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**WEDNESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2023**

## **TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM ON THURSDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 2023 FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA**

*Wendy Walters*

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

<b>Democratic Officer:</b>	<b>Kevin J Thomas</b>
<b>Telephone (direct line):</b>	<b>01267 224027</b>
<b>E-Mail:</b>	<b><a href="mailto:kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a></b>
<b>This is a multi-location meeting. Committee members can attend in person at the venue detailed above or remotely via the Zoom link which is provided separately.</b>	
<b>The meeting can be viewed on the Authority's website via the following link:- <a href="https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home">https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home</a></b>	

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,  
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP  
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

## **COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **PLAID CYMRU GROUP - 7 Members**

Cllr. Betsan Jones (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr. Bryan Davies  
Cllr. Terry Davies  
Cllr. Handel Davies  
Cllr. Ken Howell  
Cllr. Denise Owen  
Cllr. Russell Sparks

### **LABOUR GROUP - 4 Members**

Cllr. Deryk Cundy (Chair)  
Cllr. Nysia Evans  
Cllr. Rob Evans  
Cllr. Martyn Palfreman

### **INDEPENDENT GROUP - 2 Members**

Cllr. Anthony Davies  
Cllr. Hugh Shepardson

### **UNAFFILIATED**

# **A G E N D A**

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM**
- 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)**
- 5. EMPTY HOMES POLICY- OUR APPROACH TO BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK TO USE** 5 - 30
- 6. TENANT COMPENSATION POLICY** 31 - 42
- 7. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS POLICY** 43 - 56
- 8. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT** 57 - 62
- 9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS** 63 - 88
- 10. SCRUTINY ACTION UPDATE** 89 - 98
- 11. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 26TH JANUARY 2023** 99 - 108

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Agenda Item 5

**COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

**EMPTY HOMES POLICY- OUR APPROACH TO BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK TO USE**

**Purpose**

- To introduce the Empty Homes Policy that will set the vision and the work programme for the Council in tackling empty private residential homes within the County for the next 4 years; and
- To provide clear direction on the approach and where our efforts will be focussed to meet this and other policy goals.

**THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-**

**Consider and make further recommendations on:**

- The intent and impact of the Empty Homes Policy on - *"Our Approach to Bringing Empty Homes Back in to Use"*.
- The vision to reduce the number of empty homes in the County to 1500 by 2026 and how this will be achieved;
- That the type of properties that we will focus on and the rating matrix applied to empty properties meets the policy goals;
- That the Policy will align with the recommendation of the Revenue Setting Policy and the current consultation proposals to impose Council Tax Premium on empty homes that have been vacant for one year or more; and
- The way that we measure performance going forward so that it is consistent and reflective of the efforts being made to bring empty homes back into use.

**Reasons:**

- To continue the work done in previous years to reduce the number of empty homes in the County;
- Effective intervention has shown to have a positive impact on the reduction of empty properties;
- To provide alternative options to meeting housing need across all tenures and contribute to the housing market in Carmarthenshire;
- To further sustain communities by increasing the supply of housing for local people, reducing the visual and public health affect they have on surrounding areas; and
- To contribute to the Council's Economic Recovery and Delivery Plan.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-**

Cllr. Linda Evans (Deputy Leader and Homes Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Alun Lenny (Resources Portfolio Holder)

<b>Directorate</b> <b>Communities</b> <b>Name of Head of Service:</b> Jonathan Morgan  <b>Report Author:</b> Gareth Williams Hayley O'Brian	<b>Designations:</b>  Head of Housing and Public Protection  Housing Services Manager Private Sector Housing Lead	<b>E Mail Addresses &amp; Tel Nos:</b>  <a href="mailto:JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a> 01267 228960 <a href="mailto:GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a> 07787402901 <a href="mailto:Hobrian@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">Hobrian@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EMPTY HOMES POLICY- OUR APPROACH TO BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK TO USE

### Introduction

Empty homes are a wasted resource when there is a shortage of housing across the County, including rural wards. These properties also blight our neighbourhoods and can be a focus for anti-social behaviour.

The Council is committed to bringing empty homes back into use as quickly as possible and has worked with the owners of empty homes and our partners to take all available opportunities to help tackle the issue of long-term empty homes.

Bringing empty homes back into use can help address a number of housing and social issues by increasing supply in areas where there are housing shortages and pressures and where there is an opportunity to link to other regeneration projects.

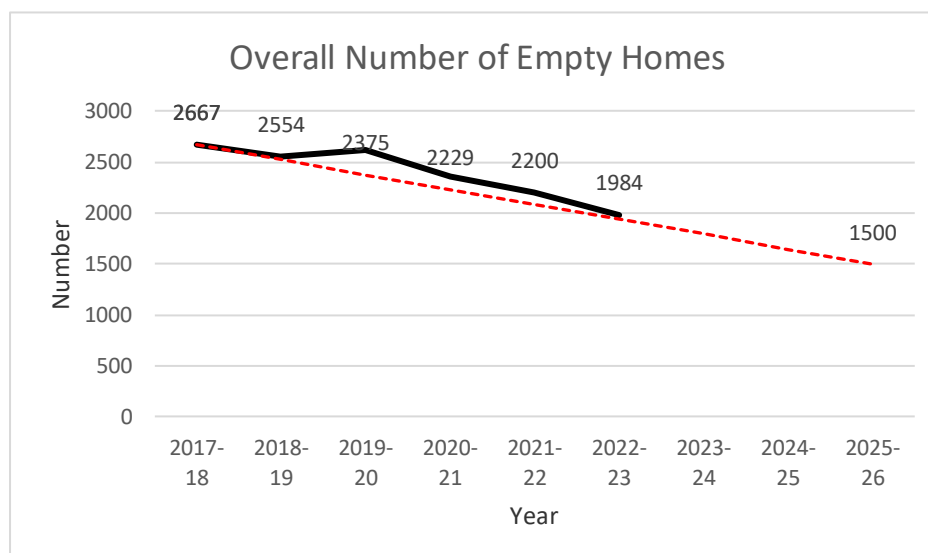
It is essential that the Council has effective measures in place to deal with these issues and a comprehensive Empty Homes Policy which contributes towards local strategic planning and the economic recovery efforts.

The Policy sets out our approach and aims to be ambitious/ forward thinking in the way that we will tackle the problem by moving at scale and pace to return as many empty homes into use during the year. The Policy will allow officers to target certain types of properties, in certain areas, and will give clarity and confidence in the actions that are taken.

### Context

Good progress has been made over the past five years to reduce the overall number of empty homes through persistent activity and action to encourage/ enforce against homeowners to bring them back into use. The current number is 1,984 (Sep 2022). This represents approximately 2.1% of the overall housing stock within the County and our performance can be seen in Graph 1 below:

Graph 1



Innovative approaches have and continue to be developed such as being the first Council in Wales to apply for an Empty Dwelling Management Order, the expansion of our in-house Social Lettings Agency and various financial assistance packages to help owners bring their properties back into use.

In comparison, Carmarthenshire performs well against other Welsh Authorities in returning empty homes back into use and has consistently been in the top four Councils in Wales over the past 10 years (Table 1). This is because we have a dedicated resource towards bringing empty homes back into use and by working cross departmentally, we have been able to target specific properties or schemes that will have the greatest impact.

Table 1

County	Actual Number returned to use	% compared to overall number of empties
Rhondda Cynnon Taf	213	7.4
Carmarthenshire	189	7.4
The Vale of Glamorgan	111	14.1
Bridgend	104	8.4
Swansea	100	5.4

Approximately two thirds (62%) of all empty homes have been vacant for two years or more and 20% have been vacant between 6- 12 months. Of all the empty homes, over half (52%) are within the *Ten Towns Action Areas*. In addition, the current council tax debt associated with homes that have been empty for 6 months or more is £1.46m.

This information has allowed us to develop the policy to ensure that we are focusing in the right areas and targeting the right properties.



## Approach to Tackling Empty Homes

Our vision is to reduce the overall number of empty homes within the County to 1500 by 2026. To achieve this, the number of empty homes that we return to use each year through this policy must be greater than those that become empty. Hopefully, this policy will discourage owners from allowing their properties to become empty in the first place by imposing financial penalties through Council Tax exemptions and premiums backed by a robust enforcement strategy, but also encourage others to take up financial assistance and other support offered by the Council to bring them back into use.

To ensure we have a balanced and transparent approach in meeting the overall aims of this policy we have developed a risk-based approach. Appendix 1 of the Policy document contains the risk assessment that we will use. Officers have tested this on several types of empty homes in different localities, of varying condition and are confident that it will help us prioritise action to:

- Target empty homes in areas of high housing demand;
- Target empty properties that will be brought back as affordable homes for people on the Housing Choice Register and focus on empty homes within our own council estates that had been previously sold off through the 'right to buy' scheme;
- Support bringing empty residential units above commercial business in our town centres back into use for people that will contribute to the town centre economy;
- Work with the families of empty homeowners that are in care, manage the properties on their behalf, allowing the income could cover part of their care cost;
- Respond to complaints where empty properties are a nuisance to neighbouring properties or attracting anti-social behaviour; and
- Identify empty properties that are in a poor state of repair, are detrimental to the surrounding area and take appropriate remedial action.

The enforcement options that are available to us are outlined in Appendix 3 and will depend on the owners willingness to engage with us. Where empty homeowners are willing to work with us we will provide them with:

- Advice, assistance and technical expertise;
- Financial assistance through grants and loans;
- An offer to lease their properties through the Council's Social Lettings Agency; and
- An offer to buy their properties in certain circumstances.

## Council Tax Exemptions and Premiums

One of the features of the Empty Homes Policy is to introduce a Council Tax premium for long term empty homes. This will align with current consultation proposals and aims to support the recovery of Council Tax Liability for empty properties or to force owners to do something with them.

Under the proposed new provisions, a long-term empty dwelling is defined as a dwelling which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least one year. The Policy recommends a Council Tax Premium to be applied to all Empty Homes that have been vacant for 1 years or more. This could be applied to over 62% of the current empty homes. It is used as a deterrent mainly, and when properties are returned to use will generate a revenue for the Council. Of the homes that have been empty for 1 year or more over 1,300 have an existing debt against them.

Table 2

Debt Banding	Number of properties	Total Debt
£2000 and above	121	£442,000
£1000 to £1999	324	£427,000
£500- £999	777	£559,000
£1- £499	113	£36,000
No debt	253	0

The current consultation proposals sets the Council Tax premiums at 50% between 1-2 Years, 100% between 2-5 years and 200% for 5+ Years. We appreciate the views and any recommendations made by Scrutiny Committee which will be included in the report as it progresses and will shape/ strengthen this Policy going forward.

Taking into consideration the parish precept for the Council Tax setting for each of the associated banding we have calculated what the average would be, the number of properties in each of those bandings and what the total liability would be if a no premium was added, 50%, 100% and 200% premium is added within a single year and not considering the existing debt against a property.

**The Council, however, does have discretion to increase this to 300% and the increase is not restricted to the length of time the property has been empty, but does need to be proportionate.** The table below demonstrates the additional revenues that would be applied though the Council Tax Premium based on the current empty properties data we hold.

Table 3

	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H	Total
No Premium	16,271	61,015	48,037	34,865	34,091	10,072	2,905	0	207,256
50% Premium	71,474	142,368	120,867	125,516	124,644	45,325	39,224	5,230	674,647
100% Premium	183,624	309,141	334,708	303,330	362,214	156,120	58,109	0	1,707,245
200% Premium	387,006	597,944	641,523	596,200	479,400	128,421	104,596	0	2,935,091
Total									5,524,239

This approach could:

- Reduce the number of overall empties naturally with the owners returning them to use voluntarily;

- Result in empty home owners choosing to pay the general liability thus increasing the revenues to the Council; or
- Owners deciding on neither, thus generating a debt against the property.

Where the owners choose to do nothing and leave the debt accrue, officers will actively pursue the enforced sale process (outlined in Appendix 2) to force the change of ownership of the property and recover the debt owed from the sale value of the house. Any surplus sums from the sale will be held by the Council until claimed by the owner, estate, executors or any other person being able to demonstrate an interest in the property. The use of the enforced sale process is likely to become a more frequently used enforcement tool under this Policy.

To ensure that empty home owners don't pay their general liability and keep the property empty to avoid paying the premiums we will work with colleagues in electoral services and other departments to review the information and take the necessary action to deal with this.

To ensure that the new owner returns the property to use in a reasonable time period and that the condition is improved, we will serve suspended notices on the property under the Housing Act 2004 to carry out necessary repairs and will be active upon change of ownership. If the property is in a reasonable condition that does not merit the service of a statutory notice, the owner will be subject to further enforced sales, empty dwelling management orders or compulsory purchase.

The enforced sale procedure is complex and can also be used to recover other debt secured against the property and registered as a local land charge.

### Economic, Social & Community Benefits

The Policy will also contribute to other wider actions around economic, social and community benefits. Over the term of this policy we aim to bring back into use between 450- 550 properties through direct action and/or financial assistance or enforcement action. This will help with the economic recovery of the County, safeguard or create up to 90 jobs, support local businesses and town centres and promote the Welsh language and culture by providing homes in our main towns, market towns and other rural areas for local people.

### Conclusion

High levels of empty properties are recognised as having a serious impact on the viability of communities in terms of blight on neighbourhoods and potential for anti-social behaviour to occur.

Empty homes are also a wasted resource and when brought back into use contribute to an increase in the supply of housing. Dealing with empty properties can therefore have social, economic and regeneration benefits.

The Policy aims to be flexible in its approach and have that balance between encouragement of owners to make better use of their empty homes and for officers to have the confidence to take decisive action to force empty homes back into occupation.

Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and make further recommendations on:

1. The intent and impact of the Empty Homes Policy on - “*Our Approach to Bringing Empty Homes Back in to Use*”.
2. The vision to reduce the number of empty homes in the County to 1500 by 2026 and how this will be achieved;
3. That the type of properties that we will focus on and the rating matrix applied to empty properties meets the policy goals;
4. That the Policy will align with the recommendation of the Revenue Setting Policy and the current consultation proposals to impose Council Tax Premium on empty homes that have been vacant for one year or more; and
5. The way that we measure performance going forward so that it is consistent and reflective of the efforts being made to bring empty homes back into use.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**YES – Empty Homes Policy 2023/26**

## 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 Head of Housing & Public Protection**

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

### 1. Policy, Crime and Disorder

The Empty Homes Policy will provide the framework to bring empty properties back into use, meet the local housing need, enhance communities, reduce crime associated with empty homes by making them secure and will contribute to other wider agendas and programmes.

