

Cwm Taf Morgannwg
Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group (RHSCG)
6th December 2024 – Microsoft Teams
Minutes – Q3 2024/25

Attendees		Representing
Ryan Jones (Acting Chair)	RJ	Housing BCBC
Cllr Neelo Farr	NF	BCBC
Susan Preece	SP	Housing RCTCBC
Hannah Mills	HM	Housing MTCBC
Jessica Ware	JW	Housing BCBC
Rachel Thomas	RT	Housing Outreach Service Rep
Emma Howells	EH	RPB Housing Rep
Lorraine Griffiths	LG	Support Provider Rep
Alyson Jones	AJ	Community Mental Health Rep
Kelly Francis	KF	CTM Regional Development Co-ordinator

1	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone and explained the meeting was originally due to take place on Tuesday 3rd December, but was rearranged at short notice due to an all-day event arranged by Welsh Government which required the attendance of all LAs members. No declarations of interest raised.</p> <p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Cllr Jamie Scrivens, Cllr Bob Harris, Cheryl Emery, Joanne Harris, Suzanne Stephens, Sarah O’Keeffe, Andrew Pritchard, Gary Hortop, Mariam Elmirghani, Beth Underwood, Deborah Evans, Kristie Williams, Sian Bunston, Melinda Powell.</p>
2	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting and Actions.</u></p> <p>Minutes accepted as an accurate account and no issues raised.</p> <p>Action:</p> <p>KF to include on the HSG Leads agenda a regular key message for the RPB Reps and look to set up a meeting to discuss further.</p> <p><i>Update:</i> <i>Going forward KF will provide an RHSCG update to the RPB Reps at least one week prior to the RPB meeting.</i></p>
3.1	<p><u>CTM - Regional Project Update</u></p> <p>Task & Finish group update</p> <p>KF explained the CTM Work Plan (please see item 6) has been enhanced with additional priority actions, as well as intended outcomes and the T&F group are currently progressing the following 4 priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholder consultation regarding current hoarding provision to determine the need for a regional project. Initial consultation with RSLs is currently underway. 2. A report comparing CTM LAs temporary/supported accommodation referral processes is currently being undertake. Following this stakeholder consultation will take place to understand the challenges/risks faced by providers of temporary/supported accommodation across CTM.

	<p>3. Stakeholder consultation is currently underway, which highlights the consequences of vulnerable individuals receiving large amounts of benefits by way of back payments from DWP. Case studies demonstrating the issues across CTM will form part of a report that will be shared with the DWP/WG.</p> <p>4. To carry out a piece of work so collectively we can understand what the current challenges are with complex needs clients who do not meet the ASC threshold.</p> <p>If any members have any queries or input regarding the regional work plan, please contact Kelly.Francis@merthyr.gov.uk.</p> <p>RJ raised the issue of the Rented Homes (Wales) Act creating additional security of tenure for those in temporary and supported accommodation, which in turn is creating more instances of room voids where the providers are having to go through a possession process.</p> <p>RJ suggested that the T&F group bring together some case study examples to be forwarded to WG and highlight the need for temporary and supported accommodation to be excluded from the RHWA.</p> <p>The T&F group to link in with Cymorth Cymru as they are carrying out a piece of work around the RHWA.</p> <p>Action: KF to include the RHWA issue and actions within the regional work plan.</p> <p>LG raised that compliance checks regarding individual meters at properties can extend void times and prevent a quick turnaround of rooms.</p>
4	<p><u>Housing / Homelessness Updates (including 24/25 HSG uplift)</u></p> <p>RCTCBC – SP: Storm Bert affected lots of homes in RCT but luckily nobody presented as homeless because many people prepared in advance due to adverse weather affecting the same streets and homes time and time again. 157 households are currently in temporary accommodation within RCT. Within this number there is a cohort of clients with complex needs who are getting trapped in the system because they are too high for supported accommodation and too low for specialist accommodation, they are also not fit for Housing First and so looking at doing a piece of work around this to avoid bed blocking.</p> <p>A new temporary accommodation project with 24/7 support opened in September for complex vulnerable women. It's had a positive move on already and provides psychology informed support. Another temporary accommodation project with 24/7 support opened more recently and is for young people and care leavers with high support needs.</p> <p>The temporary accommodation hostels for adults and young people are both out to tender with a closing date in late January. The Leasing Scheme Wales is working well and in a period of 3 years 38 units have been secured. RCT is looking to add to the current HMOs with 10 units specifically for offenders.</p> <p>BCBC - RJ: Temporary accommodation is still pressured with 250 households at present, but is about 15% less than this time last year, there is steady decline due to the work being carried out to reduce private and tourism arrangements. There are currently no single people within tourist accommodation and just a small number of families. BCBC have been purchasing temporary accommodation in the form of HMO style homes and are looking to have a total of 6 by the end of 2025 in conjunction with RSLs.</p>

