

1. The impact of wider policy developments on the programme including:

The overall clarity of the Programme's objectives; New SPPG Grant guidance objectives are clear; (re-) emphasis on homelessness prevention is positive.

The implications of, and emerging response to, the UK Government's Supported Accommodation review; The decision not to apply the LHA cap to social/supported housing is positive for the sector; however, there is a lack of clarity around the future of supported accommodation defined as short term.

The lessons to be learned from the mixed effectiveness and impact of regional working over the past five years; N Wales has achieved some good success in regional working, but the impact is seen more in sub regional joint commissioning

The extent to which the governance and management arrangements for the Programme reflect the ways of working expected under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015; The uncertainties around SP funding make it difficult to plan for sustainable services. There are issues around some needs mapping systems, and particularly outcomes data, which run the risk of informing unsustainable service planning,

2. Monitoring and evaluation including:

How monitoring/outcome data is used to inform decision-making about programme expenditure and contract monitoring; Outcome data has been unreliable - it is considered in contract monitoring/project reviews (which inform commissioning), but has had to be treated with caution.

The revised outcomes framework that the Welsh Government is proposing and the extent to which it will address the limitations of the current framework; The new outcomes framework is only going to work if this is backed up with a revised, robust database.

How any revised outcomes framework arrangements can be best communicated and embedded; Training for both Managers and frontline staff will be vital. And a user friendly guide.

Other opportunities to strengthen monitoring and evaluation, including in assessing the relative value for money of comparable services; All SP Teams could consider use of KPIs, and may also consider payment by results. Ultimately, commissioning has to be more outcomes focussed. Re-affirming the core business of SP support is an important part of this

3. The distribution of Programme funding and financial planning including:

The issues that need to be considered in developing and implementing any new funding formula; The report mentions that Denbighshire received a total of £1.94 million more than it would have done had Welsh Government continued to implement the original formula, but as we have actually already been cut by C£1.5 million over the last 5 years, this would mean cuts of almost 50% to the budget since 2012. This would have a detrimental impact on frontline support. Demand already continues to outstrip supply.

It is also important to note that our support is funded in line with a benchmark rate, which is line with the living wage.

All of this needs to be considered in the context of recent announcements regarding the possible 'super grant'. With this level of uncertainty (along with the unknowns around supported housing funding, not to mention the current and anticipated increased pressures owing to various welfare reforms, not least UC), is this really the time to be considering a new funding formula?

However integrated funding offers a great opportunity to streamline services and improve outcomes but this needs to be done in a coordinated manner to ensure that services are not reactionary but planned and coordinated to ensure the service is impacting and achieving outcomes. Need to ensure that differing funding streams fully understand the needs of services and holistically look at bigger picture.

How budget pressures and funding uncertainty have affected service planning and delivery; These have had an impact on staff retention and recruitment, as well as on the market overall – e.g. a lack of interest when tendering contracts. There's limited incentive for Providers to take the risk in developing supported housing in particular.

Reasons for the identified wide variation in financial support for different client groups across local authorities; There are a number of reasons, including different kinds/levels of needs, differences in other services or opportunities (jobs, housing

etc.) available in different settings, geographical dispersal etc. This also needs to be considered within the context of the history of SP – some areas were more proactive than others in relation to THB claims for certain client groups. This has left a legacy of LA dependency on SP funding for some services.

The extent to which local and regional planning processes and spending reflect well-evidenced needs, rather than historical patterns. Denbighshire Supporting People have recently taken the decision to cease their use of the North Wales 'Needs Mapping' system. For the time being, this continues to be used by the rest of the NW region.

- We're able to gather a lot of really helpful information via our Single Pathway.
- There are other sources of local and national information we can draw upon, including Outcomes and Performance Monitoring Data, the North Wales Population Assessment, and the Unmet Need Survey.
- It is a key priority for us that citizens have their voices heard and are able to shape services
- Our alignment with Statutory Homelessness is also allowing for far better joined up working and planning.

The Needs Mapping system was not giving us data we could rely on – this could be because the form was often completed by the Providers themselves, The SP outcomes system exacerbated this potential static picture given that a 'lead need' not in line with spend plan area is flagged as a 'discrepancy'. Having one unchanging 'lead need' is rarely the reality for anyone.