

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES & EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	1 JULY 2013	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	IMPROVING RESIDENTIAL SERVICES: FUTURE OF THE ARTHUR CLARK CARE HOME		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Following a three month public consultation on the future of the Arthur Clark Care Home, this report provides the Committee with:

- The options that are available;
- A summary of the feedback on the proposals from the consultation. Appendix B includes a report on the consultation;
- The findings of an Equality Impact Assessment; and
- An independent survey report which is attached at Appendix D.

1.2 Members of the Committee will recall that in February, Cabinet considered a report about the home and agreed to launch a public consultation on its future.

1.3 Although the quality of care at the home had consistently been assessed as compliant with regulatory standards, the building did not meet the highest standards. Structural work was becoming necessary due to the condition of the roof and boiler and to maintain fire safety standards. Consideration was given to whether the building could be modernised at the same time. However, upgrading the building to offer larger bedrooms with en-suite facilities would involve substantial building work. Because of the cost and disruption this would involve, the Cabinet agreed to consult on the proposal to support people to find permanent alternative accommodation and then close the Arthur Clark Home.

1.4 Regardless of the case for upgrading the building to meet modern standards, the Council needs to act soon to rectify the known problems outlined in paragraph 1.3 above. Several consequences flow from this:

- Significant structural work, such as re-roofing or rewiring, will require the home to be closed down in order to protect the health and safety of residents and staff. This is partly because of the asbestos risk, but also to minimise the disruption to every day care that would be caused by the building work. The cost of essential works has now been confirmed as being £720k
- If residents were to be moved it would seem perverse not to seek the opportunity to undertake works to bring the building up to modern standards at a cost of around £1.1m.
- The Council would have to meet the costs of a move to alternative accommodation which would be between £86k - £180k subject to the length of time required to complete the work, and the availability of rooms within other homes.
- Frail, elderly residents would be required to move twice with significant risk to their health and well-being.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee notes:

- (a) The findings of the Council's public consultation on the future of the Arthur Clark Care Home;
- (b) The views expressed through the "Please do not close the Arthur Clark Home in Caversham" petition presented by local residents; and
- (c) The findings of the Equality Impact Assessment on the proposal to close the Arthur Clark Home, in particular the measures identified to mitigate potential negative impacts on some groups.
- (d) The options identified for future action, set out in Section 5 of this report.

2.1 The Committee is thereafter asked to decide which of those options set out at Section 5 of the report is its preferred course of action.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council's programme of transforming Adult Social Care, designed to improve and modernise the delivery of services. The Council is committed to:

- protecting and supporting the most vulnerable;
- promoting choice and independence;
- enhancing the quality of services and facilities;
- basing service developments on the needs and expectations of service users, and those who may choose to use services in the future; and

- delivering value for money.
- being an exemplar provider and commissioner of services, aiming to ensure that people are cared for in modern facilities backed by good standards of care

3.2 Since 2007, the Council has been transforming the way it delivers Social Care for older people, reflecting national best practice and responding to the changing expectations of elderly people and their relatives. As a result, provision for older people has altered considerably.

- More people are living independently because of a successful Reablement service - one that is recognised as a national best practice model.
- Oaktree House, Spey Road, Reading is now available providing extra care housing for 60 people. In the longer term the Council is committed to the development of up to 180 additional extra care housing places, in line with its policy of promoting independence and choice. The policy adopted in 2008 commits the Council to developing extra care places across the Borough, including north Reading.
- The Willows has been developed into a local centre for both Intermediate and dementia care.
- Services now represent better value for money although in-house residential care remains expensive compared to private providers

4. THE ARTHUR CLARK CARE HOME

4.1 The Arthur Clark Care Home in Caversham is owned and managed by the Council and is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as a care home without nursing care for adults aged 65 or over. It can accommodate up to 25 frail elderly people, and has an additional 2 rooms which are set aside for respite care. This helps family/unpaid carers to get breaks which then help them carry on caring so that more frail elderly people can be supported primarily at home. Arthur Clark provides a valued service; its care and staff regularly receive compliments and are valued. Independent inspections by the CQC Care Quality Commission have rated Arthur Clark as meeting the standard. The inspection in April 2013 checked that essential standards of quality and safety were being met, but did not include consideration of the safety and suitability of the premises.

4.2 The Arthur Clark building was constructed in the 1950s. It is joined to the Albert Road Day Centre on the same site and shares a kitchen and electricity supply with the Day Service, which is in an older building. The Arthur Clark building is now in need of structural works. This includes work to keep the roof and boiler room safe, maintain fire safety standards, upgrade the heating system, upgrade the hot and cold water supply and removal of asbestos. The building is safe now but the need to carry out the structural work required to maintain safety is becoming pressing. In 2006 the Council commissioned a report which recommended that the main roof was replaced within 5-10 years. This was supported by a further survey in 2012 that emphasised that substantial work was required to the main roof.

