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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting WEDNESDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2020, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

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My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr Jenkins

6 January 2021

Councillor Lynda Thorne
Cabinet Member Housing & Communities
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



Dear Cllr Thorne,

**COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2 DECEMBER 2020
– HOMELINESS – AN UPDATE ON THE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS
AND DELIVERING THE FUTURE SERVICE MODEL**

Please accept my thanks on behalf of the Committee to both yourself and officers for attending the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee to facilitate consideration of how the Council is addressing homelessness and rough sleeping following the outbreak of covid-19. Although it is understood that the ability to eradicate rough sleeping permanently is difficult to achieve, Members were pleased to see the extensive ongoing work within the directorate towards mitigating and addressing issues of homelessness for Cardiff residents through a range of measures and support services. In a bid to assist the service area in its progression, Members of the Committee have requested that I feed back the following comments and observations to you.

Funding

During the meeting, Members sought to understand confidence levels surrounding the financial arrangements and heard that due to uncertainty with the continuation of Welsh Government funding, funding for provisions post March 2021 is uncertain. However, Members note the comments that yourself and officers have received reassuring dialogue from the Welsh Government regarding funding arrangements post March and that confirmation regarding future funding should be received from the Welsh Government by the end of December 2020. Members therefore wish to request that once the funding arrangements post March 2021 are known, this be shared with them.

In terms of contingency planning, Members heard how the phasing out of second stage accommodation, which is provided by smaller community housing, will assist with contingency planning as it will release funds over a three year period. Although Members note that this should provide a substantial amount of funding, Members hold concerns that not only will this proposal not provide a substantial amount of funding in the immediate term, but this decision was proposed prior to the establishment of additional homeless provisions and subsequent potential funding gap of circa £2.7 million per annum. Although Members heard that significant revenue and capital funding has been secured for homeless schemes', Members wish to seek further clarity on the contingency planning in place should Welsh Government fail to continue their financial support. To elaborate, Members would be grateful if more detail could be provided surrounding how much funding is expected to be received from the phasing out of these properties over the three-year period, what the deficit for funding would be even with the phasing out of these properties along with detail on any other plans to address a potential shortfall in funding. Further to this, Members would be grateful if the evidence cited at the meeting regarding second stage projects, which offer accommodation in shared community housing, proving less successful in meeting the increasingly high level of client needs could be shared with Committee.

Prevention

Members questioned what work is currently ongoing with the field of prevention and identifying vulnerable individuals at an early stage and were pleased to note that prior to the outbreak of covid-19 there was an ongoing project with the youth service, LLamau and the homeless team to engage with schools on this topic. Members wish to encourage this work being restarted when safe and possible to do so; and would welcome being kept informed on its progress.

Capacity

During the meeting, Members heard that the lease with YHA Hotel (*which Members were advised has proved successful in housing the higher needs clients*) has been extended to June 2021 with a break clause on 31 March 2021. Members questioned the primary reason for extending the provision and heard that reason for the extension was due to both the need and success of the scheme. It is for this reason why we wish to raise our concerns and seek assurance that contingency planning with respect of this provision potentially ending is in place. In particular, if the provision is ended within the next 6 months, what alternative provisions, will the (*potentially*) 80 individuals housed within this provision be provided with.

Questions were also raised regarding capacity in terms of the number of long-term units being developed and Members highlighted that the proposals contained in the July Cabinet Report

tended to focus on medium and short-term housing options. Members heard that there are various schemes in place to provide long-term housing options such as dedicated units within the Council House Build development programme, Housing First and SALE (*Supported Accommodation to Independent Living*) which provide clients' with support in line with their need. It was also acknowledged that providing 'move on' accommodation is a priority for the service area however due to the current context there is a larger number of individuals with high support needs presenting whom require urgent support which is why the current focus is on the more medium and short-term options which offer individuals' more intensive support.

When questioning the level of homeless individuals from out of county, Members heard that it is common for individuals' to come into the city to access services due to both the level of services on offer and begging opportunities. Members were further informed that in order to determine if such individuals can be supported, a waiver system is in place, however, due to the current circumstances the Welsh Government has asked every council to support any individual who presents. If possible, Members would be interested to see what data is stored on the homeless individuals from out of county in order to comprehend how this information is analysed to understand the cause.

