



Derby City Council

**ADULTS AND HEALTH
CABINET MEMBER MEETING
13 November 2014**

ITEM 4

Report of the Strategic Director of Adults, Health
and Housing

Proposed change to Alternative Living Scheme

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A proposal has been made that the Alternative Living Scheme (ALS) is fully based in the Council House rather than in Newdigate Street.
- 1.2 Before the Council can make a decision about whether to make the change, it needs to fully consider the views of people who use the service and people who support them. The Council also needs to make sure that it understands how to minimise possible negative consequences for any vulnerable groups of people who might be affected if there is a change.
- 1.3 Therefore a consultation and an Equality Impact Assessment have been carried out. Feedback from each is summarised in this report, with full details appendicised. This information has been fully considered and used to form the recommendations that are set out below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree the proposal to base the Alternative Living Scheme in the Council House and to implement this no earlier than January 31st 2015.
- 2.2 To continue delivering the Alternative Living Scheme to support some of Derby's most vulnerable deaf adults.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Council officers have carried out a full consultation. The issues set out in the consultation feedback and the Equality Impact Assessment are appropriately addressed in the Supporting Information section of this report. The customers of the Alternative Living Scheme have a range of complex needs but these will continue to be well-supported when the proposal is implemented.
- 3.2 A number of Alternative Living Scheme customers have become very accustomed to 32 Newdigate Street and are anxious about change. It is important that they are given time, supported by ALS staff and by social work staff, to plan ahead and ensure that the impact of the change is minimal when it is introduced.
- 3.3 The Alternative Living Scheme's core purpose, to enable customers to live full, connected lives in the community, will not be affected by the proposal. Customers will

continue to get the specialist support they need from the Alternative Living Scheme.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.0 Background to the Alternative Living Scheme and 32 Newdigate Street

- 4.1 The Alternative Living Scheme is a team of Council staff who work with ten deaf customers with specialist needs arising from (for example) mental health issues and/or physical or learning disabilities. An equalities profile of ALS customers is provided in the Equality Impact Assessment attached in appendix 6.
- 4.2 ALS staff provide support to ensure that customers are as safe and as independent as possible. All customers live in individual tenancies and need varying degrees of support with their independent living skills in order to maintain their tenancies and to engage in their communities.
- 4.3 Alternative Living Scheme staff work with customers according to their Support Plan which indicates the type and amount of assistance they need. The needs of each ALS customer have been determined following an individual assessment carried out between the customer, any informal carers and a qualified social worker employed by the Council. Each ALS customer has an individual number of support hours that have been agreed as a result of this assessment. ALS staff then provide the agreed hours in the manner that best achieves the goals agreed in the Support Plan. This could be on a one-to-one basis or, where ALS customers prefer, as part of a group activity.
- 4.4 32 Newdigate Street has historically been the office base for the Alternative Living Scheme and is let from Metropolitan Housing. A further tenancy, 38 Newdigate Street, was let until the end of March 2014 when it was terminated. The function of these tenancies, as well as providing an office base, has been to provide drop-in support for ALS customers and also be a venue for various group activities, such as meals and craft activities. The tenancy at 38 Newdigate Street was terminated on the basis that all the above functions could be provided at 32 Newdigate Street while the consultation referred to in this report was carried out.
- 4.5 The historical model for the Alternative Living Scheme was focused on 32 Newdigate Street as the service hub, with a number of ALS customers encouraged to take up tenancies in the immediate area. As indicated in the Equality Impact Assessment, five customers live within 0.3 miles of 32 Newdigate Street, with the remaining five customers living between 1.3 and 3.3 miles away.
- 4.6 However, the majority of support for ALS customers has always been provided in their own homes or local communities, away from 32 Newdigate Street. It is therefore important to see 32 Newdigate Street as part of the current ALS offer, but not in a way that defines the Alternative Living Scheme itself. On average ALS customers each receive just over 11 hours of support per week, with the lowest individual amount being 8 hours and the highest being 20 hours.

5.0 Consultation process and activity

- 5.1 The consultation period of 90 days began on 10th April and ended on 9th July 2014. The “Achieving Change” document that was issued to all ALS customers, staff and other stakeholders at the beginning of the consultation is attached in Appendix 2. This clearly set out the consultation proposal, rationale and timescales.
- 5.2 All consultation proposals, papers and correspondence were explained face-to-face with ALS customers, using British Sign Language interpreters. All customers were given the option of support from independent advocates where they could not speak up for themselves.
- 5.3 The consultation was launched at an open meeting on 10th April 2014 which all Alternative Living Scheme customers and staff attended. Invitations for this and further consultation opportunities were open to family members, supporters and advocates as well as customers themselves. Notes taken at the meeting are attached at Appendix 3.
- 5.4 An optional template for consultation feedback was produced, as attached at Appendix 4. This emphasised the three areas of consultation feedback that were most important for the Council when making a decision about the proposal: that the proposal was understood by consultees so they could meaningfully respond, the views of consultees about the proposal in general, and the views of consultees about the proposal in terms of its potential impact on them as individuals.
- 5.5 A second open meeting was held on 2nd June 2014. This meeting focused on picking up any concerns and clarifying factual issues that had occurred in the first half of the consultation period. Notes from this meeting are attached in Appendix 5.

6.0 Feedback from the Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is set out in Appendix 6. The EIA Team comprised two ALS customers, a cross section of ALS staff, a deaf services social worker and two prominent local advocates for the deaf community. The team was chaired by the Service Director for Home First and Direct Services, and facilitated by a Strategic Commissioning Manager.
- 6.2 Analysis within the Equality Impact Assessment showed a range of potential issues relating to age, disability, ethnicity and low income, as set out in section 7 of the EIA. These factors potentially affected customers in individual ways.
- 6.3 The Equality Impact Assessment concluded that the proposal should be adjusted to remove identified barriers and better promote equality. The actions that have been and are being undertaken to achieve this are listed in the Equality Action Plan within Appendix 6. The EIA Team agreed that these adjustments will remove the barriers that were identified.