4.3 An independent survey commissioned in June 2013 states:

- The building is nearing 60 years of age and requires a major refurbishment to bring it up to modern standards and energy efficiencies.
- Roof coverings are nearing end of life.
- Generally kitchen flooring/wall finishes will need upgrading in the near future to meet current hygiene standards and no kitchen staff toilet/ changing facility is provided.
- Whilst the building is generally compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act the passenger lift is very dated and does not have voice controls or controls for visually impaired people.
- The internal corridor ramps are above the maximum recommended gradient of 1:10 which causes difficulties for residents and staff using trolleys.
- There is no accessible parking space provided adjacent to the main entrance.
- Water damage in a number of areas in the home.
- The home is generally compliant with the Care Standards Act 2000 taking into account dispensations for care homes in use pre 2002. However, the following should be noted:
 - Only one accessible toilet is provided adjacent to the lounge and dining Areas; this is inadequate
 - The longest travel distance from private accommodation to a toilet is 15m; this is marginal against CQC requirements

An independent mechanical engineering and electrical survey commissioned within the last four weeks found:

- A new gas fired boiler has been installed however two existing boilers appear either out of service or at the end of their serviceable life. Concerns are also raised to the available combustible ventilation in the space.
- The existing heating distribution infrastructure runs within ducts containing asbestos type material, the pipework itself is in excess of 20 years old and is a single zone system and is therefore considered life expired.
- The hot water distribution presents water contamination risks (primarily Legionella) due to long draw off legs of pipework resulting in poor circulation and flow rates.
- Generally the mechanical extract ventilation that exists within the welfare facilities is either non operational or in poor physical condition requiring replacement.
- The lighting installations throughout in general are operational. However, they are in more than 20 years old and appear in poor condition requiring replacement throughout.

- The fire alarm installation appears operational and is regularly tested. However, the installation is now considered life expired requiring replacement and upgrade.
- The small power provision throughout appears operational but the installation currently restricts use due to poor socket distribution/ locations in bedrooms in particular.
- The existing passenger lift appears in fair condition. However, the lift car is not DDA compliant and should be upgraded.
- The patient call system appears functional but is now at the end of its serviceable life and should be considered for a full upgrade and replacement.

The cost of completing all immediate and necessary works is estimated at £720k. The survey report then suggests an additional spend of £426k would be required (over a five year period) to deal with those items that are deemed to be desirable rather than essential.

- 4.4 The building contains asbestos. An asbestos inspection was completed in 2011 and indicated that there was no risk to health and safety provided the asbestos is not disturbed. A more rigorous assessment of the asbestos risk in the building cannot be carried out whilst it is still occupied. We have been advised, however, that any significant building work would be likely to disturb the asbestos and thus require the home to be vacated while the work is carried out.
- 4.5 There is limited space in the communal areas at Arthur Clark, which restricts the range of activities which can be offered to residents to promote their physical and emotional wellbeing. The communal parts of the building require significant upgrading to provide a bright environment for group activities and for residents to see visitors in comfortable surroundings. The current facilities are poorly-suited to offering a stimulating environment for older people which helps keep them as well and as independent as possible. The current standard of allowing 4.1 square metres of communal space per resident is only met if the conservatory areas are taken into account.
- 4.6 The Arthur Clark building is generally compliant with CQC regulations for existing older buildings (although see paragraph 4.3 above where non-compliance issues are highlighted). However, the Commission sets higher standards for newer care services. The size of the bedrooms at Arthur Clark and the lack of en-suite facilities are not in keeping with these modern standards. In the event of significant work being undertaken, CQC would expect the Council to consider upgrading facilities to modern standards at the same time. The Committee's attention is drawn to the fact that:
- Of the 25 bedrooms offered to residents, only six meet the modern standard of being 12 sq metres.
 - A number of the rooms are too small to be accessed by older people with severe disabilities who may need specialist equipment, such as hoists.

- At the moment residents are sharing communal toilet and bathrooms in the ratio of five people to one bathroom.
- The lack of private bathrooms means the home is unlikely to meet the needs of older people who are Muslim.
- It is difficult to maintain privacy, dignity and independence with shared bathroom and toilet facilities.
- The provision of shared bathrooms is already ‘marginal’ against the compliance standard for access to toilets, baths and showers that are in close proximity to their living areas’

5. OPTIONS

5.1 Following careful consideration of the consequences outlined above, officers identified the following options. There is not a “do nothing” option in respect of essential building works, the only choice is whether to do these works now or at some time in the future.

Option 1 - Vacate the Arthur Clark Home for a period of approximately 3 months whilst essential works to maintain health and safety standards only are carried out at a capital cost of approximately £ 720k. This figure is based on an independent survey (copy attached as Appendix D). This costing would bring the building up to a reasonable standard, tackling all urgent items. However, Committee should note that a further £426k would then need to be spent to cover non essential but desirable works over a 5 year period. Residents would be found temporary alternative places and all would have the option of moving back into Arthur Clark. Since this option does not include an upgrade, they would return to small bedrooms and shared bathroom facilities.

Option 2 - Vacate the Arthur Clark Home for a period of 6 months whilst health and safety maintenance works are carried out and the building is upgraded, at a capital cost of around £1.1m. This figure has been independently calculated and is based on the £720k figure quoted above together with an additional £340k to bring the building up to a decent modern standard and covering non-compliance works set out at paragraph 4.3. Residents would be found alternative places. Most, but not all, residents would have the option of moving back into the modernised home with a smaller number of bedrooms which were larger and had en-suite facilities. The fees would need to be higher than currently charged at Arthur Clark.

Options 1 and 2 represent the views of some family members. However, officers draw the following points to the Committee’s attention.

