

COUNCIL CABINET

7 NOVEMBER 2012

103/12 Short Breaks for Adults with a Learning Disability

The Council Cabinet considered a report on Short Breaks for Adults with a Learning Disability. The Council Cabinet also considered recommendations from the Adults and Public Health Overview and Scrutiny Board. The Chair of the Adults and Public Health Board attended the meeting to present the Boards recommendations. The report provided a summary of the consultation responses to the proposed changes in how adults with a learning disability were offered short breaks, involving ceasing the residential respite service currently offered at Ashlea Hostel, a 22-bed care home managed by the Council. It also provided a summary of the findings from the Equality Impact Assessment that had taken place involving key stakeholders.

The report recommended that short breaks needed to be available in a range of ways, taking into account the needs and preferences of the disabled person as well as those of their family carers. It supported the position of the Council continuing to develop its Shared Lives scheme to provide community based short breaks whilst recognising that further work to identify appropriate alternatives to Ashlea Hostel for those with the most complex disabilities may be required.

Options Considered

1. Option 2

The **continuation of the service offered at Ashlea Hostel with no change;** The reducing demand and resulting increased cost meant that this would be a highly expensive service in addition to the running costs of the building alone. This option would mean that many people who did not need to stay in a residential care home to have an overnight break would be denied opportunities for having those breaks in other ways as the money could not be released to enable them to exercise choice. It would also not be affordable within the allocated Personal Budget amounts for those individuals and not, therefore, fit for the future in the light of personalisation and fair and affordable support based on people's needs.

Continuing to operate the service as it was would therefore meant that there was a disproportionate expenditure on short breaks for a relatively small number of families and, as such, the Council would not be supporting all families of people with learning disability fairly and equitably based on a socially inclusive model.

Budgetary savings for 2012/13 and 2013/14 totalling £270,000 would need to be found from elsewhere as the savings target assumes that people would be offered a Personal Budget with the savings released from the Ashlea Hostel budget.

2. Option 3

The development of a new residential service managed by the Council catering for approximately 20 people.

Analysis of the levels of demand and support needs for the 19 people with complex and profound impairment had been carried out. This indicated that, based on full bed occupancy over a year, approximately 3 beds would be needed. This scenario, however, was unrealistic and therefore a 5- bed facility, offering some economy of scale and providing some capacity for people with lower levels of need who wish to purchase such provision would be reasonable.

Estimated revenue costs: Staffing costs for providing a Council managed 5 bed facility would be approximately £350,000 based on existing staffing models and could reduce were these to change. However, it was still likely that the costs would remain over £300,000. Typically, staffing costs equated to 80% of running costs so the actual costs of provision would likely be an additional 20% (£70,000). Based on a conservative cost of Council managed provision at £370,000, the nightly rate, based on a 5-bed unit with 100% occupancy, would be £202.

Revenue available: Financial modelling for the Modernisation Project assumed more community based options and therefore residential short breaks costs (which are typically £140 - £300 per night) were not factored in and short breaks amounts of approximately £110 social care funding had been assumed for these customers. The net result was that there would be a shortfall of £282,000 recurring revenue, some of which may be able to be offset with Health funding for the individuals involved. In addition to this, the savings target for 2013/14 of £135,000 would be unable to be met.

This option would involve capital investment or leasing and such costs were estimated to be in the region of £1.5 m assuming that any new facility was built on an existing Council Owned site. In addition should the council opt to build to fund this option would require borrowing which would in turn mean that borrowing costs would be required to be met from revenue.

Given that the cost of providing a new residential service using Council funding alone was not viable, it was recommended that this option not be pursued.

Decision

1. To note the consultation responses and outcome from the Equality Impact Assessment as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.
2. To close the existing service offered at Ashlea Hostel by 1 April 2013, subject to the satisfactory provision in paragraph 1.2 of the report being fully met.
3. To offer a continued permanent residential service post 1 April 2013 at an existing Council facility for those individuals with the most complex needs to

enable detailed planning to identify suitable alternative choices for them to consider and to review these arrangements before September 2013.

4. To support the proposal that the Learning Disability Service would develop a contingency plan with each individual and their family that sets out what would happen should there be an emergency or unplanned need for support.

Reasons

1. The proposal to close Ashlea Hostel was in line with the aim of providing affordable, community based support tailored to the interests and needs of each person. Personal Budgets would continue to be offered to all individuals using that service and many people would be able to replicate their current level of short break through using more cost effective and personally tailored support arrangements, such as the Shared Lives scheme or through a Direct Payment.
2. The use of Ashlea Hostel had been gradually declining in recent years as young people in particular were choosing alternative ways of having a short break. Since April 2011 this had reduced from 99 to 58 and many of those remaining were actively pursuing alternative options, such as the Council Shared Lives Scheme. Increasingly, those using Ashlea Hostel had higher and more complex support needs and required use of the rooms with space for specialist equipment and large wheelchairs and/or higher ratios of staffing support due to behavioural and/or healthcare needs. Working within the current staffing establishment and the rooms fit for purpose had therefore meant reduced occupancy.
3. The Ashlea Hostel building suffered from problems with legionella, which, whilst being managed and ensuring the safe use of the property, was at a cost of approximately £1000 per month, therefore adversely impacting on the suitability of the building.
4. The profound healthcare needs of some people using Ashlea mean that identifying suitable alternative arrangements and securing appropriate Health funding was likely to be a longer process and would require careful planning. Discussions were underway with Derbyshire PCT regarding their role and potential availability of beds in the county within easy reach of Derby.
5. Offering an extended service to those families would enable detailed planning to continue beyond the end of March if needed, to explore community based options that may be appropriate, to prepare for any new arrangements and to enable a smooth transition, ensuring the needs of the person and their family carers could be fully met.