- 6.4 The EIA Action Plan set out the following actions for completion by the end of the consultation period on 9th July.
- Carry out individual risk assessments for ALS customers that explicitly address equality issues relating to (for example) age, disability, ethnicity, low income
 - Individual risk assessments as above to identify and address any particular issues for individuals with respect to “cold-calling”
 - If the decision is taken to end the tenancy at Newdigate Street, shared private space for ALS customers to meet and share experiences in a safe environment must be found
- 6.5 The above actions have all been completed and all risks identified have plans in place to manage them. Individual risk assessments have raised some cross-cutting themes which will be managed as follows:
- Some ALS customers are regarded as at risk from cold-callers. The proximity of 32 Newdigate Street to 5 out of 10 customers has been regarded as a protective factor in this regard, although ALS staff cannot intercept cold callers in person. Actions that are in place to reduce risks include the provision of signage to deter cold-callers and the installation of pendant alarms via the Council’s Carelink service to ensure that customers can ask for help in emergencies. ALS customers have also had key-safes installed in their properties to enable appropriate access from support staff.
 - Some of those customers who live close to 32 Newdigate Street have used the drop-in facility as a means of managing everyday anxieties, for example when they received a letter that they did not understand. If the tenancy at 32 Newdigate Street ended, ALS staff at the Council House would be available for drop-in during normal working hours. In addition, ALS staff will see customers on a regular and agreed basis each week as determined by their individual support plans.
 - Some ALS customers have become used to sending ad hoc requests for support and information via fax to 32 Newdigate Street. This is because they are unable to use telephones, minicomms or text messages. Other technologies that will support this sort of communication are being explored but in the meantime the Alternative Living Scheme will produce a clear fax header for ALS customers that will enable faxes to be quickly identified and dealt with when they are sent to the Council House. As above, regular and agreed weekly contact between ALS staff and each customer also enables ad hoc requests to be dealt with. Each customer has a Carelink connection to enable a rapid response in the event of an emergency.

- 6.6 Further work has been undertaken with ALS customers to explore desirable meeting spaces and opportunities for group activities. This builds on conversations with customers about their individual preferences.
- When asked, ALS customers stated they would like to pursue a range of community activities, depending on individual preference. For example, some customers would like to go bowling, others have an interest in art, and a number were keen on cinema trips. ALS staff will enable and facilitate these activities as necessary in the context of each customer's Support Plan. As well as pursuing individual activities, ALS staff are in an excellent position to support customers carrying out activities in groups.
 - Two ALS customers live in a supported housing scheme, with a third customer exploring moving there also. This scheme has communal space which can be hired for group sessions or occasions as necessary. There are a range of communal spaces across the city that can be accessed on a similar basis.
 - Many ALS customers are keen on opportunities to dine together, and have already discussed the restaurants and cafes in the city that most appeal to their tastes.

7.0 Feedback from individual customers

- 7.1 Written feedback was received from 8 out of the 10 Alternative Living Scheme customers. These have been submitted for consideration alongside this report but have not been formally appendicised because of their individual, personal nature.
- 7.2 The key cross-cutting themes received from customers were:
- Concerns about the way previous change was felt to have been managed, in the sense that this was too quick and had not involved customers enough.
 - The general value of support provided by the Alternative Living Scheme across a range of areas
 - Anxiety that there would be further reductions in the Alternative Living Scheme staff group, or that the ALS might be closed altogether.
 - The value of 32 Newdigate Street for drop-in purposes, or as a hub to respond to fax communications, as already referred to in the Equalities Impact Assessment.
 - The value of 32 Newdigate Street as a safe and familiar space for both one to one support and for group activities, as already referred to in the Equalities Impact Assessment. There was an especially strong sense of commitment to continuing with group activities such as dinners and the marking of special occasions. A number of customers did not feel secure engaging with mainstream support, and were also anxious about feeling out of place when involved with the wider deaf community.
- 7.3 Throughout the consultation, Council officers have sought to reassure ALS customers that the proposal being considered relates to the use of 32 Newdigate Street as a base and not to the future of the Alternative Living Scheme itself. A significant amount of consultation feedback from customers has nevertheless focused on wider concerns about the future of the service.
- 7.4 It has been apparent during the consultation that ALS customers have not had a high degree of trust in the Council due to perceptions about the way that previous changes have been managed without their full involvement. This is likely to be a key issue in the tendency of customers to be fearful that, although the Council is only consulting on the tenancy at 32 Newdigate Street, in fact further changes are being considered. Although ALS customers have found the recent consultation process to be clearer and more robust than discussions about previous changes, their anxiety levels are unsurprising and it is important that every opportunity is taken to reassure them that the proposal being considered relates to 32 Newdigate Street only.