Members are aware that due to the current health pandemic, the Welsh Government has urged churches not to provide their usual night shelters and Members sought assurance that there is enough provision to substitute the absence of such provisions. It was also questioned if individuals affected by repurposed provisions, such as Adams Court, will be effectively supported to ensure they receive continuation in service, with minimum disruption, whilst works are carried out. Members heard that all families affected by the repurposing have been successfully been moved out of Adams Court and half of the building is being used as a winter night shelter in order to ensure adequate winter provision. Although it was acknowledged that concerns regarding winter provision would remain due to potential issues outside of council control – *for instance issues of flooding and/or covid outbreaks* - Members welcome the comments that due to the recently established provisions of Adams Court and Hayes Place the winter position for 2020 is stronger than previous years.

Anti-social Behaviour

During the meeting, Members explored the measures in place for addressing potential ASB issues and sought assurance that security measures within provisions was not just reliant on CCTV. Members welcomed the update that positions referred to as 'safeguards' have been deployed on all of the larger sites who, along with providing an element of security, also offer 24hour support to the clients. If possible, Members wish to request further information on the

'safeguards' for instance, how many we have, on what provisions they are deployed, specific details on the support they offer and any known impact of lessons learnt from their engagement on sites.

Even though it is understood that eliminating instances of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in its entirety is challenging, clarity was sought towards what we as a Council are doing to proactively address and mitigate such issues, particularly given the relatively widespread reports in the media in spring 2020 of ASB issues within the recently established hotels following the initial covid outbreak. Members sought confirmation that the need to address the issue of ASB is both recognised and effectively managed and also if it was acknowledged amongst the executive that there could be instances when third parties, such as local residents, could be adversely impacted by the decisions the Council makes in addressing the homelessness issue. Members welcomed the comments that community impact is both recognised and taken into account and note the reference that this was a contributing factor toward the decision for why the contract with the riverside provision was not extended. It was further explored if ASB issues raised by members of the public are addressed promptly and Members were advised all issues raised by the wider community are taken seriously and are aimed to be rectified and resolved quickly. It was also pleasing to note the acknowledgement of the need to work closely with local police, ward members and for provisions to take a proactive step by ensuring they direct contact details are shared with members of the public in order to ensure any potential issues are addressed promptly.

Members wish to stress the importance in taking a pro-active position towards ASB issues and Members note that lessons have already been learnt with some provisions not previously escalating issues soon enough and Members wish to stress the importance in ensuring sufficient systems are in place. Members would **recommend** a clear action plan and framework for all homeless accommodation provisions be developed, which provides provisions with clear guidelines, advice and support toward mitigating and addressing ASB. It is also suggested that the framework distributed to provisions should also include direct contact details to relevant council support officers, and if possible a nominated police representative.

Welsh Government Leasing Scheme

As highlighted at Committee, there are shared concerns between Committee Members and the executive regarding the availability of private rented sector accommodation. It is for this reason why Members welcome the proposal for Cardiff to take part in the pilot of the Welsh Government Leasing Scheme due to the opportunity this presents in providing both extra

accommodation capacity along with greater stability for private landlords. It is hoped that the more long standing arrangements presented within this scheme could potentially help to address and pacify landlords' known concerns toward housing vulnerable individuals. Due to the recognised benefits this scheme could bring, Members are concerned that such benefits could be limited by the scheme's cap of 67 properties.

As highlighted at Committee, similar schemes, such as the Calon Residential Leasing scheme appeared to lack proactive measures in order to mitigate potential community impact. For instance with a vulnerable individual, or family, being allocated a community of which they had no connection with. Thereby potentially presenting disruption not only to the individuals housed but also the wider community. It is for this reason why Members wish to **recommend** that within this scheme the council set out clear proactive action, such as risk assessments in order to mitigate any adversarial impact on any receiver communities.

