

## REPORT TO THE CABINET

16 July 2013

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor R H Wyn Williams

**Subject:** Elderly Persons Accommodation and Care Needs in the Porthmadog Area

**Contact Officer:** D P Lewis, Corporate Director

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### **The decision sought**

Receive the approval of the Cabinet to formally consult regarding the future of Hafod y Gest residential home and to seek guidance on the way forward regarding meeting accommodation and care needs of elderly people in the Porthmadog area.

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### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 On 15 December 2011 the Council decided to "... refuse the current recommendations and return to hold transparent and thorough discussions to secure a suitable provision for the needs and aspirations of the community, and to return a full report to the Council in six months' time". This was following a recommendation by the Council Board on 11 October 2011 to bring to an end the use of Hafod y Gest as a residential home which was referred for the attention of the full Council.
- 1.2 Following the Council's decision a further report was presented back to the Council on 21 June 2012 outlining the intention to hold an assessment of the accommodation and care needs of elderly people of the area with the result feeding into a formal discussion regarding the future of Hafod y Gest residential home.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report therefore is to report back to the Cabinet on the results of the Porthmadog Area Accommodation and Care Assessment and the recommendations of the Local Members' Group which has been meeting since July 2012 to lead this assessment and consider the results.
- 1.4 The Cabinet is requested to consider the recommendations and decide on the way forward regarding the future of Hafod y Gest residential home.

## **2.0 Porthmadog Area Accommodation and Care Needs Assessment**

- 2.1 The assessment was done on the basis of an area extending around Porthmadog as far as Llanystumdwy, Garndolbenmaen, Borth y Gest and Talsarnau with the work of designing and carrying it out being led by the area Local Members Group together with key partners i.e. Cymdeithas Tai Eryri, Care and Repair Gwynedd, Age Cymru, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd.
- 2.2 A Discussion Document and questionnaire were published and 2657 copies were distributed through different means with help from the local members, local bodies such as Friends of Hafod y Gest and the area's community and town Councils. Different sessions were held to raise awareness of this assessment and meetings were attended as required. The assessment was planned to last between the middle October to the end of November 2012 but following receiving local requests it was agreed that questionnaires and comments would be received until the end of December.
- 2.3 573 questionnaires were received back and also a variety of comments by letter. The questionnaires were analysed by the Council's Research and Information Unit and the full results report can be seen on the Council's web site together with the discussion document (web site:-[www.gwynedd.gov.uk/asesiad](http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/asesiad))
- 2.4 The main messages received from the assessment are that:-
- a) the majority of the respondents (85.5%) feel that their present home is suitable for them at the present time but only 44.9% say that their present home will be suitable for the future.
  - b) the first choice of 74.4% of the respondents would be to say in their own home as they grew older with additional assistance should it be needed.
  - c) the three reasons given that a present home is not suitable are:-
    - too large
    - too expensive to heat
    - garden too large.
  - d) there is a need to ensure housing options to enable people to move to smaller homes. "Housing stairs" were identified – living at home, smaller housing units, sheltered housing, extra care housing, residential homes and nursing homes.

e) although moving to a residential home is the least popular choice among those who responded, several of the comments suggest the need for such establishments in the area.

2.5 The Local Members Group have considered the results and reached recommendations from them, their report is attached as Appendix 1.

2.6 The reports of the Local Members Group recommends that the Council should:-

- 1) consider developing a scheme of extra care housing on the site of the Hafod y Gest residential home which would include a residential care unit.
- 2) act proactively to reduce the impact of this as much as possible on the residents and staff of Hafod y Gest and users and staff of Noddfa Madog Day Centre.
- 3) consider how the need for older persons housing in the area especially bungalows can be met.
- 4) give further consideration jointly with other agencies to the support which is available in the area to enable elderly people to continue to live at home, referring to the different needs noted in paragraph 2.2

In reaching the recommendations the Members Group recognised that the "status quo" regarding Hafod y Gest was not an option and also that the Hafod y Gest site is the best site in Porthmadog for a new development. The need to bring to an end the use of Hafod y Gest as a residential home therefore was accepted by the Members Group as was the need to design a new development for the future which would include accommodation and care for the older people of the area.

2.7 The assessment has highlighted the importance of having a range of housing options available as people age. Similarly the support which is needed to care for houses – repair and maintenance, tidying the garden or adaptations which respond to the needs of individuals. There will be a need to discuss these with key partners and in the context of the housing strategy for the future.

