

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday 3 May 2021**

### **Snowy Monaro aged care investment push to commence late May**

A national market sounding process that aims to attract leading specialist residential aged care providers to take on ownership and operation of Council's residential aged care facilities is expected to commence on 21 May 2021, subject to Council endorsement, Council announced today.

This builds on the process commenced last year utilising Federal Government funding to explore the transition of aged care services to an external provider. The next step in the process is an expression of interest (EOI) to identify a suitable provider of these services for the region.

The focus of this process is about the continuation and guaranteed provision of quality aged care into the future, as well as the opportunity to expand and upgrade the regional offering. The seamless transition of care for all involved – employees, residents and relatives – is key to this process of transferring to a specialist provider.

Council's CEO Peter Bascomb said, "We want to ensure that seniors across our region can continue to access high-quality residential care in their communities, now and into the future."

The process to seek a new operator for the homes will include an initial call for EOIs in the 40-bed Yallabee Lodge in Cooma, the 14-bed Snowy River Hostel in Berridale and the expansion of services into Jindabyne.

Mr Bascomb said, "Organisations that align with Council and community values, and meet quality and other requirements will then be invited to lodge a formal proposal. If Council finds a suitable proposal then transfer to the new operator will most likely happen later this year, with solid safeguards in place for our employees and residents. Our aged care employees are at the heart of the quality care our Council provides in its residential aged care facilities.

"As part of the EOI requirements, interested organisations would have to demonstrate their track record in delivering quality care and show that they would offer roles to existing employees.

"Residents have security of tenure by law and their resident agreements will continue. Current residents cannot be asked to pay a new or higher accommodation deposit.

Following initial meetings held in late 2020, Council held further meetings with employees at both facilities on 3 May 2021. Residents and relatives have also been informed and meetings will be held with them this week, with in-person, online and phone options. Council will continue to keep residents, employees and the community informed of progress.

Council acknowledges the history and strong community involvement in developing Yallabee Lodge and Snowy River Hostel, including fundraising, bequests and community contributions.

"We look forward to working with the community to celebrate and preserve this legacy, whilst ensuring the provision of aged care services into the future across our region," said Mr Bascomb.

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