

	Landlord Services	Community Housing/ Business Planning Division
1. Portfolio	<p>Landlord Services division manages;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council-owned stock of 13,500 dwellings. The service is administered primarily through nine District Housing Offices including lettings, tenancy management, rent payments and the management of the estate. Rent arrears management is undertaken by a specialist team. • The Neighbourhood Support Unit which provides support to the District Offices in combating any antisocial behaviour on Council estates, and the Homes Preparation Unit which manages the return of any vacant council housing for letting. • Sheltered housing schemes and the furniture store which provides furnished tenancies to new tenants. • Housing Options which is responsible for general housing advice, assessment of applications for council housing and council tenant transfers, homelessness prevention and assessment, money advice services, management of council temporary accommodation, coordination of the nomination agreement with housing associations and coordination and development of partnerships with voluntary sector organisations. • The Tenancy Support Unit who provide support for vulnerable households 	<p>Community Housing/ Business Planning Division manages;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Renewal and Adaptations service which is responsible for the delivery of private sector grants, renovation grants, mandatory disabled facilities grants, delivering improvements in renewal areas and coordinating energy efficiency improvements across the city in all housing tenures and also council housing adaptations. • The Business Planning service which includes a range of direct and support services including the production of the Local Housing Strategy and the development of the investment plan for the repair and improvement of Council housing. • The Housing Futures Programme which aims to improve all Council housing up to Government standards. • The More Homes programme and the delivery of a new build strategy • Support services including budget and performance management, business planning, service review and development, system support, customer services, tenant participation, Leaseholder services, communications and training services. • Housing & Public Health which implements the housing health & safety rating system, regulates standards in Housing in Multiple-Occupation (HMO), illegal evictions, Empty Properties Strategy, Public Health Act burials and exhumations, drainage problems, dangerous trees and high hedges, Gypsy traveller liaison.
Priorities Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet performance indicators that contribute to the continual improvement of services provided to tenants and their communities. • Ensure estates are well managed to meet WHQS; including tenancy and estate management and tackling ASB to help tenants to sustain their tenancies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and develop Community Housing Services to ensure that key performance indicators are achieved. • Maximise the level of investment in energy efficiency measures for homes in Swansea. • Improve housing conditions in the private sector including delivery of Sandfields Renewal Area programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise rental income/arrears recovery • To prevent homelessness • To support vulnerable households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce waiting times for Disabled Facilities Grants • To deliver improvements to the Council housing stock up to the WHQS by 2020/21. • To deliver a long term strategy for the HRA to increase the supply of affordable housing/new build Council housing. • To support delivery of the More Homes pilot scheme. • To Monitor and assist delivery of the 2017/18 HRA £59m capital programme • Monitor delivery of the 2017/18 £8m Social Housing Grant Programme and the £4m Housing Finance Grant Scheme • Dealing with Public Health matters and improving housing conditions in the private sector
<p>2. Specific activities and achievements, progress against policy commitments, key decisions taken and impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tenancy Support Unit has been relocated to Housing Options to ensure that there is a streamlined service with regard to supporting vulnerable people with housing needs. • Established a Private Rented Sector Access Team to work alongside the Housing Options team. • Increased the number of temporary accommodation adapted units for those ready to be discharged from hospital • Continuing to maintain the Welsh Housing Management Standard for tackling ASB on estates. • Continuing to develop proposals to mitigate the impact of the ongoing welfare reform changes and monitor the impact • Continuing to ensure the Sheltered Housing Service responds to the recommendations outlined in the Aylward Report ie: becomes tenure neutral. In addition we are working with colleagues and other agencies to ensure sheltered accommodation continues to meet the needs of older people and is seen as an attractive housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing works in the Sandfields Renewal Assessment (NRA) to secure housing led improvements in the area. • Working in partnership with Utility companies and Welsh Government to secure funding for energy efficiency measures. • Continuing to act as lead authority for Western Bay region for the Houses to Homes empty homes loans scheme and new National Home Improvement Loan scheme. 38 loans have been issued to date to secure the reuse of 58 units of accommodation. • The Private Sector Housing Renewal & Disabled Adaptations Policy to Provide Assistance 2017-2022 was approved by full Council in June 2017 • Delivered HRA Capital programme of £51.9m in 2016/17 • Development of the programme that funds around £250m investment to deliver improvement to the housing stock up to the WHQS by 2020/21. • Annual 4 year capital investment plan prepared and agreed at Council on 23rd February 2017. • A long term strategy for the HRA/More Homes programme to increase the supply of affordable housing/new build Council housing Strategy was endorsed by Council in November 2016. • Delivery of 18 new Council homes on Milford Way in Swansea, designed to passivhaus standards. • Procurement of a Valuation and Viability Study to inform future development programmes

	<p>option thereby freeing up family sized accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure all sheltered residents have an individual Support Plan which is reviewed annually and outcomes are measured. • Continue to monitor the garden cutting service • Continue to develop the homelessness service to ensure that the requirements of the 2014 Housing Act are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Public Health & Housing team carried out visits to homes to investigate and deal with complaints about poor housing conditions and public health concerns, serving 1,616 enforcement notices. • Enforcement provisions were enacted under 'Rent Smart Wales'. We are liaising with the single licensing authority for Wales and working with landlords and agents to ensure their compliance with the new licensing and registration regime for private landlords and agents in Wales.
