



REPORT TO: MORAY INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD ON 28 JANUARY 2021

SUBJECT: JUBILEE COTTAGES, ELGIN – PILOT PROJECT

BY: LESLEY ATTRIDGE, LOCALITY MANAGER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1. To inform the Board of the considerations for the continuing need for Jubilee Cottages, Elgin.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. It is recommended that the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB):

- i) **consider the position of Health and Social Care Moray (HSCM) in the retaining and continuing the use of Jubilee Cottages based on information provided within this report; and**
- ii) **if considering and agreeing recommendation i) and diversity on the Trust's use, instruct the Interim Chief Officer to seek approval of Moray Council's Policy and Resources Committee to progress an amendment to the Trust Deed .**

3. BACKGROUND

Original Intention

- 3.1. Jubilee Cottages were renovated to habitable residences, in March 2017, providing 6 assessment and rehabilitation units to support hospital discharge and prevent hospital admission for the elderly population of Moray. It was intended that these cottages would facilitate intensive rehabilitation for a 6-12 week period and it was anticipated that this would support up to 30 people each year.
- 3.2. At the MIJB meeting on 25 June 2020 (para 12 of the minute refers) it was agreed to defer consideration of the options in order for a further report to be bought to the Board in September 2020 with an assumption to end use of the Jubilee Cottages unless ongoing need is identified to continue the role in a broader estate context.

- 3.3. Since the last report a major initiative across Grampian “Home First” has been developed which links to one of the key strategic themes within the MIJB Strategic Plan “Moray Partners in Care”. Whilst the primary objective would be to support people to return or stay at home, there are situations where that is not always possible.

4. KEY MATTERS RELEVANT TO RECOMMENDATION

Actual

- 4.1. The intended occupancy for 5 of the cottages was identified at a total of 30 people per year, each occupancy being for a period of 6-12 weeks. The 6th cottage serving as a hub under the original scope of use.
- 4.2. Since the last report from June 2020 to December 2020, an additional 7 service users took up residence at the cottages. The overall occupancy rate based on the 5 cottages is 63.2% overall and increase of 10.2 %.

Emerging Demand

- 4.3. During the pilot there was an indication of need for the cottages to be used for more than purely rehabilitation and reablement services, that the intended scope for the usage of the cottages may need to evolve to include elements of crisis intervention. The evidence of use showed 1/3 of residents being either “homeless” or “waiting for a new tenancy”, in addition to those with “social” and “place of safety” as approval reasons.
- 4.4. Though not originally in scope, some clients’ needs were met by use of the cottages, because there was no alternative. There is a gap in existing provision for some clients, whose specific health and social care needs, combined with the crisis situation they are in, results in usual mainstream accommodation options not being appropriate. Home is not an option for these clients and their needs because they require:-
- Longer term rehabilitation
 - Input from HSCM services to stabilise situations
 - Family are no longer able to cope with them at home
 - Houses require adaptation/deep clean before the client can return home
- 4.5. The alternative accommodation available would either be dispersed homeless accommodation, which is rarely suitable or available for this client group without a considerable amount of resource, or placement in a care home. Placement in a care home is costly and utilises a bed where there is considerable demand from other client groups for whom there is no alternative.
- 4.6. In these circumstances, the short term utilisation of Jubilee Cottages and the support provided has enabled people to progress into main stream Housing Services accommodation, or to return home. The pilot has demonstrated strengthened partnership working between the Housing Needs Team, Housing Needs Occupational Therapy, Housing Support Team and Community Care Services, who worked collaboratively in meeting the needs of at least two clients who had multiple needs and were able to be supported by the most appropriate services to meet those needs.

