involved in shaping strategic decisions and improve services through meaningful involvement by ensuring residents have the relevant skills”.

How are we interpreting the CHS+, and what have we

In order that our vision for participation fully reflects the work we undertake and for us to be consistent with other social landlords, we believe our vision should be set out along the following key principles:

Improving communities – Ensuring that our communities are positive places to live by fostering a sense of community and ensuring that estates are well maintained;

**done to
achieve it?**

Improving services – Ensuring that services delivered by us are those that tenants wish to receive, and that these are delivered to the highest standards;
Improving accountability – Ensuring that the views of our tenants are heard when decisions are made at all levels, and that these decisions are communicated to tenants in a transparent manner; and
Improving resident skills – Ensuring that tenants have the relevant skills to take part in managing their homes and providing broader support to tenants within the community to develop their skills.

We have reviewed the participation techniques we currently use, and it showed that newsletters are by far the most popular means of communication for tenants. There are three further methods of participation that we can use to improve the way that tenant participation is undertaken. These are:

More use single issue meetings;
Increased use of digital participation; and
Strengthening challenge and responsibility.

We aim to deliver on these principles by introducing the following new activities:

Changing the current structures of tenant involvement to encourage more involvement from under-represented groups;
Improving systems for gathering and acting on tenant feedback;
Using ‘Planning for Real’ as a method of engagement and consultation on estate issues;
Increasing the use of digital services to reach out to under-represented groups and to those who do not want to attend meetings;
Putting forward proposals for a challenge panel for our tenants;
Holding single issue meetings; and
Surveying our tenants (STAR Survey) to establish baseline information, and re-survey every three years and periodically on single issues.

As well as giving their views on general engagement activities, tenants and residents have also highlighted other priorities in terms of supporting them. They have told us that they would like us to focus on providing more advice and support for them with bills and benefits that will help them to maintain their homes. We will be addressing these priorities in a number of areas.

**Further
Development
and new
opportunities**

Roll out of Home Checker visits - In 2018/19 we carried out basic checks to all Council homes (where we gained access) through servicing contractors, repair visits and tenancy support calls. As a result of these visits about 5% of homes were identified as requiring a more in-depth visit by a housing officer.

Some issues identified and attended to in terms of preventative maintenance, included:

- Leaking showers;
- Loose tiles and guttering;
- Broken windows;

- Window locks and handles not working;
- Plugs and sockets loose;
- Toilet leaks;
- Extractor fans not working;
- Damp; and
- Condensation.

The continuation of our Home Checker visits will enable us to identify specifically what help tenants want, such as support with Universal Credit and household budget management. This will enable us to plan for the future and identify preventative maintenance and component failure.

Health and Safety – approach to fire management – We have now further reviewed the fire risk assessments on all of our purpose built blocks of flats, including sheltered schemes. For each block of flats, where we have identified improvements to be made and an action plan has been developed. The risk assessments are monitored by the ‘Investing in our Homes’ Group.

Investing in sheltered housing – During 2018/19 we assessed the current standards and condition of our sheltered housing schemes and started a pilot programme of upgrading. We will also continue our annual sheltered housing scheme programme of; Communal boiler replacement, maintaining and servicing lifts, upgrading aerial and satellite infrastructures and transferring lifelines to our Telecare service

Assisting with regeneration plans – The Council has been working with local residents, and other key stakeholders, to develop a masterplan for the potential regeneration of the Station Road area in the Tyisha ward, Llanelli. We have adopted the “Planning for Real” approach, which is a nationally recognised community planning process. From this information we have been developing our masterplan for the area, and delivery options, which will be presented to the community in the spring 2019.

Retrofitting our existing housing stock with low carbon technology – We are working with the Welsh School of Architecture at Cardiff University on a small number of our homes. The ‘systems-based approach’ combines renewable energy supply, energy storage and energy demand reduction technologies creating a holistic approach to retrofitting. We shall be analysing the results of the installation of low carbon technology in terms of costs, benefits to tenants and ease of use.

Homes as Power Stations – We want to maximise the impact of the Swansea Bay City Region Deal ‘Delivering Homes as Power Stations’ project which will; carry out an extensive new house build and retrofit programme, develop and seek to attract new sector supply chains help to generate sustainable and affordable homes and address fuel and focus on smart technologies. We see this as a huge opportunity for Carmarthenshire and are currently working up a detailed business plan to confirm what delivery will look like, across tenures, over the next five years.

What has been achieved to date?

The following table sets out our achievement of meeting the CHS+ in 2015 by components, together with the annual programme to maintain compliance of the CHS+.

WHQS Compliance by Component



2018/19 main achievements:

- Over £19m spent to maintain the CHS+ in tenants' homes;
- Over 240 additional affordable homes delivered during our third year of delivery;
- Over 530 adaptations completed, with over £1m being invested to ensure tenants' homes meet their needs;
- Over £285,000 spent on 35 Environmental Improvement Projects (plus £60,000 on improving garage plots, demolishing garages, clearing areas and creating car parking spaces);
- Managed improvements and lettings of 900 homes, including new homes added to our stock;
- Started development on two sites for 48 new affordable homes in Llanelli and Pembrey;
- Continued our time-banking initiative, Spice, with over 57,970 of total volunteer hours being given. Over 1,800 tenants and their family members took part;
- Housed over 40 households who have specific needs through our Accessible Housing Register (AHR);
- Introduced a Choice Based Letting scheme, Canfod Cartref, that gave tenants more choice and which will make tenancies more sustainable ;
- The findings of our Health Impact Study with Swansea University showed the positive impact on health of investing over £200m in tenants homes since 2007. This investment also brings social, economic and environmental benefits for all;
- Shortlisted for CIH Cymru Wales Housing awards recognising our work on improving tenants' homes;
- Over 250 people attended 23 comprehensive consultation events using "Planning for Real" to engage with residents of Tyisha ward in Llanelli;
- Taken on three apprentices in Property Maintenance;
- Re-let the gas servicing contract for tenant homes;
- Set up a new minor works framework with up to date Schedules of Rates to ensure value for money for housing repairs; and

- Started to realign our Property Maintenance section to improve arrangements for future lettings and maintenance of Council homes.

What have been the wider benefits of delivering the CHS+?

The Council is committed to:

- Contributing to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the wider community;
- Asking tenderers to deliver community benefits in our tendering activities through the delivery of the contracts or frameworks awarded;
- Maximising the value for every pound we spend, applying a community benefits approach to any tender valued over £1million; and
- Capturing and recording community benefits utilising WG's community benefits measurement tool.

For contracts completed in 2017/18, three contractors were used through the South West Wales Contractors Framework. Approximately £1.8m of CHS+ works were carried out in total, achieving the following results:

- For every £1 spent, £1.78 was reinvested into the Welsh economy;
- 75% of the total expenditure was spent on businesses based in Wales
- £43,777 was contributed to the Welsh economy in the form of cash donations
- £18,025 was contributed to the Welsh economy in the form of in-kind donations of labour, goods and services during the period covered by this submission
- 14 people were hired during this period who were previously unemployed, and who will continue to be employed;
- Over 280 weeks of training was provided, including:
 - 7 apprenticeships started and over 122 weeks carried out; and
 - 6 traineeships completed amounting to over 112 weeks in total.
 - 3 work experience / internship opportunities were started and completed with over 36 weeks completed in total
 - 5 work trials were completed with over 10 weeks in total

Since June 2017, Carmarthenshire County Council and Pembrokeshire County Council entered into a joint procurement shared service for a period of two years. The aim of the shared service is to deliver regional benefits and efficiencies through shared use of resources.

How will we go about maintaining

Where tenants have already had work completed, the emphasis will be to maintain these to CHS (+) in the future. For each of the CHS (+) components, there is an estimated lifespan built into our planning that allows us to work out the anticipated financial investment that will be needed to maintain the standard.

We have made a policy commitment, however, through the latest version of our business plan to:

- Replace components based on their condition; and
- Implement a programme of inspections to monitor the condition of homes.

Homes will be visited in advance of when components are due to need replacing to assess their condition. At this point we may decide to confirm the component life has been extended or is in need of replacing. We will inform tenants of this decision and the reasons for it.

The following table identifies the components needing inspection over the next three years to ensure they continue to meet the CHS (+):

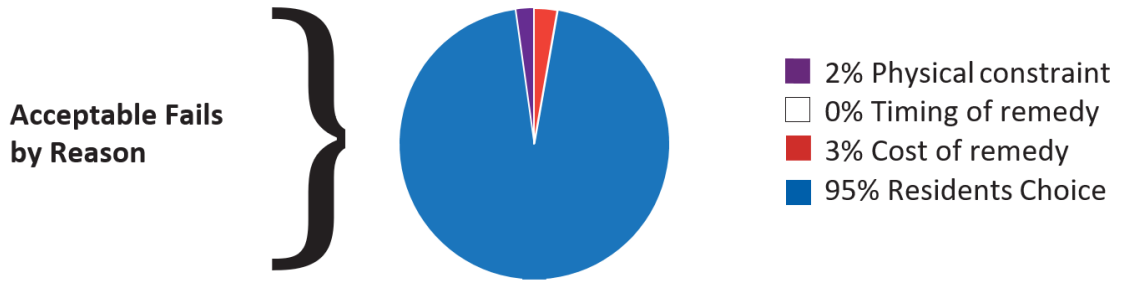
CAPITAL SPENDING TO:

CAPITAL SPENDING TO:-	Budget 2019/20 (£000s)	Budget 2020/21 (£000s)	Budget 2021/22 (£000s)
Maintain the standard:			
Internal works - kitchens, bathrooms, electrics, heating etc.	1,178	998	1,066
EWI, Render and Fascia (including gardens)	1,770	3,478	3,652
Roofing	1,292	1,086	1,140
Boiler replacements	680	563	941
Structural works - Estates and boundary walls	1,704	600	600
Voids and Major Works to homes	4,014	2,000	2,000
Support Tenant and Residents:			
Sheltered Scheme Investment (communal boilers)	499	714	0
Sheltered Scheme Investment	1,500	3,000	3,000
Adaptations	1,700	1,500	1,500
Environmental works	303	309	309
Provide more affordable homes:			
Housing Development Programme	15,452	15,952	13,000
Support the delivery of CHS+:			
Programme management	198	200	201
Stock condition information	150	100	100
Risk Reduction Measures	254	258	261
Sewerage treatment works & associated costs	184	0	0
TOTAL	30,878	30,758	27,770

There are some homes that currently fail to meet the CHS+. These are known as “acceptable fails”.

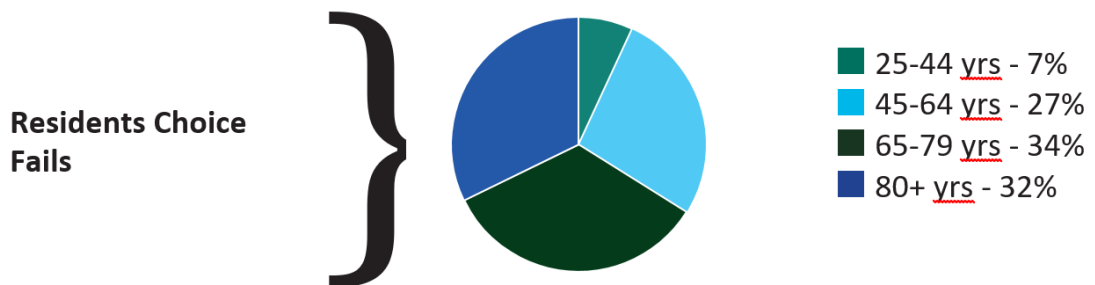
do not currently meet the CHS+?

Some tenants have chosen not to have the work done (Residents' choice) because they were happy with their homes, have made their own improvements or some, particularly older tenants, do not want the disruption. This is, by far, the main reason why homes do not currently meet the standard.



We know that 95% of our acceptable fails are as a result of residents' choice. The remaining 5% being the cost of the remedy or physical constraints.

We also know that 32% of the residents who chose not to have the CHS+ works completed are aged 80 or over and a further 34% are between the age of 65 and 79.



For homes where part or some of the work has previously been declined we will:

- Contact tenants who have previously declined CHS+ works to discuss any issues they have and agree with them when works are to be programmed; and
- Ensure homes have the appropriate smoke alarms, heat detectors or carbon monoxide devices, and discuss with tenants how we can upgrade these to improve the fire safety within their homes.

For empty homes where there is some or all of the CHS+ work to be completed we will:

- Complete individual options appraisals if homes are no longer fit for purpose to determine best course of action, including considering demolishing homes, or disposing of them;
- Make sure that homes are maintained to our standards and any repairs from previous tenants have been carried out before a new tenant moves in, together with making sure gardens are clear of rubbish and safe to use;
- Bring all homes up to the CHS+, except in exceptional circumstances, such as people fleeing domestic violence, flood or fire (this list is not exhaustive);

- Ensuring every new tenant receives a home information pack, to include information on boiler inspections, asbestos advice, Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), electrical tests, recycling and service charges if applicable; and
- Provide additional investment to bring the “back-log” of major works voids back into use.

