

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	15 th February 2022
Lead Member / Officer	Bobby Feeley / Nigel Jones & Claire Owens
Report author	Claire Owens
Title	Housing Support Programme Strategy

1. What is the report about?

1.1. There is a requirement by Welsh Government to develop a Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022 – 2026, with a mid-point review. The Strategy outlines the strategic direction of Denbighshire’s housing related support services and approach to homelessness prevention.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To seek support that the Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy outlines Denbighshire vision and approach to addressing homelessness and providing housing related support services based on assessment of need.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That Cabinet agree with Denbighshire’s vision and strategic direction outlined within the Housing Support Programme Strategy and give approval for the document to be published.

4. Report details

4.1. The HSP strategy (Appendix 1) is required to be the Council’s single strategic document on housing support and homelessness prevention. In its development we have ensured it is aligned to the existing Housing and Homelessness Strategy which is monitored by the Strategic Housing and Homelessness Group. The Strategy covers both the statutory elements of

homelessness prevention and wider housing related support funded through the Housing Support Grant.

- 4.2. In developing the HSP Strategy a thorough needs assessment was undertaken with a range of stakeholders including citizens who have experienced homelessness and accessed services, providers delivering support services - including Third Sector Organisations and other statutory partners such as BCUHB, Police and Probation Services.
- 4.3. From the needs assessment, performance data and work already undertaken to develop other internal strategies and plans we agreed on 7 priorities within the plan. These priorities have been aligned to the Corporate approach in addressing homelessness and in the main, mirror the actions within the existing Housing and Homelessness Strategic Action Plan, such as :- Adopting a Rapid Rehousing Approach to Homelessness; Sourcing permanent accommodation especially for single people under the age of 35; Providing a targeted Early Intervention and Prevention Service; Securing our own Emergency Temporary Accommodation thus reducing the reliance on B&B style accommodation; Strengthening the provision of multi-disciplinary support services. There are additional priorities which have been identified through the thorough needs assessment undertaken. These include :- increasing access to community support services; and increasing the level of tenancy support services that are timely and proportionate to the need of the household.
- 4.4. A draft action plan is included in the document to support the delivery of the HSP Strategy covering the period April 2022 – March 2026. However, we need to add longer term actions as there are only short term actions within the plan currently and timeframes agreed prior to publishing the strategy. An annual review of the action plan will be put in place. Along with this we will be developing a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government, this needs to be completed by September 2022

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1. The HSP Strategy contribute to supporting Denbighshire's Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022 in the following areas :-

- Everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs
- The Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience
- Younger people want to live and work here and have the skills to do so.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Implementation of the Strategy over the coming 4 years will be funded from existing funding streams such as Housing Support Grant, Social Housing Grant, HRA and core budget. We will also be looking at opportunities to secure additional funding, wherever possible and appropriate, from Welsh Government grants.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. A Well-Being Impact Assessment is not required.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. Consultations have been carried out with a range of stakeholders and partners (detailed in 4.2) to gather information to form the needs assessment and determine the priorities for the strategy

8.2. The Housing and Homelessness Strategy Phase 2 Plan went Cabinet Briefing in November 2020 and Full Council in December 2020. Updates on implementation of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan have been provided to the Strategic Housing and Homelessness Group at their quarterly meetings commencing in February 2021.

8.3. The principle of the Council providing temporary accommodation in-house, and adopting a sequential approach to identifying suitable premises for achieving this which would avoid where possible the location of this type of accommodation in areas already experiencing high levels of deprivation, has been discussed at Cabinet Briefing, and also at the meeting of the Rhyl Member Area Group held in April 2021. There will be ongoing consultation across all Member Area Groups to ensure we are addressing homelessness right across the County.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The service area has seen significant investment from both DCC and external sources of funding over the last two years. It is welcome that all funding streams will continue to be maximised in order to help fund the implementation of the strategy in future years, however it is likely that the service will remain an area of pressure which may require further investment. Funding decisions will be taken as part of the agreed revenue and capital budget approval processes.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. There are no identified risks in publishing the HSP strategy as a high level vision and single strategic direction to addressing homelessness and providing housing related support services

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2. Section 7.4.2 (b) of the Council's constitution.