- 4.7. The seamless support provided to these clients aided the transition from Jubilee Cottages to their own tenancies, with all agencies communicating well with each other and the clients with the shared aim of relocating these vulnerable older adults with health and social care needs into a new home and settling them in their new community.
- 4.8. Some of the clients have very complex needs and have significant support requirements and individual risk assessments are undertaken prior to consideration of use of a cottage. Support is available through the use of telecare and response teams are available from 7:30 to 22:00. Increasing referrals for the use of Jubilee Cottages has the potential to prevent unplanned admissions to care homes. For this to be progressed the criteria for admission requires to be reviewed and this is dependant on a change in the Trust deed.

Costs

- 4.9. £112,000 was allocated for the renovations costs of the cottages. Annual operating costs have been £14,820 for April 2019 to March 2020 and £10,967 for April 2020 – November 2020 (10 months) and is a budget pressure. **Appendix 1** shows the breakdown in costs over 19/20 and 20/21 to end of November 2020.
- 4.10. The pilot has demonstrated that Jubilee Cottages is meeting a specific need at a cost that is less than existing alternative options. The potential costs of predicted alternative destinations for this client group (over 50's) if Jubilee Cottages had not been available, based on a per day cost for that service/accommodation, could have equated to between £68,920 and £183,800 based on the occupation rates for the two years reviewed. If occupancy rates were to rise to the optimum occupancy rate of 80%, then the values saved on alternative costs would rise from an estimated £154,000 to £410,000 potentially is less than existing alternative options.
- 4.11. The cottages have not been utilised to their maximum occupancy levels. Further work has been undertaken in partnership with Housing Services, at the request of the MIJB meeting on 28 November 2019, building on the experiences to date, to further explore other opportunities where client need could be met through this model.
- 4.12. Reviewing the existing data showed that if the eligibility criteria for occupancy was extended to include clients aged 50 and over and to focus more on rehabilitation rather than reablement there is the potential for more suitable clients to be referred.
- 4.13. Any proposed changes to use of these properties/criteria for potential occupiers under 65, but over 50, would require to be referred to Moray Council's Policy and Resources Committee (P&R), who act as the trustees for these properties which are part of a public trust. The trust purposes require the cottages to be occupied by "poor people of respectable character who are unable to provide comfortable homes of a similar class for themselves" – there are further restrictions in the deed stating they are to be used by "old married couples", "widows not under 50 years of age", widows or elderly single females" and "old men" – legal advice has consistently been to try and align any proposed use as closely as possible with the trust purposes – any use considered by the MIJB or

the Council which is not aligned to the trust purposes would constitute a breach of the trust or require reorganisation of the trust.

- 4.12 In absence of being able to change the trust requirements to accommodate individuals as described in 4.11 then the Council's Housing position is detailed as follows:-
- The temporary accommodation team are not currently looking to add to the existing stock.
 - There is currently a portfolio of approximately 170 properties consisting of Mainstream Hostels, Supported Hostels and dispersed housing in the community.
 - As part of the Council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, the intention is to reduce the amount of temporary accommodation required as applicants start to move through the homeless system at a quicker pace.
 - Plans were initially delayed due to the impact of Covid this year and an additional 28 properties were taken on, but the service is now back on track and stock levels are on a par with the pre-Covid figures. The intention is to reduce this figure by a further 20 properties by April 2022.
 - In relation to Housing legislation the trust purposes would not align with housing or homelessness legislation (therefore our Allocations and Homelessness Policies).
 - Housing legislation does not allow landlords to take into account someone's income when assessing housing need or allocating houses under the legislation therefore any prioritising of poor people over others would not be possible.
 - There would also be issues with prioritising/bypassing people on the list on the basis of age, gender or marital status.
 - In addition to this the minimum standards for square footage excludes the cottages of being able to accommodate a single person under this policy. Therefore the cottages would not be able to be let through any of the Council's Housing options.
- 4.13 If the cottages are to be retained , it would be necessary to seek approval of Moray Council's P&R Committee for the proposed changed use, which would need to be compliant with the terms of the Trust deed as set out in para 5 (b).