During the discussions, Members were informed that the location of properties within the Leasing Scheme will be determined upon gaps in current provisions; for instance where there is limited social housing stock. Further to this, Members note the comments made that due to difficulties in rental prices and restrictions within LHA rates, challenges in achieving this objective will likely present. Members were further advised that a soft launch of the scheme occurred on 16 Nov 2020 with the intention being that early into 2021 widespread advertising of the scheme will begin. Members would be grateful if further information on the scheme could be provided to them which includes:

- Specific detail on how location of properties will be determined;
- Information on the access to grants and loans available to landlords within the scheme;
- Support arrangements in the place for the individual(s) housed and landlords;
- Contractual agreements with the landlords;
- Any lessons learnt or known feedback from the landlord involved in the soft launch and,
- How the council intends to advertise the scheme.

Public Campaigns surrounding Homelessness

During the meeting, Members expressed their concern regarding the effectiveness and organisation of a previous public campaign, set up by an external organisation, and it was pleasing to note that these challenges and frustrations were both recognised and shared by yourself. Although Members heard that the recently launched 'Real Change' campaign has

been well received by charity partners, concerns were raised by Members that the objective within the campaign appears limited. Although members understand the reasoning behind directing members of the public to provide homeless individuals with real tangible support by signposting council services to their location; it is felt this could prove difficult resonating with the public, with some members of the public feeling they have to provide a more direct, fiscal contribution to the individual. As such, members would **recommend** widening the scope of the 'Real Change' campaign which continues the objective of members of the public engaging directly with the app by reporting where a rough sleeper is residing but also provides them with an opportunity to provide a fiscal contribution, through regulated means via a charity. In addition, and in line with this committee's previous recommendation following its January 2019 meeting, it is recommended that greater effort is put forward in promoting the message that the council has adequate, safe, secure, individualised provisions for individuals' presenting as homeless along with ensuring the 'no first night out' policy is adequately reflected within its marketing campaign. Should resources allow, it would also be suggested to explore media outlets other than council and social media channels for instance, local radio and newspapers in order to ensure greater reach for the campaign.

Finally, Members would also be grateful if an update on the 'Real Change' campaign could also be shared with them which includes any known impact and lessons learnt since its launch.

Thank you once again to you and officers for attending Committee. Being mindful that this is a relatively long letter and for ease of reference, the recommendations and requests captured within this letter are as follows:

Request:

- Once known, funding arrangements post March 2021 be shared with Committee Members;
- Clarity on the contingency planning in place, should Welsh Government fail to continue their financial support post March 2021. To elaborate, Members would be grateful if more detail could be provided surrounding:
 - How much funding is expected to be received from the phasing out of second stage properties over the three-year period,
 - What the potential deficit for funding would be even with the phasing out of these properties,
 - Detail on any other plans to address a potential shortfall in funding.

- In order to aid their understanding, the evidence cited at the meeting regarding second stage accommodation proving less successful in meeting the high level of client needs.
- To see the data stored on homeless individuals from out of county in order to comprehend how this information is analysed by the service area in order to understand the cause.
- Further information on the 'safeguards' for instance, how many we have, on what provisions they are deployed, specific details on the support they offer and any known impact of lessons learnt from their engagement on sites.
- Further information on the Welsh Government Leasing scheme which includes:
 - Specific detail on how location of properties will be determined;
 - Information on the access to grants and loans available to landlords within the scheme;
 - Support arrangements in the place for the individual(s) housed and landlords;
 - Contractual agreements with the landlords;
 - Any lessons learnt or known feedback from the landlord involved in the soft launch and,
 - How the council intends to advertise the scheme.
- Further information on the 'Real Change' campaign, which includes any known impact and lessons learnt since its launch.

Recommend:

- Developing a clear action plan and framework for all homeless accommodation provisions, which provides provisions with clear guidelines, advice and support toward mitigating and addressing ASB. The framework distributed to provisions should also include direct contact details to relevant council support officers, and if possible a nominated police representative.
- Within the pilot of the Welsh Government Leasing Scheme, the council sets out clear proactive action, such as risk assessments in order to mitigate any potential adversarial impact on receiver communities.
- Widening the scope of the 'Real Change' campaign which continues the objective of members of the public engaging directly with the app by reporting where a rough sleeper is residing, but also provides them with an opportunity to provide a fiscal contribution through regulated means via a charity. In addition, and in line with this

committee's previous recommendation following its January 2019 meeting, it is recommended that greater effort is put forward in promoting the message that the council has adequate, safe, secure, individualised provisions for individuals' presenting as homeless along with ensuring the 'no first night out' policy is adequately reflected within the Real Change marketing campaign. Should resources allow, it would be suggested to explore avenues other than council and social media channels for instance, local radio and newspapers.