- These options would require two moves and residents living in temporary accommodation whilst the building work is completed.
- It would be difficult to justify keeping the staff team in place for a period of 3-6 months whilst works were undertaken.
- The physical facilities at many alternative private homes in the area are better suited to current standards, residents’ expectations and future requirements, and there is capacity in the local market to move people into superior facilities.

- The investment required to modernise Arthur Clark or to convert Albert Road is substantial. Both would result in fewer bed spaces being available at the home in future than currently, and at a higher fee level.

Option 3 - Existing Arthur Clark residents are offered permanent places in alternative (private) provision with en-suite facilities and supported to move. Alternative provision in the independent sector would similarly be secured for respite care. This would take place over the summer of 2013, i.e. whilst the alternatives identified for residents from their recent support reviews are still current and valid, and during a period of warmer weather when the health risks of moving frail elderly people are significantly reduced. Experience shows that it is important to act quite swiftly on any decision to close a residential facility. Delaying - e.g. until the spring - would mean residents living with the anxiety of an imminent move, and could lead to staff shortages as employees look for other positions.

This option would meet the Council's aspiration that people should have the right quality of accommodation that meets modern standards and respects their dignity. The costs of the private accommodation would be cheaper than current costs of running the home to the Council. In addition, costs for essential maintenance and refurbishment costs, as outlined in options 1 and 2 above, would not be needed which would mean there is not an additional budget pressure to the Council. More information is provided in the Finance Section of this report below.

Option 4 - Do not undertake works until such time as all residents have moved on to other provision to meet higher care needs or have passed away. This is an option favoured by a number of families.

Officers believe that given the urgent works (particularly to the plumbing and heating systems) that need to be done it would better to undertake these in a planned way rather than waiting until there was some form of critical failure with the fabric of the building. Such a failure would result in residents having to be moved in an unplanned and rushed manner which could have a detrimental impact on their health and well-being.

Committee's attention is also drawn to the fact that Arthur Clark would cease to be the thriving community it is now if all the residents were waiting for themselves or their neighbours to move to more intensive care or pass away. The psychological impact of this could be very negative. As time goes by, without any work at all being carried out, the home would inevitably become shabbier, less safe and less homely. Unfortunately, the costs of staffing and maintaining a home with very few residents would be prohibitive.

6. Other Options Considered

6.1 Understandably, people have been worried by the prospect of change to their

home and their care. Residents and relatives have asked whether these proposals are made simply to generate savings and if savings could be made elsewhere or money taken from other Council projects for the Arthur Clark building. Overall, the Council needs to find over £40m savings from across all Council services over the next 3 year period. Options 2 and 3 in Section 5 above are all driven by a concern to see frail elderly people in good quality accommodation supported by good levels of care. Whilst caring for vulnerable people is a key priority of the Council, it is important that the services we provide represent value for money. It would not represent value for money to spend money on a facility that does not meet modern standards and the service is already costly when compared to similar councils (see Finance Section below for more information).

- 6.2 Specifically, people have asked whether the “106 monies”¹ from the development of the Battle site could be used; but this would fall outside the agreement of how this money is to be used for the local community, in the Oxford Road area of town.
- 6.3 The Council has previously considered if it would be possible to sell the home as a going concern or to attract a third party partner to invest in the building. Officers concluded, based on knowledge of entrants into the market and existing providers, that this would not be feasible. Entrants to the market are generally advised to look for homes that meet modern standards. They generally therefore either seek to purpose-build or take over buildings that have already been modernised. Existing providers tend to behave in a similar way.
- 6.4 Trades Unions (UNISON and UNITE) have asked that the Council explore the option of converting the Albert Road building to residential use. Subject to the Committee’s decision on the future of the day service currently provided from Albert Road, this could potentially offer additional bed spaces which meet modern standards and expectations and could be offered to current Arthur Clark residents. However, Albert Road is an older and smaller building than Arthur Clark and very significant structural work would be involved e.g. installation of a lift. As this would be an extension of the home the same consideration would have to be given to improving the whole facility as outlined in paragraph 4.6 above.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 7.1 Proceeding with options 2 or 3 outlined at Section 5 above would contribute to the Administration’s priorities for Adult Social Care, in particular:
- continuing to protect and develop services for vulnerable people in need, and developing an on-going programme of service change and improvement; and

¹ Under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, developers of larger sites have to pay money to the Council to reduce the impact of the development.

- recognising and supporting the importance of carers in the community and for the people for whom they care.

8. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 A three month public consultation was carried out on the proposal to close the Arthur Clark Home. Current residents, regular users of the home for respite care, carers or other family members of service users, and staff employed at the home were identified as the groups which would be most affected by the proposals. Accordingly, the consultation was designed to focus on involving these groups in the most meaningful way. Senior managers and councillors attended a total of 5 group meetings with residents, respite users and relatives during the consultation period as well as offering a drop-in session to answer initial queries just before the consultation was launched formally. Staff at the home were also given the opportunity to give verbal feedback and raise questions at group meetings. Residents also had individual reviews of their support needs to help them understand what choices they would have in the event of a decision to close Arthur Clark.
- 8.2 People also had the option of completing a consultation questionnaire, which was available to the wider public too both online and in paper copy. The consultation was promoted publicity through press conferences and releases as well as at appropriate public meetings and local conferences taking place during the consultation period. There were 80 returned questionnaires within the RBC consultation. A further 9 written responses were received by letter and email, and the 5 user and family consultation meetings attracted between 19 and 30 people on each occasion. A 'Save Our Home' petition started by a local resident attracted approximately 2,000 signatures, some of whom are local people.
- 8.3 Most people who responded to the consultation said that ideally they would prefer that the Arthur Clark home stayed open. People were very appreciative of the quality of care and the staff there, and many felt this compensated for a building which was not of the highest quality by modern standards. The consultation did generate some alternative suggestions to try to manage down the service. These are discussed in 'other options considered'. Unfortunately, these did not address the need to move residents in any event to carry out necessary building work or the likely financial implications.
- 8.4 Discussions at consultation meetings covered concern about the upheaval of a move and what support could be offered to help residents cope with this. The support which residents and relatives were most interested in was information about alternative services, followed by support to visit other homes, having other providers visit people to offer information. Residents and relatives were also interested in support to try to move friends together or to help people stay in touch after moves to different services.