## 2. Legal

The Council has a responsibility to deal with housing standards and public health issues that arise from properties that are left empty. Statutory action requires legal support, particularly if enforced sale is seen as the most satisfactory action to recover debt and force the change of ownership of properties to return them to use. We'll need to ensure that any action taken is in line with the Council's Enforcement Policy. There will be other legal involvement in registering statutory and financial charges and developing agreements for loans/ grants. There will possibly be an increase in the number of leases or buy backs as a result of owners wishing to rid the responsibility of the property.

## 3. Finance

The recovery of council tax liability, debt from statutory action or council tax premiums will increase. Financial systems will need to be put in place to administer grants and loans. Where enforced sale procedures are applied there will need to be a mechanism for repaying the surplus sums of money to the rightful owner or the person(s) that would have had control of the property.

## 4. People Management & Performance

The inclusion of council tax premiums on empty homes may have implications on Revenue Services.

Recovery of debt will require significant enforcement activity through enforced sales.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

**Yes**

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

### **THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW**

<b>Title of Document</b>	<b>File Ref No.</b>	<b>Locations that the papers are available for public inspection</b>
<b>Empty Homes Policy</b>	<b>Housing General Files</b>	<b>Council website- Democratic Services</b>

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# Our Approach in Bringing Empty Homes Back to Use

## *Empty Homes Policy*

January 2023 - April 26



[carmarthenshire.gov.uk](http://carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**  
**Carmarthenshire**  
County Council



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For further details on Empty Homes, please visit;

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/housing/empty-properties/#.Y33c0hTP02x>



## 1. Overview

The overall aim of this policy is to;

- Reduce the number of long-term empty homes across the County
- Increase the supply of affordable housing to meet the demand, and
- Tackle issues relating to property nuisance, blight and the effect on communities

This policy intends to be bold in bringing about the improvement and occupation of empty houses, increasing the supply and use of housing to all.

The Council will work with homeowners to support and encourage voluntary action but commit to take appropriate enforcement action where reasonable negotiations fail.

Emphasis will be placed on developing appropriate, low-cost solutions which are both effective in bringing empty homes back into use and help meet our broader housing objectives to increase the availability of decent, affordable housing in Carmarthenshire.

The Policy also aims to complement other key Strategies and Policy areas like the Housing and Regeneration Delivery Plan, Rapid Rehousing Plan, Ten Towns and Developing the Private Rented Sector.

The implementation of this policy will be regularly monitored and will be subject to a full review in 2026.

## 2. The Local Context

### Local Population Data

In Carmarthenshire, the population size has increased by 2.2%, from around 183,800 in 2011 to 187,900<sup>1</sup> in 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for Wales (1.4%), where the population grew by 44,000 to 3,107,500.

The population of Carmarthenshire makes up 6% of the total population in Wales and Carmarthenshire is ranked fourth for total population out of 22 Local Authority Areas in Wales, maintaining the same position held a decade ago.

The Carmarthenshire population is one of the sparsest in Wales at just 78 people per km<sup>2</sup> who live across a diverse County of both urban and rural communities. Llanelli, Carmarthen and Ammanford are home to 25% of the population and 60% of the population live in rural areas.

The total population is projected to grow by an average of 373 people a year between 2021 and 2040, and there will likely be an accompanying growth in the use of the health and social care services in Carmarthenshire. In addition, the proportion of people aged 80+ will increase by more than 50% in a similar timeframe and, will likely contribute to greater pressure being placed on health and social care services in the future.

Whilst the number of deaths has consistently exceeded the number of births year on year, there has been consistent growth in the population because of net inward migration.

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<sup>1</sup> Census Data as of 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021

## Carmarthenshire Housing Market

Local Authority No.	RSL (Housing Association) No.	Owner Occupied	Private Rented	Total of all Tenures
9,223 (10%)	3,197 (4%)	66,389 (75%)	9,664 (11%)	<b>88,473</b>

The figures above indicate that the largest proportion of housing is Owner Occupied, equating to 75% of all tenure types. This is in contrast to social housing stock, which equates to a total of 14% of all tenure types.

### Housing need:

In the context of this policy, it is important to understand the local housing need and how bringing empty homes back into use will meet the additional demand by making them available to local people, with strong local connections that will help them live in the areas they were raised.

Generally, household sizes are getting smaller, meaning that in the future the population will be made up of more households, increasing the demand for homes.

Carmarthenshire has fewer areas amongst the most deprived in Wales and those areas are largely concentrated in the three main towns: Ammanford, Carmarthen and, to the greatest extent, Llanelli. However, Carmarthenshire has a higher proportion of areas that are less acutely deprived which are spread across the rural hinterland and smaller rural towns.

Households Requiring Housing					
Market Housing	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
Ammanford & the Amman Valley	+37	+403	+1,051	+342	<b>+1,834</b>
Carmarthen & the West	+80	+415	+928	+447	<b>+1,870</b>
Carmarthenshire Rural & Market Towns	+69	+240	+354	+105	<b>+768</b>
Llanelli & District	+83	+680	+1,793	+476	<b>+3,031</b>
<b>Total Market Housing (77%)</b>	<b>+270</b>	<b>+1,738</b>	<b>+4,125</b>	<b>+1,370</b>	<b>+7,503</b>
Affordable Housing	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
Ammanford & the Amman Valley	+385	+413	+173	+34	<b>+1005</b>
Carmarthen & the West	+563	+379	+190	+23	<b>+1155</b>
Carmarthenshire Rural & Market Towns	+449	+294	+25	0	<b>+769</b>
Llanelli & District	+974	+945	+492	+79	<b>+2490</b>
<b>Total Affordable Housing (23%)</b>	<b>+2371</b>	<b>+2031</b>	<b>+836</b>	<b>+136</b>	<b>+5419</b>

As can be seen from the table above, there is an overwhelming need for affordable 2-bedroom houses and single person accommodation in the County and significant demand for 2 and 3-bedroom houses across the general housing Market in the County.

This is also reflected in the pressure on our homelessness services and in particular the demand for temporary accommodation. COVID-19 had a significant impact on the use of temporary accommodation, with the total number of households in temporary accommodation doubling compared with pre-pandemic levels. Prior to the pandemic there were 75 households in temporary accommodation with 43 single person households accounting for 57% of the total.<sup>2</sup>

Household Type	No. Placed
Single People	43
Couples	2
Single Person Pregnant	0
Household + 1 child	14
Household + 2 children	10
Household + 3 children	4
Household + 4 children	1
Household + 5 children	1

The total number doubled to 150 households in temporary accommodation in late July and early August 2020, decreasing to 83 households in March 2021 before increasing to 121 households by the end of November 2021. In the context of this policy returning empty homes to use will increase the supply of affordable accommodation that in turn will reduce the overall number of people placed into temporary accommodation or Bed & Breakfast.

### Empty Homes in Carmarthenshire

According to the most recent estimates, there were a reported 27,213<sup>3</sup> empty private sector residential properties across Wales.

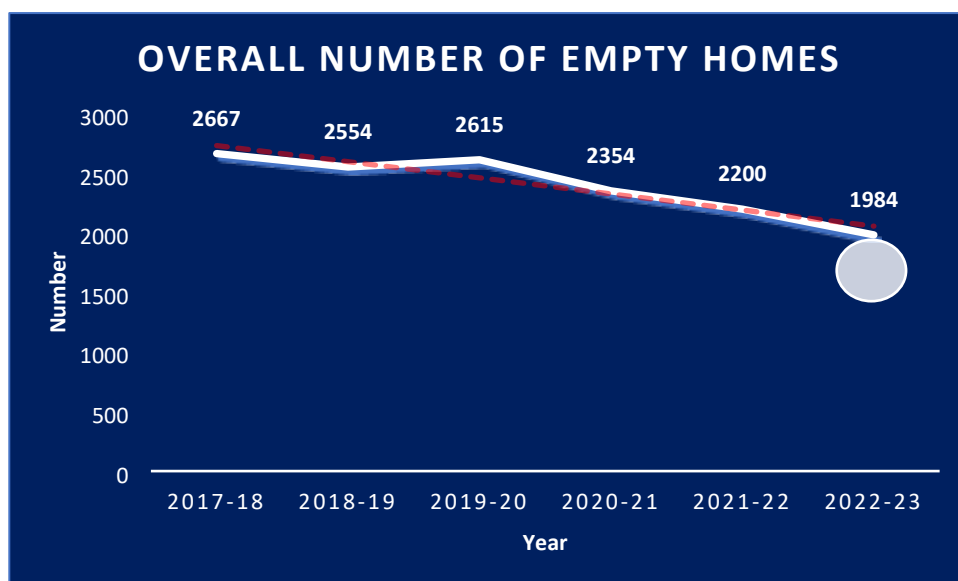
In Carmarthenshire, the overall number of properties within the private sector that have been empty for a period of 6 months or more from April 2022 is currently 1,984. This figure represents around 2.1% of all dwellings (88,473). We have made good progress in decreasing the overall number of empty homes across the County in the last 6 years following work with Owner Occupiers and Landlords.

The following Graph shows the decrease in number of Empty Homes since 2017 and the table shows the length of time they have been empty for;

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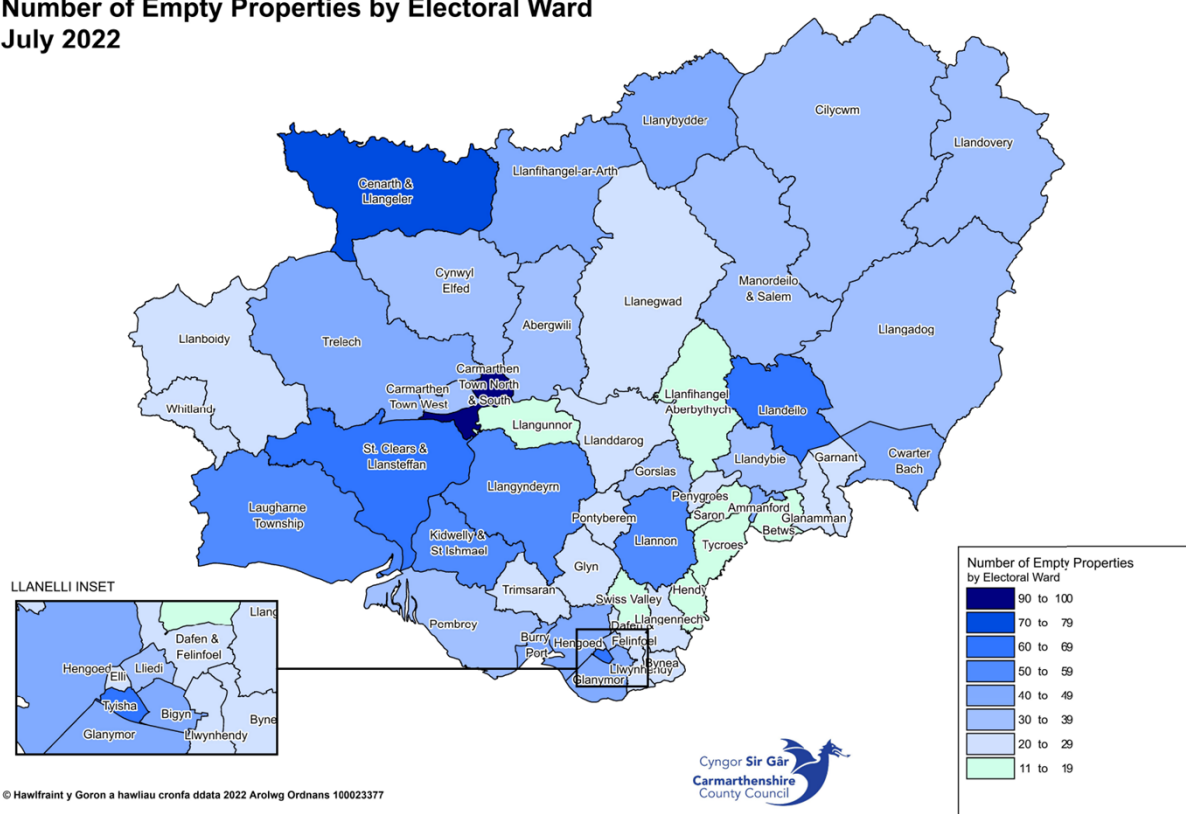
<sup>2</sup> Homeless Needs Mapping February 2021

<sup>3</sup> Data Cymru 2018/19



The distribution of these properties can be seen on the map below, most properties are concentrated around the three main townships and run along the Gwendraeth and Amman Valley, which is characteristic of old mining and industrial areas.

**Number of Empty Properties by Electoral Ward  
July 2022**



Further breakdown shows that 52% of empty homes have been empty for a period of between six months and two years. It is these properties that are likely to turn-over naturally and may be subject to sale or probate issues. On the other hand, 48% of empty homes in the County have been empty for longer than two years and these are the ones that require

intervention. In addition, a recent survey of empty property owners in Carmarthenshire told us the reasons why they were left empty.

Length of time houses have been empty	
2 Years (or less)	52%
2 – 5 Years	25%
5 – 10 Years	13%
10 Years (or more)	10%

Common Reasons for houses being empty for longer than 6 months	
Under Renovation	30%
For Sale	26%
Require/ Planned Renovation	13%
Other	28%

### 3. Definition of an ‘Empty Property’

For the purpose of this policy and in terms of how the Council reports performance to the Welsh Government, an empty property is defined as follows;

*‘An empty property is a property liable for Council Tax, which has been Unoccupied for a period of 6 months or more’*

This definition excludes:

- A second or holiday home
- A property owned by any of the following:
  - Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)
  - Police and Armed forces
  - National Health Service
  - Universities and colleges
  - Local authorities and government
  - Crown estate
  - Churches and other religious bodies
- A property that is purpose built for use as student accommodation
- A property that is in use but for non-residential purposes
- Properties that have been un-banded by the Valuation Office Agency

However, this does not mean that we will exclude homeowners that wish to work with us where the property has been empty for 6 months or less particularly where the property is likely to meet local housing demand and provide affordable accommodation to households in need.

