

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
1 JULY 2013

Present: Councillor T Jones (Chair)
Councillors: Anderson, Ballsdon, Eastwood, Eden, D Edwards, Ennis, Gavin, McElligott, O'Connell, Orton, Ralph, Vickers and Williams.

Also Present: A Wilson, S Westhead, K Reeve, S Gee and R Woodford.

Apologies: Councillors P Jones and Rynn.

1. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Children's Trust Partnership Board held on 22 May 2013 and the Children's Safeguarding Panel held on 5 June 2013 were received and endorsed.

2. IMPROVING RESIDENTIAL SERVICES: FUTURE OF THE ARTHUR CLARK CARE HOME

The Head of Adult Social Care submitted a report on the Future of the Arthur Clark Care Home. A copy of a Care Quality Commission (CQC) case study was attached to the report at Appendix A, a copy of the Improving Residential Services: Consultation Report June 2013, was attached to the report at Appendix B, a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment 3 June 2013 was attached to the report at Appendix C and a copy of the Survey Report was attached to the report at Appendix D.

The report explained that the Arthur Clark Care Home in Thames Ward, Caversham, was owned and managed by the Council and was registered with the CQC as a care home with nursing care for adults aged 65 or over. It could accommodate up to 25 frail elderly people and had an additional two rooms which were set aside for respite care. An inspection by the CQC in April 2013 had checked essential standards of quality and safety were being met, but did not include consideration of the safety and suitability of the premises.

The building had been constructed in the 1950s and was in need of structural works including work to keep the roof and boiler safe, maintain fire safety standards, upgrade the heating system, upgrade the hot and cold water supply and removal of asbestos. An independent survey had been commissioned in June 2013 and an independent mechanical engineering and electrical survey had been commissioned within the previous four weeks. The cost of completing all the immediate and necessary work had been estimated at £720k and the survey report had suggested that an additional spend of £426k would be required, over a five year period, to deal with those items that had been deemed to be desirable rather than essential.

The report explained that the building contained asbestos and an asbestos inspection had been completed in 2011 and had indicated that there was no risk to health and safety provided the asbestos was not disturbed. A more rigorous assessment of the asbestos risk in the building could not be carried out whilst it was still occupied. However, significant building work would be likely to disturb the asbestos and therefore require the home to be vacated while the work was carried out.

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The building was generally compliant with CQC regulations for existing older buildings. However, the CQC set higher standards for newer care services and the size of the bedrooms and the lack of en-suite facilities were not in keeping with those modern standards. In the event of work being carried out the CQC would expect the Council to consider upgrading facilities to modern standards at the same time.

The report stated that there was not a "do nothing" option in respect of essential building works and the only choice was whether to do the works now or at some time in the future.

The report set out four options that had been identified with regard to the future of the home as follows:

Option 1 - Vacate the Home for a period of approximately three months whilst essential works to maintain health and safety standards only were carried out at a capital cost of approximately £720k.

Option 2 - Vacate the Home for a period of six months whilst health and safety maintenance works were carried out and the building was upgraded, at a capital cost of around £1.1m.

Option 3 - Offer existing residents permanent places in alternative, private, provision with en-suite facilities and support them to move. Alternative provision in the independent sector would similarly be secured for respite care. This would take place over the summer of 2013 during a period of warmer weather when the health risks of moving frail elderly people were significantly reduced.

Option 4 - Do not carry out works until such time as all residents had moved on to other provision to meet higher care needs or had passed away.

