

**Item No: 6**

**Meeting Date: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**

**Glasgow City  
Integration Joint Board  
Public Engagement Committee**

**Report By:** Allison Eccles, Head of Business Development

**Contact:** Allison Eccles

**Phone:** 0141

**Petition re Bed & Breakfast Accommodation in Hillhead**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To consider the petition entitled 'Glasgow City Council needs to follow its own policy and stop housing homeless people in unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation in Hillhead'.
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<b>Background/Engagement:</b>	Glasgow City IJB established a Public Petitions process following approval at the IJB Public Engagement Committee on 13th September 2016.
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<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>The IJB Public Engagement Committee is asked to:</p> <p>a) consider the petition entitled 'Glasgow City Council needs to follow its own policy and stop housing homeless people in unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation in Hillhead' as set out in Appendix 1 of this report in accordance with the approved guidance for dealing with public petitions.</p>
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**Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:**

Relates to matters of governance.

**Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:**

<b>Reference to National Health &amp; Wellbeing Outcome:</b>	None
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<b>Personnel:</b>	None
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<b>Carers:</b>	None
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<b>Provider Organisations:</b>	None
<b>Equalities:</b>	None
<b>Fairer Scotland Compliance:</b>	None
<b>Financial:</b>	None
<b>Legal:</b>	None
<b>Economic Impact:</b>	None
<b>Sustainability:</b>	None
<b>Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:</b>	None
<b>Risk Implications:</b>	None
<b>Implications for Glasgow City Council:</b>	Implications for the Council are dependent on decision made by this Committee.
<b>Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow &amp; Clyde:</b>	None

### 1. Background

- 1.1 Glasgow City Integration Joint Board (IJB) established a Public Petitions process following approval at the IJB Public Engagement Committee on [13<sup>th</sup> September 2016](#).
- 1.2 Glasgow City IJB aims to provide good quality services that are easy to access and meet the health and social care needs of the people of Glasgow.
- 1.3 The public petitions process plays a key part in these aims by encouraging people to participate fully in the decision making process, either individually or as part of a group.
- 1.4 The guidance makes clear what issues will be considered. A public petition should not be the first step for an individual or group to raise a complaint with the Integration Joint Board.
- 1.5 Once a petition meets the conditions outlined in the guidance, consideration of the petition sits within the remit of the IJB Public Engagement Committee.

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### 2. Considerations

2.1 The IJB received a petition entitled 'Glasgow City Council needs to follow its own policy and stop housing homeless people in unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation in Hillhead' on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020 on behalf of individuals with 31 signatures verified in accordance with the criteria approved by the Public Engagement Committee regarding the submission of petitions.

2.2 On reviewing the petition it was noted that relevant information was omitted that petitioners are asked to submit in the "Guidance for submitting a public petition" available on our [website](#). In particular with reference to section 4 of the guidance where it states:

*Before submitting a petition, you should have:*

- *Raised the issue with the Council, Health Board or Integration Joint Board, in the first instance, for example in writing to the Chief Officer or relevant Head of Service*
- *Checked whether the Integration Joint Board is running a current related consultation exercise or engagement process and, if it is, raise your issues directly through that process first*

*Please ensure copies of any correspondence on the above are attached with your petition.*

2.3 The petition referenced attempts made through correspondence and communication with Council elected members and officers to discuss this issue but no copies or evidence of this correspondence was attached. This supporting information is important to ensure the petitions process is not the first attempt made to raise the issue. It also assists the HSCP to consider and understand its involvement in responding to the issue raised prior to the petition being submitted and help inform the response. Unfortunately the petition submitted did not contain sufficient information to do this.

2.4 A response was issued to the lead petitioner on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020 to request the supporting information. The petitioner was also advised that due to the pandemic the IJB had moved to temporary governance arrangements and therefore was not currently in a position to fully consider petitions until usual IJB governance arrangements resumed. *(N.B. The IJB temporary governance arrangements came to an end on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020).*

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- 2.5 The requested information was received on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020. A response was issued on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020 to confirm the petition now met the criteria for consideration and would proceed to the next scheduled meeting of the IJB Public Engagement Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020.
- 2.6 The Principal Petitioner's statement petition is set out in Appendix 1 to this report. The Principal Petitioner is Tom Brown and he has indicated that Melissa Toner will represent the petitioners and wishes to make a statement to the committee.
- 2.7 The petition was referred to Pat Togher, Assistant Chief Officer, Public Protection and Complex Needs, to comment and for representation on behalf of the HSCP. Comments from the HSCP in response to the petition are detailed in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 2.8 Following consideration of a petition, the Committee will decide on the appropriate action to be taken within the approved guidance for dealing with public petitions as follows:-
- (a) agree the issue(s) raised deserves further action and agree to refer the petition to another Council committee, officer or other organisation; or
  - (b) agree the issue(s) raised does not merit further action.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 The IJB Public Engagement Committee is asked to:
- a) consider the petition entitled 'Glasgow City Council needs to follow its own policy and stop housing homeless people in unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation in Hillhead' as set out in Appendix 1 of this report in accordance with the approved guidance for dealing with public petitions.