### 4. Tackling the Problem – The Council’s Approach

#### ***Our Vision:***

*To reduce the overall number of empty homes across the County to under 1,500 by 2026 and ensuring that everyone has a home that meets their needs, that people in all parts of the County always feel safe and secure and that a range of initiatives are available to help communities come together to enhance their neighbourhoods and environment.*

It is important that we have effective methods in place to deal with the issues of Empty Homes and that interventions contribute towards local strategic planning. Carmarthenshire County Council is strongly committed to reducing the number of empty homes, facilitating and assisting the creation of good quality and affordable homes in the County and making the best use of existing housing stock.

It is also important to note that not all empty properties will be in a poor condition or need action. Some will be in good condition, but vacant and on the market for sale etc. Conversely, not all empty properties will be contained within the Empty Property denominator (National Performance Indicator), as they may be substantially furnished (therefore not within the council tax exemption banding), or removed from council tax listings completely, based on their poor condition, people in care or holiday/ second homes.

To ensure we have a balanced and transparent approach in meeting the overall aims of this policy which is to;

- Reduce the number of long-term empty homes across the County consistently over time
- Increase the supply of affordable housing to meet local housing demands, and
- Tackle issues relating to property nuisance, blight and the effect on communities

There are some things that we **will do** and others that we **won't do**, which are as follows:

#### What we will do

In order of priority, we will focus on empty homes in the following ways regardless of the time they have been empty for.

- 1) Target empty homes in areas of high housing demand or in the ten towns areas that will also act as a catalyst for wider regeneration**
- 2) Target empty homes that will be brought back as affordable homes for people on the Housing Choice Register and a key focus on empty homes within our own Council Estates that had been previously sold off through the 'right to buy' scheme**
- 3) Support bringing empty residential units above commercial business in our town centres back into use for people that will contribute to the town centre economy**
- 4) Work with the families of empty homeowners that are in care, manage the properties on their behalf and the income could cover part of their care cost**
- 5) Respond to complaints where empty houses are a nuisance to neighbouring properties or attracting anti-social behaviour**
- 6) Identify empty houses that are in a poor state of repair and are detrimental to the surrounding area and take appropriate remedial action**

Every empty property will be risk assessed on the above criteria and greater weighting will be given to those factors that are of higher priority. Action will be based on this and the co-operation of the homeowner. Empty Property Risk Assessment Scoring Matrix can be found at **Appendix 1** of this document.

### What we won't do

We will not focus our efforts on bringing empty properties back into use that do not meet any of the above priority criteria. In addition, we will not actively pursue properties:

- 1) Where the value of the property is considerably higher than the local or national average unless there is a significant advantage to the Council e.g., supported housing projects, conversion to flats, visible in the main town centres**
- 2) Houses that are far beyond a reasonable state of structural repair, that are located in areas where they don't affect anybody, and the most satisfactory course of action is likely to be demolition/ clearance**

This does not mean that the door is closed to owners, members of the public or elected members seeking help and assistance through us, however, they will depend on the resources available to us.

### Financial Support for Owners

It is hugely important that we do all we can to try and support empty homeowners to bring houses back into use. That is why we have put a range of financial packages together to support the works needed to improve the standards of empty homes so that they can be lived in.

Schemes are subject to Eligibility Criteria, however, we have every intention to deliver these where and when possible. The schemes that are available are included in **Appendix 2**.

In addition to these schemes, we will take advantage of other funding such as Ecoflex, NEST and other energy saving schemes to improve the efficiency of homes, reduce our carbon emissions and lower energy bills particularly in the current economic climate.

Buying Back empty houses through the Housing and Regeneration Delivery Plan is also an option that is available to homeowners.

### Enforcement Action

The Council and its partners seek to work cooperatively with owners of empty houses to bring their properties back into use. Therefore, regular and effective communication with the owner is paramount, to establish the most appropriate course of action to bring the empty property back into use.

However, where we fail to get co-operation from the owners or their estate executors, we will look to take enforcement action to reduce any risk and return the property to use within the shortest possible time.

Prior to taking any statutory action we will conduct all reasonable enquiries to ensure that our action is proportionate and transparent, in line with this Policy. Where a property has been empty for a long period of time and officers have spent time encouraging the owners to re

occupy the property but no progress has been made, or the owner of the property has been untraceable or demonstrates an unwillingness to work with the Council, formal action will be undertaken. In some circumstances we will be required to utilise land registry records, council held information and/or local intelligence in order to establish ownership of property.

There are a number of enforcement options (legislative provision) available to the Council in order to deal with issues caused by empty properties and also to secure their return to use and these are outlined in **Appendix 3**.

## 5. Council Tax Exemption and Premiums

Welsh Government changed its accounting methods in April 2020 and no longer accounts for the discount awarded to long term empty properties and as such, the financial burden of awarding any future discounts would have to be borne by the Council.

The Council's Cabinet unanimously agreed in November 2019 that the 50% discount awarded on long term empty houses be removed and the full council tax charge apply for houses empty for longer than 6 months.

**To further encourage bringing long term empty homes back into use we will be looking to apply a Council Tax Premium to all homes that have been empty for 12 months and longer, in line with outcome of the current consultation proposals. Under Section 139 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, the Council can determine to charge a Council tax premium on empty houses of up to 300%. This may be incremental based on length of time a property has been empty.**

We don't foresee that this will affect holiday homes that will subsequently affect the tourism, visitors to the County and the local economy, given that properties will be accommodated by holidaymakers during parts of the year.

## 6. Economic, Social & Community Benefits

This policy will ensure that there are strong links between returning empty houses to use and the positive impact they will have on the local economy, meeting housing demand and how that spreads out into the community. The Council's Economic Recovery and Delivery Plan sets clear goals and actions to support recovery following Brexit, the Pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis. Key action areas include:

### **Businesses**

Safeguarding existing businesses, supporting new start-ups and growing businesses in the foundational and growth sectors to become more productive and competitive, including the green economy.

***Focus given in the Policy to town centre residential premises for key workers that will spend and support independent business and night-time economy.***



<p><b>People</b></p>	<p>Protecting jobs, responding to the expected increases in unemployment, helping people gain the skills needed for the jobs that will become available, and creating new and better-skilled employment opportunities.</p> <p><b>We aim to return between 450-550 long-term empty homes during the term of this policy through direct action. Through our financial support packages and private sector investment this will create/safeguard almost 90 jobs, helping replace the jobs lost during the period above.</b></p>
<p><b>Places</b></p>	<p>Ensuring a fair distribution of opportunities through investing in the infrastructure and adaptation of our strategic growth areas, town centres, the rural economy and regenerating our most deprived communities.</p> <p><i><b>Through this policy we will provide affordable homes for young and working aged people in both rural and urban areas, helping them remain in the county, increasing footfall in our primary towns and protecting the Welsh language and culture in rural areas.</b></i></p>

## 7. Measuring Performance

Monitoring the impact of the policy will be reported and updated quarterly. However, the Denominator will not be reported during the first quarter to take into account any new information that's made available through Council Tax.

The success in bringing empty private sector residential properties back into use will be measured using the following Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) and performance will be compared to other Councils in Wales:

- PAM/013 – Percentage of empty private sector houses brought back into use during the year through direct action by the local authority
- PAM045 – Number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use

The work resulting from the Policy will also be measured and reported on in terms of the quantity of engagement and enforcement undertaken; the increase of supply of housing in Carmarthenshire to meet housing demand, as well as the number of council tax premiums applied (when the premium is in place) in order to demonstrate the efforts that are being made to bring empty houses back into use. A suite of sub-measures will be created to reflect the effectiveness of this policy in terms of outcomes and officer activity.

## Appendix 1: Empty Property Risk Assessment Scoring Matrix



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

### Empty Property Risk Assessment Sheet

Premises Address:

Service Request ID:

Service Request Date:

#### RISK ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Length of Time Vacant	
Less than 2 year	<b>4</b>
2 – 5 Years	<b>8</b>
5 – 10 Years	<b>10</b>
Over 10 Years	<b>20</b>

Area	
Rural	<b>1</b>
Village	<b>5</b>
Ten Towns	<b>20</b>
Key Towns	<b>30</b>

Housing Potential	
One Bed Flat	<b>10</b>
Multiple Flats (above Commercial)	<b>10</b>
2 Bed House	<b>10</b>
3+ Bed House	<b>5</b>

Ownership	
Contactable & responds	<b>0</b>
Contactable, does not respond	<b>5</b>
Uncontactable	<b>10</b>
Owner in Care Home	<b>15</b>

Condition	
Good condition, no defects	<b>0</b>
Minor defects, no safety issues	<b>10</b>
Multiple Cat 2 Hazards	<b>20</b>
Multiple Cat 1 Hazards	<b>30</b>
Dangerous - Loose / Falling elements	<b>40</b>

Property Type	
Detached	<b>1</b>
Semi-Detached	<b>5</b>
Terraced	<b>10</b>
Flat / HMO	<b>15</b>
Local Authority Site	<b>20</b>

Market/Habitability	
Saleable/Good	<b>0</b>
Renovate/Habitable	<b>5</b>
Substantial Disrepair	<b>10</b>

Property Appearance in the Area	
Good Appearance	<b>0</b>
Some Detriment	<b>10</b>
Major Detriment	<b>20</b>
Ruinous / Derelict	<b>30</b>

Social Impact	
No Incidents	<b>0</b>
Minor Incidents	<b>10</b>
Major Impact	<b>20</b>

Security	
Secure	<b>0</b>
Insecure	<b>30</b>

Enforcement	
Advisory	<b>10</b>
Major / No WID	<b>20</b>
Small Scale / WID	<b>30</b>
Major / WID	<b>40</b>
Urgent	<b>50</b>

## Appendix 2: Financial Support for Empty Property Owners

<b>Houses into Homes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a Welsh Government funded scheme, offering interest free loans to owners of empty properties, offering financial assistance to improve such properties for sale or let as residential properties, on completion.</li> <li>• This scheme will consider loans up to £25,000 per self-contained unit, up to a maximum £150,000 (6 units) per applicant.</li> <li>• The loan is subject to a maximum Loan to Value of 80% and has no monthly repayment terms.</li> <li>• This scheme is also available for commercial empty properties, where planning consent is in place for its conversion to residential units.</li> </ul>
<b>Leasing Scheme Wales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This scheme is aimed at improving access to long term affordable and good quality housing, with tenancy support, in the Private Rented Sector.</li> <li>• Leasing Scheme Wales will support landlords and offer grants of up to £5,000 to bring their properties up to Housing, Health and Safety Rating System Standards</li> <li>• Up to £25,000 in grants is offered to landlords where properties have been empty for 6 months or more, in return for longer term leases of between 5 to 20 years</li> <li>• Leasing Scheme Wales will provide tenants with longer term security of accommodation (of between 5 to 20 years) in the Private Rented Sector at an affordable rent based on Local Housing Allowance levels.</li> <li>• Leasing Scheme Wales will support those who are at risk of homelessness or are homeless according to the definition in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.</li> </ul>
<b>Valley's Task Force Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner Occupier grants are administered through One National Body (RCT Council) offering financial assistance of up to 85% grant assistance to the value of £25,000, to improve empty properties which are occupied by owners, within the Valley's Task Force area.</li> <li>• Originally targeted towards the Amman Gwendraeth Valley within Carmarthenshire but this may be extended</li> <li>• Supported by WG funding, with Carmarthenshire Council providing match funding 35% to the Programme.</li> <li>• This Scheme is now closed to new enquiries and will end as a Scheme as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</li> </ul>
<b>Western Valleys Empty Homes Grant Scheme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Western Valleys Empty Homes Grant Scheme is a Government pilot offering grants of up to £25,000 per self-contained unit, in-lieu of tenancy nomination rights.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is specifically available to Landlords/Developers, up to a maximum of £200,000 for a building.</li> <li>• This was supported by Welsh Government funding at 65%, with Carmarthenshire Council investing 35% into the Scheme.</li> <li>• This Scheme is now closed to new enquiries and will end as a Scheme as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</li> </ul>
<b>Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme is a regional plan which looks to support area-based regeneration projects that promote economic regeneration such as creating jobs, enhancing skills and employability and creating the right environment for businesses to grow and thrive; with a focus on individuals and areas most in need to ensure prosperity is spread to all parts of Wales.</li> <li>• Carmarthenshire's priority areas are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Llanelli town centre</li> <li>○ Station Road, Llanelli</li> <li>○ Ammanford town centre</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The programme has two main thematic funding streams, a property enhancement development grant and sustainable living grant.</li> </ul>
<b>Property Enhancement Development Grant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Property Enhancement Grant addresses the requirement for retail and commercial floor space that meets the needs of businesses by providing gap funding for vacant commercial building occupiers and owners to enhance building frontages and bring vacant commercial floor space back into beneficial business use.</li> <li>• In addition, where a local need has been identified, it would fund development projects that create new commercial floor space.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Living Grant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will support the conversion of vacant commercial floor space into new homes and can be used alongside the Property Enhancement Development Grant and other initiatives to ensure comprehensive mixed-use regeneration of properties.</li> <li>• The aim of the funding is to convert vacant floor space on upper floors into new residential accommodation. The minimum requirement from each scheme is 1 x 1 bedroom self-contained flat. Student accommodation and bedsits are not eligible for grant funding.</li> <li>• A maximum of £20,000 grant can be considered eligible per residential unit created</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3: Enforcement Options