We have recently reviewed our approach to fire safety across all our stock, and our approach to when tenants have requested not to have work carried out. We believe that it is in the best interest of tenants, and to protect our investment, that tenants will no longer have the option to decline electrical works including the installation of hard wired smoke detectors and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors.

For homes where we believe the above work has not been upgraded, we will:

- Continuing our annual programme of safety checks on gas fires, and gas or oil boilers, and only replace boilers with energy-efficient condensing boilers, when defective and no longer economical to run; and
- Checking homes have the appropriate smoke alarms, heat detectors or carbon monoxide devices, and discussing with tenants how we can upgrade these;
- Gain access to ensure that the necessary works are completed; and
- Install servicing timers when we gain access (where a tenant repeatedly does not give us access), to help tenants understand and manage their responsibilities under their tenancy agreement and help us to protect the lives of tenants.

Have we any plans to improve the CHS +?

As has been stated our CHS(+) Business Plan takes account of supporting tenant’ and residents in their home, increasing the supply of affordable of homes as well as maintaining the standard to existing homes.

We are looking to improve the existing standards to maintain and this will need to be carried out in partnership with tenants and members.

CHS was originally set by our tenants and it is very important that any changes are driven by them, within the financial resources that are available. Examples of areas that may be considered include:

- Reviewing specification of key components e.g. bathrooms/kitchens
- Increasing technology in the home to save money; and
- Developing a different standard for older people’s accommodation to suit future needs

How do we go about monitoring progress on the CHS+?

As well as our reporting mechanisms to Welsh Government our CHS(+) compliance is monitored and reported through a robust governance structure that includes:

- A cross departmental Director led Steering Group
- Operational sub groups aligned to our three main themes

- A Project Working Group focusing on financial monitoring
- A Housing Services Advisory Panel consisting of tenants, members and officers; and
- A CHS+ Consultative Group

We also have a Corporate and Departmental Performance Management Framework that monitors quarterly/ monthly performance on key CHS+ measures. Measures are also reported through our Scrutiny and Improvement Plan processes.

How do we prepare our financial plan to deliver our work programmes to maintain the standard?

As part of the development of the annual CHS+ business plan we;

- Assess variations in forecast expenditure and income, including likely rent increases and interest payments,
- Consider emerging pressures and opportunities in consultation with service managers and tenants e.g. relating to what matters to tenants, new legislation, demographic changes and asset management priorities,
- Carry out a cost certainty exercise over three, five and 30 years (three year detailed component analysis); and
- Confirm level of investment possible in relation to our borrowing cap.

In order to make sure we are fully equipped to maintain the CHS (+) in the future we are now investing in a new HRA Business Planning model, developed by Capita Housing and Consultancy. The model is specifically designed for use with the new financing regime for local authorities with retained stock.

The model generates a full set of revenue and capital cash flows, based on the best currently available local information. It produces a range of summary tables and charts, offering flexibility in how we use it. With a relatively few number of inputs, the model will produce a full set of forecasts. More complex modelling can also be carried out if needed.

How do we manage the stock information to inform future planning to maintain the CHS+?

Stock Condition

Before implementing the CHS an internal asset management database was developed to produce the programme of works. This was populated through an 80% stock condition survey and information received from major works programmes at the time. The remaining property data was modelled giving a high level of accuracy to achieve the CHS.

Managing housing assets goes beyond just investing in good repair and improvements. Asset management is also about reviewing and potentially changing the asset base to end up with the right accommodation in the right location, supported by excellent, flexible services for our tenants. It must consider quality and value for money, particularly the whole life of a home and how running costs will affect tenants.

By applying an effective asset management strategy to our 9,000 plus homes, it will also enable us to meet our legal requirement of maintaining the CHS+ in the future.

Consequently our approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Carrying out regular stock condition surveys to assess condition, use and required investment;
- A planned maintenance programme achieving economies by replacing components e.g. kitchen, bathrooms etc. based on need, not time;
- A regular cyclical maintenance programme for certain components in a home e.g. heating appliances, electrical upgrades and external painting;
- A continual programme of works to meet Health and Safety requirements e.g. asbestos removal and structural repairs;
- A maintenance service to respond to unplanned failures in homes and to prevent deterioration in their condition e.g. boiler replacements;
- An efficient and effective voids repair service, helping to quicken the repairs process and save money by carrying out CHS+ works when a home becomes empty;
- A programme of environmental estate improvements that is strategically targeted;
- A basic check to all homes on an annual basis through our existing visits;
- A more in-depth visit to homes where there are potential issues in terms of condition, tenancy or welfare issues;
- Continuing to invest in adapting homes to suit the needs of tenants;
- Understanding the future investment needs for our sheltered housing stock, linking in with our Care Home development programme;
- Completing individual options appraisals if homes are no longer fit for purpose to determine the best course of action, including considering demolishing homes, or disposing of them;
- Completing options appraisals on sites that may need changing/converting into homes that can better meet housing need; and
- Delivering the targets within the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan.

When considering the above we will:

- Engage with tenants, stakeholders and Members using new ways of participation and challenging;
- As far as is possible, meet tenants aspirations and priorities;
- Maximise our assets and minimise liabilities;
- Seek value for money in all investment decisions and contract procurement;
- Comply with current and future regulations;
- Create good neighbourhoods for council tenants and their neighbours; and
- Provide assurance to the council's auditors and regulators that its housing service is well managed.

We fully recognise that in order to achieve the above we must ensure that:

- The right structures, skills, resources and capacity are in place to manage future programmes, procurement and contract management effectively;
- Robust stock condition information, data and analysis is in place to produce programmes of investment that will appropriately maintain and improve standards, as well as services to tenants;
- Our data is further enhanced and regularly validated by feedback from all programmed and cyclical repairs, and maintenance activities; and
- We complete our cost certainty exercise for our overarching 30 year financial plan.

Over the next 12 months we will be specifically focusing on ensuring that asset management resources, both people and systems, are challenged to make sure they are in the right areas for the future. Our joined-up approach will enable us to:

- Commence a rolling programme of stock condition survey to verify our cost certainty business plan, identify gaps and provide independent verification;
- Understand why work has not been completed within the stock e.g. the tenant has requested that no work be carried out; and
- Review our Asset Management Systems and Strategy to ensure all stock is fit for both current and emerging needs.

How do we link Welsh Government reporting with our business and asset plans?

We submit a three year Business Plan to the Welsh Government on an annual basis that reports progress on the delivery of the CHS (+). Underpinning our business plan will be our stock condition, asset management information and our 30 year financial projections.

We also provide quarterly monitoring reports on progress of the Business Plan to the Welsh Government as part of our Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) application, which is an annual grant of over £6 million to support investment in tenant homes.

Maintaining the CHS+ is now considered a medium risk by the Authority as part of its risk assessment process, and is still supported by robust governance arrangements through the Director led cross departmental Steering Group.

How will we go about verifying progress in the future?

Compliance and Acceptable Fails

Recording compliance and acceptable fails is not a simple collection of condition information for things like kitchens, bathrooms, electrics etc. It is a combination of occupancy and property condition information. Surveying of homes, collating of information, how we manage our data, and the ability to report 100% accurate information, are all data-hungry activities.

Energy Efficiency

We have had a number of different programmes running to improve the energy efficiency of homes. These programmes have helped save tenants money on their heating costs and improve the SAP rating of our homes. The average SAP across our stock is 65 out of 100.

Independent Verification

Whilst we believe that we are, and will continue to, accurately report compliance in achieving and maintaining the CHS+, we will also back this up with further verification by:

- Demonstrating compliance by ensuring there is a clear separation of duties between Carmarthenshire County Council staff reporting compliance and those staff responsible for delivering the CHS+;
- Using internal staff in conjunction with Internal Audit to undertake desktop reviews;
- Agreeing and commencing a sample programme of stock condition visits every year, carried out by an independent verifier;
- Asking tenants how they would like to be part of the process of verification;
- Continuing to use service reviews to assess compliance. Some data is already independently collected, e.g. boiler inspections, EPC's and electrical tests; and
- Introducing Home Information packs for all new tenants, informing them of boiler inspections, Asbestos advice, Energy Performance Certificates, electrical tests and when any outstanding CHS+ work will be carried out.

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COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd JANUARY 2019

Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2018/19

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That the Scrutiny Committee receives the budget monitoring report for the Housing, Regeneration, Planning and Leisure & Recreation Services and considers the budgetary position.

Reasons:

- To provide Scrutiny with an update on the latest budgetary position as at 31st October 2018, in respect of 2018-19.

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holders:

- Cllr. Linda Evans (Housing)
- Cllr. Emlyn Dole (Economic Development)
- Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths (Culture, Sport & Tourism)
- Cllr. David Jenkins (Resources)

<p>Directorate: Corporate Services</p> <p>Name of Service Director: Chris Moore</p> <p>Report Author: Chris Moore</p>	<p>Designation:</p> <p>Director of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Tel No. / E-Mail Address:</p> <p>01267 224120 CMoore@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23rd JANUARY 2019

Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2018/19

The Financial monitoring Report is presented as follows:

Revenue Budgets

Appendix A

Summary position for the Community Scrutiny Committee. Services within the Community Scrutiny remit are forecasting a £243k overspend.

Appendix B

Report on the main variances on agreed budgets.

Appendix C

Detail variances for information purposes only.

Appendix D

The HRA is forecasting a £269k overspend to the year end.

Capital Budgets

Appendix E

Details the main variances on capital schemes, which shows a forecasted net spend of £25,214k compared with a working net budget of £26,794k giving a -£1,580k variance. The variance will be slipped into future years, as the funding will be required to ensure that the schemes are completed.

Appendix F

Details all Capital Regeneration Schemes

Appendix G

Details all Capital Leisure Schemes

Appendix H

Details all Capital Housing General Fund (Private Housing) Schemes

Appendix I

Details all Capital Housing HRA (Public Housing) Schemes

Appendix J

Savings Monitoring Report

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES – A list of the main variances is attached to this report.

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: **Chris Moore** Director of Corporate Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

3. Finance

Revenue - The Regeneration, Planning, Leisure & Recreation and Non-HRA Housing Services show a net variance of £243k and the HRA Housing Service shows a £269k variance against the 2018/19 approved budgets.

Capital - The capital programme shows a variance of -£1,580k against the 2018/19 approved budget.

Savings Report - The expectation is that at year end £160k of Managerial savings put forward for 2018-19 will not have been delivered however Policy savings are projected to be on target

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: **Chris Moore** Director of Corporate Services

1. Local Member(s) – N/A
2. Community / Town Council – N/A
3. Relevant Partners – N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
2018/19 Budget	Corporate Services Department, County Hall, Carmarthen

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Community Scrutiny Report
Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Summary

Division	Working Budget				Forecasted				Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000		
Regeneration	5,080	-3,399	5,403	7,084	4,768	-3,086	5,402	7,084	-1	23
Planning	4,201	-2,457	284	2,027	4,116	-2,128	284	2,271	244	277
Leisure & Recreation	14,413	-7,130	4,525	11,809	14,598	-7,315	4,525	11,808	-0	0
Council Fund Housing	9,216	-7,955	243	1,505	9,933	-8,672	243	1,504	-0	0
GRAND TOTAL	32,911	-20,941	10,455	22,425	33,414	-21,201	10,455	22,668	243	300

Community Scrutiny Report

Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Main Variances

Division	Working Budget		Forecasted		Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000			
Planning							
Planning Admin Account	334	-9	442	-140	-23	Staff vacancies £6k, projected over-achievement of income £5k, various net underspends £12k	-17
Minerals	339	-205	298	-183	-20	Underspend mainly due to charging out of staff to projects as a 'direct cost'.	0
Development Management	1,477	-1,265	1,444	-907	326	Overspend due to ongoing shortfall in income which is driven by a small number of larger schemes which attract higher planning fees. This mirrors the trend across Wales and fees can't be increased as rates set nationally. England by comparison have increased their fees by 20%	326
Conservation	407	-31	356	-14	-35	Underspend mainly due to staff vacancies - post awaiting authorisation for recruitment in relation to delivery of Env Act Obligations.	-14
Leisure & Recreation							
Pembrey Ski Slope	357	-319	390	-336	15	Forecast overspend on Staff costs	-9
Sport & Leisure West	249	-21	226	-21	-23	In year staff vacancy	-38
Carmarthen Leisure Centre	1,283	-1,329	1,331	-1,329	48	Shortfall in income to budget £18k, additional cost of delivering in-house catering £17k, increased cost of Gas £13k	33
Sport & Leisure General	971	-56	969	-69	-16	Forecast saving against the training budget	11
Sport & Leisure South	166	-23	160	-0	16	Grant adjustments for previous financial years impacting on current year budget	-0
PEN RHOS 3G PITCH	31	-31	11	-34	-23	Part year saving of Premises and Supplies budget for this new Service in the Leisure portfolio	0
Carmarthen Museum, Abergwili.	161	-16	174	-18	11	One off relocation expenses +£6k increased NNDR +£5k	11
Museum of speed, Pendine	70	-24	55	-20	-11	Part year staff vacancy	-11
Museums General	173	0	190	0	17	Contribution to Documentation Assistant post £10k, temporary storage rental £7k	17
Leisure Management	290	0	302	0	12	Staff Training £12k	1