A full consultation report is attached at Appendix B.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The basic legal framework under which local authorities arrange for people to be supported in residential care settings is set out in the National Assistance Act (1948), as refined by subsequent legislation and guidance. There is no requirement on Adult Social Care departments to meet assessed needs through in-house provision. Appropriate services may be commissioned from external voluntary or private sector providers, and there is a statutory regulatory framework in force to protect clients against inadequate service provision regardless of the sector providing the care and support services.
- 9.2 The local authority is required to consult publicly before coming to a decision about whether to close the Arthur Clark Home. This is in fairness to current residents and in order to respect their human rights, to involve others who currently use or benefit from the service (respite users, and family members or carers of residents and users), to involve local residents in a significant decision about future service provision, and in order to identify any particular issues relevant to the local authority's equality obligations (as set out below).
- 9.3 Members, as decision makers, are under a legal duty to comply with the public sector equality duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The relevant provisions are as set out below.

Section 149 (1) - A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Section 149 (2) - A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

Section 149 (3) - Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Section 149 (4) - The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Section 149 (5) - Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- (a) tackle prejudice, and
- (b) promote understanding.

Section 149 (6) - Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

Section 149 (7) - The relevant protected characteristics are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

9.4 In order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, Members must seek to prevent discrimination, and protect and promote the interests of vulnerable groups who may be adversely affected by the proposal to close the Arthur Clark home. Members must therefore give conscious and open minded consideration to the impact of the duty when reaching any decision in relation to the future of Arthur Clark. The Public Sector Equality Duty (S.149) to pay 'due regard' to equalities duties is high in a case such as this, where there is an obvious impact on protected groups. This duty however, remains one of process and not outcome.

10. EQUALITY IMPACTS

10.1 The Arthur Clark home is a service for older people with support needs, and also benefits family/informal carers of elderly people in the Borough, many of whom are older themselves. Current residents of the home and respite users would all meet the definition of disabled under equalities legislation. The majority of service users and staff employed at the home are female.

10.2 A decision to close Arthur Clark would therefore impact disproportionately on older people, disabled people and women as compared to the general population. No other disproportionate impacts on protected groups have been identified either through the public consultation on the proposals or the personal reviews of current residents' support needs.

- 10.3 Ways of mitigating the equality impacts have been identified. Following personal reviews, service users and their families can be supported to choose other services from a personalised shortlist of alternatives. Dedicated care management support would be available in preparation for and throughout any moves, including a settling in period and appropriate reviews thereafter. There has been extensive engagement with staff and Trades Unions. Support is available to help Arthur Clark staff be matched to alternative vacancies within the Council, or take up redundancy packages on the Council's standard terms.

A full Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix C.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Revenue Implications

- 11.1 The Arthur Clark service is currently provided by the Council with an approved (gross) budget of £850k p.a. If Option 3 is decided upon this could lead to the delivery of revenue savings of approx £160k pa (excluding one off costs). Options 1 and 2 would require revenue spend of £86-180k that is not within approved budget as this would require moving residents out whilst this work was carried out (estimated to be around £86k based on supporting 12 residents @£600 per week for 12 weeks or £172k based on supporting 12 people @ £600 per week for 24 weeks). Option 4 would increase the costs to the Council as it would be necessary to close the Home to new admissions and therefore the Council would still have the vast majority of the running costs at Arthur Clark whilst also having to separately fund placing new clients in other residential homes. These additional costs have not been planned for in the medium term financial plan and if this option was chosen other compensatory savings will have to be found.

Capital implications

- 11.2 The Arthur Clark building was constructed in the 1950s. Over the years this building has been the subject to regular planned maintenance. However, with any building such as this there is a point when major refurbishment/upgrade is required and for this building this would include structural work to the roof boiler and plumbing, and to maintain fire safety standards. These essential works would require an investment of at least £720k. There is no budget available within the Council's capital programme and if works were undertaken further prudential borrowing would be required. The revenue costs to support this borrowing would be around £60k pa.
- 11.3 In order to make the home reach current standards a capital investment of at least £1.1m would be needed. This does not include any figure for redecoration, carpets, curtains and flooring etc. At the timing of writing the asbestos risk in the building cannot be quantified. Again, the Council would be required to pay for temporary accommodation, which is not within existing

budgets - the £1.1m prudential borrowing would cost around £90k pa to support.

- 11.4 Committee will note that there is no provision for capital works or additional revenue costs within the Council's agreed Medium Term Financial Plan. If Committee wishes to keep the home open and undertake works as described in Options 1 and 2 in the main body of this report other compensatory savings will have to be found.
- 11.5 A preliminary view of the potential value of the site is around £1million, subject to the usual caveats about planning and usage. To determine the best use of this land, should the decision be taken to close Arthur Clark, an Options Appraisal should be conducted to consider what the site could be used for.