<p><b>Enforced Sale</b></p>	<p>An Enforced Sale is a process by which the Council can force the sale of a privately owned property or piece of land where a 'relevant debt' is owed to the Local Authority. It is a means of transferring ownership to a new owner, in circumstances where the present owner is either unwilling or unable to deal with the site or property, and its associated problems and either refuses or is unable to repay the debt owed.</p> <p>Relevant debts will mainly be accrued where the Council carries out work to the property following the service of a statutory notice, where the recipient failed to carry out the work themselves.</p> <p>The debt is then registered as a local land charge. The enforced sale of a property has the effect of changing the ownership of the land/property, and with encouragement generating interest, investment and reoccupation. Prior to forcing the sale, the Council will take other statutory action below to force improvement or reoccupation through the new owners. Properties will be sold at Public Auction to guarantee the best price for the property, fees and charges will be recovered and any surplus repaid to the owners or treasury if unregistered and owners not known.</p>
<p><b>Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)</b></p>	<p>Introduced by the Housing Act 2004, Empty Dwelling Management Orders ("EDMOs") give the Local Authority the power to take management control of privately owned empty homes to secure occupation of them.</p> <p>The power resides in Sections 132 to 138 of the Housing Act 2004. Interim and Final EDMOs are made against the proprietor of the property, who may be either the owner, or a leaseholder where there are at least 7 years remaining on lease. The authority, having exhausted all other avenues of encouraging the proprietor to bring the property back into use, can apply to a Residential Property Tribunal for an order.</p>
<p><b>Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)</b></p>	<p>Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 gives the council the power for the purposes of Part II of that Act to acquire: a. land to build houses; b. houses or buildings which may be made suitable as houses together with any occupied land; c. land proposed to be used for any purpose authorised by legislation (facilities to be provided in connection with housing accommodation); and d. land to carry out works on it for the purpose of or in connection with the alteration, enlarging, repair or improvement of an adjoining house.</p>

<p><b>Section 215 – Detrimental to the Public Amenity</b></p>	<p>If it appears to Planning Services that the amenity of a part of their area, or of an adjoining area, is adversely affected by the condition of the land in their area, they may serve on the owner and occupier of the land a notice under this section requiring steps to be taken under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The notice will specify the steps to be taken to remedy the condition of the land. If the owner or occupier does not comply with the terms of the notice within the specified period, the owner or occupier will be guilty of an offence and liable for prosecution in the Magistrates Court (liable to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale).</p>
<p><b>Housing Act 2004 Statutory Notices</b></p>	<p>Under the Housing Act 2004, the council must take the appropriate enforcement action where it considers that either a Category 1 or 2 Hazard exists on residential premises. Appropriate enforcement action can include the serving of an improvement notice. We will not be serving Prohibition Orders as this will preclude us from bringing the property back into use. We will consider Demolition Orders under the 1985 and 2004 Act as well as suspending the notices. Notices may be split by hazard to enforce and carry out works in default on specific defects/ elements. Any works in default and charges incurred will be considered as a Primary Charge and registered against the property.</p>
<p><b>Building Act 1984</b></p>	<p>If the council considers a building or structure, or part of it, to be in a dangerous condition or ruinous/ dilapidated that subsequently detrimental to the amenity then, under the Building Act, the Council can apply to the Magistrates Court requesting an order be made requiring the owner to carry out works to remove the danger or to demolish the building. If the owner fails to comply with the order within the specified time period, the council may execute the order and recover its reasonably incurred expenses of doing so from the owner. The owner will also be liable to prosecution.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection Act 1990</b></p>	<p>If the Council is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists or is likely to occur or recur with an Empty Property, the Council can serve an abatement notice. The notice will require the abatement of the nuisance or prohibit or restrict its occurrence or recurrence. The Council may then execute works and take other steps necessary for any of those purposes.</p>

## COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

### **SUBJECT: TENANT COMPENSATION POLICY**

#### **Purpose:**

The report sets out our approach to when it may be appropriate to compensate a tenant who has suffered loss or inconvenience due to service failure. The policy will guide officers when dealing with council tenants ensuring a consistent approach.

#### **THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-**

Scrutiny is asked for their views on this policy before it goes through the Council's decision and adoption process

#### **Reasons:**

Gives clarity and consistency when compensation is being considered.

#### **CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-**

Cllr Linda Davies Evans - Homes and Deputy Leader

<b>Directorate:</b>  Communities	<b>Designations:</b>  Head of Housing & Public Protection	<b>Tel:/Email addresses:</b>  01267 228960  JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
<b>Name of Head of Service:</b>  Jonathan Morgan		
<b>Report Author:</b>  Les James	Contracts & Service Development Manager	01267 228930  lesjames@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **SUBJECT: TENANT COMPENSATION POLICY**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The Ombudsman expects landlords to have a compensation policy which gives guidance on offering compensation. This makes sure that we, as a landlord, are protected when claims are made. The purpose of the report is to ensure consistency and clarity to officers when dealing with situations which may require redress to the tenant.

#### **2. Context**

- 2.1. In delivering the CHS+ we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our tenants and residents. However, there are occasions when we fail to deliver on this commitment and things can go wrong. In most cases we can resolve complaints by:

- Acknowledging when things go wrong
- Providing the service asked for
- Changing the way we do things if they are not right
- Looking again why a decision may have caused unfairness

- 1.1. We understand that individuals may suffer some disadvantage or loss because of our actions, errors, or mistakes. In some cases, compensation may be required if the complainant has suffered loss or inconvenience by our lack of action. The report sets what we can do but also instances when we believe we are not at fault and the matter should be dealt with by our insurers.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1. This is a pre decision report on draft compensation policy. Scrutiny is asked for their views on this policy before it goes through the Council's decision and adoption process.

#### **Footnote:**

Under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, tenants are referred to as contract holders and tenancies are known as Secure Occupational Contracts. The policy applies to those housed in our own stock and who hold an occupation contract. The policy would also apply to those housed in our stock designated as temporary accommodation and therefore would hold a licence or Standard Occupational Contract.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**YES – Compensation Policy**



## 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

Head of Housing & Public Protection

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

### Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Equality Impact Assessments are a process which allows organisations to consider relevant evidence to understand the likely or actual effect of policies, practices, and decisions on people with protected characteristics. Equality Impact Assessment has been completed using the integrated assessment tool. The assessment concluded that the policy would have no adverse impact on tenants or protected characteristics groups.

Jessica Harcourt  
8.2.23

### Legal

The Ombudsman expects Local Authorities to have a compensation policy which provides fair and proportionate redress to tenants (contract-holders) where there are shortcomings in the provision of services. The policy should reduce the risk of complaints and/or court action in relevant matters where the facts are not in dispute.

Alan Evans  
26/7/22

### Finance

No direct impact as policy is for clarification only.

Steve Williams  
27/7/22

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO  
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

**Include any observations here.**  
Cabinet Member is supportive of the policy

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

**THERE ARE NONE**

<b>Title of Document</b>	<b>File Ref No.</b>	<b>Locations that the papers are available for public inspection</b>

# Polisi lawndal Tenatiaid

## Tenant Compensation Policy

### Housing Division

### February 2023



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## **1. Purpose of the Compensation Policy**

The Ombudsman expects landlords to have a compensation policy which gives guidance on offering compensation. This makes sure that we, as a landlord, are protected when claims are made.

This policy applies to compensation which we may pay if there is a valid complaint. In some cases, the compensation is controlled by legislation, referred to as “statutory compensation” and in other cases the level of payment is our discretion.

We encourage all our tenants (contract-holders); leaseholders; and residents to have home contents insurance, as compensation will only be paid for damages to individual's personal property in exceptional circumstances.

## **2. Context**

In delivering the CHS+ we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our tenants and residents. However, there are occasions when we fail to deliver on this commitment and things can go wrong. In most cases we can resolve complaints by:

- Acknowledging when things go wrong
- Providing the service asked for
- Changing the way we do things if they are not right
- Looking again why a decision may have caused unfairness

We understand that individuals may suffer some disadvantage or loss because of our actions, errors, or mistakes. In some cases, compensation may be required if the complainant has suffered loss or inconvenience by our lack of action.

Compensation due to major works are covered under our Major Works Agreement which was endorsed by full council in 2007. We will continue to meet our Statutory obligations and associated payments set out in various legislation e.g. Home Loss Payments.

### **3. Key principles**

- To make sure a clear, fair and transparent approach to dealing with claims for compensation.
- To outline the degree of service failure that necessitates compensation.
- To make clear what actions the claimants need to have taken to be eligible for compensation.
- To have a clear process in place for our staff to follow when dealing with a complaint or compensation claim.

### **4. Who is covered by the policy?**

The compensation policy is for the benefit of tenants (contract-holders) of our housing stock.

### **5. Who is not covered by the policy?**

Although this policy does not involve leaseholders and residents, we recognise that we have a responsibility to both leaseholders and residents while carrying out major work schemes and new build schemes.

We will not pay compensation for any disturbance or nuisance caused by new build schemes / major works schemes / environmental and clearance works to sites that the council owns. If we are in breach of legislation or there is clear evidence that we are liable, claims will be referred to our insurers.

### **6. Circumstances when the policy will apply**

- Damage to personal property and internal decorations which has been caused whilst we carry out repair and maintenance works. Liability must be confirmed by our contractor or the Council.
- Additional fuel costs incurred due to loss of heating for more than 24 hours (between 31 October and 31 May) or hot water for more than 24 hours. This must be confirmed by our contractor or the Council.
- Additional fuel costs for dehumidifiers incurred due to fire / flood damage.
- All loss or damages claims will be investigated by our insurers.



- Compensation for food allowance if temporarily accommodated in hotel or B&B and meals are not included or no provision for cooking facilities.
- Time and trouble payment where a complainant has had to spend an unreasonable or significant amount of time in pursuing the complaint.

## **7. Circumstances when the policy will not apply**

- The tenant (contract-holder); leaseholder; or resident has not been affected by the problem or service failure.
- A tenant (contract-holder), a member of their household or a visitor; leaseholder; or a resident have acted in an unreasonable or vexatious manner.
- Loss of service is due to damage or misuse by the tenant (contract-holder), a member of their household or a visitor, leaseholder, or resident.
- Temporary loss of facilities or amenities for less than 24 hours.
- Loss of service, utilities or amenities is beyond the Council's control (by 3rd party) e.g. power cut; ruptured water main; blocked street sewers; awaiting parts on order; inclement weather.
- Where legal action is being taken either by the Council or by the tenant (contract-holder); leaseholder; or resident.
- Where the matter is being processed via an insurance claim.
- Damage to personal items, where covered under the tenant's (contract-holder's) Contents insurance.
- Accidental damage has occurred e.g. burst pipes, blocked drains or other events which could not have been predicted.
- Access has been refused and we have not been able to arrange access to carry out repairs or to act out our duties.
- Loss of income or pay for time off work.
- Where we have given advanced notice of programmed maintenance works allowing the tenant (contract-holder); leaseholder; or resident to make alternative arrangements. Or due to a kitchen or bathroom renewal being done as a responsive repair.
- Disturbance or nuisance caused by new build schemes / major works schemes / environmental and clearance works to sites that the council

owns. If we are in breach of legislation or there is clear evidence that we are liable, claims will be referred to our insurers.

- Personal injury claims. All claims will be referred to our insurers.

## **8. Timeframe for making a claim**

Any claims for inconvenience or distress should be made within 28 days.

## **9. How will compensation payments be made**

Compensation payments will not be made as rent reductions. Tenants (contract-holders) must continue to make their rent payments to avoid being in breach of their tenancy/contract. We will take amounts to cover any rent arrears and other debts the tenant (contract-holder) owes from the compensation payment. The tenant (contract-holder) will be paid what's left.

Any payment made will be a full and final settlement of any complaint, dispute or claim.

## **10. Appeals**

If tenants (contract-holders); leaseholders; or residents are not happy with a decision on compensation or goodwill payments, they can go through our formal complaints procedure.

Should a tenant (contract-holder); leaseholder; or resident refer a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (only after the Council's complaints procedure has been exhausted) we will consider and comply with any orders and recommendations made by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.



## Compensation schedule

Type of payment	Calculation and value	Authorisation
Complete loss of heating/additional fuel costs	Formula to calculate: 2 x Ofgem set capped rate per kWh per heater. (2 heaters provided max output 2kWh per heater)	Team Leader
Flood/severe water leaks/additional fuel costs for dehumidifiers	A flat rate payment of £10 per day per dehumidifier provided based on 12 hours usage.	Team Leader
Redecoration of a room/area	We will redecorate properties after works where the original decorations have been substantially affected. We will make good to any damage where possible.  Or if tenants (contract-holders) wish to redecorate themselves, we will pay an allowance based on our decoration allowance schedule	Team Leader
Damage of personal possessions	Cost of replacing or repairing should be met by the tenant's (contract-holder's) Contents insurance.  Where a tenant's (contract-holder's) personal possessions have been damaged as a result of a property failure and they have no contents insurance, in exceptional circumstances only, we will consider reimbursing them if they can provide documented evidence of purchase and of the damage caused.  All other claims for damage will be referred to the council's liability insurers.	Team Leader
Compensation for food allowance if temporarily accommodated in hotel or B&B and meals are not included or no provision for cooking facilities	Refer to Council's current overnight accommodation and meal allowances.	Team Leader

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## COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

### **SUBJECT: RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS POLICY**

#### **Purpose:**

The Rechargeable Repairs Policy sets out the criteria for when a tenant (contract-holder) will be recharged for repairs that are their responsibility under the tenancy agreement (Contract).

#### **THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-**

- Scrutiny is asked for their views on this policy before it goes through the Council's decision and adoption process.

#### **Reasons:**

- Gives clarity and consistency when dealing with rechargeable repairs.
- The Rechargeable Repairs Policy will enable the Authority to reclaim costs where there has been wilful damage or neglect to its housing stock.

#### **CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:**

Cllr Linda Davies Evans - Homes and Deputy Leader

<b>Directorate:</b> Communities	<b>Designations:</b>  Head of Housing & Public Protection	<b>Tel:/Email addresses:</b> 01267 228960 JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
<b>Name of Head of Service:</b> Jonathan Morgan	Contracts & Service Development Manager	01267 228930 lesjames@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
<b>Report Author:</b> Les James		

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## SUBJECT RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS POLICY

### 1. Rechargeable repairs policy summary

#### 1.1. Purpose

- 1.1.1. Our aim is to provide tenants (contract-holders) with a value for money repairs and maintenance service. Vital to this approach is the need to ensure that tenants are recharged for works for which they are contractually responsible for, or for works arising from negligent behaviour or deliberate misuse.

#### 1.2. Context

- 1.2.1. Rechargeable works will normally fall into one or more of the following categories.

