**Regional Housing Support Collaborative Group (RHSCG)**

**Gwent**

**Terms of Reference 2022-23**

The **main objective** of this Group is to provide a mechanism through which local authorities can co-operate in order to improve the delivery of Housing Support Grant (HSG) funded services. Whilst individual Authorities are responsible for the delivery of the Grant in their area, the RHSCG will provide a real opportunity to jointly meet strategic objectives, engage with other public functions and learn from each other. Its structure is built on the responsibility of individual Local Authorities and partners to assess needs, strategically plan and offer services which improve the health and wellbeing of the people by preventing homelessness, reducing demand on other public services such as health and social services and building household capacity.

**Key Responsibilities**

Whilst the individual Authorities democratic control is recognised, regional working should provide a forum for local authorities to deliver those things which are best done regionally. These can be defined as:

* Development of specialist services[[1]](#footnote-1) for which there is not a critical mass locally
* Development of regional / cross regional services where justified by economies of scale
* Delivery of improvements to be achieved by collaboration
* Collaboration with other public services.

**Setting the Regional Statement**

The RHSCG will submit to Welsh Government an annual regional statement by the end of April each year setting out the collaborative working that has been achieved and the key opportunities and challenges that will be the group’s priorities through the next year.

An RHSCG work plan will be developed to take forward the priorities highlighted in the Regional Statement enabling progress against the priorities highlighted in the Regional Statement to be monitored and measured.

The Group, through the RHSCG Chair and Vice Chair, will present the annual regional statement to the Gwent RPB Strategic Housing Partnership to ensure alignment with regional health and wellbeing priorities. The Group will also share the annual regional statement with key regional partners, such as the 5 Gwent PSBs, Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board, Gwent VAWDASV Partnership Board and other partners to inform wider commissioning activities in the region.

**Structure**

This Group belongs to the Local Authorities and its accountability is to them as a collective. This Group is also a forum through which Authorities can exercise the inclusiveness, transparency and accountability which are the expectations of the spirit as well as the letter of Housing Support Grant.

Individual authorities are not accountable to RHSCGs. However, authorities will be expected to demonstrate how they have engaged with RHSCGs and how their own plans reflect collaborative approaches with other authorities and with public service partners.

It is the responsibility of Local Authority representatives to provide updates to the RHSCG about Rent Smart Wales and to feedback relevant issues to those overseeing delivery of Rent Smart Wales within each Local Authority.

It will develop links with Regional Partnership Board in Gwent through the housing representatives to the RPB where the strategic and wider conversations between Health, Housing and Social Care can take place.

The Group and HSG budgets are not accountable to RPBs. But the RHSCG are expected to explore opportunities to shape HSG spend in support of the delivery of Health and Social Care outcomes as well as facilitate conversations to improve housing outcomes, for example, by reducing rough sleeping by improving access to Mental Health and Substance Misuse services.

The RHSCG Chair and Vice Chair will formally attend the Strategic Housing Partnership to represent HSG. The RHSCG will work closely with the RPB Strategic Housing Partnership to ensure they are equipped with a good understanding of the Housing Support challenges and opportunities for joint-working, In return Representatives from the Strategic Housing Partnership can bring Health and Social Care perspectives to the RHSCG. This arrangement will be reviewed annually to be able to respond to changes in the RPB and the dynamics of regional working.

**Membership**

It is expected that representations from partners may be flexible to allow opportunities for focused discussions and bring in expertise. The structure of this group is adaptable at least during the first year of its transition and to respond COVID-19 pressures.

It is expected that members will forward or nominate representatives if they are unable to attend.

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| Local Authorities –Strategic Lead Officer representatives | Blaenau Gwent | Michelle Church (Social Services) |
| Caerphilly | Viv Daye (Social Services) |
| Monmouthshire | Sharran Lloyd (Social Services) |
| Newport | VACANT (Social Services) |
| Torfaen | Rachael Lewis (Housing) |
| Local Authorities – HSG Lead Officers | Blaenau Gwent | Claire Davies |
| Caerphilly | Shelly Jones |
| Monmouthshire | Lyn Webber |
| Newport | Nigel Stannard |
| Torfaen | Sophie Slade |
| LA Homelessness Coordination Cell Leads | Blaenau Gwent | Mark Congreve |
| Caerphilly | Kerry Denman |
| Monmouthshire | Jane Oates |
| Newport | Natalie Thompson |
| Torfaen | Sheryl Thomas |
| Regional Partners | RPB Strategic Housing Representatives | Simon Rose  Sam Lewis |
| Public Service Boards (PSB) | Sharran Lloyd |
| Substance Misuse APB | Lisa Meredith |
| VAWDASV Regional Partnership Board Representative | Babs Walsh |
| ABUHB Mental Health  Public Health | Joanne Lewis-Jones |
| Probation Representative | Guy Browett |
| Gwent Police | Leigh McFarlane |
| Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner | Sam Slater |
| Tai Pawb | Rob Milligan |
| Youth Offending Team | Geraint Spacey |
| Children and Communities Grant Representative | Lyn Webber |
| Third Sector | Support providers  Social Housing Landlords | *Short Term:* Sam Lewis  *Long Term:* Kath Deakin  *Support Provider Rep: Vacant*  *Landlord Rep: Mark Doubler*  *Landlord Rep: Vacant*  *Landlord Deputy Rep: Vacant* |
| Private Sector | PRS representation | Gillian Owens  Deputy: Tim Thomas |
| Others Partners | Service User | Specific groups/forums to be arranged |
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The individual members of the RHSCG will be expected to communicate with their own constituency, i.e. local authority members, other providers etc.