I hope you find the discussions held within committee, along with the comments, observations and recommendations captured within this letter of use.

Yours,



COUNCILLOR SHAUN JENKINS

Chairman - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee

cc. Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People & Communities

Jane Thomas, Assistant Director, Housing & Communities

**SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET
CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE**

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM44985

Dyddiad / Date: 28th April 2021

Councillor Shuan Jenkins
Chairman - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
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Annwyl / Dear Cllr Jenkins,

**Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee – 2 December 2020
Homelessness Update**

Thank you for your letter dated 6th January 2021, I apologise for the delay in responding.

I was grateful for the opportunity to attend Committee to present the work that was underway to address homelessness and on the delivery of the future model for services. Since then the Welsh Government have confirmed ongoing revenue funding to continue the new projects. Much work continues to be done to implement the new schemes and this is an area of rapid change and development.

I am pleased to say that the numbers of rough sleepers remains low, generally in single figures, despite the constant flow of individuals being identified by our Outreach Team.

I have provided a detailed response to each of your queries and to your recommendations below:

Funding & the Phasing out of Second Stage Accommodation

- Once known, funding arrangements post March 2021 be shared with Committee Members.
- Clarity on the contingency planning in place, should Welsh Government fail to continue their financial support post March 2021. To elaborate, Members would be grateful if more detail could be provided surrounding:
 - How much funding is expected to be received from the phasing out of second stage properties over the three-year period,
 - What the potential deficit for funding would be even with the phasing out of these properties,
 - Detail on any other plans to address a potential shortfall in funding

GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU

The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh, English or bilingually. We will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.



- **The evidence cited at the meeting regarding second stage accommodation proving less successful in meeting the high level of client needs.**

Funding

Funding arrangements for 2021/2 are now known. £5.4m in additional revenue Housing Support Grant funding has been made available for Cardiff. This will allow all the plans set out to be taken forward. No deficit is anticipated.

In addition, £1.8m will be released from phasing out existing second stage projects. This will further enhance the Council's capacity to take forward the rapid rehousing approach to homelessness and move both single people and families more quickly into settled accommodation.

Decommissioning of Second Stage Accommodation

Evidence from the UK and across the world has shown that a "staircase approach to homelessness", whereby an individual goes through a number of different types of homelessness accommodation before moving on to independence, is not effective. Instead there is a move to towards rapid rehousing, moving people into settled accommodation as soon as possible with the appropriate level of support. Sometimes as in Housing First, this support can be long term and very intensive, in other cases support is provided as needed with the ability to increase support at key times, this is known as Critical Time Intervention (CTI).

Cardiff monitors and controls supported accommodation schemes in Cardiff through a number of Gateways. The Single Person Gateway covers all supported accommodation for single people and couples. Outcomes for clients are monitored regularly and all data is shared with providers. This monitoring covers a number of factors including the number of clients that are refused by the project, the length of stay in the homeless accommodation and whether the clients move on positively at the end of their placement. It has been recognised for some time the second stage accommodation does not perform well in this regard with a high number of refusals in some schemes, while other schemes have a high percentage of individuals abandoning or being evicted from accommodation, going into to prison, being hospitalised or dying while in provision, with few moving on positively. Negative ends to placements are common with as many as 70% of clients who left the projects doing so negatively.

These "negative ends" from accommodation add to the revolving door effect whereby homeless clients revolve through homeless services but never move on to independence. This is a well-known issue and is largely due to the nature of the clients and their complex support needs including substance misuse, mental health issues and chaotic behaviour. Cardiff's own data shows that 376 individuals have accessed accommodation more than 10 times, most people accessing the single person gateway provision have used it before.