- Works which are the tenant's own responsibility in accordance with their Occupation Contract (tenancy agreement), or licence.
- Works which arise because of misuse of the property
- Works which arise because of neglect or where a repair has not been reported
- Works arising because of unauthorised or inappropriate alterations to the property
- Works arising from damage to the property caused by a member of the tenant's household or visitor.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. This is a pre decision report on draft recharge policy. Scrutiny is asked for their views on this policy before it goes through the Council's decision and adoption process.

#### Footnote:

Under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, tenants are referred to as contract holders and tenancies are known as Secure Occupational Contracts. The policy applies to those housed in our own stock and who hold an occupation contract. The policy would also apply to those housed in our stock designated as temporary accommodation and therefore would hold a licence or Standard Occupational Contract.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES - Rechargeable Repairs Policy

## 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

Head of Housing & Public Protection

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

### 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Equality Impact Assessments are a process which allows organisations to consider relevant evidence to understand the likely or actual effect of policies, practices and decisions on people with protected characteristics. Equality Impact Assessment has been completed using the integrated assessment tool. The assessment concluded that the policy would have no adverse impact on tenants or protected characteristics groups.

Jessica Harcourt

7.2.23

### Legal

This policy will ensure that a fair and consistent approach is taken in relation to rechargeable repairs.

Alan Evans

02/02/23

### Finance

No direct impact as policy is for clarification only.

Steve Williams 01/02/23

<b>CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED</b>  YES		<b>Include any observations here.</b> Cllr Evans supports the adoption of the policy.
<b>Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information</b> <b>List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:</b>  <b>THERE ARE NONE</b>		
<b>Title of Document</b>	<b>File Ref No.</b>	<b>Locations that the papers are available for public inspection</b>

# Polisi Ailwefru Atgyweiriadau Rechargeable Repairs Policy



## **1. Purpose of the Policy**

1.1 The policy describes the activities and responsibilities involved in carrying out repairs in circumstances where:

- The repair is the responsibility of the tenant, or
- The damage to the property is due to wilful damage, neglect, misuse or abuse by the tenant, their family, or visitors to the property: or
- The repair is required when moving out of a house to bring it up to an acceptable standard.

## **2. Context**

2.1 In delivering the CHS+ we are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our tenants and residents.

## **3. Key principles**

- To make sure a clear, fair, and transparent approach to dealing with rechargeable repairs.
- To give guidance on the circumstances where discretion can be exercised
- To have a clear process in place for our staff to follow when dealing with rechargeable repairs.
- To inform tenants of the action the Council will take if payment is not made
- The Council is committed to ensuring that existing housing is maintained to an acceptable standard under the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard+.

## **4. Who is covered by the policy?**

4.1 The rechargeable repair policy is for the benefit of tenants<sup>1</sup> of our housing stock. Our Secure Occupational Contract (tenancy) which applies to all council tenants housed in permanent accommodation states:

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 tenants and licensees are called 'contract-holders' under the Act. Contract-holders will have an 'occupation contract' (which replaces tenancy and licence arrangements).



- If we repair any damage which has been caused by you or by anyone living with or visiting you, or through a lack of proper care or supervision at the property, we will do the work and charge you for it.
- You must repair any damage to your property or to the shared areas around your property and must repair or replace any damaged items, if the damage has been caused by you or by anyone living with or visiting you, or by your pets. If you do not repair the damage or replace the item, we will do the work and charge you for it. This does not include damage resulting from fair wear and tear.
- Before your contract ends, you must remove all furniture, personal belongings and rubbish, and leave the home clean and in good condition. You must also repair any damage caused by you or anyone who lives with you or visits you.
- If we cannot offer the home to another occupant within a reasonable time because of the condition you leave it in, we can charge you for the cost of any work we need to do to bring the home back up to the necessary standard, and for any rent we lose.

4.2 Generally, the Council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure of the property and any fixtures and fittings originally provided. Tenants are informed of their repair responsibilities when they sign the occupational agreement. All tenants should, except in certain circumstances, be recharged for repairs that are their responsibility. Examples of rechargeable repairs may include:

- Wilful damage - e.g. replace smashed door
- Misuse – e.g. replace toilet, disposing of items that cause blockage
- Unauthorised alterations – removal of walls, doors, fixtures, or electrical fittings
- Property Clearance – During a tenancy or when a tenancy ends there will be a recharge raised for works identified as a tenant's responsibility.

This includes clearance of any rubbish and personal belongings that have been left in the attic, garden, garage, out buildings and communal areas.

- 4.3 Tenants (under the terms of their occupational agreement) will be responsible for work that may be required when moving out of their home to bring it up to an acceptable standard for a new tenant.
- 4.4 Tenants are recharged for misuse of the Out of Hours Emergency Service when the repair could have waited until the following working day.
- 4.5 Tenants who use the repairs service including the Out of Hours Emergency Service for reporting a repair that is later found to be the tenant's responsibility will be recharged for all costs incurred by the Council.

## **5. Who is not covered by the policy?**

- 5.1. Although this policy does not involve leaseholders and residents, we recognise that we may have a responsibility to both leaseholders and residents which would be determined by either the lease conditions or common law.

## **6. Discretionary circumstances**

- 6.1. Where a rechargeable repair is identified and it is considered that because of exceptional circumstances, the tenant should not be required to meet the cost or carry out the work. Exceptional circumstances may include: -

- Physical frailty or disability.
- Mental health issues or learning difficulties.
- Damage arising from domestic abuse.
- Damage because of criminal activity which is not associated with the tenant.
- Harassment or victimisation, including hate crime.
- To a family that has passed away if there is no estate.

- Accidental damage has occurred e.g. burst pipes, blocked drains or other events which could not have been predicted.
- Personal injury claims. All claims will be referred to our insurers.
- Where the damage is the result of vandalism, provided that it has been reported to the police (and a crime reference number has been obtained, where appropriate) a recharge will not be made.

## **7. Transfer and Void properties**

- 7.1. When a tenant gives notice to end their occupation contract (terminate their tenancy) or applies for a transfer, arrangements will be made for a pre-termination inspection. This inspection will identify any aspects of disrepair, which are the responsibility of the tenant. The tenant will then have the opportunity to rectify any repairs for which they are responsible, prior to the end of the tenancy.
- 7.2. If any such defects are not remedied prior to the end of the tenancy, or if the work is not of a satisfactory standard, a recharge may then be raised for the cost of the works.
- 7.3. We will recharge the cost to the tenant of clearing bulky items from our communal areas that has resulted in a charge to the Council, and the tenant responsible can be clearly identified.

## **8. Recovery**

- 8.1. The Council recognises that in some circumstances, repayment of charges in full may cause excessive financial problems for the tenant. Payments should be reasonable and affordable, with instalment levels based on the individual tenant's financial circumstances and ability to pay. Officers have the discretion to write off the debt where there is financial hardship, and the prospect of recovery are nil.
- 8.2. In exceptional cases, and where it would be cost-effective to do so, the Council may seek a judgement from the courts for persistent non-payment of recharges. This would be dependent on the individual circumstances (reasonableness) and the balance outstanding.

- 8.3. The decision whether to make a formal offer of accommodation which will result in the granting of any future tenancy, will therefore be conditional on a prior agreed arrangement to repay any previous recharges owing at the time of the offer, or to clear the debt in full.
- 8.4. The Council reserves the right to defer applicants from the Housing Choice Register where a rechargeable repair has not been settled and place them in the appropriate category. Applicants should come to an agreement to clear the debt as mentioned above.
- 8.5. Under this policy we may refuse a transfer until the cost of the recharges are recovered or the repair rectified to our satisfaction.
- 8.6. The Head of Service responsible for housing management will set a minimal level below which the cost of rechargeable repairs will not be pursued, to ensure that resources are used effectively. The Head of Service responsible for repairs will review Appendix A in line with any contractual and legislative changes.

## **9. Appeals**

- 9.1. If tenants, leaseholders, or residents are not happy with a decision, they can go through our formal complaint's procedure.
- 9.2. Should a tenant, leaseholder, or resident refer a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (only after the Council's complaints procedure has been exhausted) we will consider and comply with any orders and recommendations made by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

## **Appendix A - Repair responsibilities checklist**

<b>Repair</b>	<b>Notes / Exceptions</b>	<b>Landlord</b>	<b>Tenant (contract-holder)</b>
Aerials / cables / connections	Except communal aerials.		✓
Basins / sinks	Except replacing plugs, chains, and panels.	✓	
Carbon monoxide detectors	If alarm sounds, turn off gas boiler/gas fire/gas cooker, open windows and contact us.	✓	
Car hard standing/Drive	If installed by Council or in situ at start of occupation contract	✓	
Ceilings	Except small cracks and painting.	✓	
Chimneys / stacks / flues	installed by the Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Communal areas	Including shared entrances, halls, stairways, and passages. Includes alarms. Also lifts, rubbish chutes, and lighting.	✓	
Cookers	Including connection and disconnection for which you must use a Gas Safe registered engineer (if gas) or electrician (if electric).		✓
Doors / frames – external (front and back)	Except basic maintenance such as oiling hinges.	✓	
Doors / frames– internal	Includes handles, locks, hinges, and threshold strips and adaption to accommodate carpets etc.		✓
Doorbell			✓
Door entry systems		✓	
Drainage pipes/ drains / wastes pipes	Charges will be made if repeatedly blocked through tenant misuse.	✓	
Dustbins / wheelie bins/recycling			✓
Electric meters	Contact your supplier.		✓
Electrical wiring including sockets and switches		✓	
Extractor fans		✓	
Fences/Garden walls	If boundary owned by Council and originally erected by Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Fire alarms in communal areas		✓	

Fireplaces / fitted fires	If used for burning solid fuel.	✓	
Fixtures and fittings	Such as coat hooks, curtain rails, draught excluders.		✓
Floors	Except floor coverings i.e. carpet/vinyl/lino or wood laminate.	✓	
Garage / outbuildings	If built by the Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Garden maintenance	Unless paid for through service charge (only effects sheltered housing and communal gardens).		✓
Gas meters	Contact your gas supplier.		✓
Gas pipes	If you suspect a gas leak, first, please call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 and then report this to the Council.	✓	
Gates	If installed by Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Glazing	If due to break in or other criminal damage, you must get a crime number from the police. If due to accidental damage, either claim on your insurance or we will repair and recharge.	✓	
Greenhouses			✓
Guttering / rainwater pipes/ Fascia/soffits		✓	
Heating and hot water inc. Immersion heaters		✓	
Keys – Lost or stolen	Council can arrange entry but there will be a charge. If stolen, you must obtain a crime number from the police.		✓
Kitchens	If installed by the Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Kitchen appliances	Unless provided by the Council.		✓
Letterboxes			✓
Light fittings –including switches	Except lightbulbs, fuses, fluorescent tubes, and starters.	✓	
Painting and decorating inside	Except communal areas.		✓
Painting outside		✓	
Paths / steps / ramps	If built by the Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Pests	Except where we are legally responsible and there is a public health risk e.g. rats or cockroaches.		✓

Pipes/leaks	Including outside and inside drainage pipes.	✓	
Plasterwork	Except small cracks/repairs.	✓	
Porches	If installed by the Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Radiators	Except bleeding air from radiators.	✓	
Roofs		✓	
Showers	If installed by the Council or in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Skirting boards		✓	
Smoke alarms	Replacing faulty long life lithium battery or mains wired alarms.	✓	
Stairs	Including banisters / handrails etc.	✓	
Store / outhouse – brick or concrete		✓	
Taps / stopcocks		✓	
Telephone points			✓
Toilets	Except seats.	✓	
Walls	See also plasterwork.	✓	
Wall tiling	If originally fixed by the Council or were in situ at start of occupation contract.	✓	
Washing lines	Except communal lines / communal rotary dryers.		✓
Windows	Includes sills, handles, frames and misted double glazing.	✓	

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## COMMUNITIES HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY, 2023

### NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

#### To consider and comment on the following:

Explanation provided for the non-submission of a scrutiny report.

#### Reason:

The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees to develop and publish, and keep under review, an annual Forward Work Plan which identifies the issues and reports to be considered at meetings during the course of the year. If a report is not presented as scheduled, officers are expected to prepare a non-submission report explaining the reason(s) why.

**Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder:)** N/A

#### Report Author:

Kevin Thomas

#### Designation:

Democratic Services Officer

#### Tel No. / E-Mail Address:

01267 – 224027  
Kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

#### **NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees to develop, keep under review and publish an annual Forward Work Plan which identifies the issues and reports to be considered at meetings during the course of the year.

If a report is not presented as scheduled in the Forward Work Plan, the responsible officer(s) are expected to prepare a non-submission report explaining the reason(s) why.

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: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

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

## CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

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

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE / CONSULTED

YES

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

There are none.

Title of Document	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
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# Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

**23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023**

<b>EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS</b>			
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<b>EXPLANATION:</b>	<b>REVISED SUBMISSION DATE</b>
<b>Business Plan</b>	Noelwyn Daniels	The Council's new Corporate Strategy 2022-27 will take a new approach from previous versions which will also impact on business planning arrangements. The aim is to ensure greater alignment across the Council and to further strengthen performance management. In order to fully outline and seek feedback on this new approach a members' development session is being held on 27 January 2023 (invitation has been sent to all councillors). Feedback from this session will be considered in the development of the final version of the Corporate Strategy and business plans will be made available to scrutiny committees from end of February 2023.	5 <sup>th</sup> April 2023

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# COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

## FORTHCOMING ITEMS

### THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-

- To note the forthcoming items to be considered at the next meeting of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to be held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

### Reason(s)

- The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees, at the commencement of each municipal year, to develop and publish a Forward Work Plan which identifies the issues and reports which will be considered at meetings during the course of the year.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** Cllr. L. Evans (Homes and Deputy Leader)  
Cllr G. John (Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism), Cllr A. Lenny (Resources)  
Cllr A. Davies (Rural Affairs and Planning Policy)

#### Directorate

#### Name of Head of Service:

Linda Rees Jones

#### Designations:

Head of Administration and Law

#### Tel Nos.

01267 224012

[LRJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:LRJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

#### Report Author:

Kevin Thomas

#### Democratic Services Officer

01267 224027

[kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY, 2023**

**FORTHCOMING ITEMS**

The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees, at the commencement of each municipal year, to develop and publish a Forward Work Programme which identifies the issues and reports to be considered at meetings during the course of the year. When formulating the Forward Work Plan the Scrutiny Committee will take into consideration those items included on the Cabinet's Forward Work Programme.