The RHSCG may set up task and finish groups at its discretion.

**Meetings**

To be able to respond to the emerging needs and issues in housing support during the ongoing Pandemic, the Group will meet virtually via **MS Teams** on a flexible basis. Once established, the RHSCG will continue to meet virtually as a minimum every quarter. Future face to face meetings may be called for planning activities where break-out sessions and interactive discussions are necessary; this will be determined by COVID-19 work restrictions.

**Attendance**

Representatives are expected to attend at least 75% of meetings. If they fail to do so, the agency that nominated them will be asked to provide an alternative representative.

**Servicing and resourcing**

The RHSCG will be supported and administered by the Regional Development Coordinator (RDC). The day to day activity of the RDC in relation to the RHSCG work programme will be directed by the RHSCG through the Chair.

**Agenda**

Standard agenda for meetings should include:

* RPB updates from Housing Representatives/ RHSCG Chair
* Emerging issues and updates from HSG Leads and Homelessness Coordination Cell Leads
* RDC updates
* Partnership meeting updates
* Partner agency updates
* Progress against the RHSCG work plan
* Key messages from the meeting

**Conduct of RHSCG**

Members of the RHSCG will always be expected to work according to the [Nolan Principles](https://gov.wales/atisn13622)

The RHSG is a collaborative group and, whether collectively or through its individual

members, may not:

* Incur expenditures, i.e. travel expenses;
* Enter into agreements or contracts;
* Make decisions or purport to take any action on behalf of the Minister or the Welsh Government or any other body; or
* Make any statements or engage in any press or media coverage without the written permission of a named official of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Members of the Group agree to:

* Contribute time, expertise, and enthusiasm to ensuring effective operation of the RHSCG.
* Attend at least 75% of RHSCG meetings.
* Contribute in an open and honest manner.
* Recognise, respect and draw upon the contributions of each member.
* Ensure principles of equality and diversity that underpin the work of the Group.
* Positively promote the work of the RHSCG and raise the profile of HSG.
* Collectively agree to the direction of travel of the RHSCG.
* Facilitate opportunities for discussion/debate in their own organisation / network and ensure effective 2-way communication.
* Seek to influence the aligning of other resources to the work of the HSG, where this is appropriate.
* Be accountable for their actions and decisions.
* Observe confidentiality.
* Make recommendations based on merit and in the interests of the HSG.
* Adhere to the ‘Conflict of Interest Policy’.
* Accept majority recommendations.
* Prepare appropriately for RHSCG meetings.

**Responsibilities of the Chair**

The Chair of the RHSCG will have duties and responsibilities. The Chair should always remember that they are acting on behalf of the RHSCG and the HSG and not in isolation.

The essential duties of the Chair are to:

* Develop strong and positive relationship between the RHSG and the Regional Partnership Boards, as well as PSBs.
* Establish a constructive relationship with, and provide support for, the RDC.
* In partnership with the RHSCG and the RDC to recommend the regional development priorities.
* Ensure the efficient conduct of the RHSCG’s business.
* Ensure the RHSCG operates in line with the HSG Guidance.
* Ensure that all RHSCG members are given the opportunity to express their views before an important recommendation is taken.
* Ensure that any conflict of interest on the RHSCG is dealt with correctly.

**Conflict of Interest**

The Chair will establish at the beginning of each meeting whether any conflict

of interest exists and how it should be dealt with. For clarity, individual member of the RHSCG, including the Chair and stakeholders, i.e. landlords and visiting guests and presenters will have the duty to report any conflict of interest.

When identifying needs for specialist or regional needs, it is the role of provider members to not represent that interest, for example by giving information on the impact on providers of different procurement models.

The Conflict of interest guidance will be reviewed as a part of the annual review of the RHSCG ToR and regional working arrangement as a whole.

**Conflict Management**

Where there is a disagreement between the RHSCG and one or all of the constituent local authorities, the following process will be adopted:

1. The Chair will attempt to facilitate a solution.
2. The Chair will request assistance with the RDC and from the Welsh Government officials to informally meet with the local authorities and agree a way forward.

1. In this context specialist services means any service for a narrowly defined service user group [↑](#footnote-ref-1)