Community Scrutiny Report
Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Main Variances

Division	Working Budget		Forecasted		Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000			
Council Fund Housing							
Home Improvement (Non HRA)	833	-288	741	-247	-51	New funding stream was introduced in 18/19 and working with partners and other council departments, the budget was allocated accordingly. Projects due to commence later in the year	-50
Landlord Incentive	12	-10	73	-12	58	We are anticipating WG funding to tackle homelessness, confirmation not yet finalised. Until the funding is agreed the overspend is to be covered by the underspends in Home Improvement team	58
Other Variances					-60		-18
Grand Total					243		300

Community Scrutiny Report
Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Detail Monitoring

Division	Working Budget				Forecasted				Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000			
Regeneration											
Regeneration - Core Budgets											
Parry Thomas Centre	30	-30	1	1	66	-66	1	1	0		0
Betws wind farm community fund	87	-87	1	2	87	-87	1	2	-0		-0
Welfare Rights & Citizen's Advice	130	0	2	131	130	0	2	131	0		0
Llanelli Coast Joint Venture	142	-142	5	5	142	-142	5	5	0		-0
The Beacon	143	-136	43	50	183	-176	43	50	-0		23
Econ Dev-Rural Carmarthen, Ammanford, Town Centres	429	0	5,062	5,491	429	0	5,062	5,491	-0		-0
Econ Dev-Llanelli, C Hands, Coastal,Business, Inf & Ent	485	0	45	530	485	0	45	530	-0		-0
Community Development and External Funding	627	0	105	733	627	0	105	733	-0		-0
Regeneration - Externally Funded Schemes (Total)	3,008	-3,005	138	142	2,619	-2,615	138	141	-0		0
Regeneration Total	5,080	-3,399	5,403	7,084	4,768	-3,086	5,402	7,084	-1		23

Community Scrutiny Report

Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Detail Monitoring

Division	Working Budget				Forecasted				Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000			
Planning											
Planning Admin Account	334	-9	-97	228	442	-140	-97	205	-23	Staff vacancies £6k, projected over-achievement of income £5k, various net underspends £12k	-17
Building Regulations Trading - Chargeable	481	-536	56	0	402	-458	56	0	0		0
Building Regulations Trading - Non-chargeable	30	0	7	37	28	0	7	35	-2		-2
Building Control - Other	174	0	13	187	172	-0	13	185	-2		-2
Minerals	339	-205	45	180	298	-183	45	160	-20	Underspend mainly due to charging out of staff to projects as a 'direct cost'.	-14
Policy-Development Planning	576	-28	34	582	581	-33	34	582	0		0
Development Management	1,477	-1,265	182	393	1,444	-907	182	719	326	Overspend due to ongoing shortfall in income which is driven by a small number of larger schemes which attract higher planning fees. This mirrors the trend across Wales and fees can't be increased as rates set nationally. England by comparison have increased their fees by 20%	0
Tywi Centre	33	-34	9	8	84	-85	9	8	-0		326
Conservation	407	-31	30	407	356	-14	30	372	-35	Underspend mainly due to staff vacancies - post awaiting authorisation for recruitment in relation to delivery of Env Act Obligations.	0
Caeau Mynydd Mawr - Marsh Fritillary Project	132	-132	4	4	102	-102	4	4	0		0
ESD grant - Natural Resource Management	46	-46	0	0	46	-46	0	0	0		-14
Morfa Berwick S.106 fund	11	-11	0	0	6	-6	0	0	0		0
WPD Grid Connection S.106 Project	57	-57	1	1	50	-50	1	1	0		0
Water Vole S.106 Project	5	-5	0	0	4	-4	0	0	0		0
GT South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party	50	-50	0	0	50	-50	0	0	0		0
GT Waste planning monitoring report	17	-17	0	0	17	-17	0	0	0		0
GT Heritage for Schools	31	-31	0	0	34	-34	0	0	0		0
Planning Total	4,201	-2,457	284	2,027	4,116	-2,128	284	2,271	244		277
Leisure & Recreation											
Millenium Coastal Park	223	-38	969	1,154	224	-44	969	1,149	-5		-8
Burry Port Harbour	86	-127	45	4	86	-128	45	3	-1		0
Discovery Centre	82	-111	63	34	81	-107	63	37	3		-8
Pedernide Outdoor Education Centre	486	-326	74	234	468	-303	74	240	6		68
Pedernide ski shop	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	4		10

Community Scrutiny Report

Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Detail Monitoring

Division	Working Budget				Forecasted				Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditur £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllabl e £'000	Net £'000	Expenditur £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllabl e £'000	Net £'000			
Pembrey Ski Slope	357	-319	133	171	390	-336	133	186	15	Forecast overspend on Staff costs	-9
Sport & Leisure West	249	-21	22	250	226	-21	22	227	-23	In year staff vacancy	-38
Newcastle Emlyn Sports Centre	276	-128	24	172	277	-129	24	172	-0		-4
Carmarthen Leisure Centre	1,283	-1,329	658	611	1,331	-1,329	658	660	48	Shortfall in income to budget £18k, additional cost of delivering in-house catering £17k, increased cost of Gas £13k	33
St Clears Leisure Centre	138	-40	89	187	137	-34	89	192	5		-3
Bro Myrddin Indoor Bowling Club	0	0	75	75	1	0	75	75	1		0
Sport & Leisure East	192	-49	17	159	188	-50	17	155	-4		-4
Amman Valley Leisure Centre	734	-682	79	131	746	-700	79	126	-5		-4
Brynamman Swimming Pool	0	0	7	7	0	0	7	7	0		0
Llandovery Swimming Pool	193	-85	15	123	194	-81	15	129	5		-3
Garnant Golf Course	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0		0
Gwendraeth Sports Centre	7	-4	4	6	-6	0	4	-3	-9		-9
Dinefwr Bowling Centre	5	0	93	98	5	0	93	98	0		0
5 x 60 (E)	224	-282	9	-48	219	-282	9	-54	-6		-5
Dragon Sport (E)	118	-56	26	88	123	-56	26	94	6		5
LAPA Additional Funding (E)	26	-26	0	0	26	-26	0	0	-0		-0
Sport & Leisure General	971	-56	44	959	969	-69	44	944	-16	Forecast saving against the training budget	11
National Exercise Referral Scheme (E)	175	-175	8	7	175	-175	8	7	-0		-0
Sport & Leisure South	166	-23	18	162	160	-0	18	178	16	Grant adjustments for previous financial years impacting on current year budget	-0
PEN RHOS 3G PITCH	31	-31	0	0	11	-34	0	-23	-23	Part year saving of Premises and Supplies budget for this new Service in the Leisure portfolio	0
Llanelli Leisure Centre	1,237	-1,016	606	827	1,207	-984	606	830	3		1
Coedcae Sports Hall	42	-14	3	32	42	-11	3	35	3		3
ESD Rev Grant - Ynys Dawela	43	-43	2	2	43	-43	2	2	0		-0
Wales Coast Path Maintenance Fund (E)	73	-73	1	1	73	-73	1	1	0		-0
Country Parks General	451	0	73	524	447	-1	73	519	-5		-6
Outdoor Recreation - Staffing costs	148	-48	89	190	150	-45	89	194	4		25
Pembrey Country Park	654	-697	21	-22	672	-725	21	-32	-9		-35
Llyn Lech Owain Country Park	88	-31	22	80	85	-29	22	78	-2		0
Carmarthen Library	411	-33	141	520	409	-38	141	512	-7		-5
Ammanford Library	265	-14	43	294	265	-15	43	292	-2		-2
Llanelli Library	438	-32	123	528	526	-127	123	521	-7		-1
Community Libraries	210	-9	183	384	212	-10	183	385	2		-3
Libraries General	1,069	-2	62	1,130	1,086	-12	62	1,136	6		7
Mobile Library	118	0	12	130	111	0	12	123	-7		-1

Community Scrutiny Report

Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Detail Monitoring

Division	Working Budget				Forecasted				Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000			
Carmarthen Museum, Abergwili.	161	-16	86	231	174	-18	86	243	11	One off relocation expenses +£6k increased NNDR +£5k	11
Kidwelly Tinplate Museum	16	0	1	17	11	0	1	12	-5		-6
Parc Howard Museum	61	-9	51	103	120	-68	51	103	0		0
Museum of speed, Pendine	70	-24	20	66	55	-20	20	55	-11	Part year staff vacancy	-11
Museums General	173	0	12	185	190	0	12	202	17	Contribution to Documentation Assistant post £10k, temporary storage rental £7k	17
Archives General	130	-2	44	172	121	-2	44	163	-9		-9
Arts General	67	0	14	81	59	0	14	73	-8		-7
St Clears Craft Centre	138	-84	46	100	134	-70	46	109	9		2
Cultural Services Management	81	0	11	92	84	0	11	95	4		4
Laugharne Boathouse	145	-97	30	78	158	-118	30	70	-8		-2
Lyric Theatre	322	-199	66	189	391	-269	66	188	-2		-2
Y Ffwrnes	717	-427	170	460	650	-358	170	462	1		-2
Ammanford Miners Theatre	55	-17	2	40	63	-18	2	47	7		-1
Entertainment Centres General	441	-45	83	479	444	-55	83	472	-7		-5
Oriel Myrddin Trustee	178	-178	0	0	188	-188	0	0	0		0
Oriel Myrddin CCC	88	0	29	117	88	0	29	117	0		0
Motor Sports Centre - Pembrey	0	-82	0	-82	0	-82	0	-82	0		0
Pendine Beach	5	-29	0	-24	5	-38	0	-33	-8		-7
Beach safety	4	0	0	4	2	0	0	2	-2		0
Leisure Management	290	0	5	295	302	0	5	307	12	Staff Training £12k	1
Leisure & Recreation Total	14,413	-7,130	4,525	11,809	14,598	-7,315	4,525	11,808	-0		0
Council Fund Housing											
Independent Living and Affordable Homes	100	-45	64	119	100	-45	64	119	0		-0
Supporting People Providers	6,495	-6,495	0	0	6,495	-6,495	0	0	0		-0
Transitional Funding - Implementing the Housing (Wales) Act (E)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		-0
Rent Smart Wales Project (E)	17	-17	0	0	17	-17	0	1	0		0
Syrian Resettlement Scheme (E)	0	0	2	2	297	-297	2	2	-0		-0
Local Housing Company	0	0	0	0	-0	0	0	-0	-0		3
GT Pre Tenancy Training	38	-38	8	8	32	-32	8	8	-0		-0
Home Improvement (Non HRA)	833	-288	113	658	741	-247	113	607	-51	New funding stream was introduced in 18/19 and working with partners and other council departments, the budget was allocated accordingly. Projects due to commence later in the year	-50
Pembryn Traveller Site	169	-125	14	58	127	-83	14	58	-0		-0

Community Scrutiny Report

Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018 - Detail Monitoring

Division	Working Budget				Forecasted				Oct 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Aug 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net non- controllable £'000	Net £'000			
Landlord Incentive	12	-10	0	3	73	-12	0	61	58	We are anticipating WG funding to tackle homelessness, confirmation not yet finalised. Until the funding is agreed the overspend is to be covered by the underspends in Home Improvement team	58
Homelessness	153	-64	18	107	153	-64	18	107	0		0
Non Hra Re-Housing (Inc Chr)	155	0	4	159	148	0	4	152	-7		-9
Temporary Accommodation	480	-103	6	382	467	-91	6	382	-0		-0
Social Lettings Agency	764	-769	10	5	666	-673	10	3	-2		-2
Houses Into Homes WG Grant Scheme	0	0	0	0	195	-195	0	0	0		0
Home Improvement Loan Scheme	0	0	0	0	180	-180	0	0	0		0
Houses Into Homes WG Loan Scheme	0	0	4	4	240	-240	4	4	0		0
Council Fund Housing Total	9,216	-7,955	243	1,505	9,933	-8,672	243	1,504	-0		0
TOTAL FOR COMMUNITY	32,911	-20,941	10,455	22,425	33,414	-21,201	10,455	22,668	243		300

Housing Revenue Account - Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018

	Working Budget	Forecasted Actual	Aug 2018	Notes	Jun 2018
	£'000	£'000	Variance for Year £'000		Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
Expenditure					
Expenditure					
Repairs & Maintenance					0
Responsive	1,760	1,743	-16		0
Minor Works	2,812	2,812	0		0
Voids	2,350	2,366	16		0
Servicing	1,611	1,600	-11	Anticipated expenditure based on profiled spend to date.	0
Drains & Sewers	128	137	9		0
Grounds	731	734	3		0
Unadopted Roads	102	102	0		
Supervision & Management					
Employee	4,349	4,321	-28	Underspend due to vacant posts part year	-29
Premises	1,411	1,443	32	Overspend in Rent £28k and Other £6k	34
Transport	64	61	-3		-3
Supplies	877	930	53	Overspend in Legal fees mainly relating to disrepairs £48k and other £2k. Under provision for start up Work choice system costs £43k, which are being covered by an underspend in Compensation payments -£40k	53
Recharges	1,319	1,319	0		0
Provision for Bad Debt	435	216	-219	Provision for bad debt adjustment based on current and former tenants analysis .	-305
Capital Financing Cost	14,205	14,106	-99	Forecast reduction in interest rate applicable offset by additional borrowing	-158
Central Support Charges	1,620	1,620	-0		-0
DRF	13,349	13,349	0		0
Total Expenditure	47,123	46,859	-264		-408