Mr C Trinder, the Reverend M Pyke, Councillor Hopper, Thames Ward Councillor, and Mr R Wilson MP attended the meeting and addressed the Committee in support of keeping the Arthur Clark Care Home open.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Eden and seconded by Councillor Orton and CARRIED:

Resolved -

- (1) That the following be noted:
 - (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 Clarke Home in Caversham' petition presented by local residents;
 - (c) The findings of the recent Independent Survey and previous surveys on the site;

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- (d) 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;
 - (e) The options identified for future action, set out in Section 5 of this report;
 - (f) The outstanding policy commitment to expanding the provision of Extra Care Homes - which include facilities for others in the local community to access - across the Borough.
- (2) That officers be authorised to:
- (a) Procure the alternative residential and nursing places, as appropriate for current Arthur Clark residents, ensuring that all residents are offered the choice of an en-suite room;
 - (b) To mitigate the social, emotional and financial impact for residents on an individual basis, whether it is allowing trial visits to alternative care homes, support with transport for regular visitors or other support based on the individual person's requests;
 - (c) Find ways to support self-funders based on individual discussions and mitigating the potential financial impact by using the Council's commissioning relationship with care homes within Reading;
 - (d) To support groups of friends to move together where they wish to;
 - (e) To do everything possible to mitigate the impact on the staff of Arthur Clark to reduce the need for redundancies, through offering alternative employment and by encouraging those care homes which residents move to, where appropriate and desired, to consider employing the staff who have been supporting the Arthur Clark residents;
 - (f) Move current residents to alternative accommodation based on individual support reviews and to include individual transition plans to support current residents into alternative accommodation;
 - (g) Only once all this has been done, to close the Arthur Clark Care home;
- (3) That this Committee believes that this site is suitable to meet an outstanding policy commitment to provide Extra Care Housing in North

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Reading and to meet the need and desire expressed in the consultation for local facilities for elderly residents and:

- (a) Requests the Policy Committee to authorise officers to undertake a consultation on a proposal to use the Arthur Clark/Albert Road site to develop Extra Care Housing and associated community based services;
- (b) Asks officers to bring a report to this Committee regarding progress.

3. IMPROVING DAY CARE SERVICES: PROPOSALS TO MERGE THE ALBERT ROAD AND PHOENIX DAY CENTRES

The Head of Adult Social Care submitted a report on a proposal to merge the Albert Road and Phoenix Day Centres. A copy of a Consultation Report on the Proposed merger was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and an Equality Impact Assessment was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The report explained that in Reading there were two Council-run day services for older people, Phoenix Day Services and Albert Road Day Services.

Phoenix Day Services, based in Southcote Ward, had been a day service for older people from across the Borough since 1990 and up to 45 clients a day could attend. Many of those who attended used the Adult Social Care's in-house transport service to get to and from the site.

Albert Road Day Services, based in Thames Ward, Caversham, formed part of the joint site with the Arthur Clark Care Home and up to 20 people could use the service on a daily basis. The building was a converted house which was smaller than Phoenix Day Services and only the ground floor area was used as there was no disabled access to the first floor. The clients only used one large room on the ground floor, there was little space and inadequate toilet and bathroom facilities.

The report explained that a recent survey of the building had identified a number of problems including the need for a major refurbishment to bring the building up to modern day standards and energy efficiencies, there was generally poor compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act, all toilets on all levels needed to be refurbished and the roof insulation was poor and needed upgrading. Overall, the survey had identified £70k of works that were now required. In addition the building contained asbestos and an inspection that had been completed in 2011 had indicated that there was no risk to health and safety, provided the asbestos was not disturbed. However, any significant building work would be likely to disturb the asbestos and therefore require the centre to be vacated while work was carried out.

Albert Road shared a site with the Arthur Clark Care Home and was linked to it by a corridor. It had separate water and heating supply but was dependent on the Arthur Clark building for electricity and an industrial kitchen. A total capital cost of around £400k would be required to bring Albert Road up to a decent building standard and would include reinstating separate utilities, a kitchen extension,

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installation of a lift and upgrading the small and inadequate bathroom/toilet facilities.

The report stated that up to five/six times a year service users from Albert Road used the facilities at the Phoenix site, typically for social events that could not be accommodated at Albert Road. The service also offered essential day respite to families, helping the individual with support needs to remain at home longer because the main carer had regular breaks, and in cases where vulnerable people were living alone, the service offered much needed social interaction and helped prevent social isolation.