<p>3. Headlines on the performance of services and the key targets monitored to measure improvement and success</p>	<p>Key performance measures include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The end of year figure for 2016/17 current tenant arrears was £1,068,554 against a target of £1,225,000. However rent arrears have increased in recent years against a backdrop of the economic situation and welfare reform. Robust monitoring, early intervention and support for tenants continues to be in place. • The end of year void figure for 2016/17 was 232 against a target of 235. The number of voids continues to be closely monitored and early indicators for 2017/18 are positive. • The end of year result shows that the % of rent collected was achieved with the collection rate of 96.85% against the annual target of 96.5% for 16/17. • Performance for the average number of days all homeless families with children spent in B&B accommodation was achieved, i.e. 3.8 days against a target of 7 days • 73% of households were successfully prevented from becoming homeless 	<p>Key performance measures include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a DFG as at year end 16/17 was 282.6 against a target of 290. • Delivery of Sandfields renewal area programme, i.e. nearing completion of Phase 2 & 3 programmes where 248 properties will have received external wall insulation and 62 properties will have had external repairs. • A funding bid has been submitted to WG Warm Homes Arbed scheme to fund improvements to a further 60 properties. • WHQS compliance return to WG completed. Submission records high levels of compliance across key areas. • 157 new affordable housing units delivered through partnership work with RSLs in 16/17 • Full spend of £2.7m Social Housing Grant allocation in 2016/17 and an additional £4.9m SHG also claimed • Performance for Empty homes in 16/17 narrowly missed target by 1%. Results were 16% (358 properties) were brought back in to use against a target of 17% (377 properties) • Licensed HMOs – 1,660 licensed HMOs at year end against a target of 1,560

<p>4. Engagement with service users / public and what influence this has had</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Managers meet regularly with a number of service specific tenant groups, i.e. sheltered, estate management and repairs to gather feedback and deliver improvements in services • Officers from housing work with the Partnerships, Performance and Commissioning Team to develop the Big Housing Conversation for 16 – 24 year olds which is a forum for young people. This is to encourage participation of young people and give them the opportunity to express their views on housing services and priorities, i.e. feedback has been where can they go to for help, what do they do when they get a tenancy, managing money and their home, how can they get information out to other young people etc • Significant tenant communication exercise was undertaken with tenants of highrise properties • Surveys undertaken with public and service users to assist development of the homeless strategy. Focus groups due to be held over the next month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandfields Residents newsletter issued in 2016. Residents Steering Group met in November 2016, community organisations submitted applications to group for community benefits support for local projects within targeted recruitment and training/community benefit requirements of contractors working on the programme. 5 community projects approved for support this summer. • The Council has a Tenant Participation Strategy in place whose purpose is to ensure that the right mechanisms are in place to help tenants get involved and access services and information. • Open House Magazine is a key consultation mechanism which provides information to all tenants and leaseholders. • Open House tenant feedback group meet to discuss each edition of the magazine to help shape future editions and ensure the right information is reaching tenants • Ongoing liaison takes place with tenants and leaseholders prior to major work being undertaken to properties. • Tenant and Leaseholder surveys being undertaken in Summer 2017 to gather views on the housing service and future priorities for homes and estates. • Last year we hosted a Private Sector Landlords' Forum providing information on new legislation and other topics and providing an opportunity for landlords and agents to network and share good practice.
