

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET : 20TH SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

CHANGES TO RESIDENTIAL PROVISION FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND ADULTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Executive Summary

This report gives the detail of how the Department proposes to implement the decision taken by Cabinet on 24 January 2007, regarding the changes to residential provision for older people with mental health needs.

It also informs Members of the results of the consultation with people who use the services and their carers.

Members are asked to agree to the proposals contained in the recommendations of this report. This is a key decision which was first identified in the Forward Plan dated 1st May 2007.

1 Background

- 1.1 On 24 January 2007 a report was submitted to Cabinet which outlined a strategy for the continuation of direct provision of residential care for older people and adults with mental health needs. This strategy proposed the withdrawal from the direct provision of permanent care for Older People, the closure of 3 homes, the relocation of some of the retained services to alternative sites and an extension of one of the Homes, utilising Prudential Borrowing Funds.
- 1.2 The Strategy also proposed a feasibility study into the development of another existing site, the consideration of funding opportunities for further Prudential Borrowing opportunities and the continued exploration of partnership potential for the development of appropriate services.
- 1.3 On 24 January 2007, the Strategy, as set out in Sections 4 and 5 of the Report was endorsed and Members resolved that a consultation process be commenced.
- 1.4 This Report focuses on proposals within 1.2 of the original report. Further Reports will be brought to Members regarding proposals within 1.3

2 Detailed Proposals

- 2.1 The proposals consulted upon were as follows:

- 2.1.1 The closure of the Rosewarne Building, which currently provides respite care for adults with mental health needs and the transfer of the service to the Fernleigh building.
- 2.1.2 The transfer of the Fernleigh Service, which provides respite and day care for older people with EMI needs, to the Meadowcroft building.
- 2.1.3 The transfer of the Service currently provided at Meadowcroft, that is, permanent care for older people with EMI needs, into the independent sector.
- 2.1.4 The closure of Mendell Lodge and the transfer of the Service for people for whom Mendell Lodge provides permanent care in the independent sector.
- 2.1.5 The closure of Feltree House
- 2.1.6 The retention of respite care for frail older people in Pensall House.
- 2.1.7 The development of Poulton House to provide a modern, flexible building which can accommodate a range of needs, including the provision of respite care and all residential intermediate care. The new extension will be built to maximum CSCI standards to ensure that it can accommodate older people or adults if the requirement of commissioners change.
- 2.1.8 People who use services will not be denied their right to receive appropriate care to meet their assessed needs for permanent, respite or intermediate care, in the short, medium or long term from available resources within directly provided or commissioned services.

3 Rationale for the Proposals

- 3.1 The Rosewarne building was originally a private residential property which has been used by the Council as a Residential Home for many years. However, it attracts high maintenance costs and does not meet the national minimum standards as applied to newly registered services. It is not accessible to people with a disability and presents additional risk issues which have to be managed by the staff delivering the Service. The Commission for Social Care Inspection, has been very clear that it is not an appropriate building for its current use and have indicated to the Department of Adult Social Services that its registration as a residential home is not sustainable.
- 3.2 Fernleigh was refurbished to CSCI national minimum standards for older people in 2001. It provides a bright environment, with plenty of communal space, it is set in its own grounds with car parking space, a private garden area and an enclosed courtyard. By transferring to this building, the capacity to provide respite care for adults with mental health needs will increase from 12 places to 19 and allow the service to be extended to people with functional mental health needs who are over the age of 65. There is currently no service available for this group of people and some people who have hitherto received service, can be disadvantaged when they reach 65.