The list of forthcoming items attached includes those items which are scheduled in the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's Forward Work Plan to be considered at the next meeting, to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

Also attached for information are the 2022/23 Forward Work Plans in respect of the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?**

**YES:**

- (1) List of Forthcoming Items
- (2) C & R Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan
- (3) Cabinet Forward Work Plan



## 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: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration and Law

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

<b>CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED</b> NO	N/A
<b>Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information</b> <b>List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:</b>  <b>There are none.</b>	

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# FORTHCOMING ITEMS – TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2023

Agenda Item	Background	Reason for report
		<p>What is Scrutiny being asked to do? e.g. undertake a full review of the subject? Investigate different policy options? Be consulted on final proposals before decision making? Monitor outcomes /implementation?</p> <p><i>If the item is for information or for noting, can the information be provided in an alternative format i.e, via email?</i></p>
Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 (April to December 2022)	This is a standard quarterly budget report covering the revenue and capital budgets for the Community and Environment Departments which fall within the remit of the Community Scrutiny Committee	To enable the committee to undertake its monitoring role of the Communities, Regeneration, and Place and Sustainability budgets which fall within its remit
Quarter 3 Performance Management	This is the standard Performance Management report on our progress in delivering the objectives/actions and targets set out in the New Corporate Strategy. It covers those elements of the strategy that fall under the remit of this Scrutiny.	To enable the committee to undertake its monitoring role.
Business Plans x3 Chief Executives Communities Place and Infrastructure	As part of the Business Plan Development process the Committee is invited to consider and comment on an annual basis on the Business Plans for the Communities, Chief Executive and Place and Infrastructure Departmental Business Plans 2023-2024 relevant to its remit.	To afford the Committee the opportunity of commenting on and making any recommendations on the Communities, Chief Executive and Place and Infrastructure Departmental Business Plans relevant to its remit.

<b>Items circulated to the Committee under separate cover since the last meeting</b>
N.B. Copies of these reports can be obtained by emailing <a href="mailto:Scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">Scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Items attached for information</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The latest version of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2022/23</li><li>2. The latest version of the Cabinet's Forward Work Programme 2022/23</li></ol>

N.B. Copies of these reports can be obtained by emailing [Scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

**Items attached for information**

1. The latest version of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2022/23
2. The latest version of the Cabinet's Forward Work Programme 2022/23

## Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme 2022/23

29 <sup>th</sup> Sept 22	16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 22 -	14 <sup>th</sup> Dec 22 Moved to 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	26 Jan 23	23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 23	5 <sup>th</sup> April 23	15 <sup>th</sup> May 23
Annual Performance Report 2021/22 (Planning Services) – Moved to November	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/23 (Apr-Aug Monitor)	Quarter 1 Performance Management Replaced with the Q2 Report scheduled for January 2023	HRA Budget Service Charges and Rent Setting 2023/24 (moved to 19 <sup>th</sup> December)	Scrutiny Actions update	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 (April to December)	Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocations Policy – Monitoring
Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan – Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22 – moved to November <b>TO BE COMBINED INTO ONE REPORT</b>	Scrutiny Actions Update	County Council Annual Report (deferred from 29 <sup>th</sup> Sept)	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire Investment Programme (moved to 19 <sup>th</sup> December)	Tenant Compensation Policy	Quarter 3 Performance Management	Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny FWP 2023/24
Quarter 1 Performance Management – defer to December 14 <sup>th</sup>	Corporate Strategy – defer to 2023	Pendine Outdoor Education Centre Replaced with the Outdoor Education provision report initially scheduled for the 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 (April to October) (to be e-mailed)	Tenant Recharge Policy	New Social Allocation Policy – Homelessness Duty – withdrawn – new date to be confirmed later in the year	
Council Annual Report – defer to Dec 14 <sup>th</sup>	Community Asset Transfer Policy	HRA Budget Service Charges and Rent Setting	Revenue Budget Consultation 2023/24 - 2025/26	Empty Property Policy	Business Plans (moved from 23 <sup>rd</sup> February)	

		2023/24 (moved from 26 <sup>th</sup> January)				
Community Scrutiny FWP 2022/23	Consolidated Deposit Revised LDP	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire Investment Programme (moved from 26 <sup>th</sup> January)	<del>Business Plans</del> x3 – <del>C/ex, Community, Env</del> (Moved to 23 <sup>rd</sup> February)	<del>Business Plans</del> (moved to 5 <sup>th</sup> April)		
Community Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22	Leisure Strategy	Ten Towns Update	<del>Quarter 2 Performance Management</del> Moved to 19 <sup>th</sup> December			
Innovation Strategy (moved to 16 <sup>th</sup> November)	Annual Performance Report 2021/22 (Planning Services) – (Moved from September)	Section 106 (Planning Obligations) – Update report	<del>Alternative Outdoor Education Provision</del> Moved to 19 <sup>th</sup> December to replace the Pendine outdoor education report			
	Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan – Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22 – moved from September		Shared Prosperity Fund			
	Innovation Strategy (moved form 29 <sup>th</sup> Sept)		Task and Finish Report – Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy			

	Task and Finish Report		Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-26			
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#### OTHER REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED:

##### Site Visits

- Y Stordy / Museums / Libraries – Dates to be confirmed following the relaxation of Covid 19 rules

#### TASK AND FINISH REVIEW

##### Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy

#### REPORTS TO BE E-MAILED

##### Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report (Jan 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting)

#### OTHER REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED:

Section 106 – Date to be confirmed (Planning)

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## **CABINET/COUNCIL – FORWARD PLAN**

FOR THE PERIOD 1 FEBRUARY 2023 TO 31 JANUARY 2024

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director  Report Author</b>
CORPORATE STRATEGY	To update our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives	Cabinet 13 Feb 2023	No	Leader of the Council	Chief Executive Nicola Evans, Business Support Manager njevans@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN Maintenance Manual	The Maintenance Manual is being developed as a portfolio of individual highway maintenance and management policies adopting a risk-based approach and according with a national code of practice. The topic being brought forward covers the management of highway drainage.	Cabinet 13 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services	Director of Place & Infrastructure Richard Waters, Highways and Transportation Services Manager RWaters@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
PROPOSAL FOR CABINET TO CONSIDER THE FORMAL SIGNING OF THE	On 4 July 2022, Cabinet established a Cross Party Advisory Panel to support the authority's approach to addressing the climate and nature emergencies and the adoption of the Edinburgh Declaration. At	Cabinet 13 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability	Director of Place & Infrastructure Rosie Carmichael, Rural Conservation Manager

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
EDINBURGH DECLARATION ON POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK	the inaugural meeting of the Advisory panel, Members provided unanimous support for the Cabinet formally signing the declaration.				racarmichael@car marthenshire.gov.u k
Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2023-2024	That Council formally approves the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2021-22 and recommendations therein. That Council formally approves the Treasury Management Indicators, Prudential Indicators, the MRP Statement, the Investment Strategy and recommendations therein.	Cabinet 13 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Director of Corporate Services Anthony Parnell, Treasury & Pension Investments Manager aparnell@carmarth enshire.gov.uk
Council Transformation Strategy	A Transformation Strategy will provide the strategic framework to support the implementation of a programme of organisational transformation over the next 5 years.	Cabinet 13 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Organisation & Workforce	Chief Executive Nicola Evans, Business Support Manager njevans@carmarth enshire.gov.uk
COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	To consider the Task and Finish Group's recommendations on the adoption of an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Chief Executive Kevin J Thomas, Democratic Services Officer kjthomas@carmart

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT – EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY					henshire.gov.uk
HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAMME (HSP) STRATEGY 2022-26	This strategy sets out our priorities and those of our partner agencies for homelessness prevention, homelessness relief and housing related support services over the coming four years (2022-26) to support our most vulnerable citizens to live as part of their communities.	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Director of Communities Christine Harrison, Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning Chris.harrison@pembrokeshire.gov.uk
RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN 2022-2027	Rapid Rehousing is an approach which ensures that anyone experiencing homelessness can move into a settled home as quickly as possible. While our priority is preventing homelessness, we want Rapid Rehousing to become the default approach when people become homeless. The Plan has been developed in partnership to deliver transformation.	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Director of Communities Angie Bowen, Investment and Income Manager AnBowen@carmart.henshire.gov.uk
FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME	To enable the authority to agree a five-year capital programme 2023/24 to 2027/28	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Cllr. Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member	Director of Corporate Services Randal

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
(COUNCIL FUND) – 2023/24 TO 2027/28					Hemingway, Head of Financial Services RHemingway@car marthenshire.gov.uk
REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2025/26	To enable the Authority to set its Revenue Budget for the Council Fund and resultant Council Tax for 2023/24.	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Cllr. Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member	Director of Corporate Services Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services RHemingway@car marthenshire.gov.uk
Covid 19 impact on Contractors – Major works	A report will be produced to explore the financial impact on Contractors as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report will establish the current contract provisions being enforced by the Authority compared against various government advice and relief procedures. To further inform stakeholders, the report will capture the potential implications for adopting and seek a decision on implementing contractor support mechanisms to mitigate the financial impact of Covid-19.	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services	Director of Place & Infrastructure Jason G. Jones, Property Maintenance Manager JGJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT	To provide the Cabinet with an update on the latest budgetary position as at 31st December 2022, in respect of 2022/23.	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Director of Corporate Services Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services RHemingway@car-marthenshire.gov.uk
RURAL ESTATES	In January 2021, the Welsh Government announced regulatory measures to address agricultural pollution. These regulations are known as The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021. The regulations will have a huge impact on the majority of the Council's farms, especially the dairy farms, which will involve having to upgrade slurry storage facilities to accommodate at least five months' worth of slurry. The average capacity of slurry stores on Council farms currently stands at 2-3 months of storage. This report provides an update on the current situation regarding the impact of the regulations on the Farm Estate and the implications following the outcome of recent condition surveys carried out on all 24 farms.	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Chief Executive Jason Jones (Head of Regeneration), Head of Regeneration JaJones@car-marthenshire.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022	To provide members with an update on the treasury management activities from 1st April 2022 to 31st December 2022	Cabinet 20 Feb 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Director of Corporate Services Anthony Parnell, Treasury & Pension Investments Manager aparnell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME (COUNCIL FUND) – 2023/24 TO 2027/28	To enable the authority to agree a five-year capital programme 2023/24 to 2027/28	County Council 1 Mar 2023	No	Cllr. Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member	Director of Corporate Services Chris Moore, Director of Corporate Services cmoore@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS ON LONG TERM VOIDS AND SECOND HOMES	To consider the options open to the Council with regard to introducing Council Tax Premiums on Long term empty properties and second homes.	County Council 8 Mar 2023	No	Cllr. Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member	Director of Corporate Services Helen Pugh, Head of Revenues and Financial Compliance HLPugh@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Page 78 EMPTY PROPERTY POLICY	TO INTRODUCE THE EMPTY PROPERTY POLICY THAT WILL SET THE VISION AND THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COUNCIL IN TACKLING EMPTY RESIDENTIAL	Cabinet 13 Mar 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Director of Communities Gareth Williams, Team Leader GajWilliams@carm

Subject	Report Summary	Decision Making Body and Dates	Is Exempt?	Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)	Responsible Director / Report Author
	HOMES WITHIN THE COUNTY FOR THE NEXT 4 YEARS. THE POLICY ALSO SETS OUT THE LOAL CONTEXT AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO USE TO HELP MEET THE HOUSING NEED IN THE COUNTY PARTICULARLY FOR LOCAL PEOPLE.				arthenshire.gov.uk
Conservation Area Appraisals	<p>This report sets out the work being undertaken to review ten designated Conservation Areas across the County. It identifies the outcome of the review and the subsequent consultation exercise including on the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A character appraisal;</li> <li>•A boundary review and</li> <li>•A management plan.</li> </ul> <p>The report in setting out the above identifies the outcome of the public consultation exercise and the next steps including the processes required to amend any of the Conservation Area designations.</p>	Cabinet 13 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs and Planning Policy	Director of Place & Infrastructure Rhodri Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability RDGriffiths@carma rthenshire.gov.uk
PLANNING AND PURCHASE OF LAND REQUIRED FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING	Proposal to consider the purchase of land and virement in the capital programme to proceed with a new replacement Welsh medium school for Ysgol Gwennllian, Kidwelly.	Cabinet 13 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Director of Education & Children Simon Davies, Head of Access to

Subject	Report Summary	Decision Making Body and Dates	Is Exempt?	Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)	Responsible Director / Report Author
SCHEME					Education sidavies@car-mar-thenshire.gov.uk
Business Rates – Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief Scheme 2023/24	To consider the adoption of a rate relief scheme being made available to billing authorities by Welsh Government for 2023/24	Cabinet 13 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Director of Corporate Services Ann Thomas, Revenue Services Manager AnThomas@car-mar-thenshire.gov.uk
WEST WALES ADULT ADVOCACY STRATEGY 2023 - 2027	THE ADULT ADVOCACY STRATEGY SEEKS TO SHAPE THE COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS OF HDUHB, CARMARTHENSHIRE CC, CEREDIGION CC AND PEMBROKESHIRE CC IN ORDER TO MEET THEIR STATUTORY DUTIES. IT SEEKS TO ENSURE THAT GOOD QUALITY ADVOCACY IS READILY AND EQUITABLY AVAILABLE, IN THE WEST WALES REGION.	Cabinet 13 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Health & Social Services	Director of Communities Christine Harrison, Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning Chris.harrison@pe-mbrokeshire.gov.uk
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 UPDATE	To provide an update of the latest budgetary position for the 2022/23 capital programme, as at the 31st December 2022.	Cabinet 27 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Director of Corporate Services Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services