<p>5. What you hope to achieve over the coming months and challenges?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to mitigate the ongoing challenge of the impact of welfare reform on tenants and rental income • Agree a way forward for the furnished tenancies scheme which safeguards the scheme as an anti-poverty measure against the backdrop of the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance cap which is to be introduced in 2019 • Development of the Homelessness strategy ready for implementation in 2018. • Continue to tackle rough sleeping and consider innovative ways to provide long term housing with support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service hopes to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ achieve a successful bid to WG Warm Homes Arbed scheme to deliver the next scheme in the Sandfields Renewal Area programme. ➢ secure further ECO (Energy Company Obligation) funding from a partner Utility company to fund home energy efficiency improvement programmes. • Renew the marketing for the WG Houses into Homes and National Home Improvement loan scheme. • Continue work to reduce waiting times for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's). This will assist the elderly and disabled to help maintain independence at home thereby reducing hospital admissions and pressures on residential care. • Support the delivery of the £59m HRA Capital programme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work will be undertaken to implement a new standard tenancy agreement as prescribed by the Welsh Government in relation to the Renting Homes Act 2016. • Implement changes to the floating support contract for tenancy support. • Await confirmation of any potential reductions in the Supporting People funding and respond/plan accordingly. • Continue to tackle and reduce incidents of Anti social behaviour on estates. • The service will continue to promote the benefits of smart meter installation to individual households as part of the work undertaken to promote energy efficiency measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor delivery of the Social Housing Grant programme of £8m and £4m Housing Finance Grant for 2017/18 • Commence the commissioning review of the Housing service • Continue to implement the Local Housing Strategy • Review all models for delivering affordable housing, development of a new build strategy/ More Homes pilot scheme. • Submission of bids/schemes to the Innovative Housing Programme and Affordable Housing Grant. • Contribute to and await the outcome of the Welsh Governments rent policy review • Work with the single licensing authority as part of a national implementation group to progress the range of enforcement powers for 'Rent Smart Wales'. An increasing demand on the service is anticipated from tenants and landlords. • Contribute to the next phase of consultation on new Supplementary Planning guidance in relation to HMOs. • Carry out further work in relation to houses in multiple occupation identified in the St Thomas area using our enforcement powers as necessary. • The parameters/definitions for the national PI for empty properties have been amended. This will mean the number of properties reported as being brought back into use at the end of the year will reduce however our proactive approach and work with the owners of empty homes will continue.
<p>6. What key decisions you are expecting to take to Cabinet over the next year</p>	<p>The Renting Homes (Wales) Act will mean the implementation of a standardised tenancy contract (agreement) across social housing and any additional terms may require consideration by Cabinet and Tenant consultation. Regulations and guidance are currently being drawn up by the Welsh Government with an estimated timetable for implementation in Autumn 2018.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions at key stages of the HRA Capital programme. • Future Development programme as part of the More Homes Strategy • Homelessness strategy mid 2018

<p>7. Your interactions with scrutiny over the last year and whether there is any specific scrutiny activity you would welcome?</p>	<p>The Corporate Financial Inclusion Working Group has previously considered how the Council is dealing with the impact of welfare reform to which Housing has contributed.</p> <p>In addition a number of presentations have been made to Members in the past on Void properties, rent recovery and the sheltered housing service.</p> <p>Homelessness has been identified as a topic by scrutiny as part of their workplan</p>	<p>A number of presentations have been previously made to Members on WHQS and the Cabinet Advisory Committee received a presentation on the More Homes programme.</p> <p>HMOs has previously been considered by Scrutiny Working Group</p> <p>DFGs/ Empty Homes and methods of tackling them has been the subject of a number of reports / presentations to Members/ Cabinet Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Possibly Tenant participation?</p>
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