2.8 The recommendation to support developing extra care housing is to be welcomed but support cannot be given to establishing a "residential unit" as part of the development. This is based on:-

- i) the Council's strategic direction which notes the need to reduce the number of 'traditional' residential beds. This is in response to the increase in the support available to individuals who wish to continue to live at home and the natural reduction as a result in the number of people who go into residential care.
- ii) cost implications to residents as a bed in a small residential unit will be expensive. In addition to that however is the fact that a room in a residential unit costs more than twice more than an extra care housing flat to the individual i.e. approximately £581 per week compared with approximately £210 (which includes the maximum payment for care services, £50.00).
- iii) financial implications to the Council from the viewpoint of building the residential unit (estimated at £750,000 which would be financed through prudential borrowing at a cost of £38,500 per annum for 40 years) and running costs compared with similar cost in the independent sector (£120,000 a year more). The most recent projections of the Council's financial position suggest there will be a need to increase the savings which need to be found by 2015/16 and thereon. Committing to increased expenditure of about £120,000 a year would mean needing to identify this from savings from other services.
- iv) reservations by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) who are not aware of a similar facility as to the one now proposed and because of that uncertain as to the registration requirements from the viewpoint of managing and sharing facilities and staff with the extra care housing.

2.9 What is possible however is to earmark a number of extra care units for specialist purposes e.g. dementia care, re-ablement or respite. It is suggested that further work takes place to consider how this can be achieved as part of any development regarding extra care housing.

2.10 Although not recommending a "residential unit" in accordance with the CSSIW definition, it will be possible to respond to specific needs within the extra care housing scheme through designating a number of units for a specialist purpose. Care support would be provided in accordance with the needs of the individual and this would include support by the health service with community nurses with other expertise visiting as needed. It should be remembered that it would not be possible to provide this level of

care within a residential unit as the registration would not allow nursing care. This would mean that individuals would be expected to move to a nursing home should they be living in residential unit but they could continue to live in the extra care housing scheme.

- 2.11 The care model which has developed in the wake of the extra care housing scheme Awel y Coleg, Bala, ensures support from qualified care staff twenty four hours a day. It is foreseen that these would be the arrangements in a similar development at Porthmadog.

### **3.0 Hafod y Gest Residential Home, Relevant Considerations**

- 3.1 Hafod y Gest is a registered residential home for 30 elderly persons. Because of the need to undertake fire precaution work to the building the number who can live at the home is restricted to a maximum of 23. With the uncertainty existing regarding the future of the home a decision was taken in 2011 not to receive new permanent residents to the home and by now there are 11 residents there. The remainder of the beds are used for respite care for specific periods which have been planned.
- 3.2 19 members of permanent staff are employed (full and part time) and 19 members of relief staff.
- 3.3 The unit cost of Hafod y Gest is at present £777.57 compared with the average unit cost of Council homes (standard fee) of £581.28.
- 3.4 The building was built in the 1970s as a short term building with a steel framework structure and concrete panels. It is already past its planned lifetime but although the framework does not raise great concerns the remainder needs more substantial work. When the condition of the building was reported in 2011 up to £2.2m expenditure on the building was identified which would ensure acceptable condition for 20 – 25 years and also acceptable care standards for the future. The work identified together with the costs are based on a report made in 2009 by independent external consultants and it is likely therefore that present costs would be higher. Since receiving the report the only work of substance which has been carried out is installation of new heating boilers. It is estimated that about £730,000 expenditure is required on maintenance work and repairs without upgrading the building from the care standards viewpoint.

3.5 When considering the future of Hafod y Gest home there are three possible options i.e.

- maintain the 'status quo' and only meet essential expenditure required.
- invest to repair the present building including upgrading from the viewpoint of 'en-suite' facilities and maintaining the number of original beds.
- bring to an end the use of the building as a residential home and consider the afteruse of the site for the purpose of extra care housing which would also provide specialist care.

To consider the above in their turn:-

- 1) Maintaining the present situation would mean expenditure on essential matters only. This would mean restricting permanently the number of residents to 23 in accordance with fire regulations which also meant that the cost of a bed in the home would be expensive compared with corresponding costs of other homes. Essential maintenance work would be required on the roof of the building and also consideration to improve insulation and windows of the building to reduce heating costs. In spending substantially on essential matters there is no general improvement to the building and it would be unsuitable for the future from the viewpoint of the care standards.
- 2) In investing fully on the building with expenditure of about £2.2 million it gives assurance of its future for about 20 years. The investment would ensure the condition of the building including mechanical and electrical system improvements and also energy efficiently through better insulation. The intention would be to install 'en-suite' facilities but to compensate the loss of bedrooms because of this the intentions would be to build an extension to keep bed numbers about 30 which would also ensure a more cost effective and competitive unit cost. There will be not change however to the framework structure of the building and in due course further attention will be required on this. There is no provision made by the Council to finance this work therefore there are financial implications to the Council from this. Although possible to do the work without the residents having to move out of the home it is recommended that they should move because of the extent and nature of the work and the need to move rooms as the work takes place.

