

ITEM 14B

Time began 6.00pm
Time ended 6.45pm

COUNCIL CABINET 27 NOVEMBER 2007

Present: Councillor Williamson (Chair)

Councillors Banwait, Bolton, Graves, Hussain, Nath, Roberts, Smalley
and Williams

In attendance Councillor Jones

This record of decisions was published on 29 November 2007. The key decisions set out in this record will come into force and may be implemented on the expiry of five clear days unless a key decision is called in.

133/07 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hickson.

Matters Referred

117/07 Adult Services Budget Review

The Council Cabinet considered a report from the Adult Services and Health Commission which asked Council Cabinet to

- Makes Adult Services a high priority and funds the service appropriately
- Investigates reintroducing charges for home care services
- Does not raise the eligibility threshold from moderate to substantial to address the budgetary pressures
- Seeks support from the Local Government Association to minimise the effect of the Damping system and lobby's the Government to make more resources available for adult social services
- Reviews the Adult Social Services staffing budget and moves toward setting the budget on actual costs in line with other departments of the Council rather than on mid point salary scales

Decision

1. To note the report.
2. To consider further within the budget process.

118/07 Proposed Closure of Bramblebrook House

The Council Cabinet considered a report from the Adult Services and Health Commission on the Proposed Closure of Bramblebrook House. The Commission accepted that there was a case for closure of one home but did not believe this should be Bramblebrook as it had recently been modernised and there were other home in far worse condition. The Commissions recommended that should Council Cabinet decide to close a home this should be carried out quickly because closures placed a great amount of stress on the residents affected who should be given the time and support they needed to find suitable alternative homes. The Council should retain a strategic level of in-house provision proportion as experience showed that fees in the independent sector could raise dramatically if there was no competition.

There seemed to be significant nervousness in people wishing to be placed in the independent sector and therefore Council should work alongside care providers to promote the positive attributes of independent sector.

Decision

To note the comments of the Adult Services and Health Commission.

Key Decisions

119/07 Consultation on the Closure of Bramblebrook House Residential Home for Older People

The Council Cabinet considered a report on the Proposed Closure of Bramblebrook House. On 31 July 2007, Council Cabinet agreed to:

- Begin consultation on the closure of Bramblebrook House residential home for older people
- Undertake further work in 2007 / 8 to clarify future options for the remaining seven homes, including the possibilities of mental health resource centres and extra care housing options
- Explore Extra Care Housing for older people as an option for effective use of the adjoining Arthur Neal House and Lois Ellis sites and as part of the expansion of Extra Care in Derby and to agree in principle to use any capital receipt realised for this purpose

The purpose of the report was to give feedback on the consultation on the closure of Bramblebrook House residential home and to recommend that the closure proceed. A briefing note on related issues and a letter from solicitors acting on behalf of residents were also circulated and considered.

Options Considered

1. Doing nothing would result in worsening occupancy and poorer value for money, as well as further undermining the Council's financial position. It would also lessen the choice and positive outcomes available to the wider older people population in Derby from future developments that would not be possible.
2. Other Council residential care homes required detailed consideration as part of the ongoing options appraisal into their use and impact. However, changing the decision to nominate Bramblebrook at this stage would:
 - Result in the nomination of a home with more strategic relevance either in terms of geography or specialism.
 - Lessen the likely capital receipt and therefore the potential to reinvest in new services for older people.
3. The option of selling Bramblebrook House as a going concern was also discussed. However, this was not recommended on three counts:
 - Legal advice indicates there would be TUPE implications in terms of transfer of care home staff. This would mean that costs would be likely to increase for any prospective purchaser, which would most likely be reflected in their placement rates.
 - The difference in valuation between selling the full site for development and selling the two components separately, with Bramblebrook House as a going concern, had been professionally assessed at £0.4 to £0.6 million. In view of the TUPE advice above it was unlikely that the Council would get the maximum return on sale as a going concern. This would detract significantly from reinvestment in other services for older people.
 - A key premise of this and the preceding 31st July report was that demand for care home places in Derby was falling. There was no indication that maintaining a care home on the site was essential for local supply.

Decision

1. To approve closure of Bramblebrook residential home for older people at the end of May 2008 but to delegate to the Cabinet Member for Adult Services the power to extend this timescale by no more than three months if necessary.
2. To work closely with individual residents of Bramblebrook House to identify alternative placements that were suitable for them, bearing in mind their neighbourhood links, their friendship groups and their preferences about where services were delivered.
3. To ensure each affected resident had a key worker based at Bramblebrook to liaise with them, their relatives or carers and the staff at the place the resident transfers to.
4. To ensure that staff at Bramblebrook House were appropriately supported to transfer to alternative places of work.

Reasons

1. The decline in demand for residential care for older people, combined with the increase in demand for alternatives like Extra Care Housing, means action was necessary to divert resources to where they would have most long-term impact.

2. There was enough remaining care home resource in Derby, between the independent sector and the Council's own provision, to cover needs in the long and short term.
3. The closure of a residential home for older people was very difficult for residents and their families. Care must be taken that further trauma was minimised at this sensitive time, through working closely with them and ensuring their preferences were met wherever possible. If continuity through local links or friendship groups could be maintained this should be a high priority.
4. Bramblebrook staff had provided an excellent service and engaged extremely professionally in the consultation process. The decision to close Bramblebrook House was by no means a reflection on them, and they must be supported to find alternative opportunities in the Council.

(Councillor Smalley and Williams requested that their vote against the decision be recorded.)