Value for Money

- 11.6 Older People's Services in Reading cost more than in other Council areas. This is partly because of the cost of in-house residential provision. The average cost of a placement in private/charity residential care in Reading is currently around £600 per week and the cost at Arthur Clark is £735 per week (based on full occupancy). If voids and overhead costs are taken into account the average cost of residential care provided by the Council is £1,211 per week, against £636 for externally purchased care (this is based on the annual national unit cost for 2011/12 prior to any proposal for closure).
- 11.7 Residents and relatives have asked, should a decision be taken to close the home, if the Council would be prepared to exceed its normal rate for residential provision for people moving from Arthur Clark so as offer a wider choice of alternative home. If a decision were taken to close officers believe that it would be possible to guarantee that all residents were offered an en-suite room. Self funders would normally be expected to meet their own costs but in the exceptional circumstances of a home closure (if that were to be the Committee's preferred option) then officers would ask for a specific delegation to enable them to seek to mitigate any hardship created by a closure.

Risks

- 11.8 The costs and savings for residential services are estimates based on the Council's current ability to purchase comparable services in the local market. However, the Council is planning for future needs of older people by investing in new extra care accommodation; putting in place appropriate services to enable people to stay in their own homes and is reviewing how it purchases appropriate residential and nursing services. Therefore the overall risks of the decision from a business perspective would be low.
- 11.9 If the Council agrees not to close this facility then the upgrade/refurbishment work identified will be required to be undertaken. The costs of this upgrade work, plus the temporary decant costs are not budgeted for and are unlikely to be able to be covered by current budgets within Adult Services. Compensatory savings would need to be found elsewhere to cover these costs.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

Appendix A - CQC case study

Appendix B - Improving Residential Services: consultation report - June 2013

Appendix C - Equality Impact Assessment dated 03/06/2013

Appendix D - Survey Report

Appendix A

Case study: CQC ensures care home protects residents from building disruption

Imagine if you were living somewhere that you couldn't just leave for a few days, where you hadn't made the decision to call in the builders, where you couldn't escape the disruption, and where it could be damaging your health.

That's the situation we found at a care home, located on the Hampshire coast, when we inspected it on a chilly morning in February this year.

It was difficult to access toilets and bathrooms, sinks had notices asking people not to use or drink the water, and the building works had led to problems with the central heating system.

Most worryingly, staff had noted that they believed the works were having ill effects on the health of residents. Although some of the residents told us that, overall, they had been happy with the care they had received; our inspection revealed that the building works, together with some management decisions, were clearly having a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. Individual care plans, which cover personal care requirements, communication, nutrition and mobility, had not been updated to reflect residents' current care needs in light of the works.

For example, the plan for one resident's continence needs detailed how that resident should be supported to visit the toilet on a regular basis. We were then informed by staff that it was not physically possible for the person concerned to visit the toilet during the building works resulting in the highly inappropriate use of a commode. People had to be dried sitting in a wheelchair as their bedrooms were on a different floor to the one available bathroom. In addition, the bathroom was devoid of any suitable changing facilities for attending to people's personal care in a way that upheld their safety and dignity.

Communal hallways on one floor had no floor coverings, exposing uneven boards that were a serious trip hazard. Similar conditions were found in two of the bedrooms compromising safety and greatly increasing the risk of falls.

The building works also impacted on the general quality of the environment. Due to the unusually confined space in the lounge, we observed staff making several attempts to move a person from a wheelchair to a lounge chair.

Noise and dust was a problem and a port-a-cabin located directly outside the dining-room window had blocked out much of the light. Staff also told us that the building works had prevented residents from accessing the garden for more than a year.

In summary, our inspection concluded that the home was not currently fit for purpose. Consequently we required the nursing home to take the following two actions:

- To immediately move the remaining seven residents to a premises where they could be properly looked after while the building works were completed

- To submit an action plan within 14 days of receiving our inspection report that details the measures it would take to ensure that the renovated home, once re-opened, would full meet national standards.

The home met both requirements in full and re-opened earlier this month.



Improving Residential Services

Consultation report – June 2013

Executive Summary

A three month public consultation on a proposal to close the Arthur Clark residential care home generated 89 written responses, in the form of 80 returned questionnaires and 9 separate communications by letter or email. In addition, verbal feedback was gathered at 5 consultation meetings arranged for residents, people who had recently used the home for respite care, and members of residents' or users' families. Attendance at these meetings ranged from 19 to 30 people. There were also further opportunities for staff working at the home to give verbal feedback at meetings with senior managers. All residents also had the opportunity to give their views during individual interviews to review their support needs.

Most people who took part in the consultation said that, ideally, they would prefer that the Arthur Clark Home stayed open. Many people were very appreciative of the quality of care there, and some felt this compensated for a building which was not of the highest quality by modern standards. However, [most] people accepted that the condition of the Arthur Clark building made closure of the service - at least temporarily - a necessity. The consultation generated some alternative suggestions to try to manage down the service, and comments on what support would be most important to help residents manage and cope with the upheaval of a move.

Background

The Arthur Clark Care Home in Caversham provides permanent care services for up to 25 frail elderly people. It also has two beds for respite care, and a regular group of people who use these.

