

ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE - 5 JUNE 2018

DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT - RECONFIGURATION OF IN-HOUSE
LEARNING DISABILITY RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities advising of the outcomes of the public and resident consultation exercise on proposals to reconfigure the County Council's in-house learning disability residential accommodation and recommending changes to provision of these services. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Director of Adults and Communities highlighted the extensive consultation that had taken place and the strong opposition received to the original proposals. In light of the feedback, a range of other options were considered. The recommended proposals were due to be presented for approval to the Cabinet at its meeting on 12 June 2018.

Under Standing Order 35, questions had been received from Mr Robinson, which the Chairman had agreed would be dealt with as part of this item. A copy of the questions and the response provided by the Chairman was tabled at the meeting and is attached to these minutes (marked 'A'). The Chairman invited Mr Robinson to ask a supplementary question. No supplementary question was asked.

Mr Robinson was then invited to present the petition, containing 4,046 signatures, objecting to the proposed changes to The Trees in Hinckley. In presenting the petition, he stated that, after months of uncertainty, the news of the new proposal for The Trees was welcomed by all. He did, however, query why the original proposal had been suggested and allowed to go to consultation, which he said had caused a great deal of anxiety and stress for the families and individuals concerned. Mr Robinson thanked officers and members for reading the representations submitted by himself and others during the process, and the support received from a variety of sources.

The Lead Member for Adults and Communities thanked Mr Robinson for the work he had undertaken. In response to Mr Robinson's query, the Lead Member explained that the County Council had to undertake formal consultation. The majority of service users supported by the Department used the independent sector and the proposals were seeking to make greater use of the independent sector. The savings that would result would accrue from the building costs and not from a reduced service to existing clients, who would have their needs met in line with their agreed care plans. However, whilst undertaking the consultation, it had become apparent that the overwhelming response was that people were happy with the service provided by the County Council and wished for it to continue. As a result of this, the decision had been taken to change the recommendation and the Lead Member stated that he was very pleased with the outcome.

The Committee welcomed the revised proposals contained within the report, but arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:-

- (i) Noting that the majority of service users were supported by the independent sector, concern was expressed about the increased risk of failure in that sector and the quality of some service providers. The Director responded by stating that although a small number of private care homes were under scrutiny from the CQC, the County Council, the CQC and the independent providers worked together to address these issues. Where an independent provider was failing, mechanisms were in place to support them, and the County Council had a team dedicated to moving in to failing establishments to provide the necessary help and expertise.
- (ii) The decision to consult was necessary as the County Council had a duty of care to residents and staff, and as such it was important to ensure that facilities were not kept open if they did not meet the required standard.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet be advised that this Committee welcomes and supports the proposals.