- 3.3 By transferring the service for older people with EMI needs, (i.e. organic mental illness, such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease) to Meadowcroft, the capacity of the respite service can be increased from 15 to 23 places. Although the capacity for Day Care may have to reduce slightly, there are indications that any shortfall could be met in the independent or third sector, or by the development of a specialist Home Care Service. Meadowcroft was refurbished in 2002 to the national minimum CSCI standards for older people.
- 3.4 The rationale for the Council to cease to directly provide permanent care for older people was fully outlined in the previous report to Cabinet.
- 3.5 The Mendell Lodge building, which is purpose built, whilst highly regarded in the local community, does not meet CSCI national minimum standards for new registrations. It has no en-suite facilities and 60% of its 34 bedrooms are smaller than the minimum registration standard size of 12 square metres. The building has high maintenance costs and is in need of substantial renovation.
- 3.6 The site of Mendell Lodge would be attractive for the development of extra care sheltered housing or similar schemes.
- 3.7 Feltree House is a purpose built home but does not meet registration standards. It has no en-suite facilities and 80% of its 19 bedrooms are smaller than the new registrations requirement of 12 square metres. Because of the age of the building this home also has high maintenance costs and would require a considerable level of investment to bring it up to registration standards.
- 3.8 Pensall House was refurbished to the National Standards for Older People in 2002. All bedrooms are en-suite and are 12 square metres or more in size.
- 3.9 Poulton House is a purpose built residential home but does not meet the National Minimum Standards for new registrations. However, the central facilities of the home, that is, kitchen, dining area, office space and lounge space are capable of supporting an increased level of accommodation with minimal alteration. The Poulton House site is sufficiently large to allow for development to take place to create a high standard of accommodation. It will be important to ensure the planned redevelopment takes account of changing needs and expectations by offering personalised accommodation that can be responsive to the different needs across Adult/Older People's Services. Access to the home by people who use services their carers, family and visitors is good due to the home being well serviced by public transport and road networks, situated close to the M53 and the Mersey Tunnel. In addition to these advantages the home is recognised and respected as a quality provider of respite and intermediate care having well established links with local health providers.
- 3.10 As a result of these proposals three sites will be released, namely Rosewarne, Mendell Lodge and Feltree House. Rosewarne will be

declared surplus to requirements and sold with resulting capital receipt being returned to council funds. This home is within the planning moratorium area and due to the current restriction on developing such buildings into flats the market value is expected to be low. The potential to provide extra care housing by developing both the Mendell Lodge and Feltree House sites is to be explored by the Commissioning Manager for Older People. Formal proposals will be submitted to members in January 2008 with a clearer assessment of the long term needs and impact of this shift to more personalised accommodation. Opportunities to attract national funding towards these developments from the Governments Extra Care Housing Fund will be explored.

4 Time Scales for Implementation of the Strategy

- 4.1 The time scale for the implementation of the strategy in its entirety is 3 years. It commenced formally in April 2007, following the ratification of the proposals by Council in March 2007.
- 4.2 Consultation with staff, people who use the services, carers and other interested parties commenced in April 2007. All those people directly affected (i.e. staff, people who use the services and carers) have had the opportunity to attend at least one meeting (the last meeting being held on 9th August). However, the consultation process will be continuing throughout the period of implementation.
- 4.3 The proposed date for closure of Mendell Lodge is 31st March 2008.
- 4.4 The transfer of people who live at Meadowcroft into appropriate accommodation in the independent sector as proposed is to be complete by 1st October 2008.
- 4.5 The proposed transfer of service from Fernleigh to Meadowcroft is scheduled to commence on 1st October 2008.
- 4.6 The proposed transfer of service from Rosewarne to Fernleigh is scheduled to commence on 1st October 2008.
- 4.7 Building work at Poulton House is planned to commence in May 2008 and first phase completed by December 2008. Timescales for Phase 2 are still to be negotiated.
- 4.8 Feltree House is planned to close by March 2010, dependent on the completion of building work at Poulton House.
- 4.9 The proposed time scales are dependent on a number of external factors which are outside the control of DASS, but are robust with current intelligence and indications.

5 Impact of Proposals on People Who Use Services and Carers

- 5.1 People who currently live in Mendell Lodge will be transferred to homes in the independent sector or alternative accommodation such as sheltered

housing commencing in January 2008. However, in view of the age and length of time which people have been living in residential care it is most likely that an independent residential care home will be the preferred option.

- 5.2.1 People who live in Meadowcroft will be transferred to homes in the independent sector. This process will start in June 2008. At the time of writing this report, that number stands at 16, having reduced from the 19 people who were resident in April. However, in view of the length of time before the proposed transfer commences and the changing needs which people with dementia type illnesses experience, the number affected may reduce.
- 5.2.2 In order to maximise DASS resources, any vacancies which occur in Meadowcroft will be available for people with appropriate needs. However, it will be made clear that this is a transitional arrangement and will only be available until the end of September 2008.
- 5.3 All intermediate care at residential level will be provided at Poulton House. This will provide efficiencies of scale and benefits of concentrated resources.
- 5.4 Older people with functional mental health needs, who may not have previously been able to access a respite service, will be able to do so.
- 5.5 The respite care capacity for older people with organic mental health (ie dementia type illnesses) needs will be increased.
- 5.6 Respite care for frail older people will be available in Poulton House and Pensall House (located in Wallasey and Pensby respectively).
- 5.7 The reviews of people who currently use services and the continuing rigorous application of the FACS (Fair Access to Care Services) criteria, together with a review of the current capacity in the in-house sector, indicates that the majority of respite care for frail older people will continue to be met by these two homes. There is sufficient capacity within the independent sector to make up any shortfall and some people may welcome the increase in choice which this offers. DASS is confident that everyone who is assessed as needing respite care will have their needs met.