In February 2013, Reading Borough Council's Cabinet agreed to launch a public consultation on the future of the home. Although the quality of care at the home had consistently been assessed as high, by this stage the building did not meet the highest standards by modern expectations. Structural work was becoming due to the roof and boiler and to maintain fire safety standards. Consideration was given to

whether the building could be modernised at the same time. However, upgrading the building to offer larger bedrooms with en-suite facilities would involve substantial building work. Because of the cost and disruption this would involve, the Council agreed to consult on the proposal to support people to find permanent alternative accommodation and then close the Arthur Clark Home.

While comments were being gathered on the proposal, each resident had an individual review of their support needs. This helped to develop a clear evidence base for understanding what would be the impact of closing the home. It also put residents and their families in a better position to understand what choices were open to them. The individual reviews captured personal characteristics, including any 'protected characteristics' under anti-discrimination legislation². This helped the Council to assess what the potential might be for any conflict between the proposed closure and the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity.

What we consulted on

We asked people to tell us:

- whether they agreed in principle with the proposal to close the Arthur Clark Home;
- if they had any concerns about the proposal to close the Arthur Clark Home;
- what their concerns were (if any);
- what support would help residents and users of the Arthur Clark Home manage the transition to another service; and
- if there were other issues about this proposal which people would like the Council to consider.

How we consulted

The consultation ran from 13 March to 14 June 2013. The consultation was designed to involve people who used the care home and their families in particular, but was open to the general public.

Consultation material

A consultation questionnaire was issued to all residents, anyone who had stayed at the Arthur Clark Home for respite care recently, and the next of kin of all residents and users. The questionnaire was posted out with some background information, the responses to a number of Frequently Asked Questions, and information about how to respond. This included a link for online completion of the questionnaire, a reply paid envelope for the return of paper questionnaires, and information about opportunities to give verbal feedback.

Consultation meetings

² age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation per the Equality Act 2010

Officers and councillors met with residents of the home, respite users and family members on [5] occasions during the consultation, and twice prior to the launch of the consultation. Meetings were offered on different days and at different times to give the maximum number of people the opportunity to attend. The meetings were conducted in an open format to give service users and relatives the space to raise any issues and concerns they had.

Personal reviews

In addition to group meetings, each resident had a personal interview to review their support needs and discuss what other services might be suitable for them. Residents were encouraged to have a family member or friend join them for this review meeting to help them put their views across. Independent advocacy support was also available from Healthwatch Reading.

Promoting the consultation

Personal letters were sent to Arthur Clark residents, other users and their next of kin as well as to staff employed at the home in advance of the formal consultation period. Senior managers also met with staff and were available to service users and relatives at a drop in event to let people know what to expect. A press conference was held alongside the publication of Cabinet papers proposing the consultation launch, and a press release was issued to mark the start of the consultation.

Information was available online throughout the consultation period, and paper copies available on request from managers at the Arthur Clark Home or from the Council's main offices.

Who responded

By the close of the consultation, 80 questionnaires had been returned either online or in paper form. 6 of these were from residents of the home, 3 from respite users, 27 from relatives of people who lived in or had used the home, 3 from members of staff at Arthur Clark, and 37 were from other respondents who didn't fall into any of these categories. 4 respondents didn't answer this question.

In addition, consultation responses were received in the form of 9 letters, including a joint response from the trades unions Unison and Unite.

Service users, relatives and staff were also invited to give their feedback verbally at specially arranged meetings. These were well attended. Between 19 and 30 people attended each of the service user/family meetings, and all members of staff had the opportunity to attend at least one staff meeting.

The proposal to find permanent alternative accommodation for Arthur Clark residents

14% of the survey responses received indicated support for the proposal to find permanent alternative accommodation for Arthur Clark residents. 65% of responses were from people who disagreed with the proposal. 14% of respondents were 'unsure' and 7% gave no response to this question.

The general feeling at the user and family meetings was a preference for trying to find a way to keep the Arthur Clark Home open, at least for current residents. Questions were asked about whether building work could be phased in some way, including whether the Albert Road (Day Centre) building could be used to re-house Arthur Clark residents temporarily. An alternative proposal was made that the Council wind down the home by just not filling rooms as they become vacant, or using vacated rooms only for respite care rather than offering them to anyone new as a permanent residence.

Concerns about the proposed closure of the Arthur Clark home

Matching the current quality of care

Many residents and family members spoke extremely highly of the quality of care at the Arthur Clark Home. There was a common feeling that staff treated residents with kindness and dignity, and made Arthur Clark a welcoming and homely place. Many relatives talked about the confidence they had in the staff at Arthur Clark and how approachable they found them. Several people described Arthur Clark as 'like a hotel'. Some people felt the standard of care was so high at Arthur Clark that it would be difficult to match in another setting.

Disruption

People expressed concerns about the physical upheaval of a move, and also the emotional upheaval of getting to know new staff/carers and companions if residents had to move. Current residents talked of how carefully they had thought through their choice of home, in the expectation that they would end their days in the home they had chosen.

Location

Some residents and respite users felt a strong connection to the local area, or had friends and relatives nearby. For them, the loss of a Caversham based service was a particular concern. Some family members talked about how convenient Arthur Clark was for them for visiting. Some residents valued being able to visit local shops and library.