While this is a problem for all accommodation types, the second stage accommodation which is based in houses within the community without full time support on site is particularly poor at retaining clients. The nature of the client group and the increasing complexity of their needs means that this accommodation is no longer unsuitable.

Out of County Homeless Individuals

The data stored on homeless individuals from out of county in order to comprehend how this information is analysed by the service area in order to understand the cause.

Cardiff, as with other local authorities, receive homeless presentations from clients who do not have a local connection to the local authority area.

During a homeless assessment, an officer will establish where the client is presenting from and record this on the client's case file. The officer will also try to establish why the client has presented to Cardiff rather than their own local authority, although this information may not always be forthcoming.

There may be a variety of different reasons why a client may present to us in Cardiff including:

- Feeling at risk in their own area
- They have not been assisted by their own local authority
- They do not wish to take up accommodation in their own local authority area
- They feel that Cardiff has better facilities and services

The reasons for presenting in Cardiff are not recorded.

If a client reports that they have been told to present to Cardiff by homeless services in their own local authority area, officers will contact the relevant local authority to establish if this is correct and to ascertain why this has been advised.

Investigations are also made into the address history of the client, and any other relevant information which will inform a decision on the case. If the officer decides that the client is in Priority Need, that is particularly vulnerable as defined by the legislation, the client can be referred back to their home local authority through a formal route called a Section 80 Referral, their home local authority will then have a duty to provide them with accommodation.

Unfortunately if they are deemed not to be in priority need then their home local authority need only "help to secure them accommodation" and this will not result in the guarantee of housing. These are the clients are normally referred to the Reconnection Team to assist them to return to their home local authority or to find suitable accommodation, in the private sector for example, with only a small number being accommodated by homelessness services where there are exceptional reasons.

Throughout the pandemic however, and following Welsh Government guidance issued, all cases where clients are considered to be at risk of rough sleeping or homeless, are now being housed by the local authority where they present, regardless of whether they are assessed as priority need.

Local Connection Data

A review of homeless presentations for the 6 month period from 1st July 2019 to 31st December 2020 has been carried out. During this period 144 households presented to the Housing Options Service as homeless and had no local connection. Of these 144

households, 4 were couples with no dependents, 21 were single females, and 119 were single males.

The area that each client presented from during the period is shown in the following table, broken down by South East Wales, elsewhere in Wales, elsewhere in the UK and Europe:

Local Connection	Households	Couples	Total Individuals
South East Wales	51	3	54
RCT	17	3	20
Newport	9		9
Caerphilly	8		8
Bridgend	6		6
Merthyr Tydfil	4		4
Torfaen	3		3
Vale of Glamorgan	3		3
Blaenau Gwent	1		1
Elsewhere in Wales	11	0	11
Swansea	3		3
Carmarthenshire	2		2
NPT	2		2
Ceredigion	1		1
Pembrokeshire	1		1
Powys	1		1
Wrexham	1		1
Elsewhere in the UK	78	1	79
London	23		23
West Midlands	9		9
Bristol	6		6
Home Counties	6		6
Somerset	6	1	7
Manchester	4		4

Yorkshire	4		4
Merseyside	3		3
West Scotland	3		3
Gloucestershire	2		2
Hampshire	2		2
North East England	2		2
North West England	2		2
Northern Ireland	2		2
Devon & Cornwall	1		1
East Midlands	1		1
North Midlands	1		1
Wiltshire	1		1
Europe	4		4
Poland	2		2
Romania	2		2
Grand Total	144	4	148

Safeguards

Further information on the ‘safeguards’. How many we have, on what provisions they are deployed, specific details on the support they offer and any known impact of lessons learnt from their engagement on sites.

Many clients have significant underlying issues such as substance misuse and poor mental health which can lead to chaotic and sometimes violent behaviour. Behavioural issues have increased with the emergence of new illegal substances such as Spice.

Officers have spent much time controlling and limiting the impact of such behaviour and have not been able to focus on providing the support that is needed. Also this has resulted in clients with significant support needs being evicted from projects.

During the recent Covid -19 pandemic this problem has increased due to the need to encourage clients to stay indoors, socially distance or self-isolate.