Over the previous nine months there had been a decline in the number of older people using Council Day Services and neither service achieved full occupancy on any day of the week. At Phoenix the average daily usage of people was 29, with a capacity of 45, and at Albert Road the average daily usage was 13, with a capacity of 20.

The report set out two options that had been identified to improve and modernise services as follows:

Option 1 - Continue with the existing facilities, accepting that significant investment of at least £450k would be required and that the facilities might still not be capable of meeting future needs.

Option 2 - Consolidate current respite and day care services at the Phoenix site. This would entail some disruption in the short term with Albert Road clients having to re-locate to Phoenix.

The report explained that Phoenix was a more spacious building and could accommodate all existing service users and detailed consideration would be given to transport issues. This would make good use of existing Council assets, whilst maintaining standards of care, and could be followed by a programme of co-development with communities to provide a modernised older people's service.

The Reverend M Pyke, Mrs J Beecroft and Ms J Bull attended the meeting and addressed the Committee in support of keeping the Albert Road Day Centre open.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Eden and seconded by Councillor Orton and CARRIED:

Resolved -

- (1) That the following be noted:
 - (a) The findings of the Council's public consultation on the proposed merger of the Albert Road and Phoenix Day Care Centres noting that the majority of those consulted supported a merger;
 - (b) The views expressed through the 'Please do not close the Arthur Clarke Home in Caversham' petition presented by local

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residents, which includes many comments regarding the value placed on local services in Caversham and the Albert Road Day Centre;

- (c) The findings of the Equality Impact Assessment on the proposal, in particular the measures identified to mitigate impacts on some protected groups;
- (2) That officers be authorised to:
- (a) Transfer respite and day care services currently offered at Albert Road to the Phoenix site without loss of service;
 - (b) Provide a transition plan to ensure that current users of the Albert Road Day Service are able to access the Phoenix Service or alternative community services;
 - (c) Ensure that a transport plan is implemented that is suitable for those who currently use the Albert Road site to enable them to access services;
 - (d) Transfer the staff from Albert Road to Phoenix;
 - (e) Close the building at Albert Road;
- (3) That the Policy Committee be requested to include the Albert Road site in the consultation on Extra-Care Housing.

4. MODERNISING DAY CARE SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE: UPDATE ON THE LET'S TALK CARE PROGRAMME

The Head of Adult Social Care submitted a report providing the Committee with a summary of consultation feedback to the proposed development of Older People's Resource Centres. A copy of the Modernising Day Care Services for Older People: Let's Talk Care Equality Impact Assessment was attached to the report at Appendix 1, a case study of opportunities for older people to take part in Southcote was attached to the report at Appendix 2 and a case study of the community assets in the Caversham area and potential for developing alternative day care services for older people was attached to the report at Appendix 3.

The report explained that there were two local authority-run day services for older people in Reading, Phoenix Day Services based in Southcote Ward and Albert Road Day Services based in Thames Ward in Caversham. Demand for services had been falling for some time and the following options for the future of day care services had been identified and had formed the basis of a consultation which had run from March to June 2013:

Option 1 - Continue to provide day care services for older people as currently.

Option 2 - Expand the Council's current day service to incorporate other services offered from an Older People's Resource Centre.

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As a result of the consultation feedback, an additional option had been identified as follows:

Option 3 - Expand the Council's current day care service to incorporate other services from a network of Older People's Resource Centres, possibly with a single centre for specialist support best offered from a single location, but complemented by satellite services offered from a number of neighbourhood bases.

The first phase of community involvement on modernising day care services for older people had effectively focused on options as to how a central resource could meet some of the needs of older people. There would always be a need to provide specialist support for older people with complex needs and family carers valued the reassurance which came from having a local centre of expertise on caring for and stimulating older people with higher support needs. However, older people had said that maintaining social connections was what mattered most and that they would like to stay in touch with the communities they had identified as being important to them.