Housing Revenue Account - Budget Monitoring as at 31st October 2018

	Working Budget £'000	Forecasted Actual £'000	Aug 2018 Variance for Year £'000	Notes	Jun 2018 Forecasted Variance for Year £'000
Income					
Rents	-39,729	-39,258	471	Underachievement of rental income - Void loss prediction at budget setting 2.1%, while current forecast is 2.87% and reduction in rents due .	494
Service Charges	-750	-695	55	Underachievement of service charge income due to predicted void loss	60
Supporting People	-135	-135	0		0
Mortgage Interest	-3	-3	0		0
Interest on Cash Balances	-66	-66	0		0
Insurance	0	-89	-89	Settlement of insurance claims	0
Other Income	-598	-501	97	Underachievement of water rates commission due to a Government initiative to reduce the water bills for eligible tenants	91
Total Income	-41,280	-40,747	533		645
Net Expenditure	5,843	6,112	269		237

HRA Reserve	£'000
Balance b/f 1/4/18	20,114
Budgeted movement in year	-5,843
Variance for the year	-269
Balance c/f 31/3/19	14,002

Capital Programme 2018/19

Capital Budget Monitoring - Report for October 2018 - Main Variances

	Working Budget			Forecasted			Variance for Year £'000	Comment
	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000		
DEPARTMENT/SCHEMES								
REGENERATION	4,988	-2,028	2,960	4,071	-1,111	2,960	0	No Major Variances.
COMMUNITIES								
- Leisure	5,172	-170	5,002	5,136	-120	5,016	14	No Major Variances.
- Private Housing	2,180	-283	1,897	2,180	-283	1,897	0	No Major Variances.
- Public Housing	23,125	-6,190	16,935	21,612	-6,271	15,341	-1,594	
Sheltered Housing - Remodelling	568	0	568	360	0	360	-208	Preliminary design work has been undertaken to upgrade existing sheltered schemes, with delivery planned for 2019/20.
Voids To Achieve The CHS	2,518	0	2,518	3,268	0	3,268	750	Additional work being undertaken to bring voids with major works back into use.
Stock Condition Survey 2018/19 - County Wide	150	0	150	0	0	0	-150	Method and capacity to capture and analyse data in process of being confirmed.
Managing Private Sector Homes (Social Lettings)	106	0	106	25	0	25	-81	Level of capital investment needed reduced as a result of successful use of alternative funding streams.
Empty Homes	152	0	152	0	0	0	-152	Level of capital investment needed reduced as a result of successful use of alternative funding streams.
Council New Build	2,000	0	2,000	355	0	355	-1,645	Delay in starting on site for the Dylan and Garreglwyd council house developments.
Other Projects with Minor Variances	17,631	-6,190	11,441	17,604	-6,271	11,333	-108	
TOTAL	35,465	-8,671	26,794	32,999	-7,785	25,214	-1,580	

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Regeneration

Capital Budget Monitoring - Scrutiny Report for October 2018 - Detailed Variances

Scheme	Target Date for Completion	Working Budget			Forecasted			Variance for year £'000	Comment
		Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000		
Llanelli JV General	Ongoing	0	0	0	902	-902	0		
Community Development	Mar-19	32	0	32	32	0	32		
Mynydd Y Betws Wind Farm Community Benefit	Ongoing	8	0	8	8	0	8		
County Wide Regeneration fund 2015-16 Onwards		1,586	0	1,586	1,586	0	1,586		
Rural Enterprise Fund	Mar-20	397	0	397	397	0	397		
Transformation Commercial Property Development Fund	Mar-20	1,189	0	1,189	1,189	0	1,189		
Health & Safety Remediation Works	Mar-19	64	0	64	64	0	64		
Llanelli, Cross Hands & Coastal Belt Area		486	0	486	505	0	505	19	
Cross Hands East strategic Employment Site	Mar-19	119	0	119	119	0	119	0	
Opportunity Street (Llanelli)	Mar-19	45	0	45	81	0	81	36	
Llanelli Regeneration Plan	Ongoing	22	0	22	5	0	5	-17	
Crosshands East Plot 3	Ongoing	15	0	15	15	0	15	0	
Cross Hands East Phase 2	Mar-19	285	0	285	285	0	285	0	
Ammanford, Carmarthen & Rural Area		2,559	-2,028	531	721	-209	512	-19	
Ammanford Town Centre Regeneration	Mar-19	109	0	109	109	0	109	0	
Coastal Communities - Parry Thomas Centre, Pendine	Completed	29	0	29	29	0	29	0	
Ammanford Town Centre Partnership(Rail Crossing Enhancement Scheme)	Mar-19	3	0	3	3	0	3	0	
Laugharne Carpark	Ongoing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Pendine Iconic International Visitors Destination	Ongoing	2,036	-2,000	36	216	-180	36	0	
Carmarthen Town Regeneration - King Street	Ongoing	14	0	14	14	0	14	0	
Margaret St - Retaining Wall & Road Widening	Mar-19	84	0	84	84	0	84	0	
Carmarthen Western Gateway & Wetlands	Ongoing	0	-28	-28	1	-29	-28	0	
Opportunity Street (Ammanford Hwb)	Ongoing	214	0	214	195	0	195	-19	
Ammanford Regeneration Development Fund	Mar-19	70	0	70	70	0	70	0	
Acquisitions of County Buildings	Completed	253	0	253	253	0	253	0	
NET BUDGET		4,988	-2,028	2,960	4,071	-1,111	2,960	0	

Housing G.F.(Private Sector)
Capital Budget Monitoring - Scrutiny Report for October 2018 - Detailed Variances

		Working Budget			Forecasted		
		Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
Scheme	Target Date for Completion						
Private Sector Housing - Capital Receipts	Ongoing	0	-37	-37	0	-37	-37
Renewal Assistance	Completed	1	0	1	1	0	1
Disabled Facility Grants	Ongoing	1,920	0	1,920	1,920	0	1,920
Travellers Sites General	Ongoing	13	0	13	13	0	13
ENABLE - Adaptations to Support Independent	Mar-19	246	-246	0	246	-246	0
NET BUDGET		2,180	-283	1,897	2,180	-283	1,897

Variance for year £'000	Comment
0	
0	
0	
0	
0	
0	
0	
0	

Housing H.R.A.(Public Sector)

Capital Budget Monitoring - Scrutiny Report for October 2018 - Detailed Variances

Scheme	Target Date for Completion	Working Budget			Forecasted		
		Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
Public Sector Housing External Funding	Ongoing	0	-6,190	-6,190	0	-6,209	-6,209
Internal and External Works (PROPERTY)		9,490	0	9,490	10,032	0	10,032
Sheltered Housing Investment	Ongoing	568	0	568	360	0	360
Voids To Achieve The CHS (VOI)	Ongoing	2,518	0	2,518	3,268	0	3,268
Planned M&E Works - Inc Smoke Detectors (PSW)	Ongoing	670	0	670	670	0	670
Internal Refurbishment (PKB)	Ongoing	1,630	0	1,630	1,630	0	1,630
Housing Minor Works (HMO)	Ongoing	1,084	0	1,084	1,084	0	1,084
Rendering and External Works (EXP & EXI)	Ongoing	2,096	0	2,096	2,096	0	2,096
Re-Roofing - Council Dwellings	Ongoing	924	0	924	924	0	924
Environmental Works (Housing Services)	Ongoing	298	0	298	259	0	259
Adaptations and DDA Works (Building Services)	Ongoing	1,900	0	1,900	1,900	0	1,900
Programme Delivery and Strategy		345	0	345	145	0	145
CHS Programme	Ongoing	195	0	195	145	0	145
Stock Condition Survey 2018/19 - County Wide	Ongoing	150	0	150	0	0	0
Housing Development Programme (New builds & Purchase of Private Dwellings for Hsg Stock)		11,092	0	11,092	9,276	-62	9,214
Managing Private Sector Homes (Social Lettings)	Ongoing	106	0	106	25	0	25
Empty Homes	Ongoing	152	0	152	0	0	0
Council New Build	Ongoing	2,000	0	2,000	355	0	355
Rural Housing Needs For Capital Programme	Ongoing	45	0	45	45	0	45
NET BUDGET		23,125	-6,190	16,935	21,612	-6,271	15,341

Variance for year £'000	Comment
-19	
542	
-208	Preliminary design work has been undertaken to upgrade existing sheltered schemes, with delivery planned for 2019/20.
750	Additional work being undertaken to bring voids with major works back into use.
0	
0	
0	
0	
0	
-39	
0	
-200	
-50	
-150	Method and capacity to capture and analyse data in process of being confirmed.
-1,878	
0	
-81	Level of capital investment needed reduced as a result of successful use of alternative funding streams.
-152	Level of capital investment needed reduced as a result of successful use of alternative funding streams.
-1,645	Delay in starting on site for the Dylan and Garreglwyd council house developments.
0	
-1,594	

2018-19 Savings Monitoring Report
Community Scrutiny Committee
23rd January 2019

1 Summary position as at : 30th October 2018 £160 k variance from delivery target

	2018-19 Savings monitoring		
	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19
	Target	Delivered	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive(Community Scrutiny Services)	48	48	0
Communities(Community Scrutiny Services)	410	250	160
Environment(Community Scrutiny Services)	68	68	0
	526	366	160

2 Analysis of delivery against target for managerial and policy decisions:

Managerial £160 k Off delivery target
Policy £0 k ahead of target

	MANAGERIAL			POLICY		
	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19
	Target	Delivered	Variance	Target	Delivered	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive(Community Scrutiny Services)	48	48	0	0	0	0
Communities(Community Scrutiny Services)	410	250	160	0	0	0
Environment(Community Scrutiny Services)	68	68	0	0	0	0
	526	366	160	0	0	0

3 Appendix J(i) : Savings proposals not on target

Appendix J(ii) : Savings proposals on target (for information)

Department	Scrutiny Indicator	2017-18 Budget	FACT FILE	'2018-19 Proposed	'2018-19 Delivered	'2018-19 Variance	EFFICIENCY DESCRIPTION	REASON FOR VARIANCE
		£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000		
Managerial - off Target								
Communities								
Homes and Safer Communities								
Care and Support								
Divisional								
Divisional Staffing costs	Community / Env&PP / SC&H	2,257	The staffing complement of Housing (Council Fund) ,Public Protection and Support & care services total nearly 400 FTE's with a pay budget of over £8M. Reviews of service provision will include staffing as part of that process, which will produce savings over the medium term. This also includes acceptance of severance requests.	160		160	Amend staff budgets to reflect vacancy factor 2018-2019 £30k; Divisional restructure to include on-going severences for Housing, Public Protection and Care & Support Services.	Divisional re-structures ongoing , with implementation not from beginning of financial year resulting in delays in savings delivery.
Total Homes and Safer Communities				160	0	160		

Department	Scrutiny Indicator	2017-18 Budget	FACT FILE	'2018-19 Proposed	'2018-19 Delivered	'2018-19 Variance	EFFICIENCY DESCRIPTION
		£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	

Managerial - on Target

Regeneration, Policy & Property(Chief Executive's Department)

Regeneration

3 T's Community Regeneration	Community & P & R	297	The Community Regeneration Unit has historically supported local communities to develop projects that alleviate poverty and improve quality of life. This has been achieved through working in partnership with key agencies and community members to improve existing services and develop new ones. During 2015 we will continue to develop our new key account management system supporting new and existing social enterprises and those organisations delivering vital services in our communities, supporting them to grow and become sustainable. Another key aspect of our work is working with local authority departments to identify opportunities for the delivery of services via the third sector, from asset transfer to public sector out-sourcing. Our core grants continue to support via one discretionary enterprise finance fund. Supporting third sector led projects that make a real difference in our communities and contribute to economic outputs and outcomes and a high return on investment. We have a successful track record of sourcing external funding for our communities, levering in over £8 million additional community investment into Carmarthenshire per year. Our Community Bureau continues to be a one stop shop for all information and funding enquiries for community, voluntary groups and third sector as a whole, supporting over 600 organisations per year. We also administer other grants for the authority and external partners including Welsh Church Fund and Mynydd Y Betws Community Benefit Fund. We also lead on the theme of digital inclusion for the authority.	48	48	0	Severance of post. Responsibilities being re distributed as part of ongoing Regeneration service realignment.
Total Regeneration				48	48	0	

Homes and Safer Communities(Communities Department)