Subject	Report Summary	Decision Making Body and Dates	Is Exempt?	Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)	Responsible Director / Report Author
					RHemingway@car marthenshire.gov.u k
ALTERNATIVE OUTDOOR EDUCATION OFFER	The purpose of this report is to review Carmarthenshire County Council's current Outdoor Education offer and to explore options for a re-modelled service within existing resources.	Cabinet 27 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism	Director of Communities Ian Jones, Head of Leisure IJones@carmarthe nshire.gov.uk
CARMARTHENSHIRE'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING (CSCfL)	To provide Cabinet with an updated CSCfL (formerly known as Modernising Education Programme (MEP)) as the long-term strategy and investment plan for schools. The plan will be brought forward following extensive consultation with stakeholders.	Cabinet 27 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Director of Education & Children Simon Davies, Head of Access to Education sidavies@carmarth enshire.gov.uk
Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme	A Roundabout Sponsorship Scheme will involve businesses being able to sponsor a roundabout in the County and see their company promoted in potentially highly visible locations. It is envisaged that sponsorship funds will go towards maintaining both roundabouts and essential Highways	Cabinet 27 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services	Director of Place & Infrastructure Jonathan Willis, Housing Services Manager (Advice & Options) jnwillis@carmarthe nshire.gov.uk
ELECTRIC	The report provides an update on	Cabinet	No	Cabinet Member for	Director of Place &

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY, TWELVE MONTH REVIEW	progress with the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy.	24 Apr 2023		Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services	Infrastructure Steve Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways SGPilliner@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
THE EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGY FOR SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOLS AND SPECIALIST SETTINGS, INCLUDING THOSE THAT ARE MOST CHALLENGED.	This report outlines the range of differentiated support provided to our schools, PRUs and specialist settings ensuring that leaders, teachers and teaching assistants access the necessary support to ensure that all pupils progress and thrive.	Cabinet 27 Mar 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Director of Education & Children Elin Forsyth, Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness EMForsyth@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
TENANT RECHARGE POLICY	Occasionally it may be necessary to recharge a tenant for work that we have carried out to the property which was the tenant responsibility under the tenancy agreement. The policy will guide officers when dealing with council tenant recharges, ensuring a consistent approach.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Director of Communities Jonathan Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
TENANT COMPENSATION POLICY	The report sets out our approach to when it may be appropriate to compensate a tenant who has suffered loss or inconvenience due to service failure. The policy will guide officers when dealing with council tenants ensuring a consistent approach.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Director of Communities Jonathan Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
AN EVALUATION OF ESTYN INSPECTIONS ACROSS CARMARTHENSHIRE SCHOOLS, PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS AND SPECIALIST SETTINGS.	This report provides an evaluation of Estyn inspections over the last five years, outlining the strengths of our schools, PRUs and specialist settings, as well as providing an overview of recommendations for improvement. In addition, the report outlines how the ECS department supports schools both pre and post Estyn inspections to ensure that all of our learners' progress and thrive.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Director of Education & Children Elin Forsyth, Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness EMForsyth@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Street Naming and Numbering Policy	The report seeks to update on the preparation of the Street Naming and Numbering Policy. It sets out the responses received as part of the formal consultation on the policy and officer recommendations ahead of its formal adoption.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs and Planning Policy	Director of Place & Infrastructure Ian R Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager IRLlewelyn@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Carmarthenshire Public Services	The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on each	Cabinet 11 Apr 2023	No	Leader of the Council	Chief Executive Noelwyn Daniel,

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
Board (PSB) Well-being Plan 2023-28	PSB to develop and publish a county Well-being Plan. As part of the preparation of this Plan, Carmarthenshire PSB has undertaken a detailed Well-being Assessment. The objectives and actions identified as part of this plan will focus on areas of collective action that the PSB can influence by working together and does not therefore replicate what is considered to be the core business of the individual member bodies of the PSB, unless there is added value to be gained by the PSB working together.				Head of ICT and Corporate Policy ndaniel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Cleansing Service Strategic Management Plan	To present the outcomes of the review into the Council's street cleaning service and make recommendations for future service delivery.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services	Director of Place & Infrastructure Daniel John, Interim Head of Waste DWJohn@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Grants Awards Policy	In line with the requirement of the Welsh Language Standards the Council must produce and publish a policy on awarding grants (or, where appropriate, amend an existing policy) which requires you to consider positive or negative effects the awarding and implementing of the grant could have on: (i) opportunities for persons to use the	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Chief Executive Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT and Corporate Policy ndaniel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
	Welsh language, and (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.				
Tackling Poverty Action Plan	The Council has prepared a tackling poverty action plan which incorporates its response to the cost of living crisis. The plan outlines actions to be taken by a range of Council services and steps to further our involvement with a range of external stakeholders.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes	Chief Executive Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT and Corporate Policy ndaniel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Defence Employee Recognition Scheme	To approve progression within the Defence Employee Recognition Scheme (DERS) to Silver Award and to strengthen our ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. In October 2021, Cabinet approved the re-signing of the Armed Forces Covenant, which pledged a commitment to apply for the DERS. The DERS encourages employers to support those serving (reservists) or who have served in the armed forces (veterans) and their dependants. It aligns with the Armed Forces Covenant which is a pledge to the Armed Forces Community and their families that they will be given respect and fairness in the United Kingdom that they serve. The DERS encompasses Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards for employers that pledge, demonstrate or advocate	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Organisation & Workforce	Chief Executive Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT and Corporate Policy ndaniel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
	support to the Armed Forces Community.				
Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-28	To approve the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for 2023-28, as a part of our statutory responsibilities under the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011. Carmarthenshire County Council leads on the preparation of the Promotion Strategy; however, we work closely with partners across the county to co-design our work to support the Language in our communities. This is the second promotion strategy and there will be an opportunity to reflect on the results of the 2021 Census as part of our work.	Cabinet 24 Apr 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Chief Executive Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT and Corporate Policy ndaniel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
LEISURE, CULTURE AND OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGY – POST CONSULTATION	The document provides a framework for the service to work with key stakeholders to deliver a strategically aligned Leisure, Culture and Outdoor Recreation Strategy for the next 10 years.	Cabinet 5 Jun 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism	Director of Communities Ian Jones, Head of Leisure IJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP)	The Carmarthenshire 2022-32 WESP became operative on 1.9.22. The Local Authority is required to submit an annual progress report to Welsh Government. It's deemed pertinent to present this report to the Scrutiny process prior to WG	Cabinet 17 Jul 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Education and Welsh Language	Director of Education & Children Aeron Rees, Head of Strategy and Learner Support

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
	submission.				jarees@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Annual Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report 2022-2023	To provide members with an update on the treasury management activities for 2022-2023	Cabinet 4 Sep 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Resources	Director of Corporate Services Anthony Parnell, Treasury & Pension Investments Manager aparnell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Equestrian Strategy	<p>The Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2019-2029 has been produced and published in accordance with section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000).</p> <p>The ROWIP details Carmarthenshire's plan for the strategic management, development, and improvement of the County's Public Rights of Way network up until 2029.</p> <p>During consultation with the Local Access Forum, The Forum identified a need for the local authority to commit to producing a Carmarthenshire Equestrian Strategy to recognise the access opportunities and challenges for horse riding and carriage driving across the County.</p> <p>An Equestrian Strategy to 'promote and develop an accessible network for</p>	Cabinet 30 Oct 2023	No	Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste and Infrastructure Services	Director of Place & Infrastructure Steve Pilliner, Head of Transportation & Highways SGPilliner@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Decision Making Body and Dates</b>	<b>Is Exempt?</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder (if applicable)</b>	<b>Responsible Director / Report Author</b>
	equestrian use' has therefore been published in the Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2019-2029. The report sets out the proposal to adopt an Equestrian Strategy for Carmarthenshire.				
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 UPDATE	To provide an update of the latest budgetary position for the 2022/23 capital programme	Cabinet 27 Nov 2023	No		



# COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

#### SCRUTINY ACTION UPDATE

**Purpose: To apprise the Committee of actions taken in response to decisions made**

#### To consider and comment on the following issues:

- To scrutinise the progress made in relation to actions, requests or referrals recorded during previous meetings of the Committee.

#### Reasons:

- To enable members to exercise their scrutiny role in relation to monitoring performance.

#### CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Not Applicable

<b>Directorate</b> <b>Name of Head of Service:</b> Linda Rees Jones  <b>Report Author:</b> Kevin Thomas	<b>Designations:</b> Head of Administration and Law  Democratic Services Officer	<b>Tel Nos.</b> 01267 224012 <a href="mailto:LRJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">LRJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a> 01267 224027 <a href="mailto:kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2023**

**Scrutiny Action Update**

During the course of a municipal year, several requests for additional information are made by the Committee in order to assist it in discharging its scrutiny role.

The attached report provides members of the Committee with an update on the progress made in relation to these requests.

**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: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration and Law

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

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED NO	N/A
<p><b>Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information</b>  <b>List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:</b></p> <p>There are none.</p>	

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## Community Scrutiny Committee Actions 2021-2022

Ref No	Meeting Date	Recommendation / Action / Referral	Description	Progress Update	Member / Officer	Status
CS 01 - 22/23	29th September 2022	Recommendation	<p><b>Establishment of a Pre-Decision Task and Finish Group (Development of Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy)</b></p> <p>4.1 - That a Pre-decision Scrutiny Task and Finish Group be established to develop an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy for Carmarthenshire</p> <p>5.2 - That the Task and Finish Group Comprise 6 members, politically balanced, and the membership be as detailed above.</p> <p>4.3 That the Task and Finish Group's Terms of Reference/scoping and planning document be approved</p>	The Group has been established with the first meeting held on the 11th October 2022	Kevin Thomas	Completed
CS 02 - 22/23	29th September 2022	Recommendation	<p><b>Forward Work Programme 2022/23</b></p> <p>to reduce the number of items on the FWP for the November 2022 meeting if possible</p> <p>An update report on the Pendine Outdoor Education Centre be submitted to a future meeting</p>	<p>The report is scheduled for the Committee's meeting in December 2022</p>	<p>Kevin Thomas</p> <p>Ian Jones</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

## Community Scrutiny Committee Actions 2021-2022

CS03 - 22/23	16th November 2022	Recommendation	<b>Apologies for Action - LDP Reports</b>  The Head of Place and Sustainability to examine the format of future LDP Reports presented to the Committee	The submission of the Annual report will be accompanied by a report, executive summary, and highlight presentation for Members	Rhodri Griffiths	Completed
CS04 - 22/23	16th November 2022	Action	<b>Leisure, Culture and outdoor Recreation Strategy</b>  1. To provide local members with an update on the tinvasive Top Mouth Gudgeon species in the lakes at the Millennium Coastal Park  2.To provide members of the committee with a high level summary of the contribution of leisure services in tackling poverty.  3. To include a reference to fishing within the Strategy.	1. An update has been provided to local members  2. Head of Leisure sits on corporate 'Tackling Poverty Group' which feeds into a corporate advisory panel, and includes officers from Media and Marketing, Housing, Regeneration, Policy, Finance, Children's services; Education and Social Care. Further detail via Gwyneth Ayres in policy team. Leisure is specifically supporting through hosting of 'warm places at our 3 town libraries' and via social pricing at leisure sites.  3. A reference will be included within the revised Strategy for Cabinet approval	Ian Jones	Completed

## Community Scrutiny Committee Actions 2021-2022

CS05 -22/23	16th November 2022	Recommendation	<b>Local Innovation Strategy</b>  1. The report be recommended to Cabinet for adoption  2. To provide members of the committee, via e-mail, further details on the local benefits arising for carmarthenshire from the city deal projects on Digital Infrastructure and Skills and Challenges	1. The Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet on the 28th November 2022  2. The information was circulated to the Committee members on the 16th December	Jason Jones	Completed
CS06 - 22/23	16th November 2022	Recommendation	<b>Community Asset Transfer</b>  That the newly updated Community Asset Transfer Procedures Document be recommended to Cabinet for approval	To be considered by the Cabinet in February 2023	Jason Jones	Completed
CS07 - 22/23	19th December	Recommendation	<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2023/24</b> To recommend to Cabinet / Council the proposed Housing Revenue Account Budget and House Rent setting for 2023/24 be adopted	The report was considered by Cabinet on the 9th January and Council on the 25th January	Chris Moore	Completed
CS08 - 22/23	19th December	Action	<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2023/24</b>  To provide the committee with details of the proportion of the 24% of Tenants not in receipt of benefits who were elderly	The following note was added to the cabinet report in response to the query in scrutiny."30% of tenants are now in receipt of universal credit, 28% of tenants are on full Housing Benefit (HB), 18% are on partial HB and 24% receive no HB. Of those receiving no assistance in the form of universal credit or housing benefit there are approximately 839 of pensionable age."	Chris Moore	Completed
CS09- 22/23	19th December	Recommendation	<b>Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire's Housing Investment Programme</b>  To recommend to Cabinet / Council that the report and its recommendations be adopted	The report was considered by Cabinet on the 9th January and Council on the 25th January	Jonathan Morgan	Completed
CS10 - 22/23	26th January 2023	Recommendation	<b>Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2023/24 - 2025/26</b>  To recommend to Cabinet/Council 1. the 2023/24 - 2025/26 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received. 2. The Charging Digests for the Regeneration Leisure Place and Sustainability and Non HRA services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report, be endorsed	The Strategy is due to be considered by Cabinet on the 20th February and Council on the 1st March 2023	Chris Moore	

## Community Scrutiny Committee Actions 2021-2022

CS11-22/23	26th January 2023	Recommendation	<p><b>Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group - Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy</b></p> <p>To recommend to Cabinet/Council</p> <p>1. The Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocation Policy be approved,  2. The current Choice Based Lettings Policy be suspended for a approximately one year, and the Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocation Policy be implemented,  3. The Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee receive updates at every meeting on the effectiveness of the change,  4. the content of the reports include data for the previous period referring to the areas detailed in the minutes.</p> <p>That the members of the Task and Finish Group meet every two months to monitor the Policy's implementation.</p> <p>The current system of advertising properties on 'Canfod Cartref - Home Finder' commencing at midnight on Thursday be retained.</p>	<p>The Task and Finish Group's report is due to be considered by Cabinet on the 20th February and Council on the 8th March 2023</p> <p>No action Required to amend the existing policy</p>	<p>Kevin Thomas</p> <p>Jonathan Morgan</p> <p>Jonathan Morgan</p>	<p>Completed</p>
CS11-22/23	26th January 2023	Action	<p><b>Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group - Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy</b></p> <p>To examine the wording on Canfod Cartref to clarify the 'bidding process'</p>		Jonathan Morgan	
CS12- 22/23	26th January 2023	Recommendation	<p><b>Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026</b></p> <p>That the Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026 be endorsed</p>	<p>The Strategy is due to be considered by Cabinet on the 20th February 2023</p>	Chris Harrison	
CS13- 22/23	26th January 2023	Recommendation	<p><b>Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-2027</b></p> <p>That the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-2027 be endorsed</p>	<p>The Plan is to be considered by Cabinet on the 20th February 2023</p>	Jonathan Morgan	