- 7.5 Although the consultation feedback in relation to the value of 32 Newdigate Street as a safe and familiar space for both one to one support and for group activities has already been referred to in the Equalities Impact Assessment, it is important to understand this in more detail. Several consultation responses emphasise that at least some ALS customers find it difficult to feel safe and accepted in either the hearing community or the wider deaf community. This is because of the interplay between communication difficulties caused by deafness and other disability and ill-health issues. Subsequently there is a strong sense that 32 Newdigate Street is regarded as a refuge by ALS customers. Historically this has been actively fostered by Alternative Living Scheme management, seeking to build a tight community around the Newdigate Street hub to protect its customers. On the positive side, this has helped a real family ethos to develop within the Alternative Living Scheme. However, the service needs to deal with the challenge of balancing its responsibility to keep customers safe with its responsibility to support them to lead connected and fulfilling lives, encouraging both deaf and hearing communities to respect the contribution that each of them can make.
- 7.6 As set out in 5.6, work has taken place to identify convenient meeting spaces for Alternative Living Scheme customers that will afford them privacy where they need it. However, accompanying this has been an exploration of options for them to socialise amongst themselves and with others in a range of community settings. This should be seen as part of the wider work that the Council is undertaking in response to its adoption of the Deaf Charter, promoting the rights of deaf people regardless of background or disability to lead an “ordinary life” with the same rights and opportunities as Derby’s other citizens.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Some consultation feedback has requested not only the continuation of the tenancy at 32 Newdigate Street, but also the reinstatement of 38 Newdigate Street or further space of a similar nature. This option has been considered but is not recommended on two grounds. Firstly the increased property expenses will increase the cost of the service as a whole which is extremely challenging in light of the Council’s budget position. Secondly, dedicated social space for the Alternative Living Scheme risks customers being cut off from their community, rather than being supported to safely and rewardingly live within it.
- 8.2 Consultation feedback from ALS customers chiefly focused on the wish to continue the tenancy at 32 Newdigate Street. This option has been considered but is not recommended on the same grounds as 8.1 above, and because of the mitigating actions that are set out in the body of this report.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Olu Idowu Peter Shillcock Liz Moore Alex Ward Perveez Sadiq
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Phil Holmes 01332 642845 phil.holmes@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The ending of the Council's tenancy at 32 Newdigate Street will contribute to the saving required from the Alternative Living Scheme following the loss of £155,000 annual income from the Housing Related Support funding stream in 2013-14.

Legal

- 2.1 The Public Sector equality duty consists of a general duty, which is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act), and specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. The general equality duty came into force on 5 April 2011.
- 2.2 Those subject to the equality duty, such as the Council must, in the exercise of their functions, have **due regard** to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 2.3 The Act effectively broadens and extends the positive equality duties and previously found in the Race Relations, Disability Discrimination Act so it now applies to cover age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief.
- 2.4 In order to comply with this duty the Council must, when making decisions, assess the impact they will have on different members of the community and where possible and proportionate to mitigate the adverse effect on any disadvantaged group. This duty can best be discharged in cases of possible significant impact by undertaking an Equality Impact Study, as was done in this case.
- 2.5 The equality duties do not prevent a local authority, or other public body, from making difficult decisions but they must have "due regard" to these matters in the decision making process by properly assessing and considering the potential impact of the proposed change on different equality groups.

Personnel

- 3.1 No Personnel implications are identified.

IT

- 4.1 No Information Technology implications are identified in immediate connection with the proposal. New technologies are continually being explored in relation to improving methods of communication with the deaf customers of the Alternative Living Scheme.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Please see appendicised Equality Impact Assessment.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 No Health and Safety implications are identified.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 No significant environmental implications are identified.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 The transfer of the ALS service to the Council House will release the Council of any further financial obligations in respect of the ongoing operational costs of 32 Newdigate Street. The termination of this lease arrangement and intensification of use within the Council House accords with the provisions of the Property Rationalisation Project.

Risk Management

- 9.1 The management of key risks is covered in the body of this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 This workstream meetings the following Council Plan objectives:
- Better outcomes for our communities
 - Improved value for money for our customers
 - More efficient and effective processes
 - A skilled and motivated workforce

Consulting with you about potential changes to the Alternative Living Scheme

10th April 2014

Phil Holmes
Director of Home First and Direct Services

1 What is this document for?

- 1.1 This document sets out a proposal to change the Alternative Living Scheme (ALS). No decision has been made yet.
- 1.2 The proposal is that the Alternative Living Scheme is fully based in the Council House rather than in Newdigate Street.
- 1.3 Before the Council makes a decision about whether to make the change, it needs to fully consider the views of people who use the service and people who support them (these might be friends, family members or advocates). The views of ALS staff are also important.
- 1.4 The Council also needs to make sure that it understands the possible negative consequences for any vulnerable groups of people who might be affected if there is a change. The Council needs to be clear about how any negative consequences could be prevented.
- 1.5 This document sets out how the Council will consider the views of everybody affected (this is called a “consultation”) and will also check any vulnerable groups are not disadvantaged (this is called an “Equality Impact Assessment”).
- 1.6 This document explains how long this will take, including when a decision will be made and how any changes would be managed.

2 What is happening at Newdigate Street at the moment?

- 2.1 The Council has made space for Alternative Living Scheme staff in the Council House, but in response to strong feedback from one ALS customer has agreed to continue providing a service from 32 Newdigate Street until a fuller consultation is carried out.
- 2.2 The previous consultation and engagement with Alternative Living Scheme customers about moving ALS staff to the Council House was not clear enough and the Council apologises unreservedly for this.
- 2.3 The Council will maintain staffing in 32 Newdigate Street in order to provide the Monday to Friday 9am to 12pm “drop-in” service that was previously offered. The Council will also use 32 Newdigate Street to run any group activities for ALS customers for which there is demand.
- 2.4 The reopening of 32 Newdigate Street is being delayed by the necessary reinstallation of a minicom line and a flashing doorbell. Council staff are working to ensure this happens as soon as possible and will advise customers immediately when this is in place. The Council apologises to ALS customers for this disruption.