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## Glasgow City Integration Joint Board Petitions form

**Please refer to the Guidance on Submission of Public Petitions before filling in this form. If you need more information or advice, please contact the Senior Officer (Governance Support), whose contact details are provided in the guidance document.**

### Details of Principal Petitioner

Please enter the name of the person raising the petition. You must include a name and contact address, and it is also helpful if you include a telephone number and email address.

**Name:** Thomas Brown ( Vice Chair HARA )

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

### Title of Petition

Glasgow City Council needs to follow its own policy and stop housing homeless people In unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation in Hillhead

Please write in no more than 250 words:

- The purpose of your petition; and,
- The result you wish to achieve from your petition

### **Purpose of petition**

The petition asks Glasgow City Council to fully implement its policy of providing homes to those who are homeless, and end its present use of temporary, wholly unsuitable accommodation in former guest houses and small hotels.

### **What we wish to achieve**

Despite Scottish Government and Homeless charities both recognising that the present situation of accommodating homeless people in bed and breakfast hotels is wholly unsuitable, it still continues. It's also getting worse as one of the former guest houses is expanding their operation into neighbouring houses.

We wish to achieve:

Appropriate and properly supported provision for those homeless people who seek help instead of a reliance on temporary guest houses.

Until more appropriate accommodation is provided, a substantial reduction in the number of homeless referrals to guest houses in the Hillhead area with a firm end date to the practice.

If implemented, this would not only mean better living conditions and opportunities for homeless people but also create a safer environment in Hillhead for a community badly affected by anti-social behavior, petty crime and serious acts of violence, directly associated with these guest houses. The residents of Hillhead have tolerated the negative impact of the present policy for almost 20 years and it affects the security and quality of life of all those housed in the area including children attending nursery, primary and secondary schools and a major University.

It's time it ended, for everyone's sake

HARA. (Hillhead Street, Cecil Street and surrounding area Residents Association)

### **Action taken, if any, to resolve issues before submitting the petition**

Please enter below details of any individuals or organisations approached. You should attach copies of correspondence, including any responses. This information will be made available to the Public Engagement Committee before it considers the petition.

Over the last five years we have made many attempts to have this issue addressed and have had many meetings with other local resident associations and have had the attendance and communication with various MPs and Councillors and GCC officers at those meetings.

Various complaints, emails and letters have been sent to the police and the GCC , MPs and Councilors asking for assistance and help on this matter.

Liaison with Crisis and some training and advice was administered during our meetings

**Appearance before Committee**

The Chair of the Public Engagement Committee may invite petitioners to appear before the committee to speak in support of their petition.

Please indicate whether you would like to make a brief statement (no more than 10 minutes) to the committee when it is considering your petition

\*I do wish to make a statement to the committee

**NB :** This statement will be made by Melissa Morbey ( Chair of HARA )

\*delete as appropriate

**Signature of Principal Petitioner**

When you are satisfied the petition meets all the conditions outlined in the Guidance on Submission of Petitions, the principal petitioner must sign and date the form in the box below. For petitions submitted by email, a digital signature will be accepted.

Signature..... T Brown .....

Date..... 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH. 2020 .....

Print name in BLOCK CAPITALS THOMAS BROWN...



## **Introduction**

This paper sets out the Homelessness Service's response to the petition submitted to Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board. The subject of the petition was a request to the IJB to implement its policy to end the use of unsuitable accommodation in the Hillhead area.

## **Background**

The Local Authority has a statutory duty under section 29 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 to provide emergency accommodation to households where it has a reason to believe that they are homeless until as such times as the authority can discharge its wider duties under the 87 act. These duties are discharged through the HSCP's Homelessness Service.

The Homelessness Service utilises a range of accommodation types to discharge this duty (Appendix 1 sets out the accommodation mix). This mix includes the use of bed and breakfast accommodation in locations across the City. Prior to the introduction of the Scottish Government's introduction of social distancing measures of the 2400 units of temporary accommodation approximately 230 bed and breakfast places were being used across the city to provide emergency accommodation.