Cost

People worried about whether the alternatives to the Arthur Clark Home would be more expensive. This was naturally a greater concern for residents currently paying their care home place without any support from public funds. They had concerns about their savings running out sooner if they moved to a more expensive home, and questions about what would happen then.

Future of the site

Some people had concerns that closure of the Arthur Clark Care Home could lead to the site being redeveloped in a way which increased traffic congestion in the area, or otherwise made it less attractive for other residents of Caversham.

Questioning the need to modernise

There was some acceptance that the Arthur Clark building was in need of work. Several people made reference to the small bedrooms, limited number of bathrooms and toilets, and general need for refurbishment. On the whole, though, residents and relatives felt that the care at Arthur Clark compensated for a less than ideal building. Many current residents were of the opinion that they could manage without en-suite facilities, particularly as en-suite facilities were not available in all other Reading care homes.

Support to manage a move

People were asked what support the Council could offer to help people manage a move into different services. The most important support identified was information about the alternatives, closely followed by support to visit different homes. Approximately half of the responses received were in support of inviting other providers into the Arthur Clark Home to present about their services. A slightly smaller proportion was in support of helping Arthur Clark residents to stay in touch with one another after a move.



Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed

Improving Residential Services - proposal to close the Arthur Clark Care Home

Directorate: Education, Social Services & Housing

Service: Adult Social Care

Name and job title of person doing the assessment

Name: Janette Searle

Job Title: Service Development & Partnerships Manager

Date of assessment: 03.06.2013

Scope of proposal

What is the aim of the policy or new service?

The proposal is to improve residential care provision for older people across the borough by ensuring that the Council focuses its resources on the development of provision which meets current and future needs and expectations.

The Arthur Clark Home in Caversham is owned and managed by the Council and is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as a care home without nursing for adults aged 65+. It can accommodate 25 people and has 2 rooms set aside for respite care. The Arthur Clark building was constructed in the 1950s. It is in need of structural work to the roof and boiler, and to maintain fire safety standards. Although the building is currently compliant with CQC regulations, the Commission sets higher standards for care services run from new and newly registered premises than it does for services run from older properties. In the event of significant structural work being undertaken, the Commission would expect a provider to work towards achieving modern standards. This would include larger bedrooms than are currently available at Arthur Clark and en-suite facilities.

As the Arthur Clark building would require substantial investment to achieve modern standards, the proposal is to support residents into permanent alternative accommodation, and close the home. Carrying out the structural work necessary to modernise the building would be costly and would lead to a loss of bedroom space meaning fees per place would need to be raised.

Arthur Clark is currently the permanent home of 20 people. These current residents would be most directly impacted by the proposals, which are subject to the outcome of a three month public consultation and linked to a proposal to close the Albert

Road Day Centre, which is on the same site as the Arthur Clark Home and shares some facilities with the Home.

The support needs of current residents have been reviewed to help them and their families understand what options would be available to them in the event of a decision to close Arthur Clark. As is usual with a care home population, residents' support needs have tended to increase over time, and some people would need to look for more specialist care in the event of a move. 5 residents are likely to need to seek a home with nursing care, 3 a service which offers dementia care and the remaining 12 could continue to be supported appropriately in a residential home without specialist care. 12 of the current residents receive state funding towards the cost of their care. If the most appropriate alternative for them was a home charging higher fees than Arthur Clark does currently, the residents would continue to pay the same contribution as now with the local authority making up any difference. For the 6 residents who fully fund their care at the moment, a move to a more expensive home would have a direct financial impact on the individual.

Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

Current residents of the Arthur Clark Care Home would be supported into alternative accommodation where their care needs could be met to the same standard as currently but in superior physical surroundings. People who have used Arthur Clark for respite care would benefit similarly. Residents would be required to move only once under the current proposal rather than twice, as could be the case if the home were vacated temporarily for renovation.

What outcomes will the change achieve and for whom?

- The safe and managed transition of Arthur Clark residents into alternative accommodation more in keeping with modern standards
- The safe and managed transition of Arthur Clark respite users into alternative services more in keeping with modern standards
- The managed redeployment or release of staff according to the Council's procedures and policies, including training or additional support to those affected as required.

Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this proposal?

- Current residents of the Arthur Clark Care Home
- Current Adult Social Care service users who come to Arthur Clark for respite care
- Carers and family members of Arthur Clark residents/users
- Staff employed at the Arthur Clark Home
- Other elderly residents of the borough, particularly those with a strong Caversham connection, who may have wished to consider using the Arthur Clark Home in future

(subject to availability of places at the time of need)

Impact of proposal

Describe how this proposal could impact differently on some racial groups

No negative or disproportionate impact has been identified, but person centred reviews will consider individuals' racial and ethnic backgrounds and how this could impact on finding the most appropriate (alternative) service for each person.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No x Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact differently on men and women, or transgendered individuals (including any issues in relation to pregnancy, maternity or marriage)

Across the group of current residents and regular visitors to Arthur Clark for respite care, around three quarters are women. 86% of employees at the home are female. These proposals therefore have a disproportionate effect on women rather than impacting equally across genders. However, the gender breakdown of those using and working at Arthur Clark broadly reflects that across the care home sector generally, and does not reflect any particular feature of how services are provided at Arthur Clark.

The regulations which govern the provision of care in residential settings should ensure that any residential care home offers gender-sensitive support as appropriate and so as to respect residents' dignity.

