



Meeting **CABINET COMMITTEE:**

**REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF COUNCIL
RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND FOR
EXTRA CARE SERVICES**

Date **TUESDAY 15TH MAY 2007 (2.00 – 3.55 pm)**

membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

- A Mick Storey
- A Alan Rhodes
- Steve Carroll

- A Councillor John Allin
- A Councillor Steve Carr
- Councillor V. H. Dobson
- Councillor Joe Lonergan MBE
- Councillor The Hon Joan Taylor

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Grace Perry - Unison
Mick Tinkler - Age Concern
Councillor Keith Girling
Keith Dobb) Nottinghamshire Care Association

1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: 2007/003

That the Notes of the last meeting held on 16th April 2007 be agreed.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Alan Rhodes

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

4. OPTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESIDENTIAL HOMES STRATEGY AND EXTRA CARE

Malcolm Dillon, Service Director in the Adult and Social Care and Health Department, introduced the report and gave a presentation on some options for the future and the implications.

Councillor Storey reported that he felt more time was needed on the consideration of the options and it was therefore now proposed to finalise the study in September.

Councillor Lonergan asked what the options were with regard to using the 'not for profit sector'. He asked for clarification about the proposals in respect to Newark and Sherwood District. With regard to the options he commented that to do nothing was not an option as there was a need to do something. He thought that option two – to withdraw from providing was a step too far, too quickly. He believed, therefore, that the only option was option three which was to retain a strategic share in the market and re-invest some savings into extra care. He thought there were nine homes where there was a need to consider closure as he did not believe they could be sold off. He felt there was a need to realise the capital and re-organise the services differently and for the better. He stressed that what must be paramount was how we dealt with the old people in the homes. He thought that it would be a massive amount of work which was needed to prepare a plan. He was unclear as to when the detailed plan would be prepared but he felt that implementation was important. He believed that extra care was something that the Authority should move towards. He pointed out that funding to the independent sector was inadequate at the moment. He liked the suggestion of the County Council paying the top-up where it would be necessary to move an older person from a home which was closing to an appropriate home of their choice.

Councillor The Hon Joan Taylor commented that there was no reference in the report to the real impact on old people. She thought they would be devastated if they were closed and had given up their homes to move into these establishments. She felt that most people were in County Council homes because they wanted to be there and felt they had more control. She emphasised that any closures needed to be done very delicately. She thought that there was a need to look at the long term and at option three. She believed that if it was felt that the homes were not good enough then they should not be used by someone else. She pointed out that funds were needed for extra care. She commented that the expectations of the current generation would be higher than previous ones. She indicated that she would be prepared to look at the options for the 'not for profit sector'.

Councillor Girling commented that if the number of vacancies in care homes were reduced places may not be available when they were needed quickly. He thought it was important that options were available to families.

Mick Tinkler from Age Concern thought that it would be useful to have clarification about the funding from Primary Care Trust's commissioners. He welcomed the links to day-care which was a valuable resource. He referred to

the bed survey of the care homes in each district in the report and pointed out that it only talked about homes not beds. He had concerns about occupancy. He pointed out that if a number of homes were closed the county may be near full capacity. He thought there was a need to keep pace with the aging society and there was a need to have an eye to the future demographic movement. He accepted that extra-care may reduce demand. He stated that there was a need to keep in mind the quality factor and the standard of care was important rather than the fabric of the building. He pointed out that the County Council homes provided a good standard of care which was why they were full. Physical environments were not a key factor. He gave examples of Abbeyfield and Anchor as organisations in the 'not for profit sector'.

Grace Perry from Unison pointed out that the elderly residents viewed the staff as their relatives; and to close any home was a wrench. She indicated that the Trade Unions were aware of the constraints on the public purse. She pointed out that all the homes were deemed to be fit for purpose at the moment and therefore, there was time before a decision needed to be made. She wanted a quality home in each district and in some Districts, with mileage and occupancy, this might not be enough. She pointed out that some areas were already stretched to capacity for day-care. She felt it important that the costs, which were considered, included day-care, and said she had understood the direction of travel for day care was for smaller centres. She thought that option three was the one to follow but indicated that she did not like any closures .