Advice & Tenancy Support

Temporary Accommodation	Community	93	The Housing Options and Advice Team receive over 30,000 calls a year for housing related advice. One of the duties of the team is to assist homeless households with rehousing. Interim accommodation is used whilst completing an investigation into our statutory duty to rehouse. B&Bs were historically used to provide temporary accommodation while the investigation was undertaken. However, this was costly and often not the most appropriate type of accommodation. We now procure/lease properties from the private rented sector which is better value and allows us to place households in appropriate accommodation. Lease contracts are currently being reviewed so that they are fit for purpose and provide better value for money. There are also identified opportunities to increase the income of the section through fees and recharges.	10	10	0	Procurement of temporary accommodation
Advice & Tenancy Support - staff	Community	174	This section helps owner occupiers, landlords and tenants to improve housing standards. This includes services such as area renewal, energy efficiency advice, general housing standards and dealing with empty homes. The 2014 Housing Act places a duty on local authorities to conduct homelessness reviews and introduce a homelessness strategy to provide help for people who are homeless or who are threatened with becoming homeless.	60	60	0	Additional income from Simple Lettings business model 30k, staffing to be part funded by a HRA recharge 15k & additional income from landlord advice and enforcement 15k in year 2018/19. Additional income from empty homes work 20k & additional income from advice and prevention duties 10k in year 2020/21.
Total Homes and Safer Communities				70	70	0	

Department	Scrutiny Indicator	2017-18 Budget	FACT FILE	'2018-19 Proposed	'2018-19 Delivered	'2018-19 Variance	EFFICIENCY DESCRIPTION
		£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	
Leisure (Communities Department)							
Outdoor Recreation							
Burry Port Harbour	Community	24	Burry Port Harbour has huge potential to develop even further as a key tourist attraction in the middle of Carmarthen Bay and as part of the regeneration plan for the harbour area. With 350 pontoons and direct access to the Wales Coastal path, it forms part of the 17Km Millennium Coastal Park situated between Llanelli Town and Pembrey Country Park. The Harbour forms part of a necklace of such facilities around the coast of Wales.	55	55	0	Reduction in net cost of dredging
Pembrey Country Park	Community	57	Pembrey Country Park has been transformed into one of Wales's top visitor attractions providing a unique blend of coast and countryside. Eight miles of golden sands set against the spectacular backdrop of the Gower Peninsula and overlooking the coastal scenery of Carmarthen Bay. There is everything from caravan and camping (with electric), 550 acres of idyllic woodlands, 130m long dry ski slope to the longest toboggan run in Wales - all providing a perfect family day out or a relaxing holiday in idyllic surroundings.	30	30	0	Increased Income (charges / car park / accommodation / F&B)
Waste Management procurement	Community	57	Our Country Parks generate significant quantities of waste, especially at the caravan and campsite in Pembrey. Whilst every effort is made to minimise and re-cycle waste, there are opportunities to be more efficient in this area	5	5	0	Review of cesspool emptying contracts
Sport & Leisure							
Leisure Centres	Community	682	There are 6 Leisure Centres in Carmarthenshire. Llanelli, Carmarthen, Ammanford, Llandovery, St Clears and Newcastle Emlyn. A variety of activities at your local leisure centre such as; Swimming, Diving, Canoeing, Fitness, Cycling, Badminton, Tennis, Table Tennis, Squash, Hockey, Netball, Basketball, Football, Rugby, Cricket, Gymnastics, Birthday Parties, Holiday programmes. There were over a million visits to the Leisure facilities in 2015/2016.	40	40	0	Increased income (higher charges / more activity)
Salix loan ending (for energy saving initiatives)	Community	682	Salix funding has been secured to invest in more energy efficient lighting and the installation of swimming pool covers to reduce overnight heat loss at our leisure centres	9	9	0	Additional income as a result of Invest to Save funding for energy saving initiatives. Last repayment to the Development Fund due in 2017-2018
Dinefwr Bowls	Community	10	The Indoor Bowls in Ammanford is being managed by a local management board on a reducing subsidy from the authority.	5	5	0	Last year of reducing subsidy
Bro Myrddin Bowls	Community	8	Bro myrddin Bowls Centre transferred to the local Authority in approx 2004, reason being the management committee could no longer sustain the costs on operating the centre. After a number of years within Leisure services we negotiated an asset transfer back to the members(2015) whom created a trust with charitable status enabling opportunities to draw down grants etc. part of the agreement is a reduced subsidy over three years. We are now in the second year and accounts from the club show excellent results. The club membership is growing and signs that long term sustainability is achievable!	5	5	0	Last year of reducing subsidy
Culture							
Theatres	Community	800	Carmarthenshire Theatres manages the Miners' Ammanford, Lyric Carmarthen and Ffwrnes Llanelli and promotes a broad range of events and productions throughout the year for all age groups and interests. During 2015/16 a total in excess of 100,000 paying customers and participants visited and made use of our facilities. As Carmarthenshire's flagship theatre The Ffwrnes is increasingly establishing itself as one of Wales's leading Cultural and Entertainment venue. 266 visiting companies and hirers 400 performances/events 74,130 attendances 33,805 participants	11	11	0	Reduced agency costs & Increased income in Theatres
Libraries	Community	2,337	Carmarthenshire libraries provides an extensive choice of books, DVDs, CDs, online services, newspapers and magazines, there is something for everyone! With over half a million books on offer between 3 regional, 13 branch and mobile libraries you're never too far away from a centre of knowledge. Public access computers and Wi-Fi are available at all libraries. Keeping up to date with technology there is now the Playstation 4 available at Llanelli, Carmarthen and Ammanford library. Carmarthenshire is the 4 th busiest Library in Britain. There have been over 600,00 issues of books per year. Promoting a new mobile service in January 2017 as an out of reach service, linking up with various partners to deliver this new service.	20	20	0	Procurement, cost efficiencies and income
Total Leisure				180	180	0	

Department	Scrutiny Indicator	2017-18 Budget	FACT FILE	'2018-19 Proposed	'2018-19 Delivered	'2018-19 Variance	EFFICIENCY DESCRIPTION
		£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	

Planning(Environment Department)

Development Management	Community	141	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Development Management Unit manages the statutory planning application process (including pre application and also discharge of conditions and variation of conditions post approval). The Unit deals with between 1700 and 1900 applications on average each year (roughly 150 cases per annum per Officer). The unit is also responsible for planning enforcement matters including enforcement of planning conditions and unauthorised development and built conservation matters, dealing with roughly 500 cases per annum. 	30	30	0	2018/19 - £20k : Savings have been identified in terms of staffing. This is part of an overall reconfiguration of posts within the Development Management section aimed at improving resiliency and efficiency and re-targeting of resources within the Business Unit; £10k : predicted income from new Pre-application service (new fee system yet to be agreed through Council).
Minerals & Waste	Community	137	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Team ensure that the significant aggregate resources and waste within Carmarthenshire are provided and managed in a sustainable way. This involves dealing with applications for waste and mineral workings/sites, dealing with enforcement matters relating to such sites and also required monitoring regarding the operation of such sites. The Team also undertake the above functions in whole or in part for another 7 Local Authorities in South and West Wales. 	15	15	0	Increase in income through various Service Level Agreements coupled with some savings to be made through reconfiguration of the Team which is aimed at improving the resilience of the Team going forward.
Forward Planning	Community	435	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division responsible for producing and assisting with implementation, including on-going monitoring of plan delivery and on-going revision of evidence base, of all development plans which cover or part cover Carmarthenshire. These plans include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial plans – the potential for plans to span more than one (or part of) County in future years the Local Development Plan which was adopted for Carmarthenshire in 2014 and Development Briefs for specific sites and areas - a number of which have now been produced for the County. Also involved in assisting with development and or disposal of Council owned land/property in relation to advising on potential uses and providing consultancy role regarding preparation of planning applications on behalf of the Council. 	6.5	6.5	0	General savings identified within the Forward Planning budget which are not related to the production of the LDP.
Rural Conservation	Community	287		5	5	0	2018/19 - Predicted income from new Common Lands procedure for charging titles etc.
Planning Admin.	Community	365		6	6	0	2018/19 - Increase in Street name and numbering income.
Building Control	Community	139		5.5	5.5	0	Dangerous structure - temporary payments are dealt with
Total Planning division				68	68	0	

Department	Scrutiny Indicator	2017-18 Budget	FACT FILE	'2018-19 Proposed	'2018-19 Delivered	'2018-19 Variance	EFFICIENCY DESCRIPTION
		£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	

Policy - on Target

Nothing to report

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COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 23RD JANUARY, 2019

SUBJECT: OUR APPROACH TO TENANT INVOLVEMENT

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to outline our approach in meeting our vision for tenant involvement in the future.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- To recommend to Executive Board that the Tenant Involvement Plan be approved.

Reasons:

- To develop a fresh approach to involve tenants in challenging the way we deliver services and make it easier for more tenants to become involved.
- To formulate views for submission to Executive Board for consideration.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision:

Executive Board:	YES – 4 th February, 2019
County Council	NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr Linda Evans (Housing Portfolio Holder)

<p>Directorate Communities</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Jonathan Morgan</p> <p>Report Author: Les James</p>	<p>Designations: Acting Head of Homes & Safer Communities</p> <p>Engagement and Partnership Manager</p>	<p>Tel Nos. 01267 228920 01267 228930</p> <p>E Mail Addresses: jmorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk lesjames@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE: 23RD JANUARY, 2019

OUR APPROACH TO TENANT INVOLVEMENT

What is the purpose of this report?

The purpose of this report is to outline our approach in meeting our vision for tenant involvement in the future

What is the context?

To assist in developing our new tenant participation plan, TPAS Cymru were commissioned to carry out a fundamental review of tenant participation and resident engagement.

The review considered our existing approach and challenged whether our existing plans were in line with best practice and if participation activities had been successful in encouraging tenants to become involved. We also asked, as part of the review, for TPAS to consult and seek tenant's views and to suggest areas we need to focus on.

How did we go about the review?

The review used a mixture of methods, including a desktop review of existing evidence, questionnaires/surveys, attendance at community events and focus groups.

What was found to be the main barriers to engagement?

The review found that Carmarthenshire is the same as other social landlords across Wales, facing the following key issues:

- How do we increase the diversity of residents involved in participation;
- How do we better use digital participation techniques; and
- How do tenants become better involved in challenging what we do.

What is the way forward?

The attached plan sets out our key actions moving forward to address the above issues

A summary document also gives a "at a glance a view" of our approach and plans.

Recommendation

- **To recommend to Executive Board that the Tenant Involvement Plan be approved.**

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

- **Our Approach to Tenant Involvement**
- **Summary document**

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Acting Head of Homes and Safer Communities

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

- Equalities – the plan addresses the need to reach out to under-represented groups on age and protected characteristics;
- Welsh Language – the plan commits the Council to working with communities to ensure tenant involvement is in line with the need of that community. This includes promoting bi-linguism; and
- Social inclusion – the plan aims to reach out and promote engagement across the county using a variety of different tools that we have not fully utilised before.

Legal

- There is no single piece of legislation which sets out a tenant’s right to participate, though it is implied in various documents and guidance on best practice;
- That said, we have seen over the last few years from Welsh Government an increasing move to tie in tenant engagement with the Major Repairs Allowance Grant; and
- We should be mindful that, for Housing Associations, tenant involvement forms part of the Regulatory Framework.

Finance

- All finance relating to this report and subsequent delivery action plans are contained in existing approved budgets within the Housing Revenue Account and form part of the CHS+ Business Plan; and
- From 2020, the Welsh Government will make it a requirement of the Major Repairs Allowance Grant that we can demonstrate that we have engaged and involved tenants. The attached plan will address any current concerns and ensures we meet those requirements.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Acting Head of Homes and Safer Communities

1. Local Member(s) - N/A

2. Community / Town Council - N/A

3. Relevant Partners

In forming the plan, we asked TPAS Cymru to carry out an independent review which involved surveys, focus groups and meeting other representative groups. Progress reports were also presented to the Housing Services Advisory Panel, including a presentation of the results at the September meeting. The findings have also been to the Tenants Consultative Forum.

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
THE CARMARTHENSIRE HOMES STANDARD PLUS (CHS+) BUSINESS PLAN 2018-21		http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=155&MId=1425&Ver=4

Our approach to tenant involvement

Our Vision - To make it easy and inviting for tenants to get involved in shaping strategic decisions and improving services, through meaningful involvement and development of relevant tenant skills.