Housing Safety Officers

The Council's Hostel & Outreach Service has used the new schemes set up during the pandemic to trial new ways of working. This includes the introduction of Housing Safety Officers also known as Safeguards. These officers are provided by a private company and are all Security Industry Authority License trained.

The Safeguards:

- prevent situations from escalating into incidents.
- to directly intervene in situations where a threat to health and safety has been identified.
- reduce need for police interventions and evictions.
- monitor CCTV and control access to the project.
- Carry out regular patrols of specified areas both internal and external area.

During the development of the new projects their duties have gradually been expanded to include additional duties and this allows support staff to focus on providing support and advice, activities and managing the project. These additional functions include:

- Providing a reception / concierge service
- Undertaking a daily building check, taking corrective action where possible and reporting and recording any issues that require repairs
- Undertaking fire safety tests and inspections
- Acting as qualified fire warden and lead on the fire evacuation plan
- Assisting with carrying out welfare checks on individual service users
- Providing first aid to service users on site and in the immediate vicinity when required

The table below shows the number of guards and night support staff in Council provision.

Project	Numbers of Guards
The YHA	2
Ty Tresillian	1
Litchfield Court	1
Adams / Baileys Court	3
Ty Casnewydd (118 Newport)	1
Ty Countisbury	1
Cargo House	1

Welsh Government Leasing Scheme

Further information on the Welsh Government Leasing scheme which includes:

- **Specific detail on how location of properties will be determined;**
- **Information on the access to grants and loans available to landlords within the scheme**
- **Support arrangements in the place for the individual(s) housed and landlords**
- **Contractual agreements with the landlords**
- **Any lessons learnt or known feedback from the landlord involved in the soft launch**
- **How the council intends to advertise the scheme.**

How the location of properties will be determined

Property owners that show an interest in the Welsh Government Private Rented Leasing Scheme are provided with a Landlord Information Pack which includes an Expression of Interest document for them to submit with details regarding the property they wish to lease to the Council under the scheme.

The location of the properties could be anywhere within Cardiff, as there is demand for accommodation across the city. Properties are required to pass relevant checks, including an inspection and must meet the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) standard.

The tenant matching process starts following the signing of a Head Lease with the property owner.

Access to grants and loans available to landlords within the scheme

The Welsh Government requires properties to meet its mandatory quality standard prior to being accepted on the scheme. There are two types of renovation incentive – a renovation grant and an interest free loan is available to property owners for £2000

Before accepting a property for the Scheme, the Council will conduct a survey to ascertain its condition, and the likely cost of any renovation works to bring the property up to the requisite standard. The Council will also request and inspect electrical and gas safety certificates to ensure they are valid. These will be checked by Council technical officers.

The payment of any grant or loan is dependent upon the property owner committing to leasing their property to the Council under the Scheme. An Agreement for Lease will be drafted by Legal Services using a Welsh Government provided agreement.

Once a renovation incentive has been awarded, the Council will ensure that the funding is being used for the agreed purpose through regular site checks and communication with

the property owner. The Council will work with the property owner to agree a reasonable time scale by which the works will be completed.

Once the renovation work has been completed, the Council will inspect the property to ensure that the renovation work has been completed to an acceptable standard and that the property as a whole is now of the requisite standard and sign the Head Lease.

Support arrangements in the place for the individual(s) housed and landlords

Tenants

The scheme includes dedicated Housing Support Workers. The Tenant will be allocated a Housing Support Worker immediately on sign up to support them with how to manage their tenancy and finances, as well as digital inclusion and wellbeing.

A proactive attitude to the Tenant Support in the scheme by providing early intervention to try and avoid rent arrears or other issues.

Existing housing services will be provided to these tenants including services from Tenancy Management and Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

The cost of the support to tenants is funded by the Housing Support Grant provided by Welsh Government.

Contractual agreements with the landlords

Model Lease Agreements have been provided by Welsh Government for use on this scheme, an Agreement for Lease and a Head Lease.

The Property Owner to leases the property to the Council for the 5 year lease period.