6 Outcome of Consultations with People Who Use Services

- 6.1 The Care Services Manager and the relevant Service Manager have visited every home affected by these proposed changes to meet people who use services and their carers. Most homes have been visited on two occasions, once in the evening and once in the afternoon. Meeting dates are listed in Appendix 1.
- 6.2 Two people who use services and one carer attended the meeting at Poulton House and were supportive of the proposed changes.

- 6.3 Ten people attended the Pensall House meeting. The main concerns relating to the proposals were that “the Council may not have any say in what private homes provide if you ditch all your permanent homes”. Other concerns were that the amount of respite care which a person received may be reduced because of the reduction in capacity.
- 6.4 Ten people attended the meeting for people who lived permanently at Mendell Lodge and their carers. Concerns were about the level of charges made by independent homes and how much the Council paid; the possibility of funding places “out of borough”; and concern that older people were the most vulnerable in society. There was also a concern expressed that staff might leave Mendell Lodge, leading to a diminution in the standard of care provided.
- 6.5 Approximately 28 people attended the two meetings held at Fernleigh. Some people were concerned that they had read about some of the proposed changes in the newspaper before the meeting. Some concern was expressed about the validity of the consultation and wanted to ensure that carers could “have their say”. Carers wanted more information about the proposed changes and there was discussion about why the proposed moves were as they were, rather than other configurations. There was concern about the effects of moving people from one building to another, although one carer did cite the positive experience of moving from Meadowcroft to Fernleigh last year, and said that she felt that this move would be similar. Carers wanted reassurance that they would still receive respite care and day care and that charges would not be affected. Carers were concerned about losing relationships with staff and staff’s future. They felt that older people with EMI needs are the most vulnerable people and susceptible to change.
- 6.6 25 people attended the meetings at Meadowcroft, representing 14 of the people who live at Meadowcroft. However, several people attended on both occasions. The strength of feeling expressed and the level of anxiety that views would not be adequately represented in the report back to Members was such that a summary of this meeting was sent out to all those who attended. This is attached as Appendix 2. Additional comments which were sent in following this are attached as Appendix 3. Permission to include these comments as part of the appendix to this report was obtained in writing.
- 6.7 16 people attended the meeting at Feltree. The response from people who use Feltree House and their carers was that they felt that Feltree House was a good resource which should be maintained. There were views expressed about how older people were regarded and their value in society. The disruption which change caused was an anxiety for many people.
- 6.8 31 people attended the 2 meetings at Mendell Lodge, representing 21 people who use the respite and/or day care service. A number of people who use services also attended.

- 6.9 Strong views were expressed at both meetings and the proposal to close Mendell Lodge was opposed. Concern focused on the continuing availability of respite care, the effect of change on people who use the service and a view that quality of care was more important than the physical environment.
- 6.10 Approximately 30 people attended the meeting at Rosewarne. Anxieties centred on the response of the local community to the change of use of the Fernleigh building. A number of suggestions were made as to how the anticipated opposition could be addressed. At the end of the second meeting, one person who had objected to the proposal in writing decided to withdraw their objection. Other concerns expressed and addressed were around issues such as access by public transport and facilities in the building.
- 6.11 Summary of Consultation
- 6.11.1 In summary, the proposed change in the provision of service to older people generated the following responses:
- The high regard in which people hold current in-house residential services
 - Concern about the impact of change on peoples' health and wellbeing
 - Concern about the quality of services in the independent sector
 - Concern about how changes might impact on the amount of respite which people received
 - Concern about the possible increase in charges for services if they are provided in the independent sector.
 - Concern that Older People are not valued by society.
- 6.11.2 People who used mental health services were primarily concerned about the response of the local community to their move. Suggestions were made as to how this anticipated response could be minimised and most people appeared reassured by this approach.