	<p>Leasing Scheme Wales is going well and is fully mobilised with 6 properties live and another 10 to 15 in the pipeline.</p> <p>MTCBC – HM: Merthyr currently have 46 people in temporary accommodation, with HMOs and Hostel provision at capacity. Some people in B&B should be in supported provision as their needs are too high. Storm Bert caused a large sink hole but only 1 person required temporary accommodation. A new 19-unit project for people with complex needs will hopefully open at the end of next year. The tender for the support element will be out at the middle of next year, so there is a provider and support team on board for when the project is ready to open.</p>
5	<p><u>Partner/Stakeholder/Representative Updates</u></p> <p>5.1 Housing Support Provider Update - LG: Since the last meeting the issues raised about balancing the needs and risks within a project have been discussed individually with each LA and this comes back to complexity and high levels of demand. The situation is advancing, and continued communication will allow for further development.</p> <p>Cymorth is working with DWP on the review around supported housing in England, but this shouldn't have an impact in Wales.</p> <p>Employers National Insurance increase will be a big hit on providers. Cymorth is petitioning WG to get those service providers who deliver a service on behalf of a statutory body exempt, if not successful then providers will need to discuss uplifts with LAs.</p> <p>Real Living Wage increases will also impact providers and when necessary, providers will be in touch with LAs regarding uplifts to cover RLW.</p> <p>RJ pointed out that he will be raising the increases at his next relationship manager meeting with WG and highlighting the financial ramifications.</p> <p>5.2 Community Housing Landlord Update – EH: Landlords are likewise concerned with the employer NI increasing costs, but they are also worried for the support agencies they work with as they are vital to the delivery of services. Looking at increased costs to deliver services is challenging.</p> <p>WHQS 2023 with deadlines to hit in March next year. Homelessness Bill and concerns landlords are moving into crisis management rather than upstream management.</p> <p>Emerging issue is overcrowding and there is a possibility some might be forced into eviction routes due to breach of tenancy, as there is no other accommodation available, and notices are being served.</p> <p>5.3 RPB Housing Rep Update - EH: Capital works is continuing as usual. The RPB meeting in December is going to be a showcase of what the RPB has achieved over the past year. The CTM Community Hub strategy went through, which considers well-being and complex needs. Some RSLs have partnered with CTM Health Board to carry out small micro projects within the hub-spoke areas to link well-being and housing.</p>

	AJ mentioned the dispersed scheme in Merthyr works well in relation to mental health and moving people from high-cost placements into dispersed housing. It gives people with severe mental health issues the opportunity to have their own tenancy.
6	<p><u>Regional Priorities 2024/25 Update</u></p> <p>KF explained since April the original work plan has expanded and undergone several changes, which has developed as a result of discussions at RHSCG that have then progressed as part of the HSG Leads meeting and/or the Task & Finish group. All the work and collaboration is reflected in the work plan and is provided for your information. If you have any queries, please contact KF.</p>
7	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>The next meeting in March will hopefully be in person at March House in Merthyr Tydfil unless there are any other suggestions for a venue.</p>
	<p><u>Future Meetings</u></p> <p>NF explained she is unable to attend any Tuesday meetings due to ongoing commitments.</p> <p>Action: KF to alternate the future RHSCG meetings between Tuesdays and Thursdays.</p> <p>2024/25: Q4 Tuesday 4th March 2025 (In Person) 2025/26: Q1 Thursday 5th June 2025 Q2 Tuesday 2nd September 2025 Q3 Thursday 4th December 2025 Q4 Tuesday 3rd March 2026</p>
	<p>Actions arising from this meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. KF to include the RHWA issue and actions within the regional work plan. 2. KF to alternate the future RHSCG meetings between Tuesdays and Thursdays.