

## Integrated Care Partnership Stepdown Scheme Update (Housing, Maggie Ward)

### **Synopsis of report:**

**In March 2021 Housing Committee approved the use of two Independent Retirement Living flats for participation in a pilot “Step Down” scheme to support the NHS in a partnership with Spelthorne, Woking and Elmbridge Councils.**

**The scheme is to facilitate discharge from hospital for medically fit patients who cannot immediately return home, providing a 6 week placement with a care package to enable their own accommodation to be made ready.**

**Following a successful pilot, the Integrated Care Partnership has approved funding for a further year to extend the scheme.**

**The report requests approval for the continued use of two IRL flats for “Step Down” or “Step Up” where a patient needs accommodation with support either before or after a hospital admission.**

### **Recommendation:**

**Members approve the continued use of two flats in Floral House as part of the North West Surrey Integrated Care Partnership Step Down scheme until such time as the scheme is ended or demand for IRL accommodation outweighs the benefit of the scheme.**

## **1. Context and background of report**

- 1.1 Nationally the availability of hospital beds is restricted due to patients who are medically fit “bed blocking” because they are unable to return to their home. In many cases people require adaptations, changes to their home environment or a respite location where they do not have to care for another person.
- 1.2 It is recognised that there needs to be synergy with local services and health and medical provision and as a result Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP) have been established to give people the support they need, joined up across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional divisions between hospitals and family doctors, between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services. In the past, these divisions have meant that too many people experienced disjointed care.
- 1.3 Runnymede is within the North West Surrey ICP which is made up of Woking, Spelthorne, Runnymede and Elmbridge. Runnymede Community Services have an established and growing relationship with the Integrated Care Partnership Board and are involved in a number of initiatives through their discretionary, prevention and community services in supporting residents to remain living at home.
- 1.4 In March 2021 this Committee approved participation in a pilot scheme to be funded by the ICP to provide accommodation either with care on site or where a short term agency package could be provided through Adult Social Care. These are called “step down” beds as they are an interim between hospital care and full discharge. This is furnished accommodation for up to six weeks whilst the issues with their own home

are addressed. The pilot scheme has seven properties, two each from Woking, Spelthorne (A2 Dominion) and Runnymede and one at Whitely Village in Elmbridge.

1.5 In March 2021 officers undertook to report back on the pilot after the initial year.

## 2. **Report**

2.1 Two properties at the Floral House Independent Retirement Scheme have been furnished and used under the Step-Down Scheme over the past year. The scheme is managed by a coordinator across the four boroughs who liaises with the NHS hospital Discharge teams and is fully funded by the ICP.

2.2 This interim accommodation is only available to people who have a move on plan in place, it is for a maximum of six weeks so is suitable for pending adaptations, deep clean or decluttering etc. Placements can be for people from any of the four boroughs and location will be determined by availability and the level of care required.

2.3 The scheme has been very successful with mainly positive outcomes where either the client was able to return home within the six weeks or alternative suitable accommodation was secured for them.

2.4 The ICP considers the scheme to have been very beneficial in releasing hospital beds and transitioning patients back into the community. They have committed to funding for a further year, increasing the units to nine across the Boroughs and resources for further staffing.

2.5 Officers recommend that Members approve the continued use of two flats in Floral House as part of the Surrey Heartlands Step Down scheme until such time as the scheme is ended or demand for IRL accommodation outweighs the benefit of the scheme.

## 3. **Policy framework implications**

3.1 Interim lettings to the properties at Floral House are made in accordance with Runnymede's Housing Allocations Policy. Exceptions can be made to the prioritisation criteria and the use of a 'direct let' is available under section 9.6 of the policy (sections b and i are most relevant in this situation).

"The Council may not advertise all properties, and may reserve some properties / nominations for direct letting in the following circumstances:

- a) Assisted Choice for Homeless Households Scheme (see section 13)
- b) Where the property has specific adaptations
- c) To allow the landlord to make the best use of their housing stock
- d) For community safety reasons
- e) For management moves (see paragraph 6.10.10)
- f) For reasons of public protection
- g) Where the move will facilitate a chain of lets releasing another property which the Council has a particular need of (usually involving under occupiers)
- h) Where the property is deemed to be hard to let
- i) Any other reason as authorised by the Service Manager or the Strategic Housing Manager."

Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Allocations Policy Section 9.6 Exceptions to advertising properties

**4. Resource implications/Value for Money (where applicable)**

4.1 The full cost of the scheme is covered by the ICP funding.

**5. Legal implications**

5.1 To follow.

**6. Equality implications**

6.1 Although this scheme takes two properties out of use as Independent Retirement living flats, these properties are not currently in high demand. They would be accessed by older people and therefore this group with a protected characteristic are disproportionately impacted by the scheme. However, this is the largest IRL scheme with 75 flats and the properties are in the outer blocks which are less popular with people seeking the security of the scheme. There is a regular turnover of properties so this would not have a significant impact on waiting list times. Most of the patients accessing the scheme are elderly and vulnerable and therefore the benefit of the scheme to Runnymede residents outweighs the potential small increase in waiting time for an individual.

**7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

7.1 No Implications have been identified

**8. Conclusions**

8.1 The Step Down pilot has been very successful, supporting vulnerable residents to be discharged from hospital to a safer environment with care. The Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Partnership has approved funding to extend the scheme for another year and to increase the number of properties available to nine. Members are asked to approve the continued use of two HRA flats in Runnymede.

(To resolve)

**Background papers**

[March 2021 Housing Committee Report](#)