<p>What is the purpose of this plan?</p> <p>Our last tenant involvement strategy expired in 2015. We think that a new approach and vision was required.</p> <p>In 2018, we asked TPAS Cymru to review our approach to tenant involvement and how we can improve. Following engagement with our tenants and stakeholders we set out our four guiding principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving Communities 2. Improving Services 3. Improving Accountability 4. Improving Resident Skills 	<p>What are our aims?</p> <p>Our approach has been developed by tenants utilising information from the TPAS Cymru consultation and has been supported by the Housing Services Advisory Panel. Supporting the aims of the strategy are three key improvement areas. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving tenants in improving services, providing value for money and ensuring transparency; • Developing a culture of tenant involvement so that all planning and decision making processes are open to tenant involvement; and • Increasing the involvement of tenants from under-represented groups. 	<p>What new things do we want to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolve current structures to reflect increasing involvement from underrepresented groups; • Improve tenant feedback and what we do with the information; • Further use initiatives such as “Planning for Real” as a method of engagement and consultation on estate issues; • Increase the use of digital services to reach out to underrepresented groups or to those who do not want to attend meetings; • Consider a new “Challenge Panel” for tenants; • Introduce single issue meetings; • Support tenants through the introduction of Universal Credit; • Survey our tenants every three years (STAR Survey). 	<p>How will we communicate with our tenants?</p> <p>Community events – specific events will be increasingly used to engage with tenants to improve services. This method will be effective in broad consultation and engagement providing information which can be used by more formal groups for detailed discussion.</p> <p>Digital services will complement existing networks and groups with the aim to increase involvement from underrepresented groups. These new methods will engage different people in specific issues or services allowing us to gain a better understanding of people’s experiences.</p> <p>Digital and social media will be an increasingly utilised channel which can and will underpin all areas of tenant involvement.</p> <p>Estate Inspections where we can promote using social media. This will also be an opportunity to meet staff and local members.</p>	<p>What specific Tenant Groups do we want to develop?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young tenants – 18-25 including care leavers; • Older tenants – 55+; • Families; • Disabled tenants; and • BME & LGBTQ tenants. <p>What will be the outcomes for tenants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants feeling better engaged in decision making and improving services; • Better satisfaction rates for our services; • Services being held to account for their performance by tenants; and • Better understanding the impact on what we spend for our tenants. • Information and campaigns on community safety issues e.g. financial safeguarding. • To foster community cohesion.
<p>What can we offer you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time; • CHS investment programmes; • Budget to support tenant involvement and communications; • Time Banking rewards for volunteering; and • Tenant Resource Centre’s and HUBs 	<p>What skills have we available and can offer?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed and skilled tenants involved in current structures; • Staff experienced in tenant involvement; • The expertise to develop skills knowledge and confidence of tenants; • Broad based involvement in community activities through Time Banking; and • Strong existing structures in place. 	<p>What will we continue to support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Networks and local groups; • Community events; • Fuel Clubs; • Time Banking; • Tenant 2 Tenant newsletter; • Tenant 2 Tenant awards; • Estate walkabouts; and • Pride in your Patch initiatives to improve the environment. 		<p>Who are our key partners, in addition to tenants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local members; • Community Councils; • Local Housing Associations • Public Services Board; • Neighbouring local authorities; • TPAS Cymru; • Tai Pawb; • Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru; • Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA); and • Welsh Government;

Our approach to Tenant Involvement



EICH CYNGOR arleinamdani
www.sirgar.llyw.cymru
YOUR COUNCIL doitonline
www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales

1. What is the purpose of this report?

The purpose of this report is to outline our approach in meeting our vision for tenant involvement.

2. What is our vision?

Tenant participation and underpins everything we do.

Gaining views from tenants on “what matters to them” is vital in order to obtain an understanding of tenants needs, their aspirations and to continuously improve services. We should give tenants the opportunity to influence decisions about their homes, the area where they live and ensure the services they receive achieve value for money.

In order that our vision for participation fully reflects the work we undertake and for us to be consistent with other social landlords, we believe our vision should be set out along the following key principles:

- **Improving communities** – making them positive places to live by fostering a sense of community and ensuring estates are well maintained;
- **Improving services** – the services delivered by us are those that tenants wish to receive, and that these are delivered to the highest standards;
- **Improving accountability** – the views of our tenants are heard when decisions are made at all levels, and that these decisions are communicated to tenants in a transparent manner; and
- **Improving resident skills** – tenants have the relevant skills to take part in tenant participation and we provide broader support to tenants within the community to develop their skills.

Our vision is to:-

“Make it easy and inviting for tenants to get involved in shaping strategic decisions and improving services, through meaningful involvement and development of relevant tenant skills”.

3. What is the changing face of tenant involvement?

Since our last strategy, produced in 2012, there have been many changes in the way social landlords work with tenants in shaping and improving services. There has been a shift away from formal meetings to approaches which are more inclusive, flexible and responsive to tenant’s wishes. These are described below:

Digital communication	We recognise that not all tenants want to attend formal meetings. Increased focus on digital communication in gathering tenant’s views and opinions on the service we provide, will encourage a more diverse range of tenants getting involved.
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Tenant Profiling	Collecting information about our tenants helps us to compare whether our participation activities are appealing to a sufficient diverse range of tenants.
Value for money	It is becoming more important than ever that our approach to participation reflects an increasing emphasis on value for money. We need to ensure our approach allows for tenants to share their views on what is important to them and that our participation activities provide value for money.
Social value	<p>Highlighting the impact of our spending on the local economy, and providing tenants with training to improve their skills and readiness for the work place, demonstrates social value.</p> <p>Tenant participation can play an important role in this process.</p> <p>Community events, fuel clubs, partnership working, environmental works and lottery funded projects have allowed us to develop relationships with our tenants, and has allowed our tenants to engage with each other, developing a sense of community. This work has also provided a way for tenants to develop their skills, an important, additional social value.</p>
Outcome focused	We must ensure that we operate in an outcome focused way. This allows us to measure whether we are achieving desired outcomes. Adopting such an approach will enable us to benchmark our performance of various participation techniques, allowing us to focus resources on those means of participation that work.
Openness and Transparency	Welsh Government have said to Welsh Housing Associations that they should operate in a more transparent manner. We have strong structures in place, underpinned by local democracy and accountability, though changes that are happening elsewhere are likely to have an impact on what is viewed as best practice within the sector. Our last strategy made no reference to how tenants can become involved in “strategic decision making”. Given that this is now a regulatory requirement for housing associations, it appears likely that this will increasingly become a focus for tenant participation for all social landlords.

4. What is the story so far?

Tenant Participation was instrumental in the development of the CHS (Carmarthenshire Homes Standard) in 2005. This was a standard developed by tenants with a higher specification than that set out by the WHQS (Welsh Housing Quality Standard).

In 2013, over a 1000 tenants contributed to the development of the CHS+, the next phase of development. This was achieved using a variety of engagement methods such as stakeholder engagement events, focus groups, face to face interviews, surveys and questionnaires. Tenants and stakeholders also told us what was important to them. The main priorities were:

- Supporting tenants and residents;
- Investing in tenants' homes; and
- Providing more homes.

In 2017, we asked TPAS Cymru to further review our approach and question whether participation activities to date have been successful in encouraging tenants to become involved and challenge our decisions. There were a number of areas of strength and improvement, as outlined below:

Areas of strength	Areas in need of improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events – successful in strengthening Carmarthenshire CC communities; • Fuel Clubs – improving communities and the lives of tenants; • Tenant 2 Tenant newsletter; • Partnership working – Useful tool in engaging with a broader range of tenants; • Tenant Networks – where they are focused on specific tasks/ projects; and • Committed and knowledgeable staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims of participation – not consistent with best practice across the sector; • Challenge and scrutiny – improvements could be made as to how tenants are given the opportunity to challenge and scrutinise decisions made, or services delivered; • Lack of diversity – particularly within the Tenant Networks; • Communication – particularly digital communication; • Tenant Networks – not in place in all areas; and • Time Credits – greater geographical spread needed;

Analysis of where we are: source TPAS Cymru (2017)

5. What are we going to do?

In response to the above we have highlighted four key priorities. These are:

a) Developing digital participation

A high number of tenants have said that a reason for them not taking part in tenant participation is that they cannot, or do not wish to, attend formal face to face meetings. More and more social landlords are turning to digital participation

techniques to engage with their tenants. These can include online surveys and social media. These digital tools can be used to gather a resident's opinion on services, or to ask residents about their views on proposed decisions.

Experiences of using digital participation techniques suggests that this is not only a way to engage with tenants who are unable to attend formal meetings, but that it can also lead to a more diverse range of residents engaging, something that we are eager to boost.

As a result we believe that there would be value in us using more digital participation channels.

To take advantage of the opportunities presented by digital technology, we need to improve how we share information with tenants digitally.

An example is improving how we communicate through our website. Establishing a website specifically for housing tenants could make information more accessible for tenants. This will allow us to:

- share information about upcoming events;
- set out examples of how participation has helped the communities;
- provide links for surveys developed using platforms such as Survey Monkey and Doopoll; and
- Further promote new initiatives such as "Planning for Real" that has been successful in Tyisha ward, Llanelli.

b) Strengthening challenge and responsibility

Challenge style panels are now a common feature of tenant participation within social housing. We believe that we should consider proposals on establishing such a panel to improve challenge and responsibility. If these proposals are accepted then this could replace the existing Housing Services Advisory Panel.

Challenge Panels are made up of involved tenants who examine how services are delivered, or look at decisions that have been made by social landlords in Wales.

This approach has proven popular as it allows landlords to gather the views of tenants in a way that provides them with more detailed feedback on proposals and service standards.

We believe membership of the panel should be open to all tenants, but for the panel to work effectively, its numbers should be limited to between 6 and 12 members.

In the event that more tenants apply to be members of the panel than the membership of the panel allows, a skills-based selection approach will be used to ensure that all tenants are given an equal opportunity to become members.

In addition to this limitation, best practice within the sector suggest that challenge panels benefit from refreshing its membership at regular intervals. This can be achieved in a number of ways, either by placing a time limit on the length that a

tenant is permitted to sit on the panel, or through allowing tenants to apply to join the panel for the duration of a particular project.

Adopting this approach would ensure that a diverse group of individuals were able to get involved with the panels work, and could attract tenants who are currently reluctant to commit long term.

c) Using single issue meetings

A number of our tenants either do not wish to, or are unable to attend formal face to face meetings held during the day.

We are suggesting that one way in which it will be possible to attract more tenants to face to face meetings, will be to organise meetings that discuss issues specific to local communities. Meetings should be held on single topic issues e.g. issues with ground maintenance. Experiences from other landlords suggest that such meetings are better attended as they directly affect tenants.

Whilst the frequency of these meetings may vary depending on when concerns become apparent on individual estates, adopting such an approach would allow us to gather feedback that would improve the service and shape decisions we take. This could encourage those tenants present at these events to become more interested and involved in other participation opportunities that we offer.

d) Engagement to help tenants on Universal Credit

We have already seen the financial impact that Universal Credit (UC) and other welfare reforms are having. Tenants have told us that they want enough money to make choices, to have good health, and to live in safe and secure homes and communities. We need to start the journey of moving from being reactive to a proactive/preventative service through engagement.

We see tenant engagement as key to enabling tenants to develop skills so that the impact of UC is lessened. Facilitating conversations with tenants as to what matters to them and understanding this is vital in the face of the challenges UC presents to us as a landlord.

Sustaining tenancies involves us looking carefully at the way we work with our tenants and communities through training and employment opportunities. We aim to encourage tenants on the pathway to employability through coaching and mentoring, and by working with partners to get people back in to work. To do this we will promote opportunities to develop digital skills and to reach out to people who may otherwise feel excluded. This will build confidence in our tenants so that they can make informed choices. Tenant participation encourages people to get involved, by supporting them to have access to services and opportunities for employment and training.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: **COMMUNITY**

DATE OF MEETING: **23rd JANUARY, 2018**

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	EXPLANATION	REVISED SUBMISSION DATE
Universal Credit Action Plan	Gwyneth Ayers - Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager	Due to the number of agenda items scheduled for consideration at the meeting, the Chair has agreed to defer the report to the next meeting of the Committee.	14 th February 2019
Fire Safety/ Fire Risk Assessments	Jason Jones, Property Maintenance Manager	Due to the number of agenda items scheduled for consideration at the meeting, the Chair has agreed to defer the report to the next meeting of the Committee.	14 th February 2019
Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2017/18: Carmarthenshire	Jane Davies – Senior Cultural Services Manager	Due to the number of agenda items scheduled for consideration at the meeting, the Chair has agreed to defer the report to the next meeting of the Committee.	14 th February 2019

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**COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13TH DECEMBER 2018**

**FORTHCOMING ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING
TO BE HELD ON 14TH FEBRUARY 2019**

In order to ensure effective Scrutiny, Members need to be clear as to the purpose of requesting specific information and the outcome they are hoping to achieve as a consequence of examining a report. Limiting the number of agenda items may help to keep meetings focused and easier to manage.

Proposed Agenda Item	Background	Reason for report
Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2017/18: Carmarthenshire	The report covers the Annual Assessment for 2017/18 by the Museums, Archives & Libraries Division of Welsh Government of the Annual Return submitted by Carmarthenshire Libraries under the Welsh Public Library Standards	To monitor the performance of the Library Service against the 6 th Quality Assessment Framework of the Welsh Public Library Standards, as contained in the Annual Return for 2017/18.
Fire Safety/ Fire Risk Assessments	The Committee at its meeting held in January 2018 requested a report be submitted to a future meeting on general fire safety	The report is being provided in accordance with the Committee's request
Universal Credit Action Plan	The Committee, at its meeting in January 2018 requested a report on the Authority's action plan for the roll out of the Government's Universal Credit in Carmarthenshire	The report will afford the Committee the opportunity of commenting on the Action Plan

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COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 23 November 2018

PRESENT: Councillor S.L. Davies (Chair)

Councillors:

D.M. Cundy, C.A. Davies, W.R.A. Davies, S.J.G. Gilasbey, B.W. Jones, G.R. Jones (In place of B.A.L. Roberts), H.I. Jones, M.J.A. Lewis (In place of H.L. Davies), S. Matthews, H.B. Shepardson, G.B. Thomas and A.Vaughan Owen

Also in attendance:

Councillor L.D. Evans, Executive Board Member for Housing
 P. Hughes-Griffiths, Executive Board Member for Culture, Sport and Tourism
 L.M. Stephens, Deputy Leader of the Council

The following Officers were in attendance:

I. Jones, Head of Leisure
 L. Quelch, Head of Planning
 J. Morgan, Acting Head of Homes & Safer Communities
 H. Morgan, Economic Development Manager
 S. Walters, Economic Development Manager
 A. Thomas, Group Accountant
 I.R. Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager
 R. Parkinson, Team Leader - Housing Advice
 K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP. - 10.00 - 11.15 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H. Davies and B.A.L. Roberts

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS & PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

The following declarations of personal interest were made:-

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
G.B. Thomas	4 – Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 – Draft Preferred Strategy	Rural Areas in general
A Davies	4 – Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 – Draft Preferred Strategy	Has submitted an application for inclusion of a site within the revised Local Development Plan 2018-2033

A Vaughan Owen	4 – Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 – Draft Preferred Strategy	Relative has submitted an application for inclusion of a site within the Revised Local Development Plan 2018-2033
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3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

No Public questions had been received.

4. REVISED CARMARTHESHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018 - 2033 DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY

(NOTE:

1. Councillor G.B. Thomas had earlier declared an interest in this item and had been granted dispensation by the Council's Standards Committee to speak, but not vote on matters relating to farming
2. Councillors A. Davies and A. Vaughan Owen had earlier declared interests in this item).

The Committee received for consideration the Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) 2018-2033 Draft Preferred Strategy identifying the Council's land use vision, strategic objectives and strategic growth requirements for the County to 2033. It was noted the Strategy had been approved by Council on the 14th November, 2018 for formal consultation for a minimum statutory period of six weeks, which would commence the week of the 10th December, 2018 for a period of 8 weeks (to allow for the Christmas and New Year Holiday periods), with a report on the outcome thereof anticipated to be ready for submission to the Committee in March 2019.

The following questions/issues were raised on the strategy:-

- The Committee's attention was drawn to a recent meeting of the Council's Rural Affairs Task Group where discussion had been undertaken on the Strategy with the following three issues having been raised as areas of concern set against the need to protect and rejuvenate rural areas:-
 1. There was no provision in the plan to address difficulties encountered in obtaining planning consent for small dwellings on plots of land, especially small holdings, where the owners had resided in the areas all their lives;
 2. Traditional farm houses were old and small and difficulties were encountered in obtaining planning consent to facilitate their extension in excess of 20-30% of their original footprint. That policy was considered to be restrictive, especially when large new build properties located within settlement areas were granted planning consent;
 3. Existing planning policies made it difficult for the farming community to diversify their business to maximise income potential, for example the provision of camping/tourism facilities

The Forward Planning Manager reminded the Committee that the current document detailed the Council's land use vision, strategic objectives and

strategic growth requirements for the County to 2033 and did not contain specific policies. Those would form part of the Draft Deposit LDP which would detail Development Management Plan Policies and be prepared over the next twelve months as part of the statutory consultation process.

- References were made to Housing site allocations within the existing LDP and whether some, or all, of those would be included within the new Plan, having regard to proposals to reduce the allocation over the plan period.

The Forward Planning Manager advised that one of the aims of the new Plan would be to ensure its deliverability and, as the current level of housing allocation would reduce, the department would need to critically examine all sites submitted for inclusion. If the owners of those sites were unable to provide evidence based facts to support deliverability, there was a possibility they may not be included.

- The Committee was reminded that it had established a Task and Finish Group to examine the provision of affordable bungalows within Carmarthenshire. Clarification was sought on how the outcome could inform the review process.

The Forward Planning Manager advised that the timing of the Task and Finish Group was opportune in that consideration was currently being afforded to the content of the Draft Deposit LDP which would incorporate specific development site opportunities. Whilst that would include the allocation of land for housing development purposes, it would not categorise the type of dwellings to be constructed on each site. That would be determined as part of the normal planning process, via the submission of a planning application.

- Reference was made to the Community Led Option and clarification sought on how that could impact on rural communities.

The Forward Planning Manager advised the Option's intent was to change the focus of the existing LDP away from the three main urban growth centres (which would still be the focus of the majority of growth) and seek to have greater provision for rural areas by adopting a more balanced and deliverable approach to growth for the whole of Carmarthenshire.

- Reference was made to the scale of development being undertaken in some parts of the County where the emphasis by developers was to build large housing estates with no thought given to creating communities and providing community facilities such as shops etc. A question was raised as to whether the revised LDP could influence developers to include community facilities within their estates.

The Forward Planning Manager advised that the revised LDP would be used as a vehicle to influence that aim via the introduction of policies to create a 'sense of place', promote the Health and Well-being agenda by encouraging access to facilities, open space and a connection to community services such as health facilities. That would be part of a step approach whereby the LDP would introduce policies and the authority, via for example the issue of Supplementary Planning Guidance, would seek to facilitate debate with developers on the design of their developments.

- In response to a question on the promotion of sustainable developments, the Forward Planning Manager confirmed the revised plan would seek to introduce mechanisms to facilitate their provision, whilst having regard to deliverability and the department would work with developers to achieve that provision.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Draft Preferred Strategy (and supporting documents) for the Revised Local Development Plan 2018-2033 be endorsed.

5. REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Committee was reminded that at its meeting held on the 11th May, 2018 it had endorsed the preparation of a Regional Homelessness Strategy and the report presented to it that day outlined the key themes and priorities on how Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys would prevent homelessness over the coming years.

The following questions/issues were raised on the strategy:-

- The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities in response to a question on the average time scale for rehousing people presented as emergency homeless advised that was approximately 3-4 months. He assured the Committee that, in such circumstances, bed and breakfast accommodation was only used as an emergency, with the majority of presenters being housed in quality temporary homes.
- The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities in response to a question on the introduction, in December 2018, of Universal Credit for all new benefit claimants within Carmarthenshire, advised the authority was aware of the potential impact that could have on its housing tenants and would be monitoring the situation on a weekly basis.
- Reference was made to the Council's Housing Lettings Agency and to whether its services were being sufficiently promoted to the private sector having regard to the fact the 160 properties currently managed was less than the previous 180.

The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that having regard to the fluidity of landlords entering and leaving the social lettings environment, the number of properties managed by the authority had remained relatively stagnant over the previous year. He assured efforts were continually being made to encourage private landlords to take advantage of its service, which was offered as a Bronze, Silver and Gold package. Discussions were also on-going as to how those packages could be made more attractive countywide.

- Reference was made to the use of Information Technology to prevent homelessness, and the database operated by some English local authorities to monitor and identify individuals at risk and to share information with other housing providers and the third sector. The Housing Advice Lead advised that discussion on adopting the English model had

been undertaken with the Welsh Government which had agreed to its roll out across Wales.

- The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities in response to a question on the provision of single person accommodation advised whilst the current model sought to concentrate single person accommodation in specific areas, such as Station Road, Llanelli, it was recognised that approach could adversely impact on vulnerable persons. In light of that recognition, examinations were being undertaken on the feasibility of moving away from larger concentrations to providing more manageable smaller dispersal units that were still situated close to services.
- Reference was made to the proposal within the report for the authority to adopt community based support provision to help prevent homelessness. Clarification was sought on the format of that provision and if it would include community based engagement officers.

The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that prior to the introduction of community based support, an audit would be undertaken to assess current levels of provision and how it could be best utilised.

- Reference was made to the statement within the report that 'landlords are reportedly leaving the market' for various reasons. Clarification was sought on whether that was a contributory factor to the 444 increase in Carmarthenshire in the numbers of households triggering homeless duties between 2015-16 and 2017-18.

The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities confirmed that landlords were leaving the market and the rental market varied across the county making it difficult to assess trends or future market direction. The authority did however liaise with the landlords via the Landlord Forum as part of its approach to preventing homelessness. Whilst some landlords were leaving, it was stressed that overall, the rental market within the county was operating from a relative position of strength.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Homelessness Strategy be endorsed and recommended to the Executive Board for approval

6. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2018/19

The Committee considered the 2017/18 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring reports for the Housing, Regeneration, Planning and Leisure and Recreation Services for the period up to the 30th June, 2018. It was noted that the revenue budget was forecasting a £300k overspend, the capital budget a £362k underspend, whilst the Housing Revenue Account was forecasting a £237k underspend.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report.

- The Head of Planning in response to a question on the projected £326k overspend within the Planning Division advised the position was not expected to change in the near future and that mirrored the trend across Wales where planning services were recovering an average 60%. The

Division, through existing targets was expected to recover 80%, but in reality was recouping around 60% in line with the Wales average. The Division was examining alternative ways of increasing its income stream which could, for example, include charging for pre-planning advice. However, it should also be noted there were some services for which it was not allowed to charge for such as enforcement duties.

- The Head of Leisure in response to a question on increased revenue at Pembrey Country Park, advised there was potential for that trend to increase over the next few years especially having regard to the Council's investment proposals which included new infrastructure, wi-fi, amenity block and restaurant. However, there would come a time when income levels would plateau.
- Reference was made to the operating deficit at the Pendine Outdoor Education Centre and whether the Council had a strategy to address the deficit.

The Head of Leisure confirmed whilst there was a strategy in place, which was achieving a deficit reduction, the site was in need of investment with some of the buildings having been on site in excess of 50 years, and consideration was being given to addressing that position, which may result in the submission of a capital funding bid.

- The Head of Leisure referred to a question on the £10k cost to the museums budget for employing a documentation assistant and confirmed the post had been created on a one year fixed contract to assist with the backlog in recording artefacts held by the service, which was a requirement to achieving accreditation.

He also advised that with regard to the level of artefacts held by the Museums Service there was an adopted collections and disposals policy in place.

- Reference was made to the £494k variance in the authority's housing rental income with clarification being sought on the reason for the 0.8 % increase in the level of void properties and the resultant increased loss of rental.

The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that every year, as part of the budget setting process, an assumption was made on the level of voids during the year. For 2018/19 that had been estimated as being 2.1% of rental income, but was now projected to be 2.9%. The main reason for the variance was a number of voids requiring extensive works prior to returning to the housing stock. However, finance was available to undertake those works. Additionally, a number of properties were being held back to accommodate tenants decanted whilst renovations were undertaken to their properties.

- Reference was made to the recent contract entered into by the Authority with Burry Port Marine Ltd for the management of Burry Port Harbour and its £100k contribution towards the cost of a dredger. Clarification was sought on the terms of the contribution and to whether the authority would receive income from the dredger's use at other harbours.

The Head of Leisure confirmed a profit share arrangement was in place, with any income re-invested into the harbour

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report be received.

7. COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

The Committee received for consideration its Annual Report on the work undertaken during the 2017/18 municipal year. It was noted that the report had been prepared in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Council's constitution and provided an overview of the work programme and the key issues addressed, whilst also incorporating any issues referred to or from the Executive Board, Task and Finish reviews and development sessions.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. SCRUTINY ACTION UPDATE

The Committee received a report detailing the progress achieved in relation to requests or referrals emerging from previous meetings.

The Committee was advised that with regard to CS031 – 17/18 the member seminar on regeneration activity within Carmarthenshire had been arranged for the 30th January, 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 13th December, 2018. It was advised that subsequent to the despatch of the agenda for the meeting the proposed report on the Universal Credit Action Plan had been withdrawn and would now be submitted to its meeting on the 23rd January, 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that subject to the report on the Universal credit Action Plan being rescheduled for the Committee's meeting on the 23rd January 2019, the remaining list of forthcoming items be agreed and presented to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on the 13th December, 2018.

10. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee considered the explanations provided for the non-submission of four scrutiny reports.

With regard to the delay in the submission of the Affordable Homes Standard Report, reference was made to a recent press article alleging the provision of such homes in Wales was being adversely affected by the lack of staff within local authority planning departments. The Head of Planning confirmed the allegation was not applicable to Carmarthenshire.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the non-submission report be received.

11. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES

11.1. 21ST SEPTEMBER 2018

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 21st September, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

11.2. 4TH OCTOBER 2018

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 4th October, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 23 November 2018

PRESENT: Councillor S.L. Davies (Chair)

Councillors:

D.M. Cundy, C.A. Davies, W.R.A. Davies, S.J.G. Gilasbey, B.W. Jones, G.R. Jones (In place of B.A.L. Roberts), H.I. Jones, M.J.A. Lewis (In place of H.L. Davies), S. Matthews, H.B. Shepardson, G.B. Thomas and A.Vaughan Owen

Also in attendance:

Councillor L.D. Evans, Executive Board Member for Housing
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Chamber, - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP. - 10.00 - 11.15 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H. Davies and B.A.L. Roberts

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS & PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM

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3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

No Public questions had been received.