Meeting Individuals' Outcomes

- 4.14 Feedback from the occupants of the cottages has demonstrated high satisfaction.
- 4.15 The cottages have enabled the service to be more responsive to individual needs which has resulted in a less stressful experience for people at a time when feeling most vulnerable.
- 4.16 The cottages offer some time to get clients back on their feet both mentally and physically, combined with the opportunity for services to assess need and ability to live independently, thereby achieving many of the clients' desired outcomes.
- 4.17 If the cottages were not available it would be more difficult to deliver a holistic outcome focussed system for the individual. For those people whose original "home" was no longer available to them it would mean they would have to be taken through the normal accommodation process via housing options team,

taking into account the individual's assessed health and social care needs, which may result in delays in discharge from hospital, increased length of stay or increased accommodation costs for HSCM.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)) and Moray Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan “Moray Partners in Care 2019 – 2029”

This report is in line with MIJB's Strategic Plan. A key policy directive within the Strategic Plan 2019 – 2029 is to strive to maintain independence for individuals and the ability to live at home.

(b) Policy and Legal

These properties are held under a Trust Deed which requires that the cottages are occupied by poor elderly individuals over 50 years of age. The trustee of the Public Trust covering the properties is the Council's Policy and Resources Committee on behalf of the Council as body corporate.

Any use of the subjects would need to be in compliance with the terms of the trust deed. The council's Policy and Resources decision of 30 August 2016 (para 18 of the minute refers) authorised the delivery of a rehabilitation service from these properties – any change to the service being delivered would need to be made by that Committee as Trustees.

(c) Financial implications

Financial implications are outlined in 4.9 and 4.10 of this report

(d) Risk Implications and Mitigation

There is a risk of creating an unmet need if it is not possible to identify other suitable accommodation for clients with assessed needs. Any use of the subjects needs to be in compliance with the restrictions contained within the Trust Deed.

(e) Staffing Implications

Staff who provide support and reablement or rehabilitation to occupants of Jubilee Cottages are part of the community teams providing support to people in their own homes in Elgin. There are no additional staff costs arising from delivery of care at Jubilee Cottages as staff are already employed to work in the Elgin area with people in their own homes.

(f) Property

There are no direct implications for property as a result of this report however if a subsequent report requires to be submitted regarding the use of the Cottages to Moray Council Policy and Resources Committee, property implications would be considered at this point.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An equality impact assessment has been completed for this project. The proposal assists in promoting equality of opportunity for elderly and disabled people

(h) Consultations

Consultation on this report has taken place with the following staff who are in agreement with the content in relation to their area of responsibility:-

- Chief Financial Officer, MIJB
- Legal Services Manager, Moray Council
- Corporate Manager, HSCM
- Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer, Moray Council
- Senior Performance Officer, HSCM
- Head of Service, Sean Coady
- Housing Needs Manager, Moray Council
- Service Manager, Learning Disabilities
- Service Manager, Mental Health

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. The initial intended profile of the cottages being used for 6 week (fast track) rehabilitation has not proven to deliver on the original aim for the project. The resource accommodates those with longer term needs of a more complex housing and social care needs.**
- 6.2. Although provision of accommodation is not part of the core business for HSCM or MIJB, this pilot has demonstrated benefits to the lives and the personal outcomes of service users.**
- 6.3. The first principle is always to consider supporting people in their own homes, as outlined in the Home First agenda, but where this is not an option the annual running costs of the cottages are lower than the majority of potential alternative costs for those people who have used Jubilee Cottages, and there is clear evidence that people's outcomes are being met.**
- 6.4. Should the cottages be returned to Moray Council Estates, the properties will remain unoccupied under the terms of Housing legislation as detailed in 4.12.**
- 6.5. HSCM would conclude that despite the budget pressure, it is relatively low in comparison to alternatives and with the increased occupancy rates moves towards more financially sustainable service, and decreases the costs of alternative solutions and system impact for a wider population of Moray.**

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Background Papers: with author
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