## Community Scrutiny Committee Actions 2021-2022

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# Agenda Item 11

## COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillor D.M. Cundy (Chair) (Virtually)

**Councillors (Virtually):**

B.W. Jones	W.R.A. Davies	B. Davies	T. Davies
N. Evans	R.E. Evans	H.L. Davies	J.K. Howell
A. Leyshon	H.B. Shepardson	R. Sparks	

**Also in attendance (Virtually):**

Councillor L. Evans Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Leader  
Councillor A. Davies – Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs and Planning Policy  
Councillor A. Lenny – Cabinet Member for Resources  
Councillor G. John – Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism

**Also Present (Virtually):**

R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services  
J. Jones, Head of Regeneration  
J. Fearn, Head of Housing Property and Strategic Projects  
I. Jones, Head of Leisure  
J. Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities  
C. Daniels, Senior Sports and Leisure Manager  
J. Davies, Senior Cultural Services Manager  
H. Morgan, Economic Development Manager  
A Bowen, Investment and Income Manager  
A. Jones, Procurement & Contracting Officer  
R. Parkinson, Team Leader - Housing Advice  
J. Williams, Rapid Rehousing Policy Lead  
A. Eynon, Principal Translator  
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer  
S. Hendy, Member Support Officer  
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer  
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

**Virtual Meeting - 10.00 am - 12.05 pm**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M. Palfreman.

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

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

Councillor	Minute No (s)	Nature of Interest
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H. Shepardson	4 – Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2023/24 – 2025/26	Ticket Holder for the car parks within the Millennium Coastal Park and Season Ticket Holder for Pembrey Country Park
R. Sparks	4 – Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2023/24 – 2025/26	Has a swimming business and has dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak and make written representations but not vote

### 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

### 4. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2023/24 to 2025/26

(NOTE: Councillors H. Shepardson and R. Sparks having previously declared an interest in this item redeclared that interest and remained in the meeting )

The Committee considered a report on the Council's Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26, as endorsed by the Executive Board for consultation purposes at its meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2023/2024 together with indicative figures for the 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 financial years based on officers' projections of spending requirements and took account of the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

The Committee was informed that the announced provisional settlement represented an average increase of 8.0% across Wales on the 2022/23 settlement, with Carmarthenshire's increase being 8.5% (£26.432mm) thereby taking the Aggregate External Finance to £338.017m for 2023/24. While the settlement was significantly above the initial indicative figure of a 3.4% increase and provided some £15.5m more than the Council's original assumption, the Welsh Government had recognised the increased figure would still not be sufficient to meet inflationary pressures facing councils, pay awards and fuel price increases and difficult decisions would need to be made.

Whilst the budget proposals assumed the full delivery of all savings proposals, it was noted further work would be required to develop the cost reductions for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years to be able to maintain the current Budget Strategy and level of Council tax.

It was noted that given the current risks around the Budget Strategy and the ongoing inflationary backdrop, together with other budgetary pressures, the

proposed Council Tax increase for 2023/24 had been set at 7% to mitigate reductions to critical services. In years 2 and 3, the financial picture remained uncertain and, as such, modelled indicative Council Tax rises of 4% and 3% had been made purely for planning purposes and sought to strike a balance with budget reductions. Those proposals would be considered by the Council in setting the Council Tax level for 2023/24 at its meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Additionally, as the Welsh Government final settlement figure was not due to be announced until the 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 any amendments required to be considered to the budget strategy as a result of that announcement would need to be considered by Council.

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, Place and Sustainability and Non HRA Housing Services;
- **Appendix A(ii)** – Growth Pressures summary for the for the Place and Sustainability Services, - none for the Regeneration, Leisure and Non HRA Services;
- **Appendix B** – Budget monitoring report for the Regeneration, Leisure, Place and Sustainability and Non HRA Housing Services;
- **Appendix C** – Charging Digest for the Regeneration, Leisure, Place and Sustainability and Non HRA Housing Services;

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

- With regard to the recent budget seminars held for county councillors, it was confirmed no changes had been made to the Strategy following the seminars. However, the outcome of the formal budget consultation exercise, that included the Council's Scrutiny Committees and the public, would be collated and incorporated within the budget consultation report to Cabinet and Council as part of their considerations on the Budget Strategy.

**RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET/COUNCIL THAT: -**

- 4.1 The 2023/24 – 2025/26 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received.**
- 4.2 The Charging Digests for the Regeneration, Leisure, Place and Sustainability and Non HRA Services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report, be endorsed.**

## **5. COMMUNITIES, HOMES AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP - EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Committee considered the report of its Task and Finish Group established to develop an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy for Carmarthenshire to address the unprecedented situation where the Council, as with all Welsh Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords, was facing increased demand over supply for social housing.

The report detailed the Group's work, incorporating a proposed Emergency Allocations Policy, where it was proposed that future allocations for social housing in Carmarthenshire would be via 'direct matching' whereby the Council would allocate all available properties according to set criteria to those presenting as homeless and in greater housing need. If the proposal was adopted, it was further proposed the emergency policy would be in place for approximately one year to enable a full review to be undertaken of the 'Common Allocations Policy' which would need to be suspended whilst the emergency policy was in operation. It was also noted that if the policy were to be adopted, and not all available properties could be allocated at a given point, those unallocated would be made available via 'Canfod Cartref – Home Finder' for people to bid for, as at present.

The Committee's appreciation was extended to the Task and Finish Members and the officers involved in the review for their work in developing the proposed Emergency Allocations Policy

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

- It was confirmed that should an available property not be directly matched, in accordance with set criteria, it would be advertised on 'Canfod Cartref – Home Finder' for those on the Housing Register to bid for as at present.
- Reference was made to the current bidding system whereby properties were advertised at midnight on a Thursday until midnight the following Monday and to the fact some people were staying up until midnight on the Thursday to lodge their bid early. It was suggested the start time be amended to say 6.00 a.m. on the Friday morning.

The Committee was advised that whilst that was possible, the window for people to submit a bid was open for four days, and a bid could be submitted at any time within that window. It was also confirmed that allocation of a property was made on need and not the time a bid was submitted. The Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that he would examine the wording on Canfod Cartref to clarify the bidding process.

- With regard to a question on the level of temporary accommodation being provided to the homeless, the Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that whilst the allocation of properties was a tool to address homelessness, there were other avenues available to the Council in that regard including, building more properties, use of the private rented sector and buying properties.

He further confirmed while the Council always endeavoured to house those presenting to the department as homeless in areas close to their home / families etc, that was not always possible. Currently, the Council had 146 people housed in temporary accommodation at a cost of up to £100 per night. The Welsh Government, in accepting the homeless pressures faced by local government at the current time, had allocated additional funding to help meet those costs, with Carmarthenshire's share amounting to £0.5m.

- Reference was made to the introduction of the Emergency Policy being a temporary measure for approximately one year. It was suggested the

members of the Task and Finish Group should meet with officers every two months to evaluate its implementation

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that it be recommended to Cabinet/Council that:**

- 5.1 the Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocation Policy be approved;**
- 5.2 the current Choice Based Lettings Policy be suspended for approximately one year, and the Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocation Policy be implemented;**
- 5.3 the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee receive updates at every meeting on the effectiveness of the change;**
- 5.4 the content of the update reports include data for the previous period referring to:**
  - Proportion of properties directly matched and those advertised;**
  - Banding of clients matched;**
  - Number of properties directly matched and advertised by each community area, type of property and landlord;**
  - Proportion of direct matches that were successful;**
  - Number of direct matches where the clients requests a review of the allocation and the outcome of those reviews;**
  - Number of direct matches where the client refuses the allocation but doesn't request a review**
- 5.5 UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that members of the Task and Finish Group meet every 2 months to monitor the Emergency Policy's implementation**
- 5.6 RESOLVED that the current system of advertising properties on 'Canfod Cartref – Home Finder' commencing at midnight on Thursday be retained.**

## **6. HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAMME (HSP) STRATEGY 2022-2026**

The Committee considered a report on the Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026, produced in accordance with Welsh Government requirements, detailing the strategic priorities of the Council, and its partner agencies, on homelessness prevention and housing related support services over the coming 4 years (2022-26). The Strategy refreshed earlier priorities included within the Local Authority's former homelessness strategy and the Housing Support Grant (HSG) Delivery Plan for 2021-22 with the development of the priorities having been informed by a comprehensive need assessment exercise that included direct engagement with stakeholders within the Local Authority providers of support services and service users.

The following questions /issues were raised on the report:

- Reference was made to the issue of funding sources identified within the report and clarification sought on how that would support the actions detailed in the reports action plan.

The Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that the use of funding sources was dependent upon whether the action related to capital or revenue expenditure. He assured that every effort was made to maximise availability of funding including, joint funding, Housing Revenue Account together with Welsh Government Funding.

- In relation to the £8.8m Housing Support Grant from the Welsh Government, that was an indicative allocation up to March 2025. Accordingly, it was assumed the grant would be forthcoming up to that time. However, future funding levels beyond that date would be dependent on Welsh Government priorities,
- Reference was made to the Actions in the Plan being up until March 2023 and clarification sought on how the plan would be refreshed after that time. It was confirmed the Housing Support Grant terms and conditions required the Action Plan to be refreshed every two years and, in accordance with that requirement, work thereon would take place this year.
- With regard to the serving of Section 21 Notices by private landlords, it was reported there had been a slight reduction in the level of notices served since the implementation of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act in December 2022. However, tenants on rolling contracts could continue to be served with notices up to June 23. It was hoped the new allocations policy would enable the authority to house persons presenting as homeless without having to place them in temporary accommodation

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026 be endorsed.**

## **7. RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN 2022 - 2027**

The Committee considered the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-27, produced in accordance with Welsh Government Requirements, containing a series of High-Level Actions to enable the Council to transition to a Rapid Rehousing approach to help make homelessness in Carmarthenshire rare, brief and unrepeatd.

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

- It was confirmed that whilst the length of time spent by the homeless in temporary accommodation within Carmarthenshire varied, the average length of time was 3 – 4 months. However, every effort was made to place people within emergency accommodation as soon as was possible.
- The Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised the length of time people spent in temporary accommodation could be monitored as part of the monitoring of the Emergency Allocation Policy
- Reference was made to the work of the homeless teams and the Committee expressed its appreciation to them for all their hard work



**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-2027 be endorsed.**

## **8. UPDATE ON UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)**

The Committee considered an update report on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) within Carmarthenshire which had received a total sum of £37m out of the total fund sum of £138m. It was noted the report also contained, for information, an application form and assessment criteria for the Anchor and Standalone projects and that a guidance document to assist applicants was currently being prepared and would be made available shortly.

The Committee was advised that the Cabinet at its meeting held in October 2022 had approved the delivery model for implementation of the fund between Anchor, Standalone and Commissioned Projects with the following themed anchor projects having been approved:

**Community Anchor** – providing a third party grant to support the development and creation of activities aligned to the following themes.

- Poverty
- Circular Economy
- Wellbeing / Leisure
- Access to Services
- Environment and Green
- Tourism, Culture / Heritage
- Community Engagement

**Rural Anchor** - consisting of 3 elements:

- Ten Towns Initiative
- Rural Innovation Fund
- Hwb Fach y Wlad

**Place Anchor:** - supporting town centres through a Vacant Property Fund, a Town Centre Events Fund and a package of support to deliver key projects identified in our Town Centre Recovery Plans to address the ongoing challenges.

**Supporting Local Business Anchor:** offering financial support to local businesses to support them in all stages of their development through Business start-up and Growth Grants, a Business Renewable Energy Fund and also a Property Development Fund.

In addition, a key focus will be supporting Carmarthenshire businesses to benefit from public procurement spend

**Employability & Skills Anchor:** New streamlined employability programme was being developed and there would be a focus on activity outside the remit of the RLSP and the Swansea Bay City Deal Skills and Talent project.

The working budgets for the themes in Carmarthenshire were as detailed below. However, those may change as the programme commenced and flexibility would

be required to enable virements both within and amongst each of the themes to deliver the Investment Plan's requirements

<b>UK SPF Theme</b>	<b>Working Budget (4% administrative budget removed from figures below)</b>
Community & Place	£10,240,933.76
Supporting Local Businesses	£10,240,933.76
People & Skills	£10,240,933.76
Multiply	£6,413,012

The following questions/issues were raised on the report;

- It was confirmed the Multiply theme related to the new adult numeracy programme whereby the Council was working with Coleg Sir Gar and wider stakeholders on its delivery. Consideration was also being given to whether the theme could be extended to include digital skills.
- It was confirmed the Shared Prosperity Fund was currently progressing through the democratic process of the four constituent authorities of the Swansea Bay City Deal being, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Powys and Swansea and it was hoped to have a co-ordinated launch in the week commencing 27<sup>th</sup> February.
- Reference was made to the requirement for 2022/23 funding to be utilised by March 23 and to whether there were any risks associated therewith. It was confirmed that whilst previous reports had indicated spending would occur in the current financial year, delays by the UK Government had meant it would not be possible to achieve the required spend by March. Accordingly, the UK Government had allowed for flexibility to move the funding to the next financial year, subject to justification, and no funding would be lost. It was also confirmed funding would be up to March 2025.
- It was confirmed the Ten Towns Initiative formed part of the Rural Anchor and that any projects for funding would need to be submitted via the approved application process. Officers from the department would also be liaising with the ten towns teams on the submission of projects for funding.
- It was confirmed that in addition to the ten towns initiative, there were opportunities for all town and community councils within Carmarthenshire to apply for funding and engagement thereon would be made with the clerks of those authorities

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund update report be received.**

## **9. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Committee received an explanation for the non-submission of the following scrutiny reports

- Business Plans

**RESOLVED that the explanation for the non-submissions be noted.**

**10. FORTHCOMING ITEMS**

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2023.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2023 be noted.

**11. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 19TH DECEMBER 2022**

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 be signed as a correct record.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHAIR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

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