The report explained that one location that could be used for a co-development trial was the area north of the river, where across the Peppard, Mapledurham, Thames and Caversham Wards there was a significant elderly population and a number of shelter housing units and a thriving residents' association. The second location that had been identified for a trial was Southcote which also had a significant elderly population. There was a good range of services offered for older people, four Active Ageing groups and three carer support groups. Southcote was also one of the bases for the timebanking pilot.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Eden and seconded by Councillor Councillor Oton and CARRIED:

Resolved -

- (1) That the following be noted:
 - (a) The findings of the Council's public consultation on the Modernisation of Day Care Services for Older People;
 - (b) The findings of the equality Impact Assessment on the proposal for Modernising Day Care Services for Older People, in particular the opportunities this could offer to promote greater equality of opportunity as well as the risk of disproportionate negative impact on some protected groups and the measures identified to mitigate this;
- (2) That officers be authorised to:
 - (a) Continue to provide a specialist centre of expertise in Day Care at Phoenix with day services to provide services for frail elderly people including where appropriate respite for their carers and

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to discuss with users, carers and potential future users how they would like to see services developed further;

- (b) Trial the co-development of neighbourhood day services initially with communities north of the river in the Caversham area and in Southcote using council and community assets working with the voluntary sector.
- (c) Submit a progress report to a future meeting.

5. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN INSPECTION AND ACTION PLAN

The Head of Children's Social Care and Youth Offending and Source, submitted a report on the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) Children's Services and Skills unannounced inspection on the arrangements for the protection of children that had taken place in March 2013. A copy of the Ofsted Inspection Report and the proposed Ofsted Action Plan was attached to the report.

The report explained that the inspection team had focused on key aspects of a child's journey through child protection and early help system and how well multi-agency arrangements for identifying children and provision of early help services in protecting children worked. An overall grading of adequate had been reported, the three sub judgements had also been given an adequate finding and inspectors had clearly indicated that they had seen improvements in the previous year. The judgement had to be seen in the context of another rise in the 'bar' in relation to the standards for service to be judged as 'good' and the context of recent overall Ofsted judgements.

The inspection had found that progress had been made in a number of key areas, such as securing a stable workforce, developing early help services and that Councillors and staff all showed ambition for the council in securing and maintaining high quality services. The inspectors noted that parents felt they were listened to and respected, that children and young people received timely and robust responses to their needs for protection and referrals were responded to promptly. In their verbal feedback the inspectors had noted that the authority was in the upper most quartile of the adequate grade and that with a concerted drive in the next year it would reach good.

The report stated that there was no room for complacency and the service was clear that there remained some variability in provision and key challenges that it needed to address to continue to drive performance. Ofsted did note that they did not highlight anything that the service was not already alert too and that the right plans were in place to address the need to improve.

In their reports Ofsted had noted recommended areas for improvement in three bands, immediate, within three months and within six months. In this instance ten actions had been identified but there were no immediate actions. The actions had been put into an action plan with allocated actions and owners to drive forward their completion.

Resolved -

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- (1) That the Ofsted Inspection Report on the arrangements for the protection of children be noted and the associated Action Plan agreed;
- (2) That a progress report be submitted to the next meeting.

6. ADOPTION - PAN BERKSHIRE PROPOSAL

The Head of Children's Social Care and Youth Offending and Source, submitted a report noting the work underway to establish a shared Pan Berkshire Adoption Service under a joint arrangement for agencies to work together in providing recruitment, training, assessment and supervision of adopters. This would include a team of family finders and a team of assessing social workers who would recruit, prepare, train and assess prospective adopters. A Berkshire wide service would streamline the process and ensure that children would be placed much more quickly with a wider pool of adopters to choose from.

The report explained that in the next few years there would be systematic changes to the way adoption services were delivered nationally. As the Government had acknowledged this would not be an easy transition, whether they took action or whether local authorities put forward alternative proposals, although a direction of travel had been established and the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) was looking at what, in the next two to three years, would be an acceptable minimum viability for a local authority adoption agency to be successful.