3 Why is further change being proposed?

- 3.1 The Council needs to save money because it is receiving less and less from the Government. Almost all areas of the Council have been affected by this, including services for deaf people. The Council previously received £155,000 of funding called “Housing Related Support” towards the Alternative Living Scheme but this was taken away in 2013.
- 3.2 The Council does not have the money that it used to have, and is not legally able to go into debt. This means the Council has to make difficult decisions about savings in relation to everything that it does.
- 3.3 Saving money by moving away from Newdigate Street is not an easy step, but it is felt to be better than other options, for example further reducing ALS staff numbers or increasing the costs that customers would have to pay to use the service.
- 3.4 All customers of the Alternative Living Scheme have now been given a “Personal Budget” by social workers. The size of the Personal Budget depends on the needs that each customer has. The Personal Budget pays for ALS staff to work with customers to help meet their needs. All customers are different and this means that ALS staff work differently with every individual.
- 3.5 Asking ALS staff to work in this way means that they are able to work with customers in their own homes and in their local communities, rather than asking them to come to a building whether that is on Newdigate Street or in the Council House. This is intended to help ALS customers achieve the goals that are most important to them.
- 3.6 Moving Deaf Services staff to the Council House helps remind the Council that deaf people are everybody’s business. This goes hand in hand with the Council signing a Charter to ensure people who are deaf, including those with acquired deafness, are able to get appropriate support from all services that the Council provides. The Council is working to make all its services much more “deaf friendly”. There is a lot to do, but the Council will work with the deaf community in Derby to get there.
- 3.7 As above, this does not mean that ALS customers have to come to the Council House whenever they want help from the Alternative Living Scheme. ALS staff will come to them, depending on the customer’s Personal Budget and how they have agreed they want to be supported. How customers receive support is agreed in their “Support Plan”.
- 3.8 Some ALS customers have enjoyed doing activities together, using Newdigate Street as a base. Where customers still want to do this, if 32 Newdigate Street was closed then ALS staff would need to help customers find another location for shared activities. This need not be in the Council House. For example, some customers might enjoy hosting activities in their house. There are also other community facilities across the city that could be used as a base for activities.

4 What is going to happen and when?

- 4.1 There are different things that need to happen in order for the Council to be able to make an informed decision about the proposed change to the Alternative Living Scheme. These are set out overleaf, with dates when actions need to have been completed.

Stage	Action	Completed by
1	Consultation	
	Start the consultation with people affected by the proposed change	10 th April
	Individual and group consultation meetings depending on personal preferences	10 th April to 9 th July
	Last day for comments from people affected by the proposed change	9 th July
2	Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	
	Organise volunteers to help carry out the EIA	30 th April
	Gather information that will help inform the EIA	30 th April
	EIA meetings as necessary to help the volunteers form a view about equality impact	30 th April to 9 th July
	Completion of Equality Impact Assessment	14 th July
3	Making a decision	
	Confirm decision-making meeting	30 th April
	Make and record decision	31 st July
	Communicate decision to all people affected by the proposed change	31 st July
4	Making any changes that are agreed	
	Social workers work with ALS customers to make any changes to Support Plans that are necessary	31 st August
	Any necessary changes to support are made ensuring that eligible needs of all ALS customers remain addressed	30 th September

- 4.2 It is also really important that ALS customers have an up-to-date assessment from social workers in the deaf team so that the Council is clear about their individual needs. Social workers will review current assessments with customers, making sure these are clear and that ALS customers sign them if in agreement with contents. This must happen by 14th July.

5 What do I do next?

- 5.1 The consultation will run for 90 days so there is no pressure to have to do anything quickly. Different people will have different ways of responding. Some people will be very clear about what they think already, and others will need longer. Some people will prefer to give their individual view, and others may prefer to feed back in a group. All ALS customers should think about what is the best for them in passing on their views. Council staff will support everybody in this as best as we can.
- 5.2 As a first step, it is really important that you feel you understand the Council's proposal. If there is anything you are not sure about please ask. Your questions will be answered to the best of our ability. Please do not worry if you

think of questions later. You can still pass these on and they will be answered. The 90 day consultation is designed to be long enough so that you are not rushed into giving your opinion before you feel you have all the information you would like.

Appendix Three: notes from first consultation meeting
Consultation meeting

Proposed changes to the Alternative Living Scheme

Thursday 10th April 2014 @ 2 pm
Meeting Room 12, Kedleston Road

Present

Phil Holmes (PH), Service Director, Home First and Direct Services
Lesley Kopec, Team Manager, Unit for Deaf Services
Kamran Yusuf, Social Worker, Unit for Deaf Services
Marion Wilmot, Clerical Worker, Unit for Deaf Services
Sue Drummond, Principal Social Worker, Unit for Deaf Services
Rachel Bastikar, Unit Manager, Alternative Living Scheme
Steve Webb, Residential Social Care Worker, AHH
Todd Biss, Residential Social Care Worker, AHH
Ian Gosling, Residential Social care Worker, AHH

Alternative Living Scheme (ALS) customers and supporters

Carl Hines
Sue Hines
Lorna Edwards
Jackie Cardwell
Cedric Cundy
Janet Barnes
Nicola Gittoes
Sidney Barratt
Sarah Jane Adam
Gilberto Templo
David Cartwright
Michael Campbell
David Cartwright

Background

PH welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. The consultation document was circulated, setting out the potential changes to the Alternative Living Scheme (ALS). PH explained that the document could be taken away to share with family/friends and further copies were also available if required. These could be e-mailed or posted.

PH apologised for the short notice that had been given for this meeting but emphasised the importance of gathering everyone together as soon as possible, to be able to talk to people face to face, so that everyone is clear about the Council's proposals. .

PH talked through the document outlining that the consultation will run for 90 days and within that time customers will be able to express their views and opinions and that all feed back given will be

taken into consideration when the Council makes the final decision.

PH emphasised that no decision has been made to close 32 Newdigate Street. If the decision is made to close 32 Newdigate Street after consultation, 32 Newdigate Street will not close before 30th September 2014.

PH emphasised that the consultation period would end on 9th July 2014, 90 days after this meeting. All views should be passed across to the Council by then. PH emphasised that any concerns/issues that people want to make can be raised with any ALS staff or their worker and that they will write them down and let the Council have these before the end of the consultation period and that staff will work to help support them with any changes that are made.

PH explained that all views were important, and ALS customers and their families would be supported to respond as necessary, with professional advocacy being made available for those who could not speak for themselves.

Comments made by ALS customers are summarised below, with responses.

Summary of ALS customers comments and concerns, with responses:

1. Why can't 38 Newdigate Street also be kept open? Comment made regarding the money that had been spent on number 38 by ALS, to make it nice and that it seems sad and a waste of money if it were to close.
 - PH said that, having discussed with staff, it was agreed the drop-in service and all the activities valued by ALS customers could be provided at 32 Newdigate Street. If consultation feedback was that extra space was needed for any reason, that would be considered by the Council when making its decision.
2. When number 32 is re-opened, will this be from 9am till 12 pm as before, to drop in and get help from staff and also if it will be open at weekends?
 - PH outlined that it would be open from 9 am till 12 pm, Monday to Friday and if staff can run it at weekends, this could be a possibility.
3. Whether staff will be still available to help out with any support needed if customers went to the Council House?
 - PH explained that ALS staff will still be available for support, as agreed with each ALS customer within their Support Plan.
4. Concerns raised regarding when staff are on leave, whether support from another member of staff would be in place?
 - PH confirmed that when ALS staff were on leave, other staff members would cover as now.
5. Concerns raised regarding staff cuts, as 2 staff have already left. One customer asked if there would be an opportunity to be more involved in helping out and the possibility of being able to work there?
 - PH confirmed that 2 staff had taken voluntary redundancy. There were no paid staff vacancies in the service, but it was important that ALS helped people into working and volunteering opportunities where at all possible, and if the ALS service could

directly provide these in future then customers would be informed.

6. Concerns raised regarding staff changes and newly allocated staff not being able to understand the requirements of customers.
 - ALS staff confirmed they will work with people to increase understanding and build trust. ALS staff confirmed that everybody's needs will continue to be met. To make sure everybody is clear about this, social workers are working with customers to ensure that assessments and support plans are up to date and signed by everybody involved.
7. Concerns raised regarding current activities, writing etc and if this can carry on? Where would Christmas parties be held if no 32 was closed? Where would ALS meetings take place?
 - PH confirmed that current activities enjoyed by ALS customers would take place in 32 Newdigate Street where there was no more convenient location for ALS customers. If the decision after consultation was to move the ALS base from 32 Newdigate Street to the Council House, then other convenient locations for community activities would be found.
8. Comment made on who will pay for all the work on 32 to re-open?
 - PH stated that this will come out of the Council's budget.

What will happen next

What will happen next is set out in the consultation document.

PH will provide information by 30th April 2014 about how and when a decision will be made after the consultation ends.

PH suggested meeting again about half way through the consultation period to check everybody was getting the right opportunities to put forward their views.

PH thanked everyone for attending the meeting and ensured that enough time would be given in advance for the next meeting, for family/friends to be able to attend.

Consulting with you about potential changes to the Alternative Living Scheme

10th April to 9th July 2014

Your views

1 What is this document for?

- The Council is proposing that the Alternative Living Scheme is fully based in the Council House rather than in Newdigate Street.
- Before the Council makes a decision about whether to make the change, it needs to fully consider the views of people who use the service and people who support them (these might be friends, family members or advocates).
- This form is only one way that you can give your views. You do not have to fill in the form if you do not want to: there may be other ways that you prefer to get your views across..
- Please send your views to Phil Holmes, Service Director, Adults, Health and Housing, Derby City Council, The Council House, Corporation Street, DERBY DE1 2FS.
- If you prefer, you can e-mail to phil.holmes@derby.gov.uk

2 Why is the Council proposing this change?

- The Council needs to save money because it is receiving less and less from the Government. Almost all areas of the Council have been affected by this, including services for deaf people. The Council previously received £155,000 of funding called "Housing Related Support" towards the Alternative Living Scheme but this was taken away in 2013.
- The Council does not have the money that it used to have, and is not legally able to go into debt. This means the Council has to make difficult decisions about savings in relation to everything that it does.
- Saving money by moving away from Newdigate Street is not an easy step, but it is felt to be better than other options, for example further reducing ALS staff

numbers or increasing the costs that customers would have to pay to use the service.

- All customers of the Alternative Living Scheme have now been given a “Personal Budget” by social workers. The size of the Personal Budget depends on the needs that each customer has. The Personal Budget pays for ALS staff to work with customers to help meet their needs. All customers are different and this means that ALS staff work differently with every individual.
- Asking ALS staff to work in this way means that they are able to work with customers in their own homes and in their local communities, rather than asking them to come to a building whether that is on Newdigate Street or in the Council House. This is intended to help ALS customers achieve the goals that are most important to them.
- Moving Deaf Services staff to the Council House helps remind the Council that deaf people are everybody’s business. This goes hand in hand with the Council signing a Charter to ensure people who are deaf, including those with acquired deafness, are able to get appropriate support from all services that the Council provides. The Council is working to make all its services much more “deaf friendly”. There is a lot to do, but the Council will work with the deaf community in Derby to get there.
- As above, this does not mean that ALS customers have to come to the Council House whenever they want help from the Alternative Living Scheme. ALS staff will come to them, depending on the customer’s Personal Budget and how they have agreed they want to be supported. How customers receive support is agreed in their “Support Plan”.
- Some ALS customers have enjoyed doing activities together, using Newdigate Street as a base. Where customers still want to do this, if 32 Newdigate Street was closed then ALS staff would need to help customers find another location for shared activities. This need not be in the Council House. For example, some customers might enjoy hosting activities in their house. There are also other community facilities across the city that could be used as a base for activities.

3 How long do I have to give my views and what will happen next?

- You have until 9th July to give your views about the Council’s proposal.
- Everybody’s views will be considered by the Cabinet member for Adults and Health when a decision is made about the proposal on 29th July. This will be at a public meeting in the Council House that you are welcome to attend. A BSL interpreter will be present.
- If a decision is made to accept the proposal, changes will not be made before 30th September 2014.

Giving your views about potential changes to the Alternative Living Scheme

Please use this form if it helps you give your views. You do not have to use this form if you prefer another way of getting your views across.

Please send this form to Phil Holmes, Service Director, Adults, Health and Housing, Derby City Council, The Council House, Corporation Street, DERBY DE1 2FS.

If you have an electronic version, you can e-mail to phil.holmes@derby.gov.uk

Please make sure that your views are received by the Council **before 5pm on 9th July 2014**. Otherwise it will be too late for the Council to consider them.

Your details

Please give your name here:

Please explain how your relationship with the Alternative Living Scheme. For instance, you might be a customer, a friend or family member of a customer or a staff member.

If you are filling this form on behalf of somebody else please say who you are representing:

Understanding the proposals

Do you understand the Council's proposal and how you can give your views?

If you said “no” to the above question, please explain what would help you understand:



How the proposal might affect you

Please give any views you have about how the Council's proposal could directly affect you and those close to you.

General views you have about the proposal

Please give any overall views that you have about the Council's proposal.

Any other comments

Please use this space to make any other comments if you wish to.

Appendix Five: notes from second consultation meeting
Consultation Meeting

Proposed changes to the Alternative Living Scheme

Monday 2 June 2014 @ 2 pm
Meeting Room 12, Kedleston Road

Present

Phil Holmes (PH), Service Director, Home First and Direct Services
Lesley Kopec, Team Manager, Unit for Deaf Services
Kamran Yusuf, Social Worker, Unit for Deaf Services
Marion Wilmot, Clerical Worker, Unit for Deaf Services
Sue Drummond, Principal Social Worker, Unit for Deaf Services
Rachel Bastikar, Unit Manager, Alternative Living Scheme
Ian Gosling, Residential Social care Worker, AHH

Alternative Living Scheme (ALS) Customers

Lorna Edwards
Jackie Cardwell
Cedric Cundy
Janet Barnes
Nicola Gittoes
Sidney Barratt
Sarah Jane Adam
Gilberto Templo
David Cartwright
Michael Campbell
David Cartwright

Phil Holmes (PH) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

PH explained that this second consultation meeting was held in order to review the proposal and for an opportunity for customers to raise any other points, outlining the end of the consultation period on 9th July.

PH reminded everybody about the Council's proposal that had been made for ALS to be based at the Council House, rather than Newdigate Street, and the opportunity for customers to add their views and comments in the form that had been given to them a few weeks ago, or for them to express their views in any other way possible. The response deadline is 9th July, and all views will be taken into account when the final decision is made on 29th July. The Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care will make a decision at a public meeting held at the Council House. Everyone is welcome to attend and an interpreter will be present. The outcome of the decision won't be put in place until 30th September.

ALS customers provided questions and comments as follows:

9. Concerns raised regarding the wish of ALS customers to be able to get together for

Christmas dinner and on other social occasions. Customers were already discussing ideas around the possibility of using other meeting spaces in the city should the decision be made to move away from Newdigate Street. Some customers were looking at options to do this at Village Learning Centre, or other housing schemes. Staff are supporting ALS customers in looking at different options which would enable them to get together should the Newdigate Street base not be available.

10. Concerns were raised regarding communication issues as below:

- Having a 24 hour access to a fax machine, concerns raised within the Council House at weekends and bank holidays.
- Problems encountered regarding whether messages would get to the right person within the Council House, and suggestions made for a fax machine to be situated within the team.
- Query raised regarding whether an iPhone/tablet could be used or other alternative solutions.
- Concerns raised regarding life line alarms. This did not seem to directly relate to the Council's proposal to move office base from Newdigate Street to the Council House but was nevertheless an important issue for a number of customers.

11. Concerns raised about activities and social events in holiday periods, when education has finished and some ALS customers felt they had less to occupy them. This did not seem to directly relate to the Council's proposal to move office base from Newdigate Street to the Council House but was nevertheless an important issue for a number of customers.

12. The consultation form was discussed . PH emphasised that customers should use it if they felt it was helpful in representing their views, or use another approach if that was better for them. ALS staff and involved advocates will help ALS customers find the right ways of getting their views across.

PH thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and reminded of the consultation deadline on 9th July.

Appendix Six: Equality Impact Assessment

1 What's the name of the policy you are assessing?

The proposal is that the staff base for Alternative Living Scheme is moved to the Council House rather than being provided in Newdigate Street as at present.

2 The assessment team

Team leader's name and job title –

Phil Holmes, Service Director, Home First and Direct Services

Other team members:

Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Michael Campbell	ALS customer	Not applicable	In receipt of current service
Sarah-Jane Adam	ALS customer		
Rachell Bastikar	ALS manager	Derby City Council	Direct support to deaf people
Todd Biss	Residential social care worker	Derby City Council	
Steve Webb	Residential social care worker	Derby City Council	
Sue Drummond	Principal social worker	Derby City Council	Assessment of deaf people
Robin Ash	Empowerment and Campaigns Officer	British Deaf Association	Advocacy for deaf people
Alison Hicking	Secretary	Derby Deaf Forum	
Christine Collingwood	Strategic Commissioning Manager	Derby City Council	Facilitation of Equality Impact Assessment

3 What are the main aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal? How does it fit in with the wider aims of the Council? Include here any links to the Council Plan or your Directorate Service Plan.

a) The proposal

The proposal is that the staff base for Alternative Living Scheme is moved from Newdigate Street to the Council House.

b) Background to the Alternative Living Scheme

The Alternative Living Scheme is based at 32 Newdigate Street and is a partnership between City Council Department and the Metropolitan Housing Association which began in 1987.

The Housing Association provided houses close together and tenanted by the individual Deaf people in the scheme and space is rented by the City Council to provide a staff base.

ALS is a properly constituted agency of the Unit for Deaf People providing support in independent living for people who are deaf but who also have additional needs (for example relating to mental health, learning or physical disabilities).

Some ALS customers have been deskilled from long term institutionalisation, most typically in residential schools or hospitals.

c) Rationale for the proposal

Saving money by moving away from Newdigate Street is not an easy step, but it is felt to be better than other options, for example further reducing ALS staff numbers or increasing the costs that customers would have to pay to use the service.

All customers of the Alternative Living Scheme have now been given a “Personal Budget” by social workers. The size of the Personal Budget depends on the needs that each customer has. The Personal Budget pays for ALS staff to work with customers to help meet their needs. All customers are different and this means that ALS staff work differently with every individual.