3) Bringing the use of the building as a residential home to an end offers opportunities to consider the local provision for elderly persons and plan a response to their needs for the future. The Accommodation and Care Needs Assessment in the area has highlighted the need for 'housing' choices and also support for elderly persons as they age which ensures independence as long as possible. Paragraphs 2.9 – 2.11 provide more detail as to what can be provided as part of an extra care housing.

3.6 Legally the Council needs to formally consult with the residents of Hafod y Gest home, their families and the home's staff regarding the future. The options noted are the obvious options which would need to be considered but it also possible to offer a 'preferred option' for consultation. In considering the three options, against the above matters including the recommendations of the Members Group it is proposed to offer the third option as the preferred option i.e. bring the use of Hafod y Gest as a residential home to an end and to consider further the intention of developing an extra care housing scheme which would also include specialist care units earmarked for dementia, respite or rehabilitation purposes, as the need arises.

#### **4.0 Other Relevant Considerations**

4.1 In considering any after-use of the Hafod y Gest site for the future a conclusion was reached that extra care housing would respond to the needs of the area. The initial plans developed by Cymdeithas Tai Eryri has to use all the site space including the land where Noddfa Madog Day centre is situated.

4.2 This means that the arrangements for elderly people day care needs to be revised with choices being considered at present being:-

- a) community activities hub taking place in the new extra care housing,
- b) extend the capacity of Encil y Coed, Criccieth to provide day care five days a week.
- c) a combination of the two above options depending on the activities which could be offered and individual needs.

## **5.0 Equality Impact Assessment**

5.1 Attached to the report in Appendix 2 is an Equality Impact Assessment in accordance with legislative requirements.

## **6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

6.1 The Local Members Group should be congratulated for their inclusive work in carrying out an assessment of elderly persons accommodation and care needs in the area. The assessment has highlighted the needs of elderly people which includes a number of matters including housing choices, assistance to live at home, socialising opportunities and also residential care.

6.2 The Group also acknowledges that there is no future for Hafod y Gest residential home as it is but recommends that it is the best site for any development for elderly persons for the future.

6.3 The Group reached the conclusion that extra care housing would be best to be developed on the site but those plans to include a 'residential unit'. This is further discussed in part 2 of this report and it is noted why this specific recommendation cannot be supported although the remainder of the recommendations are accepted. Rather than establishing a 'residential unit' the ability to earmark a number of additional extra care housing is suggested which would offer more specialist care e.g. dementia, respite and rehabilitation which would offer a higher level of care than a residential unit and also more flexibility to respond to needs as residents age and needs increase.

6.4 The Cabinet is requested to consider the report and decide:-

- a) the Council should statutorily consult regarding the future of Hafod y Gest residential home; specifically regarding the favoured option to bring to an end its use as a residential home.
- b) that the Cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Local Members Group and that consideration is given to the after-use of the Hafod y Gest site to develop extra care housing which would include a number of units, earmarked to provide specialist care rather than a 'residential unit' with a report back to the Cabinet as soon as possible.
- c) in the wake of the above, the need to review the needs of users of Noddfa Madog Day Centre ensuring services which respond to their needs should the use of the centre finish.



## **Opinion of the Statutory Officers**

### **Chief Executive:**

It is important to recognise the important work the Members Group have made on the basis of thorough analysis of needs and also the choices available. The recommendations before us logically builds on the work of the Members Group and I support them.

### **Monitoring Officer:**

Discussion took place with the Legal Unit when drawing up the report and I am content that it addresses the necessary legal matters. No other matters of propriety arise.

### **Head of Finance Department:**

I confirm the financial facts which are part of 2.8 of the report. If the Cabinet approve the recommendation to develop a plan of extra care housing on Hafod y Gest site, then no additional financial pressure falls on the Council, as the cost of building the new houses falls on the housing associations and the cost of serving the Home Care clients can be financed through transferring from Hafod y Gest present budget. If a decision is made to go with the recommendation of the Local Members Group and to build a 'residential unit' in addition to the care houses, then there would be responsibility on the Council to finance the capital (£750k) and the revenue (£120k), budget which hasn't been determined up to now. In the unprecedented challenging financial climate we face, the situation should be carefully considered in the context of the aspirations of the whole of Gwynedd's taxpayers and citizens. It should be remember that other valuable projects would need to be sacrificed if the Council invests sparse financial resources to establish a 'residential unit' here, whilst I understand that alternative residential care is available in the area. Therefore, I support the recommendations in part 6.4 of the report.

### **Comments of the Director of Social Services:**

The recommendations are in agreement with the basic vision of the Council in the field of elderly people. There will be a need to plan any future development in accordance with needs assessments and resources which are basal to our strategic commissioning plans. It is recognised that this is a very difficult period to the residents of the home and it should be ensured that they receive the necessary support through the consultation period and beyond.

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### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Report by Porthmadog Area Members Group

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment