

ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
6 MARCH 2018

**RECONFIGURATION OF IN-HOUSE LEARNING DISABILITY RESIDENTIAL
ACCOMMODATION**

QUESTIONS/REPRESENTATIONS FROM RELATIVES OF RESIDENTS

A. Question from the Parents of a Resident

It has now been four weeks since we were informed of the news that The Trees care home in Hinckley may be restructured.

Our 35 year old son has been a resident at The Trees for the past six years, prior to that James attended The Trees for almost 20 years enjoying respite care breaks.

Our son since birth has had cerebral palsy, quadriplegic and epilepsy, reliant on his wheelchair for mobility, needing extreme care for all his needs. As parents, we and our other 2 children met all his difficult and daily needs and requirements for 30 years.

We then made an extremely difficult decision to settle our son in a residential place at The Trees, which has and is working great.

Our son now gets support in every way from a team of wonderful staff who have worked with him, got to know him and care greatly for him, this is The Trees staff.

There are six other residents, our son's house mates and buddies, all in a similar situation with severe conditions, some being Trees residents much longer.

The proposed reconfiguration of The Trees will make our son and his six mates un-homed from a suitable building, staff and place where they all recognise as a secure, safe, home, The Trees.

Our question to the committee is more than one.

1. Why un-home this vulnerable but happy group when surely there are other ways to resolve the counties needs for short term respite care beds.
2. Why have we and other loved ones had to suffer the pain and anguish of this information for the past four weeks and many weeks ahead, with no support from LCC or other.
3. All these plans, reconfigurations, proposals are put to us all with one huge item missing, WHERE ARE THESE SEVEN VULNERABLE RESIDENTS GOING TO BE LIVING as the year goes on?
4. How dare LCC Adults and Communities propose any of the information put to the Cabinet on 9/2/18, without any solution for these residents?

Reply by the Chairman

1. The County Council has a duty to consider what is in the best interest of the people who are resident at the Trees, together with the best interests of the wider population of disabled adults and future people who may require services. Alongside these considerations the Council also needs to consider the most appropriate use of its resources both now and in the future.

If the proposals are agreed, no-one currently resident will be left without appropriate care or accommodation. The current service users all have individual needs and these will be taken into account as part of a detailed individual assessment. The Council is committed to ensuring that individuals continue to receive the same quality of support they receive now. If proposals are agreed the homes will not be able to close until each current resident has moved to a suitable alternative.

2. Pre-consultation meetings were held with relatives in advance of the request to the Cabinet and support to individuals offered in the form of 1-1 or group discussions. The consultation has a dedicated phone number and email address that can be used to provide support. Specific meetings for relatives of people living at The Trees, Hamilton Court and using Smith Crescent have been arranged as part of the consultation and individuals have been sent invites directly. Staff working at The Trees, Hamilton Court and Smith Crescent also have meetings arranged and have been given information so are also able to offer support on site. The Cabinet Lead Member and Director of Adults and Communities have also offered to meet with families and carers of people affected by the proposals.
3. Until such time as the Council determines the outcome of the consultation, specific information on the future care and accommodation arrangements cannot be considered. If the decision is made to close The Trees, each individual will have a detailed assessment conducted by a dedicated worker who will identify options available and determine suitability of those options. The assessment process will consider any friendships and relationship people have now, how these can be maintained alongside opportunities to build new relationships.
4. The identification of suitable accommodation will start when and if the proposals are agreed by the Cabinet. Individuals will be fully supported to find suitable alternatives and with their transition. People may want to move into another residential home, or there may be other services such as Extra Care Housing that are more suitable. This will be better understood through a detailed assessment for each individual involving the individuals, staff and families and the transition process will follow best practice considering the needs of each person.

B. Representation from Relatives of a Resident

We have a sister who lives at The Trees so our question is in relation to the proposal by Adults and Communities for reconfiguration of The Trees to a short breaks facility. We are not against reconfiguration or more respite beds, but the proposal in this format, if passed, would force our sister to have to leave her home where she has lived blissfully happy for almost 20 years.

We understand there is a strategic approach to get people away from Residential Homes and into supported living. While this is admirable and suitable for many, for our sister and some of her friends, this type of accommodation would be completely unsuitable and full time residential care is unfortunately still a necessity for her.

Can we respectfully ask the Committee to question the Adults and Communities Department as to what alternative options were considered and why this is the only proposal being promoted?

It is surely not too much to ask that there be a compromise reconfiguration option in the proposal to include both respite care beds and residential beds for those who wish to remain in their Home where they have been looked after and been happy for many years. This option would allow that when residents do leave in the future these beds could be converted to respite beds. This way you provide good quality respite but also continue to meet and care for your vulnerable existing residents.