Asking ALS staff to work in this way means that they are able to work with customers in their own homes and in their local communities, rather than asking them to come to a building whether that is on Newdigate Street or in the Council House. This is intended to help ALS customers achieve the goals that are most important to them.

Moving Deaf Services staff to the Council House helps remind the Council that deaf people are everybody’s business. This goes hand in hand with the Council signing a Charter to ensure people who are deaf, including those with acquired deafness, are able to get appropriate support from all services that the Council provides. The Council is working to make all its services much more “deaf friendly”. There is a lot to do, but the Council will work with the deaf community in Derby to get there.

This change does not mean that ALS customers have to come to the Council House whenever they want help from the Alternative Living Scheme. ALS staff will come to them, depending on the customer’s Personal Budget and how they have agreed they want to be supported. How customers receive support is agreed in their “Support Plan”.

d) Link with wider Council plans

The above proposal and general development of the Alternative Living Scheme links with the following objectives in the 2014-15 Council Plan (available [here](#)) :

- Support people to live independently in the community, including the continued roll-out of Self Directed Support.

- Provide services that are more accessible to users, for example, our commitment to equality for deaf and hearing impaired people.
- Deliver a balanced budget on time supported by the achievement of agreed savings across all directorates.

4 Who delivers the service, including any outside organisations who deliver under procurement arrangements?

The Alternative Living Scheme, which is part of Derby City Council's Adults Health and Housing Directorate.

5 Who are the main customers, users, partners, employees or groups affected by this proposal?

The Alternative Living Scheme supports ten customers. All are deaf and have a range of additional health and disability issues.

5 of these customers are female and 5 of these customers are male

The ages and ethnic backgrounds of customers are as follows:

Age	Number of customers	Ethnic background	Number of customers
18-29		White UK	5
30-39	1	Asian Pakistani	
40-49	4	Asian Indian	
50-59	3	Asian Chinese	
60-69	2	Other Asian	1
70-79		Black African	
80 or older		Black Caribbean	4

The distance that ALS customers live from Newdigate Street, the amount of time they have been supported by the Alternative Living Scheme and the number of assessed hours they currently receive support from ALS staff are as follows:

Customer	Distance from 32 Newdigate Street (miles)	Time supported by ALS (years)	Weekly allocated support (hours)
1	0	25	20
2	0	8	15
3	0	6	14
4	0	11	9
5	0.3	27	8
6	2.1	21	8
7	1.6	27	10
8	1.3	9	8
9	1.3	2	12
10	3.3	7	8

6 Who have you consulted and engaged with so far about this policy and what did they tell you? Who else do you plan to consult with? – tell us here how you did this consultation and how you made it accessible for the equality groups

An achieving change document has been produced and has been consulted with staff. This EiA forms the first stage of our consultation with stakeholders and service users as it will inform the plans we present to help facilitate the move to the Council House.

There is currently a consultation process underway with customers and other stakeholders (see table below for the decision making timetable).

Stage	Action	Completed by
1	Consultation	
	Start the consultation with people affected by the proposed change	10th April
	Individual and group consultation meetings depending on personal preferences	10th April to 9th July
	Last day for comments from people affected by the proposed change	9th July
2	Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	
	Organise volunteers to help carry out the EIA	30th April
	Gather information that will help inform the EIA	30th April
	EIA meetings as necessary to help the volunteers form a view about equality impact	30th April to 9th July
	Completion of Equality Impact Assessment	14th July
3	Making a decision	
	Confirm decision-making meeting	30th April
	Make and record decision	31st October
	Communicate decision to all people affected by the proposed change	31st October
4	Making any changes that are agreed	
	Social workers work with ALS customers to make any changes to Support Plans that are necessary	31st December
	Any necessary changes to support are made ensuring that eligible needs of all ALS customers remain addressed	31 st January

- 7 Using the skills and knowledge in your assessment team, what do you already know about the equality impact of the policy on particular groups? Also, use any other information you know about such as any customer feedback, surveys, national research or data. Indicate by a tick for each equality group whether this is a negative impact, a positive one or if you are not sure**

Equality groups	What do you know?	Positive impact	Negative impact	Not sure
Age	<p>The tables on page 6 show the number of older customers who have been with the ALS service a number of years. The proposed change is more difficult for older customers who have become habituated to the Newdigate Street location.</p> <p>In regards to young people, data from the Children and Young Peoples Department indicates there are increasing numbers of deaf young people with complex needs moving into adulthood who may require additional support like the ALS service in order to live independently. This group of potential customers will not have been habituated to the Newdigate Street location if the proposed change goes ahead.</p>		X	
Disability	<p>The customers of ALS have complex needs that often result in additional communication issues beyond using British Sign Language (BSL).</p> <p>Due to their additional and complex needs ALS customers can find change extremely challenging, and need time to get used to think through and understand the proposed changes</p> <p>Each of the ALS customers have different needs and complex issues an individual approach may be required to fully understand some of the risk issues. For example, the three customers receiving the highest</p>		X	