There has been extensive engagement with staff and trade unions about the proposed closure. Work has already started to identify vacant roles in other parts of the Council for staff who wish to remain with the local authority to move into. These would be matched to the skills, preferences, and home locations of staff to avoid redundancies as far as possible, including the offer of training to prepare for new roles where appropriate. Where alternative roles could not be matched to individuals, staff would be offered redundancy packages on the Council's standard terms.

No negative or disproportionate impacts in relation to transgender, pregnancy, maternity or marriage have been identified.

Is there a negative impact? Yes X No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact differently on people with a disability

All the residents of Arthur Clark and those who use the service for respite care would meet the definition of disability per the Equality Act 2010 on account of their frailty. Some have additional specific disabilities or long term health conditions. This places restrictions on the range of accommodation options open to the people affected. Person centred reviews of the support needs of all residents have been carried out by a dedicated social worker. This has meant suitable alternative services have been

identified for people to choose from. In some cases, this puts residents and their families in a position to identify alternatives which are better suited to their needs now after a decline in mobility or other aspects of their health since they first moved to Arthur Clark, a building which was not purpose-built for supporting people with disabilities.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure X

Describe how this proposal could impact differently on people based on their sexual orientation (including civil partnership)

No negative or disproportionate impact has been identified, but person centred reviews will consider individuals' sexual orientation and how this impacts on finding the most appropriate (alternative) service for each person.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No X Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact differently on people based on their age

Closure of the Arthur Clark home would mean 20 elderly residents having to move. They are likely to find this change unsettling and worrying. Moving home carries a potential health risk for frail people and this would need to be managed carefully. Adapting to new surroundings would probably be difficult, at least to begin with, and some disruption to care would be inevitable as people adjusted to new care workers. Some social connections would also be disrupted as residents would not all move to the same alternative setting. There isn't an alternative Reading home with sufficient vacancies to take all the Arthur Clark residents, and there is variation in the support needs and personal preferences of residents which means different alternative settings would suit different people best.

The advanced age of the Arthur Clark residents means that many of their family members and friends are also likely to be elderly. A move could involve friends and family having to travel further to visit, and elderly people could find this challenging. Elderly people who have been used to staying at the home for respite care from time to time would also be unsettled by needing to find an alternative service, although not to the same extent as residents. Family carers of respite users would take time to develop confidence in a new setting so as to get the most from their break from caring.

The wider impact is that closure of the home would reduce the number of residential care beds in Reading available to frail elderly people for permanent or respite care. However, allowing for seasonal fluctuations, the Council's experience of finding residential care for elderly Reading residents indicates there is sufficient provision locally across the voluntary and independent sectors to meet need without relying on the Arthur Clark spaces.

Is there a negative impact? Yes X No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact differently on people on account of their religion or belief

No negative or disproportionate impact has been identified, but person centred reviews will consider individuals' religion or belief and how this may impact on finding the most appropriate (alternative) service for each person.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Assessment of the Equalities Impact of the proposal

1. No negative impact identified Go to sign off
2. Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason
You must give due regard or weight but this does not necessarily mean that the equality duty overrides other clearly conflicting statutory duties that you must comply with.
Reason
3. Negative impact identified or uncertain
What action will you take to eliminate or reduce the impact? Set out your actions and timescale?

The Arthur Clark home is one of 16 in the Reading area offering residential care for adults aged 65+, including those which also provide nursing care. Within a 5 mile radius of the Arthur Clark site, there are over 40 similar facilities. This means that a range of alternative services is potentially available to each resident and service user. Person centred reviews have now been conducted for all residents - with family members involved where this met with the resident's wishes - and can form the basis of supporting people to find out more about the alternative services shortlisted on an individual basis. This would include support to visit alternative providers, or have representatives of the services visit residents at Arthur Clark.

Many people would prefer to remain within the area of their current service, and this is often an important consideration for relatives. Every effort would be made to make alternative placements on the basis of individual preference, but this would of course be subject to availability of places. In the event of a decision to close Arthur Clark, the Council would immediately start to reserve residential care places which become available for elderly people in the Reading area and which meet the Council's and CQC's preferred standards, so as to maximise the choice available to Arthur Clark residents in moving to new homes.

Once alternative placements were agreed, a transition plan would be put in place for each resident based on person centred plans. This would include familiarisation visits and support to maintain friendships which could be disrupted by a move.

Independent advocacy support has been and would remain available for service users who would like this to help them make decisions.

Take up of the respite bed spaces at Arthur Clark has been at approximately 60% over the past year. In the event of a decision to close Arthur Clark, the Council would

block book a residential care place in a local setting for elderly people to be kept for respite use. With the assistance of the respite co-ordinator appointed in June 2012 to help match demand to supply of respite care, the Council is confident that this replacement provision would suffice to meet local need for residential respite care for people aged 65+.

How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?

Dedicated care management support is already in place to support the residents of Arthur Clark, people who visit for respite care, and any family/informal carers. Support needs are reviewed regularly through care management, and support packages revised as indicated by these reviews.

The Care Procurement team monitors the availability of care services to meet local demand through its ongoing work to identify support services which will help individual Adult Social Care users meet the outcomes set out in their support plans. Any patterns of concern, such as difficulty in securing suitable provision are reported to the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team who can respond through their contract management and quality monitoring functions.

Signed (completing officer) Janette Searle

Date 03.06.2013

Signed (Lead Officer)

Date