4. REVISED CARMARTHESHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018 - 2033 DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY

(NOTE:

1. Councillor G.B. Thomas had earlier declared an interest in this item and had been granted dispensation by the Council's Standards Committee to speak, but not vote on matters relating to farming
2. Councillors A. Davies and A. Vaughan Owen had earlier declared interests in this item).

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He also advised that with regard to the level of artefacts held by the Museums Service there was an adopted collections and disposals policy in place.

- Reference was made to the £494k variance in the authority's housing rental income with clarification being sought on the reason for the 0.8 % increase in the level of void properties and the resultant increased loss of rental.

The Interim Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that every year, as part of the budget setting process, an assumption was made on the level of voids during the year. For 2018/19 that had been estimated as being 2.1% of rental income, but was now projected to be 2.9%. The main reason for the variance was a number of voids requiring extensive works prior to returning to the housing stock. However, finance was available to undertake those works. Additionally, a number of properties were being held back to accommodate tenants decanted whilst renovations were undertaken to their properties.

- Reference was made to the recent contract entered into by the Authority with Burry Port Marine Ltd for the management of Burry Port Harbour and its £100k contribution towards the cost of a dredger. Clarification was sought on the terms of the contribution and to whether the authority would receive income from the dredger's use at other harbours.

The Head of Leisure confirmed a profit share arrangement was in place, with any income re-invested into the harbour

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report be received.

7. COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

The Committee received for consideration its Annual Report on the work undertaken during the 2017/18 municipal year. It was noted that the report had been prepared in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Council's constitution and provided an overview of the work programme and the key issues addressed, whilst also incorporating any issues referred to or from the Executive Board, Task and Finish reviews and development sessions.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. SCRUTINY ACTION UPDATE

The Committee received a report detailing the progress achieved in relation to requests or referrals emerging from previous meetings.

The Committee was advised that with regard to CS031 – 17/18 the member seminar on regeneration activity within Carmarthenshire had been arranged for the 30th January, 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 13th December, 2018. It was advised that subsequent to the despatch of the agenda for the meeting the proposed report on the Universal Credit Action Plan had been withdrawn and would now be submitted to its meeting on the 23rd January, 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that subject to the report on the Universal credit Action Plan being rescheduled for the Committee's meeting on the 23rd January 2019, the remaining list of forthcoming items be agreed and presented to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on the 13th December, 2018.

10. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee considered the explanations provided for the non-submission of four scrutiny reports.

With regard to the delay in the submission of the Affordable Homes Standard Report, reference was made to a recent press article alleging the provision of such homes in Wales was being adversely affected by the lack of staff within local authority planning departments. The Head of Planning confirmed the allegation was not applicable to Carmarthenshire.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the non-submission report be received.

11. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES

11.1. 21ST SEPTEMBER 2018

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 21st September, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

11.2. 4TH OCTOBER 2018

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 4th October, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 13 December 2018

PRESENT: Councillor G.B. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors:

K.V. Broom (In place of S.J.G. Gilasbey), C.A. Davies, W.R.A. Davies, H.L. Davies, B.W. Jones and A.Vaughan Owen

Also in attendance:

Councillor L.D. Evans, Executive Board Member for Housing
 P. Hughes-Griffiths, Executive Board Member for Culture, Sport and Tourism
 D.M. Jenkins, Executive Board Member for Resources

The following Officers were in attendance:

I. Jones, Head of Leisure
 L. Quelch, Head of Planning
 J. Morgan, Acting Head of Homes & Safer Communities
 S. Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways
 R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services
 H. Morgan, Economic Development Manager
 S. Walters, Economic Development Manager
 S. Sauro, Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager
 J. Jones, Property and Major Projects Manager
 S Charles, Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager
 K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer
 J. Laimann, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

Chamber & Ante Room, - 3, Spilman Street, Carmarthen. SA31 1LE. - 2.00 - 3.20 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Cundy, S. Davies, J. Gilasbey, H.I. Jones and H. Shepardson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
A. Vaughan Owen	4 – Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2019/20 to 2021/22	Licence holder for Gwendraeth Sports Hall

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

No public questions had been received.

4. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2019/20 to 2021/22

(NOTE: Councillor A. Vaughan-Owen had earlier declared an interest in this item)

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2019/20 to 2021/22 (Appendix A) which had been endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting on the 19th November 2018. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2019/2020 together with indicative figures for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 financial years. The report was based on officers' projections of spending need and took into account the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on 9th October 2018.

The Head of Financial Services advised whilst the announced provisional settlement represented a 0.3% reduction as an average across Wales on the 18/19 settlement, the impact on Carmarthenshire, after taking into account factors such as meeting the cost of the teachers' pay award and free school meals eligibility, was a 0.5% reduction equating to £1.873m.

In summary, the budget proposals would assume full delivery of the £28m identified savings over the plan period. Furthermore, the budget proposals assumed a Council tax increase of 4.89% for 2019/20.

The Head of Financial Services also advised that subsequent to the publication of the council's budget proposals for consultation, the Welsh Government's Cabinet Secretary for Finance had announced an additional £13m to be added to the Welsh Revenue Support Grant for 2019/20. Whilst specific details of the announcement had yet to be received, it had been estimated the impact for Carmarthenshire would be a reduction in the anticipated funding deficit from 0.5% to 0.3% over the 18/19 settlement. Additionally, the Welsh Government had announced an extra £7.5m grant across Wales to part fund the teachers' pay award. However, that was for one year only.

The Committee thereupon considered the following detailed budget information appended to the Strategy relevant to its remit:

- **Appendix A(i)** – Efficiency summary for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;
- **Appendix A(ii)** – Growth Pressures summary for the Planning Service (none for the Regeneration, Leisure and Non HRA Services);
- **Appendix B** – Budget extracts for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;
- **Appendix C** – Charging Digest for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:-

- The Committee's attention was drawn to the Councils' efficiency savings and to the current position whereby primary schools were responsible for funding the cost of swimming lessons, which had previously been borne by Leisure Services. As schools were facing reductions to their budgets, and the cost of providing the lessons was becoming a cause of concern for some, a suggestion was made that the Executive Board give consideration to the Council funding the estimated £150k cost direct. Should that be possible, it would help improve children's fitness levels, improve their safety near water by teaching them to swim and have regard to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The Head of Leisure advised that as a result of the above, some schools had reduced the numbers of pupils receiving swimming lessons, in the main to key stage 2 pupils. He also reminded the Committee that the Welsh Government had previously provided free swimming during school holidays for children under 16 years of age and it was currently reviewing that provision.

The Head of Financial Services reminded the Committee that the current proposals represented a balanced budget, and if the proposal was to be endorsed, the additional estimated £150k cost would either have to be met from reductions in other service areas or by increasing the council tax.

- The Head of Leisure in response to a request for an explanation on the projected 190K operating deficit for the St Clears Leisure Centre in 2019/20, advised that a significant element thereof related to non-controllable costs such as corporate costs, central recharges, repayment of capital loans to fund improvements to the centre together with rates of £36k. The department, being acutely aware of the need to generate income/reduce operating costs, was developing an options appraisals for the centre with a view to increasing revenue/participation rates that included discussions with the Town and Community Council and various sports organisations/clubs. However, it should also be recognised that the provision of leisure facilities in rural areas would always be more challenging than for urban areas.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 5.1 The 2019/20 – 2021/22 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received.**
- 5.2 The Charging Digest for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report be endorsed.**
- 5.3 That the Executive Board be requested to give consideration to funding the estimated £150k cost to primary schools of providing school swimming lessons.**

5. COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENTAL DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2019/20 - 2022

The Committee considered the Communities Departmental Draft Business Plan 2019/20 – 2022 in relation to those services falling within its remit i.e. Housing Services and Leisure Services. It was noted that further work would be undertaken on the draft for completion by April 2019.

The following issues/questions were raised on the report:

- Reference was made to the Council's ambition of becoming the 'cycling hub of Wales'. Whilst the current road cycling provision, which included the Tywi Valley Cycling Way, Carmarthen Velodrome and the closed circuit cycling track at Pembrey were welcomed, clarification was sought on whether the Cycling Strategy included provision for off-road cycling for example, at Brechfa Forest.

The Head of Leisure confirmed the Strategy catered for all forms of cycling disciplines, including off-roading and a recent meeting had been held with

Welsh Cycling to discuss that provision at various venues. Those included land in the council's ownership at Pembrey Country Park and Mynydd Mawr and at Brechfa Forest, which was owned by Natural Resources Wales. The Council's Active Travel Plan also addressed the provision of cycle routes as part of route connectivity between communities.

The Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager confirmed the Council would be Liaising with Natural Resources Wales and other interested parties on the cycling infrastructure throughout the county. He also advised on a requirement of the Active Travel Plan for the Council to produce an Integrated Network Travel Map, which had been submitted to the Welsh Government for its consideration. As part of that Map, proposals were being considered for the linking of existing paths/cycle ways and the possible introduction of new shared paths linking Ammanford with Cross Hands, which could include utilising former railway lines.

The Head of Transport and Engineering confirmed the Welsh Government invited local authorities to submit funding bids under the auspices of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 for schemes within their Integrated Network Plans. For 2019/20 the Welsh Government had made available £23m for local authorities to bid for, with the proviso any allocated funds were spent during the financial year. It was to be also noted the Welsh Government may release additional funds during the year.

- Reference was made to the provision of catering by Leisure Services at its many outlets e.g. leisure centres/ theatres and to whether the service was embracing the ethos of sustainability and healthy eating by reducing single use plastics and reducing sugary food and drink.

The Head of Leisure confirmed the Department had adopted a set of principles to promote sustainability and healthy eating which included environmentally friendly and locally sourced products.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Communities Departmental Draft Business Plan 2019/20 – 2022 be received.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2019/2022

The Committee considered the report on the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan 2018/19 – 2021 in relation to those services falling within its remit i.e. Economic Development and Property and Major Projects.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:

- The Property and Major Projects Manager confirmed all of the properties acquired and refurbished by the Council within Llanelli Town Centre were tenanted, with some being occupied by former market tenants who had upgraded to shop units.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan 2019/2022 be received

7. ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2019/20 - 2022

The Committee considered the report on the Environment Departmental Business Plan 2019/20 – 2022 in relation to those services falling within its remit i.e. Planning Services and outlining the priorities for the department over the Plan's time frame.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Environment Departmental Business Plan 2019/20 – 2022 be received.

8. CARMARTHENSHIRE HIGHWAY DESIGN GUIDE

The Committee considered a proposed new Carmarthenshire Highways Design Guide as a replacement to the existing guide adopted in 1997. It was noted the new guide incorporated numerous local and national policy changes, new design templates, as set out in the Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2 publication. It detailed the Authority's expectations for the design of highways infrastructure for developments in the County and was intended to provide guidance to developers, designers and other professionals in preparing transport infrastructure and associated interventions relating to a wide range of developments in Carmarthenshire. It had also been designed to support development by ensuring the planning process was as smooth, transparent, consistent and accurate as possible by providing details of the Council's requirements in terms of all aspects of potential highways impacts, highways design and the application of appropriate local and national policy guidance.

The following questions/issues were raised on the report.

- The Head of Planning confirmed the Guide would be implemented immediately following its adoption by the Council. Thereafter, it was intended to be progressed as Supplementary Planning Guidance commencing with a consultation in spring 2019 with adoption in the autumn of 2019 for subsequent inclusion within the revised Local Development Plan 2018-2033.
- As part of the discussion on the guide a number of references were made outside of its remit to which the Committee was advised that:
 - In relation to un-adopted roads within the county, there was no legislative requirement on developers to construct roads to adoption standard or to request their adoption by the Local Highway Authority. Whilst it was accepted un-adopted highways caused difficulties for homeowners, it was a civil matter for them, and their solicitors to address. It was also noted that the matter fell within the remit of the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny which had agreed to write to the local Assembly Members to request the Welsh Government to examine the issue of un-adopted roads and to introduce legislation to protect home owners;
 - In relation to the provision of public transport, and a recent announcement by a bus provider to withdraw from its contract to provide services in the county, it was confirmed the Authority had invited tenders for the service, responses to which were awaited. It was noted that whilst it was difficult to provide bus services in the rural areas for a number of reasons e.g. travel time, frequency, car ownership and the level of resources available to subsidise rural bus routes, the authority was pro-active in its approach to the provision of bus routes

and did submit grant bids wherever possible, for example the Bwc-a-Bus project;

- In relation to the provision of electric vehicle hook up points, a bid had been submitted with the Carmarthenshire Energy Partnership for the employment of an electric vehicle co-ordinator to prepare a strategy for their provision throughout the County, in association with public and private sector partners. That was currently in draft form, and would be published in the New Year. Funding had recently been obtained for their provision in Carmarthen and Newcastle Emlyn and shortly Llandovery. A further grant application was also being prepared for submission to the Welsh Government to fund their installation in Council Car parks.

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 23rd January 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items for the meeting of the Committee to be held on the 23rd January 2019 be received.

CHAIR

DATE