Keith Dobb, Nottinghamshire Care Association, pointed out that the Authority over the years had looked at its homes and reviewed them and looking back would see that some of the money spent to improve homes – it was now proposed to close. He pointed out that if the Authority were to invest in extra-care there was a need to be careful how this was invested. He agreed that the new County Council homes were good but the costs were higher than the independent sector. He pointed out that it always cost the local authority more to run homes. He asked whether the Authority should have built the new homes? He added that what residents wanted was companionship and care. He felt that respite care in independent homes had declined as people were steered into the Council's provision. He pointed out that all homes could take respite care. He was not sure that there was a need for large day-care provision but the problem was that the unit costs were higher if they were smaller. He thought that most independent sector homes would cater for 2 or 3 more in day care. He felt that the Authority had a lot of expertise to cope with closure of homes. He did not share the worries expressed about capacity – he had thought 10 years ago that there would need to be a large expansion, but now recognised that numbers would reduce; most people preferred to stay in their own homes and services in the community had been increased. He said that if the council do continue to run some homes, this will be at a higher price than the independent sector could run them at, and he hoped that the independent sector would get a fair price for the care they provide.

Councillor Lonergan said that most of the financial discussion so far had been about capital; but revenue costs were very important and he commented that Adult Services were receiving considerably less funding increases than the

National Health Service. He pointed out that the Chair of the Local Government Association had said that adult services were £1 billion under-funded in the country. He indicated that the report of the Strategic Director showed that there was a significant difference in the cost between the County Council and the Independent Sector and he supported the comments in the paper about moving to a framework pricing structure with the independent sector, which needed to be secure and safe, with third party top ups reduced..

Councillor Storey thought that more information was needed on day-care, working with the National Health Service, the charging and costs and, the options for the 'not for profit sector'. He agreed that the residential homes were people's homes and there was a need to take account of their feelings. He emphasised that no decisions have been taken about any closures. There remained a national issue about the quality of care expected and the amount people expect to pay for it directly or through taxes.

David Pearson, Strategic Director Adult Social Care and Health agreed that the potential for use of the 'not for profit sector' was an area where more work was needed. He commented, however, that in other areas where homes had been transferred to the 'not for profit sector' it had meant that costs had not been reduced and therefore there were no funds available for re-investment. With regard to the implementation plan he explained that the Terms of Reference were for the Cabinet Committee to decide the direction of travel. Cabinet would then consider this, which if agreed would go out to consultation. The implementation plan would not be drawn up by the Cabinet Committee. He indicated that the County Primary Care Trust had only recently been formed and was intending to publish its commissioning plan in the autumn. He indicated that they and Bassetlaw PCT had supported the County Council's commissioning strategy. He added that there was a commitment to work together with the Nottinghamshire Care Association on how to measure and reward the quality of care in the Independent Sector. With regard to the human impact of any closures which may be proposed, he stated that this had always been a major issue for the Authority and it took the greatest care, with detailed assessment and plans. He added that there was experience to tackle this within the Department.

Malcolm Dillon, Service Director in the Adult Social Care and Health Department commented that there was some degree of uncertainty in predicting the future around capacity. He indicated that there had been a steady reduction of placements but there had been an increase in home care and maybe there was some connection. He added that Nottinghamshire still had nationally high numbers in residential care and low numbers in home care. He agreed that there was a potential for homes to provide a small amount of day-care.

The Chair then invited comments and questions from the members of the public who were present.

In response to a question, Malcolm Dillon explained that where there was a need for dedicated day-care for older people but this could be provided in a building divided up into parts which were tailored for the different groups. He

added that the boundaries did not have to be rigid and the skills of the staff could be interchanged. He pointed out that they were at the early stage of thinking about this.

In response to another question, it was stated that discussions had already happened with residents and that they had the information as soon as possible. It was emphasised that formal consultation had not yet begun. It was explained that with regard to Newark and Sherwood District, the report was saying there were good reasons to look differently at the homes in this area.

The meeting closed at 3.55 pm.

CHAIR

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