The report stated that the critical need was for the Berkshire agencies to respond to the challenge of ensuring that they recruited, approved and matched the larger number of children who had adoption as the plan. If the powers were taken by the Secretary of State to force local authorities to contract out their adoption services if they did not begin to recruit more adopters and place more children, as had been proposed in the Children and Families Bill 2013, then a very different set of organisational arrangements would be established.

In taking up this challenge and deciding to work together, the Berkshire unitary agencies would become one of the largest group agencies to pool their resources and should it prove to be successful there was no reason why it could not become the blueprint for other agencies who wished to establish a joint arrangement.

Finally, the report stated that taking bold action now would send a message to Government that the authority was ready to embrace change and that local authorities continued to have a role in the recruitment of adopters for local children.

Resolved -

- (1) That the establishment of a shared Pan Berkshire Adoption Service under a joint arrangement for agencies to work together in providing recruitment, training, assessment and supervision of adopters be supported;

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- (2) That an update report on progress and outcomes of the shared service be submitted to the meeting on 5 March 2014.

7. EARLY HELP STRATEGY

The Head of Housing, Neighbourhood and Community Services submitted a report introducing Reading's first Early Help Strategy and seeking the Committee's endorsement of the draft strategy to go out to consultation more widely to inform the final version of the documents. A copy of consultation draft of the Early Help Strategy 2013 to 2016 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that 'Early Help' meant intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families. Intervention might occur pre-birth and at any stage in a child's or young person's life. The term 'early help' broadly referred to the range of services below the threshold of Children's Social Care or very specialist interventions.

The authority currently had an Early Years Strategy with a focus on children aged nought for five years of age, the new Early Help Strategy would cover the provision of early intervention and prevention services for children and young people all ages. Effective early help relied upon agencies working together to identify the needs of families and to provide targeted services to improve outcomes for children, at both an individual and system wide level. The Strategy therefore aimed to be multi-agency, covering aligned work between the Council, other statutory services and the voluntary sector to provide early help.

The Strategy had been structured around five priority areas, which reflected the Ofsted inspection framework. Each section set out the authority's current early help offer, identified the key actions to take forward further improvements and the outcome measures that would be used to monitor progress. The Strategy had been informed by the analysis of demographic, needs and performance data; national best practice and feedback from stakeholders, including over 200 interviews with local parents as part of the Council's 'Transforming Early Years' project.

The report stated that the vision for the Borough was of 'no child left behind and no parent unsupported'. Children could achieve their potential and families realise their ambitions for themselves and their children, regardless of their background. The Strategy set out how the Council aimed to strengthen integration, joint working and consistency across services to ensure that needs were identified and children, young people and their families were supported at the earliest possible stage, improving outcomes and reducing costs.

The report set out the key principles that underpinned the development of Early Help services for children and families in the Borough going forward, the key strengths of the Council's current early help offer and some of the areas for further development. The Strategy would be underpinned by a Delivery Plan that would set out how the Strategy would be implemented, identifying lead officers, resources and timescales for the delivery of the key actions set out in the high-level Strategy. Progress in implementing the Strategy and demonstrating the impact achieved through the identified outcome measures would be monitored by the

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Children's Trust, including the outcome measures that had been identified to demonstrate successful improvements.

Resolved - That the draft Early Help Strategy be endorsed to go out to wider consultation.

8. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

The following motion was moved by Councillor T Jones and seconded by Councillor Gavin and CARRIED:

Resolved - That the meeting be closed and the remaining items on the agenda, as set out below, be referred for inclusion on the agenda of the Policy Committee on 15 July 2013:

- (a) 12. Turnaround Families Programme:
- (b) 13. Special Education Needs Strategy 2013-16;
- (c) 14. Re-commissioning of a Comprehensive Drug and Alcohol Treatment System for Reading (Part 2).

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.35 pm).