

Meeting between LCDT and Health and Social Care Partnership, Thursday 25 January 2024

Present:

Derrick Pearce (**DP**), Head of Community Health Care Services,
Stephen McDonald (**SM**), Manager of Adult and Older People Services,
Dr Gareth James (**GJ**), Research Fellow at Glasgow University specialising in housing evidence and research,
Margaret Whitelaw (**MW**), Jim Bunney (**JB**), Margaret Reid (**MR**), Ruth Daubney (**RD**)

MW gave the background to the Trust – the closure of Lenzie Hospital and our wish to keep elderly people within the community. This is our 3rd attempt to find a replacement. We're putting through a CAT for the Campsie View School site.

There is an epidemic of loneliness. Elderly people in Lenzie are left in big houses with no alternatives. Loneliness can cost £9000 pa per individual.

Our meeting with Councillor (Provost) Gillian Renwick yesterday emphasised that the practicalities need to be worked out. At a meeting in Feb the Council will consider the site for affordable housing and we must have put a Stage 2 CAT application in with a business plan and details.

We're looking to see about having your support eg financial. Hartfields got £12M from the Joseph Rowntree Trust.

DP - Steven remembers the closure of Lenzie Hospital and the Carewell proposition. Our policy is to support people to stay in the community so your ambitions resonate with our ethos.

I would need to get approval for a formal partnership. We certainly have the same aims. But financially it's different. Our situation is perilous; the number of elderly people is increasing. But we might be able to help avoid costs; nothing like the £12m.

SM - personally my mother lives on her own in Lenzie and faces loneliness. We understand the benefits of cohousing.

JB - we're looking for a grant; the money would be paid back. We envisage there would be a cross section of people owning, renting, or part owning/part renting. People selling would sell back to the Trust.

SM – will there be staff?

JB - there would be community support and people would be coming in eg Mens Shed, Bridge Club etc.

SM - Key Housing are a housing provider and a care provider. Also Richmond Fellowship. Might organisations like those help?

DP The scenario would save care expense because people would be living together in a community and carers wouldn't have to travel around.

MW - the cohousing plan is that people would look out for each other, be good neighbours. We're keen to provide for all people in Lenzie not just home owners with money.

We're reluctant to engage with local people without a letter of comfort from the Council but on the other hand, decisions re design, planning, management would be taken by the community so we don't have detailed plans. Some of our ideas are step down rooms, ceilidh house, communal dining, respite rooms, We're at a threshold; we don't want to go to the community only to disappoint them, given our previous history.

DP the Council will choose between Council affordable housing and your proposal? Yes

GJ - the incidental savings shouldn't be underestimated. Housing interventions can be hugely preventative in other budgets. There's the real opportunity to make this a flagship venture. Scotland is behind the curve. The Westminster and Welsh governments have housing strategies, Scotland doesn't. Health & Social Care Partnership aren't able to invest. The crucial ingredient is partnership between the Trust, HSCP and the Council; there are ways of creating innovative financial models. It can pay back – people will be paying rent. Don't underestimate the influence the HSCP can have. Putting your weight behind could swing it with the Council.

SM - H&SCP is just one partnership. We'd need Scottish Government buy in. We need a mechanism to bring this to pass. From a Social Work perspective I agree with all you're saying.

DP - we had the Older People's Housing research before the pandemic and the results supported what you're saying.

East Dunbartonshire has the highest number of care home beds, but we know people would have stayed in their own homes if that were possible. If developers wish to build a care home, how do we engage with them to build cohousing instead? We've said we don't need more care homes. But maybe the Trust could engage with developers, if they have upfront capital.

SM - Elderly people coming into the area is a cost for services. So your idea wouldn't cost that.

MW - The Council zones areas for Care Homes as being commercial and land. That's warehousing older people whereas the Trust is about neighbourliness and community.

DP - HSCP think there should be more provision for smaller houses for elderly people. If we could converse with developers to convince them to change their provision from care homes.

The HSCP definitely support your vision & ethos, but we can't promise practical support.

SM - Lenzie has become a transient community, people live in a silo and don't invest in the community.

MW - we're meeting with Hillhead housing associatin including Councillor Margaret Murray who's a carer, and someone else who may be helpful to us.

SM - maybe a partnership between a HA to provide the social housing and a developer would fit your purposes?

JB - in High Barnet, the Council helped with the provision.

DP - we could provide support and advocate for the rise in care costs and need in volume and complexity which we could share with you as part of your business case. You could reference the information we have already given to you.

GJ – a letter from HSCP to accompany the CAT application would strengthen the Trust's case and give it weight

DP – I would need to ask the board if we could formally partner, but what you already have from our strategic plan should help with your business case.

Your proposal has huge potential benefit, but the Council would get immediate revenue if selling or using a Housing Association.

GJ having HSPC support would def strengthen the case of the Trust.

MW we met with the Housing, Health and Care Forum, with Councillor Gordan Low. They were sympathetic but don't have decision making powers.

DP If I speak to the Chairperson of the HSCP Board and ask if we can give our support to you, who should I email – MW.

GJ - housing developers make more money from large family houses and that's why there's such a lack of small housing therefore it needs partnership with other agencies and help from the Council. I suggest the Trust if/when they get to the next stage, if the opportunity is still there, it would be good to get the Council, a Housing Association and the Trust in the room together to

see how it could work in practice. In Scotland we have great strategies and policies but we don't have enough doers. We're not delivering on the ambitions. It just takes courage for the public sector to take steps. We know there's a shortage of housing for the elderly.

DP we agree. The funding is locked into the current provision of care. The money is locked into the 900 people we have in care homes.

GJ the health and housing connection has been lost.

GJ In my research team we can evaluate projects and have an effect. Advise on how to provide housing and save money.

After the meeting had ended Gareth James, Margaret W, Margaret R, Jim and Ruth met briefly.

GJ you should push to get the letter of support from the HSCP. Lenzie with its Tom Johnson heritage is ideal for this pilot. The model could be rolled out to rural communities.

The private sector will not invest on its own; the project needs public sector leadership. The current housing minister is open to meeting with people.

The Scottish Government is not going to meet its target for creating affordable housing so if you demonstrate your model might benefit them, that would help.

Housing to 2040 aims for people to live in the RIGHT size of house, and for people to age in place. So the business plan should say this is what YOU want to achieve, and here is our way.

MW is meeting with Ceartas. They are funded by local government and partner with Take Control which does Self-directed Care. If Ceartas would endorse the Trust's plans, that would be helpful.

GJ – it would definitely help to have a variety of people supporting you.

MW – we hope to have the community Council, Ceartas, HSCP and Gareth.

GJ – when you make your case

Demonstrate the preventative costs and potential savings from other budgets eg health and social care. The expense in the housing budget would be off set by savings in others.

The turnover in the housing market – point out that this venture will free up housing elsewhere in the community

Show how the financials will stack up.

MW – the concordat signed between the Scottish Government and COSLA aimed to devolve democracy further down to local communities – that is the future.

RD

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