7 Wider Consultation

- 7.1 Meetings have taken place with the Older People's Advocate, the Carer's Advocate, and the representative from the Alzheimer's society, in order to outline the strategy and ensure that advocates were adequately briefed to respond to any approach from people who use services and carers.
- 7.2 Officers have presented the proposal to the PCT Management Board meeting; the Older People's Jury; the Bebington and West Wirral GP Forum; the Intermediate Care Strategy Group; the Mental Health Joint Management Team; Standard 7 Older People's National Service Framework. Consultation with other partners will continue.
- 7.3 Officers have also met with the Senior Inspector from the Commission for Social Care Inspection to ensure that the proposals around the change of use for Homes and the proposed development at Poulton house were

robust from a regulatory perspective. Consultation will continue throughout the implementation of the strategy.

- 7.4 Trade Union representatives have been kept apprised of developments through monthly meetings with the Divisional Leadership Team. Staff from Human Resources and Trade Union representatives will be meeting with individual staff members to discuss future options commencing 19 September. Staff themselves, whilst expressing concerns about their future and that of the service, have for the most part responded positively to the proposals.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The planned changes will deliver a permanent reduction in the base line budget at the end of the 3 year transition. As the changes progress additional commitments which will be funded eventually by closures are likely to impact on the year in which they take place. The exact financial implications are difficult to predict and arise from people who transfer into the independent sector in advance of the homes closing and from the payment of severance to staff that cannot be employed elsewhere in Care Services or across the department.
- 8.2 Consultation to date implies that that people who use our services are most likely to stay as long as possible. However people may transfer on finding a place of their choice. It is estimated that the additional commissioning cost will be £70,000 in 2007/2008 and £130,000 in 2008/2009. This will be an added burden to the community care budget because for a brief period of time people are effectively funded twice e.g. by the availability of an in-house place and from the funding of an independent place of their choice.
- 8.3 Where possible the impact of double funding will be managed by offering vacated places to people in transition thereby avoiding the independent sector cost. Experience to date suggests that this will be possible for frail older people but less likely to be an acceptable solution for people with EMI needs who require familiar surroundings.
- 8.4 If staff in those Homes which were closing were to be offered severance/redundancy payments, the maximum amount payable would be £127,000. However, having considered the profile of the workforce, staff turnover and vacancy rates, the Department is confident that the majority of staff affected will be offered employment in other service areas.

9. Staffing Implications

- 9.1 In total 105 staff are affected by the proposed changes and staff will be encouraged to fully participate in the redeployment process by applying for new jobs and vacancies across the department. Vacancies in Care Services are being ring fenced to the homes where closures are planned. A newsletter has been introduced to ensure staff are kept up to date with the changes and opportunities available to them. It is planned to include

vacancies in the independent sector as part of the newsletter. Training and support is being made available to staff to assist them in applying for and relocating to alternative positions.

9.2 A high proportion of the staff working in the homes it is proposed to close live in close proximity to their workplace.

9.3 A workforce plan will be developed to ensure that every effort is made to make staff a reasonable offer of alternative employment so that the costs associated with severance and redundancy payments can be avoided where possible.

9.4 Any staff displaced by the closure will be managed in accordance with the the corporate policy.

10 Equal Opportunities Implications

The people affected by those changes are amongst the most vulnerable in society. This fact has been highlighted in much of the consultation.

11 Community Safety Implications

All the proposed changes are intended to help to keep people safe. However, some of the people affected have expressed concerns about their safety if the proposed move takes place from Rosewarne to Fernleigh. These have been addressed.

12 Local Agenda 21 Implications

The development at Poulton House will incorporate appropriate technology to ensure maximum energy efficiency.

13 Planning Implications

The proposed redevelopment of Poulton house will necessitate planning permission.

14 Anti Poverty Implications

There are no anti poverty implications.

15 Social Inclusion Implications

There are no social inclusion implications.

16 Local Member Support Implications

People affected by theses changes live in all areas of the Borough. A number of people have approached their local Members with concerns about the proposals.

17 Background Papers

Provision for the future – an overview of the Direction for Care Services 21 January 2007.

18 Recommendations

That :

- (1)** the respite service for older people with EMI needs be relocated to the Meadowcroft building within the time scales proposed;
- (2)** the respite service for adults with Mental Health needs be relocated to the Fernleigh building, and that the service be extended to older people with functional EMI needs within the time scales proposed;
- (3)** Poulton House be extended in line with Phase 1 plans within the time scales proposed;
- (4)** Mendell Lodge be closed within the time scales proposed;
- (5)** Feltree be closed within the timescale proposed;
- (6)** the Rosewarne building be closed within the time scales proposed; and
- (7)** those people for whom the Council currently provides permanent care in these services be helped to find alternative accommodation within the time scales proposed.

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