

CWOP/31/11

Policy & Scrutiny Committee Community and Older People

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Update report on the transformation of the Council's residential care homes for people with a learning disability. The Committee last reviewed this on 9 September 2010 (Paper reference CWOP/32/10 and minute 65/10 refers)

Purpose of Report

This report sets out developments in services for people with a learning disability in Essex with respect to residential care services operated by the Council and reported on earlier in September 2010. The committee asked for an update against four headings: the residential review; PFI prospects; closure of Berecroft in Harlow and changes associated with economic improvements.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee receive this report and note the progress made in respect of:

1. Completion of the review of residential care offered by the Council;
2. An update on the position of the PFI review;
3. Feedback on the closure of a care home in Harlow, including the views of carers;
4. The impact of economic improvements.

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1 Review of learning disability residential services

Current Position

- 1.1 ECC Residential Care Homes – 5 units offering 52 long stay and 31 short break places.
- 1.2 In addition Bramble Close registered care home (4 units with sleep in) plus the supported living scheme since 2009 is also within the AHCW portfolio and staffed by ECC.
- 1.3 Service Users and families had been fully engaged in the previous consultation that took place and expectations this raised included people moving out from their current hostel placement for a period of time and then returning to their own purpose built flat, many families were happy with this concept.
- 1.4 New development of supported housing in the County is currently limited although the private sector is increasingly looking to work with the Council to develop and deliver housing for people with a Learning Disability.
- 1.5 A new project has been developed with the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) this work has identified some current residents at Bridgemarsh as able to move on and will form part of the Housing Brokerage pilot.
- 1.6 The new grant regime from the Homes & Communities Agency is requiring Registered Providers (previously known as Registered Social Landlords) to deliver new units with much less grant than previously available alongside new rental regimes. The new units will require considerable capital investment input from other sources in order to fund acquisition/development whilst keeping rents affordable.
- 1.7 Turnover in the existing supply is low and a recent programme to optimise the utilisation of voids in shared housing stock for people with a LD has been successful, with the remaining voids being assessed in partnership with the Registered Provider's to determine whether they are sustainable going forward.
- 1.8 The above coupled with the strategic aim of reducing the numbers of people living in registered care (Housing for Disabled People Strategy 2009 – 13) means it is unlikely that the existing shared housing stock could meet the needs of all current residents although it may be able to meet the needs of a proportion of them.

Commissioning Intent

- 1.9 Strategic Commissioning wishes to see a clear shift away from the purchase of traditional block residential contracts. Those contracts in place need to be

changed to individualised care packages which reflect the needs of service users within each setting thus providing personalisation.

- 1.10 Through Choice and Control there needs to be clear direction that service users wish to be accommodated in the area/district of their choice, this may not reflect where the current residential placement is situated. This is in line with the council's strategic direction and long standing commitment to the personalisation agenda, as well as the principles enshrined within the national strategy for citizens with learning disabilities, 'Valuing People Now'.
- 1.11 It is envisaged that future service users will be offered supported living as a first choice as opposed to being placed in residential care unless their individual needs are such that residential care is the only viable option (Dementia/Profound Multiple Learning Disabilities. This poses a risk within the wider LD market that providers will decide to de-register with the intention of becoming shared accommodation or supported living. This could have a big impact on the market especially as ECC would not want to encourage any more shared accommodation (in line with the Housing Strategy) as this generally doesn't provide for a personalised service.
- 1.12 Within the market there is potential room for growth for short term (3-5 year) 'move on' for younger adults.

Proposal

- 1.13 To decant current service users into supported accommodation voids where appropriate whilst maintaining their circles of support and independence by placing them as close to their current accommodation as possible, this will reduce concern and anxiety.
- 1.14 For any service users unable to move into supported accommodation, work with current residential providers to support a short term move to an alternative residential placement whilst maintaining those important social networks and circles of support.
- 1.15 All service users will require a full review to establish individual capacity to live more independently. AA&CM will need to undertake these reviews quite quickly as anxiety and concern is already being raised by family members.

Next Steps

- 1.16 Review of children homes and LD hostels as a multi service group needs to be convened to consider the operational, organizational and physical issues/limitations around any joint proposals. ECC must avoid keeping property empty pending decisions on service need. Holding costs will be passed back to Schools, Children and Families and Adult Social Care Services.

2 Update on the Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

- 2.1 The advent of the Coalition Government meant all decisions made by the former Government since January 2010 were under review and subject to wider decisions as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CPR), which was reported in October 2010.
- 2.2 The Council received confirmation from the Minister of State for Care Services, Paul Burstow MP April 2011 confirming that he 'was unable to sustain the award in principal in PFI credits that was made under the former government'.

3 Feedback on the closure of a care home in Harlow and lessons learnt

- 3.1 Berecroft was closed in October 2010 having re-settled all service users in alternative accommodation either supported living or hostel settings. Consultation with service users and family carers throughout the process concluding that people were broadly content with the outcome of the moves in most instances but concerns were expressed regarding the length of time taken to affect the moves and some of the details of the mechanics of communication over what was a relatively lengthy period.

Lessons Learnt

- 3.2 The purpose of the report was to document the lessons learned in the planning and delivery of the Berecroft Learning Disability Hostel re-provision, so that when we undertake a similar project we will know:
- What to do again as it worked well this time
 - What we need to improve upon so we don't make the same mistakes/hit the same problems next time.

4. The impact of economic improvements

- 4.1 The impact of economic improvements is reflected in the Business Case prepared for the Residential Redevelopment Review. Revised valuations for premises taken in 2006 and 2010 show a difference of over £1.5M between them but less than the gap was in 2008 when values dipped significantly and meant the programme in its entirety was unaffordable.