Rent payable by the Council is the equivalent of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate less 10%. It will be paid monthly and in advance. The 10% is retained by the Council to assist with maintenance costs and other running costs of the Scheme

The lease provides a mutual break option. The break clause can only be activated 2 years after the commencement of the lease and must be subject to 12 months' notice.

Lessons learnt or known feedback from the landlord involved in the soft launch

The Council has recently found from some landlords that due to the length of the scheme, mortgage companies and building societies will not allow them to enter the scheme as their terms and conditions limit them to 36 months/3 years maximum. This issue is currently being reviewed by Welsh Government and has reduced the number of landlords currently able to take part in the scheme.

How the council intends to advertise the scheme.

From 9th February 2021, the Council started advertising the scheme through a press release, and also via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

A webpage has also been created on the Councils website - Private Rented Leasing Scheme (cardiff.gov.uk)

This has been done in conjunction with Welsh Government and Rent Smart Wales who are also assisting with advertising the scheme.

Real Change Campaign.

Further information on the 'Real Change' campaign, which includes any known impact and lessons learn since its launch.

The Real Change campaign has provided a unique opportunity for inter-agency and partnership working for the benefit of Cardiff residents. It has also provided an opportunity for the public be involved in helping services identify rough sleepers and allowed for support to be provided promptly.

This approach has enabled officers to provide intervention where needed and to help individuals avoid becoming entrenched in negative behaviours and lifestyles. To date **255** Real Change messages have been received from the public and these have helped us to assist people trapped in the cycle of begging, move off the streets into accommodation and also to keep the rough sleeping numbers at historically low levels.

Recommendations

- **Developing a clear action plan and framework for all homeless accommodation provisions, which provides provisions with clear guidelines, advice and support toward mitigating and addressing ASB. The framework distributed to provisions should also include direct contact details to relevant council support officers, and if possible a nominated police representative.**

The Council works closely with the police and other partners to assess the potential impact of homeless accommodation and to put in place community impact plans for each project. This includes site visits by specialist police colleagues who advise on security measures such as sighting of cctv and the designing out problem areas. The accommodation managers work to develop good relations with local police inspectors so that any issues can be identified early and resolved as soon as possible.

The Council team also work closely with the other homeless accommodation providers. Working groups have been developing joint procedures which include dealing with ASB.

- **Within the pilot of the Welsh Government Leasing Scheme, the council sets out clear proactive action, such as risk assessments in order to mitigate any potential adversarial impact on receiver communities.**
- Homeless applicants are assessed based on their needs and are placed in the most suitable accommodation for them. Any tenants with significant support needs will

stay within supported accommodation to allow time for those needs to be addressed. Those tenants deemed suitable for the leasing scheme will have a designated support worker. If problems occur this support worker will intervene, also housing tenancy and antisocial behaviour arrangement will also apply to these tenants.

- **Widening the scope of the ‘Real Change’ campaign which continues the objective of members of the public engaging directly with the app by reporting where a rough sleeper is residing, but also provides them with an opportunity to provide a fiscal contribution through regulated means via a charity.**
- **In addition, and in line with this committee’s previous recommendation following its January 2019 meeting, it is recommended that greater effort is put forward in promoting the message that the council has adequate, safe, secure, individualised provisions for individuals’ presenting as homeless along with ensuring the ‘no first night out’ policy is adequately reflected within the Real Change marketing campaign.**
- **Should resources allow, it would be suggested to explore avenues other than council and social media channels for instance, local radio and newspapers.**

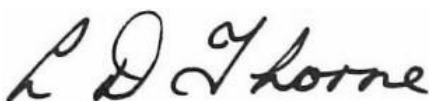
The app has recently been reviewed and simplified to make it easier to report rough sleepers. This change will be going live shortly.

The Real Change campaign is not itself a fund raising initiative, it invites people to “call for help” for individuals. The council website links people to homeless charities to which they can make financial contributions should they wish.

The Council’s Communication team regularly post information about homeless services and good news stories. However it is recognised that more can be done and this will continue to be reviewed in the coming year.

I trust this answers the Committees questions and may I once more apologise for the delay in responding to your letter.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely,



**Councillor / Y Cyngorydd Lynda Thorne
Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities
Aelod Cabinet dros Dai a Chymunedau**