	<p>support hours from ALS all live on Newdigate Street very close to the existing office base.</p> <p>Having staff nearby was felt to have helped the most vulnerable of ALS customers base deal with issues swiftly such as problematic cold callers who have been known to identify and deliberately target vulnerable households</p> <p>Due to their additional needs and complex issues ALS customers are felt not to integrate easily with the wider deaf community. The current shared / staff space at Newdigate Street is felt to help reduce social isolation by having somewhere for ALS customers to meet and get together (for example have Christmas Day together) which is neutral and safe</p> <p>The ALS customers use this space to talk about feelings and issues in a secure and private environment. As BSL is a visual language it requires extra privacy</p> <p>A shared space also helps promote a feeling of community and 'family' amongst service users as many do not have strong family ties due to being sent away to institutions as children</p> <p>As this client group finds accessing information difficult (for example cannot use the radio and low literacy levels move newspapers / social media problematic) it was felt that a shared space can make information / news dissemination much easier</p> <p>The ALS Service operates beyond office hours and customers need to feel comfortable that they can still access support when they need it as some customers additional needs means that waiting for help can be</p>			
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	particularly difficult and stressful			
Gender	The group felt that gender was not a significant factor in the move as the service was very much geared to meeting the needs of all genders equally and the move would potentially not have any additional impact dependent on gender, though this would need to be monitored			X
Marriage and civil partnership	This factor was not discussed in detail as other equality strands were felt to be more affected by the proposals. However, this will need to be monitored to ascertain if this is an issue were the proposals to be implemented			X
Pregnancy and maternity	This factor was not discussed in detail as other equality strands were felt to be more affected by the proposals. However, this will need to be monitored to ascertain if this is an issue were the proposals to be implemented			X
Race	A relatively high proportion of ALS customers are from a BME background. This provides an additional equality barrier for those customers, which amplifies the integration issues referred to in the disability section.		X	
Religion or belief or none	Group members reported instances of some religious groups deliberately targeting vulnerable ALS customers using BSL which impacted upon customers feeling pressured to attend these meetings / services. However it is difficult to justify that a move of office base for the Alternative Living Scheme will affect this risk, as customers are typically targeted when they are alone, either in their own homes or in the community.			X
Sexuality	This factor was not discussed in detail as other equality strands were felt to			X

	be more affected by the proposals. However, this will need to be monitored to ascertain if this is an issue were the proposals to be implemented			
Trans gender	This factor was not discussed in detail as other equality strands were felt to be more affected by the proposals. However, this will need to be monitored to ascertain if this is an issue were the proposals to be implemented			X
People on low income	<p>All of the ALS customers are on benefits and therefore have limited income</p> <p>Due to their complex needs and literacy issues many ALS customers have additional stress about income and welfare reform issues as they find letters from statutory agencies worrying and difficult to understand.</p> <p>The ALS service helps customers to budget and manage limited funds</p> <p>A concern is that without the activities offered at the shared base to combat social isolation that customers may resort to expensive diversion activities (in one case this was scratch cards) to give them something to do which will further limit stretch finances</p>		X	

8 From the information you have collected, how are you going to lesson any negative impact on any of the equality groups? How are you going to fill any gaps in information you have discovered?

Please see Equality Action PPlan

9 What outcome does this assessment suggest you take? – you might find more than one applies. Please also tell us why you have come to this decision?

Outcome 1		No major change needed – the EIA hasn't identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken
Outcome 2	Y	Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?
Outcome 3		Continue the policy despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and plans to monitor the actual impact
Outcome 4		Stop and rethink the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination

The Equality Impact Assessment has concluded that Outcome number 2 applies.

The actions set out in the Equality action plan are felt to successfully mitigate negative equality impacts.

10 How do you plan to monitor the equality impact of the proposals, once they have been implemented?

Please see Equality action plan overleaf.

Equality action plan – setting targets and monitoring

What are we going to do to improve equality?	How are we going to do it?	When will we do it?	What difference will this make?	Lead officer	Monitoring arrangements
Carry out individual risk assessments for ALS customers that explicitly address equality issues relating to (for example) age, disability, ethnicity, low income	Social work staff will complete this risk assessment as an addendum to an updated Outcome Based Supported Assessment	By 9th July	Individual equality issues will be highlighted and addressed. For example customers from a Black and Minority Ethnic background will have a set of issues in relation to both disability and ethnicity that need to be addressed	Vickie Minion	In line with ongoing review of ALS customers' needs, risks and support
All ALS customers to be supported by keyworkers with any changes that are agreed. Family members and advocates also to be involved where appropriate.	Support Plans for ALS customers to be updated as necessary with their full involvement. No changes to be made until 30 th September 2014 at the earliest.	By 31st January	ALS customers will have one to one support over an extended period of time to manage any changes that may be agreed	Vickie Minion	ALS customers will continue to receive regular support from ALS staff in line with their Support Plans

What are we going to do to improve equality?	How are we going to do it?	When will we do it?	What difference will this make?	Lead officer	Monitoring arrangements
Individual risk assessments as above to identify any particular issues for individuals with respect to “cold-calling”	Social work staff will complete this risk assessment as an addendum to an updated Outcome Based Supported Assessment	By 9th July	Individual personal safety issues will be highlighted and addressed	Vickie Minion	In line with ongoing individual reviews of ALS customers’ needs, risks and support
If the decision is taken to move away from Newdigate Street, shared private space for ALS customers to meet and share experiences in a safe environment must be found	ALS managers to work with Council colleagues and external partners to find potential alternative meeting spaces for gatherings that cannot be supported in ALS customers’ own homes	By 9th July	ALS customers will be able to maintain connections with each other and all the mutual support entailed by that.	Vickie Minion	ALS management to keep social opportunities continually under review

What are we going to do to improve equality?	How are we going to do it?	When will we do it?	What difference will this make?	Lead officer	Monitoring arrangements
Derby ALS customers who come to the Council House for advice, information or support need to be able to access this appropriately	ALS staff to be available for ALS customers when they come to the Council House. Derby City Council to implement the Deaf Charter for all mainstream services.	31st January	ALS customers will continue to receive a deaf-friendly service from ALS and the wider Council	Ann Webster	The implementation of the Deaf Charter will be monitored by the Council's Chief Officer Group.
Some ALS customers have grown accustomed to dropping in on Newdigate Street when they feel anxious, for example when they have received a letter.	ALS staff to provide flexible support for ALS customers in line with their Support Plans. ALS staff to work through the implications of any changes to office hours with ALS customers as above	31st January	ALS customers will receive flexible support and will understand clearly how and when they can deal with day to day issues as they crop up	Vickie Minion	In line with ongoing individual reviews of ALS customers' needs, risks and support

What are we going to do to improve equality?	How are we going to do it?	When will we do it?	What difference will this make?	Lead officer	Monitoring arrangements