It is generally accepted that the use of bed and breakfast type accommodation to accommodate homeless households is not satisfactory due the impact on service users and the costs to the Local Authority. However, due to the challenges in relation to the HSCP's ability to secure an adequate supply of permanent accommodation to resettle homeless households the Council does rely on the use of bed and breakfast type accommodation to discharge its statutory duty.

## **Policy Position**

The Glasgow Rapid Rehousing Transition plan was submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2018. The IJB approved the RRTP in February 2019. This plan set out how City partners would work together over 5-year transition period to deliver a housing led approach to tackling and ending homelessness in Glasgow. As a consequence of the acknowledged issues with bed and breakfast type accommodation the HSCP its committed to end the use of bed and breakfast over the life of its RRTP. Our ability to deliver the objective was contingent on our capacity to reform the Homelessness system to better secure a sufficient number of lets for the City's Housing Associations to re-house homeless households.



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During 2019 good progress was made in achieving our RRTP priority outcomes for 2019/20 and the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. A resource framework was agreed that set out the additional resources that were to be put in place to allow the HSCP to progress the plan. A significant level of activity during 2019 focused on remodelling the Homelessness Service to reflect the priorities set out within the RRTP. It was envisaged that through 2020 the HSCP would have seen a continued increase in the number of settled lets that would have allowed it to begin to step down from bed and breakfast accommodation.

The advent of Covid19 and the Scottish Governments guidance on social distancing in March 2020 and the subsequent move to emergency, business critical response by the housing and homelessness sector saw a rapid response from the Homelessness Service has been required to provide emergency accommodation to rough sleepers and those with no recourse to public funds. Of critical importance to the HSCPs Homelessness Service was the ending of all letting activity on the part of the City's housing associations. This has seen significant rise in the use of repurposing of city centre hotels and the curtailment of the progression of the objectives of the RRTP to end the use of bed and breakfast type accommodation. However, the HSCP has put in place a RRTP Recovery plan in order to rapidly end the use of the repurposed city centre hotels and recommence the delivery of the RRTP.

We will set out our proposals for the elimination of the use of bed and breakfast accommodation and a reduction of temporary accommodation by February 2021.

### **Management of Bed and Breakfast in the Hillhead Area**

In order to monitor and minimise any impact on the local community of the use of the Hillhead and Chez Nous Guest Houses the HSCP maintains routine liaison with Police Scotland and Neighbourhood and Sustainability. Neighbourhoods and Sustainability Team has been working regularly with Police Scotland to ensure a coordinated response to crime and anti-social behaviour. Where vulnerable households have been identified as at risk the Street Team are contacted directly to assist.

The August update from colleagues in Neighbourhood and Sustainability indicates that there has been no heightened reports of anti-social behaviour or enforcement activity emanating from the Chez Nous or Hillhead Guest Houses. However, reports from the Homelessness Services Anti-Social Behaviour Team indicates that there has been a general rise of ASB across all tenures through the pandemic period.

The HSCP also has regular liaison meetings with the Chez Nous Guest Houses owners houses to ensure that service users are accessing appropriate supports and that the impact on the local community is minimised. During the pandemic period funding has been put in place to ensure deliveries of hot food to the residents of both guest houses.

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In order to ensure physical standards of the bed and breakfast establishments that the HSCP uses staff undertake regular inspections.

The HSCP commissions the Simon Community Street Team who engage with homeless people across the city on a regular basis. The Street Team actively encourages homeless people to access both Homelessness and other service provision such as Addiction, Mental Health, Financial Inclusion etc. as appropriate. This has resulted in homeless people receiving both support and/or accommodation services which are designed to assist them to address the root causes of their current situation and in normal times assist them into accommodation.

### **Summary**

The HSCP has a statutory duty to provide emergency accommodation to households whom it believes are homeless. The HSCP faces particular challenges in relation to its ability to secure settled accommodation and therefore has a reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation. The HSCP has committed to ending the use of bed and breakfast during the life of the 5 year Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan.

Prior to Covid19 and the social distancing measures the HSCP was making progress in delivering the objectives of the RRTP. The pandemic period has placed unprecedented pressures on the Homelessness Service and increased our use of Hotel accommodation. We remain committed to ending the use of bed and breakfast accommodation and are actively working to secure alternatives to bed and breakfast accommodation. However, progress on ending the use of bed and breakfast accommodation is reliant on the Council securing an increased supply of settled lets from the City's housing associations to meet demand. We continue to work positively with RSLs and reform our systems and processes to meet this challenge.

Whilst we continue to use bed and breakfast accommodation we are working with a range of partners to support service users and address the impact on local communities.

### **Recommendations**

The IJB Public Engagement Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the contents of this report; and
- b) Request the Head of Public Protection provides an update on the RRTP targets associated with B & B reductions by October 2021.